THE

Spiritual Magazine.

NOVEMBER, 1866.

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS IN GREAT POEMS.

THE VISION OF SIN. IN MEMORIAM.

By Thomas Brevior.

Alfred Tennyson is not one of those poets who wake one morning and find themselves famous. His fame has ripened slowly, and, perhaps, has not even yet reached its full maturity. Like Wordsworth,—like all great original poets, he has had to educate his public by presenting them with unfamiliar forms of excellence. Not as a critic, but as a grateful scholar, would I speak of Tennyson, in the hope that possibly a few readers may be induced to study, or to study more carefully, one from whom it has been my privilege to learn so much, and some of whose teachings I shall here endeavour briefly to set forth.

I cannot dwell upon the merits of Tennyson as an artist—upon the richness of tone and colour, the consummate skill, the perfect finish, the tenderness, pathos, simplicity, humour, the lyric sweetness, the variety both of matter and metre, the insight into life, the shrewd observation of manners, and the careful study of nature which his poems exhibit. His portraitures of men and women and his landscape paintings would of themselves form a delightful volume. Nor can I more than allude, in passing, to what would worthily form the subject of a separate paper—his treatment of the social questions of the age. How fine and fierce does his indignation burn against the social lies, the sickly forms, that warp us from the living truth, that err from honest nature's rule. How hopefully and cheerily too in his *Locksley Hall*, does his voice ring out the assurance that whatever of noble and good men have done in the past is but the *earnest* of what they yet shall do :—

> I doubt not, through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.
> * * * * * * * * * * *

> Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
> Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.
> Through the shadows of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
> Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

To give only one illustration of his treatment of a radical social question,—where shall we find "woman's rights" and the "relation of the sexes" treated with so fine a discrimination, ending in such wise conclusion — one that lays the just basis of a noble life for both men and women, as in the last few pages of *The Princess?*—where the poet brings the question back, as a poet should, to nature: developes the ideal out of the actual woman, and reads out of what she is, on the one hand, what her Creator intended her to be—and, on the other, what she never can nor ought to be.

Not in graceful fancies lacking a substantial human interest, as in *The Kraken*, the *Sea-Fairies*, *The Merman*, *The Mermaid*, and the like "fairy tales of science" with which the poet nourished his youthful muse, could a poet like Tennyson be content to rest; for, perhaps, no poet ever employed his powers under a deeper sense of the responsibility they entailed. Eminently a meditative poet, he has pondered deeply not only the questions of the age, but also those profounder questions concerning the human soul, which are of permanent and universal interest; and he has given us the results; not cast into syllogistic moulds and formal treatises, but shaped in accordance with the laws of imagination and of true art, which, faithfully adhered to, are not less, but more trustworthy than logical formulæ; for while the first is concerned with the substance of things, the last deals only with the forms of thought and their verbal statement. Whether its medium of expression be colour, form, sound, or human language, all true Art works by law, though it may be in ways too subtle for formal definition. Hence the monstrous fallacy of regarding true poetry as nothing more than light amusing reading. If we would understand a great poem, and truly enjoy the full satisfaction it is capable of imparting, it must be not only read, but carefully studied. The insight which comes through the imaginative faculty—especially co-operating with a mind of quick observation, stored with varied knowledges, and disciplined by reflection and the experiences of life, enables the poet to render worthy service to true philosophy and pure religion; and by acting on the higher nature of man, to give an ever fresh impulse to the work of human progress. He approaches the consideration of these great themes from other sides, and with different lights, to those of the mere reasoner or ecclesiastic. "It may be the office of the priest to teach upon authority—of the philosopher according to induction—but the

province of the poet is neither to teach by induction nor by authority, but to appeal to those primal intuitions of our being which are eternally and necessarily true."

In considering the appeal to these primal intuitions in the poems of Tennyson, and his spiritual teachings generally, I cannot linger by the way, and must pass by much on which it were well to pause. I cannot, for instance, dwell on the punishment that the selfish isolation and scornful pride of intellect outworks for itself—the lesson that permanent happiness is not to be found in the mere enjoyment of outward things, however varied and beautiful, while we ignore the relations and duties which we owe to God and our fellow-creatures, and the need of that human sympathy which binds us to our kind; as this lesson is set before us in *The Palace of Art.* Nor can I do more than barely allude to what is, perhaps, the most perfect of Tennyson's minor poems of this class—*The Two Voices.* One, the tempting voice of earth and sense, the other, the pleading voice of "The Divinity that stirs within," setting forth the true nature, duty, and destiny of man.

In this paper, I must confine myself to the two poems named at the head of this article—poems so widely differing in subject and treatment, that each may, in a certain sense, be regarded as the complement of the other.

The Vision of Sin is an allegory, of which I think the interpretation is not difficult: I will endeavour to set it forth. The poet

> Had a vision when the night was late:
> A youth came riding toward a palace gate.
> He rode a horse with wings that would have flown,
> But that his heavy rider kept him down.

This winged horse, as in the *Phœdrus* of Plato, is the human soul, and his heavy rider the body and its appetites. If we ride *toward* the gate of sin the tempter is pretty sure to meet us there, and it needs little persuasion to induce us to go within it. So with the typical youth of this poem.

> And from the palace came a child of sin,
> And took him by the curls, and led him in,
> Where sat a company with heated eyes,
> Expecting when a fountain should arise:
> A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
> As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
> Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—
> Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,
> By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine, and piles of grapes.

The pleasures of appetite have palled upon the sense; and this party of pleasure wait in expectation of the fountain of fresh desire that shall arise when the sense of satiety has passed away.

> Then methought I heard a hollow sound,
> Gathering up from all the lower ground;

Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Wov'n in circles: They that heard it, sigh'd—
Panted hand in hand with faces pale;
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied;
Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond drift and pearly hail.

Passionate desire has sprung up anew within them under the stimulus applied. And as the music rose and fell, stormed in orbs of song, and

The strong tempestuous treble thrill'd and palpitated,

the Bacchanals move and wheel in fierce embraces in wild delirium of enjoyment. In this Palace of Sin, the youth of the poem spends his nights and days, not without warnings, which pass by all unheeded:

I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made unto himself an awful rose of dawn—
Unheeded.

The ruddy light of morn breaks in on the youth's sinful pleasures, and the days pass over him, bearing their silent testimony and solemn warning in vain. In vain too this other warning:—

Detaching fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near,
A vapour, heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Comes floating on for many a month and year—
Unheeded.

This vapour is the gradual coming on of old age, unnoticed amid the pleasures of youth. It touches the palace gates, and the lines and shapes of youthful beauty are blotted out in its embrace, like a mirage, or a phantom ship. The enchanted palace with its delights fades and disappears. The poet's dream is broken and re-linked. The vision changes; and oh, the change! The gay youth is now seen

A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death.

Slowly he rode across a withered heath (what but a withered and blasted prospect could lay before the old age of a youth so spent?) and alighted at a ruined inn. In the young man the soul was as a horse winged, and would have flown, but of what use were the wings to its heavy rider? He had no high thoughts aspiring heavenward, and so his winged steed must be made a beast of burden—a pack-horse heavily laden with sin. And now the youthful libertine has become not only a lean, gray, gap-toothed man, but a bitter misanthrope, mocking at virtue; a leering, lascivious, wretched, rotting, ruined old reprobate, hating and cursing his fellow-creatures; with no hope—no blessed future. All the enjoyment that remains to him is "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every minute dies a man,
Every minute one is born.
* * * *
Chant me now some wicked stave,
'Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glowworm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

At length the voice with its wicked wit and ribaldry grows faint and dies away. There is a further change in the poet's vision: below the mystic mountain range life and death ply their unceasing work. The aged sinner has passed through death from the life of time to the life of eternity, and stands for judgment.

Then some one spake: "Behold! it was a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with time."
Another said: "The crime of sense became
The crime of malice, and is equal blame."
And one: "He had not wholly quenched his power;
A little grain of conscience made him sour."
At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, "Is there any hope?"
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

O, most miserable man! O, wretched soul! thy heavy rider hath kept thee down indeed! And now Pity can ask only in pleading, doubtful tone—"Is there any hope?" The answer from the summit of the high land of the Invisible peals forth an answer, but in a tongue that no man can understand, let presumptuous priests babble as they may. Yet, is there not a meaning in the circumstance that the last intelligible word from the slope of that high land is—HOPE! Oh! let us cherish that word, and trust, though it may be with trembling, that in God's infinite mercies there will be even for such as he, and for all, means and processes, however long and painful, of final restoration, and all be brought by the loving Shepherd into the divine fold.

Such then is the *Vision of Sin*. It is the story of a crime of sense avenged by sense;—a dramatic, vivid presentation of the terrible consequences of the misuse of faculties—of a wasted and perverted life. The poet's singing robe is not exactly a surplice; but this *Vision of Sin* may be regarded as a poet's sermon on the text, "Rejoice, O young man! in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*

* There is another *Vision of Sin*, by a very ancient writer, the reader may be interested in comparing it with this of Tennyson's, I give the principal

I gladly pass from the foul life of sin presented in the foregoing Vision—impressive, and alas! needful as its lesson is in this nineteenth Christian century, to the serene and lofty meditations of *In Memoriam*. It is a work unique in literature. Where, indeed, shall we find a poem so deep and catholic in sympathy, of such lofty thought and strong affection,—so purifying, strengthening, and consolatory,—so fitted to touch with healing power the stricken heart of love, and raise the soul from despondency and doubt to fortitude and noble faith, as *In Memoriam?* If we turn to the only poems in our language which can for a moment be named in comparison with it—to the *Lycidas* of Milton, or the *Adonais* of Shelley,—beautiful and musical, affluent in classical allusion, and adorned with choicest flowers of fancy as are these master-pieces of our great poets, how cold and poor and unsatisfactory they seem beside it.

The general character of this poem is so well described by the late Rev. F. W. Robertson, in his *Lectures on the Influence of Poetry*, that I cannot convey an idea of it so well as by transcribing the sketch of it he has given :—

"The poem entitled *In Memoriam* is a monument erected by friendship to the memory of a gifted son of the historian Hallam. It is divided into a number of cabinet-like compartments, which, with fine and delicate shades of difference, exhibit the various phases through which the bereaved spirit passes from the first shock of despair,—dull, hopeless misery and rebellion, up to the dawn of hope, acquiescent trust, and even calm happiness again. In the meanwhile, many a question has been solved, which can only suggest itself when suffering forces the soul to front the realities of our mysterious existence; such as: Is there indeed a life to come? And if there is, will it be a conscious life? Shall I know that I am myself? Will there

---

passages:—"At the window of my house, I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones. I discerned among the youths a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house, in the twilight in the evening, in the black and dark night: And behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart. So she caught him and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him—"I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves." . . . With much fair speech she caused him to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks. Till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. . . Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."

be mutual recognition? continuance of attachments? Shall friend meet friend, and brother brother, as friends and brothers? Or, again: How comes it that one so gifted was taken away so early, in the maturity of his powers, just at the moment when they seemed about to become available to mankind? What means all this, and is there not something wrong? Is the law of creation Love indeed?

"By slow degrees, all these doubts, and worse, are answered; not as a philosopher would answer them, nor as a theologian or a metaphysician, but as it is the duty of a poet to reply, by intuitive faculty, in strains in which Imagination predominates over Thought and Memory. And one of the manifold beauties of this exquisite poem, and which is another characteristic of true Poetry, is that, piercing through all the sophistries and over-refinements of speculation, and the lifeless scepticism of science, it falls back upon the grand, primary, simple truths of our humanity; those first principles which underlie all creeds, which belong to our earliest childhood, and on which the wisest and best have rested through all ages: that all is right: that darkness shall be clear: that God and Time are the only interpreters: that Love is king: that the Immortal is in us: that—which is the key note of the whole—

'——all is well, though Faith and Form
Be sundered in the night of fear.'

* * * * * *

"To a coarser class of minds, *In Memoriam* appears too melancholy: one long monotone of grief. It is simply one of the most victorious songs that ever poet chanted: with the mysterious undertone, no doubt, of sadness which belongs to all human joy, in front of the mysteries of death and sorrow; but that belongs to Paradise Regained as well as to Paradise Lost: to every true note, indeed, of human triumph except a Bacchanalian drinking song. And that it should predominate in a monumental record is not particularly unnatural. But readers who never dream of mastering the plan of a work before they pretend to criticize details can scarcely be expected to perceive that the wail passes into a hymn of solemn and peaceful beauty before it closes."

To trace the poet's thought consecutively through all these divisions of the poem would require a more elaborate treatment than can be essayed in a paper like the present. Even under the most careful and accurate analysis, much of the more subtle element, the fine *aroma* of the poet's genius, must unavoidably be lost. All, I think, that can here be usefully attempted is to present a few illustrations of his dealing with those great problems of the soul which specially press in upon it in presence of some

great affliction—the sudden bereavement of one dearest to our hearts—cut down by the grim reaper Death; not in the harvest time of mortal life, but as spring was ripening into summer, giving glorious promise of golden grain; as in the instance of him of whom *In Memoriam* is so noble a monument. Not that the poet offers these lays as a final answer to questions which perplex philosophy. He deprecates any such construction of his purpose:—

> If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
> Were taken to be such as closed
> Grave doubts and answers here proposed,
> Then these were such as men might scorn.

But there are primary questions which, at some time or other arrest every reflecting mind; the Whence and How? the What and the Where of Being? Life, Death, and the continuity of life beyond, and the sympathy and possible communion between that life and this. Who, capable of reflection, has not thought and felt about these questions? The mathematical mind may object that the poet cannot solve such problems, that he *proves* nothing; but at least these questions receive from *In Memoriam* answers clear, intelligible, expressed with inimitable force and beauty, and which many feel meet more fully than any other those demands of our nature in which these inquiries have arisen. In a metaphysical treatise these questions might receive other answers, or the same answers be reached by other methods; the writer would lay bare the mental processes by which his results were obtained, and challenge scrutiny into their sufficiency. The poet, on the contrary, gives us the product and expression of his spiritual life and intuitive insight, and appeals to the consciousness and the sympathies of our humanity for its verification. He is the Interpreter, revealing man unto himself, and using the shadows of the world without to reveal the substance of the world within:—

> He saw through life and death, through good and ill—
> He saw through his own soul.
> The marvel of the everlasting will
> An open scroll
> Before him lay.

Measurably, at least, has Tennyson approximated to this, which in part describes his ideal conception of the poet; and hence it is that, in speaking of these things to his fellow-men the viewless arrows of his thoughts are headed and winged with flame. And with this deep spiritual insight, sharpened by sorrow, comes that central peace which no fire can burn, nor flood quench, nor accident destroy, for it is rooted in the deep conviction of Eternal Justice and Immortal Love. How true, and tender, and strong is that trust we see in the stanzas introduc-

tory to this great poem. To the soul that has cast anchor on God how re-assuring is the thought that behind the darkest cloud shines forth the sun of Everlasting Love;—that the divine verity and goodness never deceive;—that God never fails to provide the means of satisfaction for the instincts He has implanted even in His lowest creatures. How, then, can He disappoint the deepest, noblest expectations He has implanted in the soul of him whom He has created "the roof and crown of things?"

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

This is the ground of the poet's anticipation of the life beyond mortality; and next to the direct demonstration of the fact itself, which in our day men are privileged to witness, I know of none better.

In Memoriam is a spiritual biography: it mirrors the successive phases of the poet's feeling on the loss of his friend:—The first mood of sorrow—its gloom robing the universe in its own darkness; a sickening sense of the hollowness of common-place condolements—

Vacant chaff well-meant for grain;

the will struggling with the helplessness and aimlessness of grief.

Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and feels
Her place is empty, fall like these;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed;
And, where warm hands have prest and closed,
Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Like the child in Wordsworth's *We are Seven*, he cannot think of the departed otherwise than as living still. He dwells with fond remembrance on their early communings when life's burden was halved by love. The idea of death is to him less

dreadful than the conception of the possibility of forgetting; he feels the inestimable worth of human love:—

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

Does true, deep love like this end with mortal breath? The universe were a dark enigma and meaningless, and love itself a satyr's feeling separate from the belief of immortality.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore;
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

His heart is vexed with subtle, vague suspicions of eternal severance by immeasurable inferiority:—

A spectral doubt which makes me cold,
That I shall be thy mate no more.

But yet, there may be, he feels, reunion through loving discipleship:—

And he the much-beloved again,
A lord of large experience, train
To riper growth the mind and will:

And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves, but knows not, reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows.

If Death be unconscious trance, Love, as after sleep, will begin again:—

And love would last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

And he asks, "How fares it with the happy dead?" When

God's finger touch'd him, and he slept,

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him through the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain fresh
All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd.

The days have vanished, yet perhaps, the hoarding sense gives out at times "a little flash, a mystic hint;" and "some dim touch of earthly things" may surprise the happy spirit ranging with his peers. He bids his friend—

If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O, turn thee round, resolve the doubt,
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

Love shrinks from Pantheism, and demands mutual recognition and separate identity. The doctrine that each is fused and re-merged into the general whole

> Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
> Eternal form shall still divide
> The eternal soul from all beside;
> And I shall know him when we meet.

He has no feud with Death for changes wrought on form and face, and the lower life that earth's embrace may breed; these are but the shattered stalks, or ruined chrysalis, of the spirit: transplanted human worth

> Will bloom to profit otherwhere.

His quarrel with Death is this—

> He put our lives so far apart
> We cannot hear each other speak.

Were this so in its fullest sense—were all communion with "the dear one dead" cut off during the years that may here remain to us, our lot were indeed hard to bear, for though that communion be resumed when we have passed behind the veil—beyond

> The Shadow, cloak'd from head to foot,
> That keeps the keys of all the creeds.

Yet it is *now*, when the wound is yet raw, that the balm of his presence and companionship would be most a solace. And is no companionship—no blessed communion with him now possible? Why, then, does the secret heart so intently desire it? Why, even while characterising it as folly, does the sorrowing poet wish:—

> Yet that this could be—
> That I could wing my will with might
> To leap the grades of life and light,
> And flash at once my friend to thee.

Can this love and sympathy, and strong desire be wasted on the desert air, and meet no response from the soul with whom there is this intimate union? Or is love, "my Lord and King," so powerless and prostrate in that fairer world that he can make no sign? His intellect may be for a moment clouded, but the poet's heart pierces to the truth, and says to the spirit-friend, "Come, O come!" For a time, and in certain moods, the world's sceptical "No" may overpower the soul's still pleading and earnest invocation, and the sophistries of false philosophy explain away every evidence and manifestation that the spirit may present:—

> If any vision should reveal
> Thy likeness, I might count it vain
> As but the canker of the brain;
> Yea, though it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
Together in the days behind,
I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, though it spake and bared to view
A fact within the coming year;
And though the months, revolving near,
Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.

But the truth cannot thus be suppressed or evaded, nor the heart be cheated of its dues. The downward course of scepticism is checked midway:—

I shall not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native land,
Where first he walk'd when claspt in clay?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may come
Where all the nerve of sense is numb;
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in unconjectured bliss,
O, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold-complicated change.

Descend, and touch, and enter; hear
The wish too strong for words to name;
That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

Again, and again, does the poet invoke the presence of his spirit-friend:—

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted thrush;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March;

Come, wear the form by which I know
Thy spirit in time among thy peers;
The hope of unaccomplish'd years
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change
May breathe with many roses sweet
Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
That ripple round the lonely grange;

Come: not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth warm
Come, beauteous in thine after form,
And like a finer light in light.

And again:—

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my doom,
And yearn'd to burst the folded gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
The strong imagination roll
A sphere of stars about my soul,
In all her motion one with law;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
Divide us not, be with me now,
And enter in at breast and brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death.

And yet, again:—

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust,
And Time, a maniac, scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury, slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

And he records dreams, visions, voices of the beloved one expressing the continued love that watches him from the quiet shore, urging him to action, and encouraging him with the assurance that his spirit can reach up to the friend whose loss he mourns. He re-peruses "the noble letters of the dead."

And all at once it seem'd at last
His living soul was flashed on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and whirl'd
About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world.

So holds he "commerce with the dead," not unmindful of the responsibilities of that dear privilege, and with the misgivings natural to a noble and loving nature that some baseness—some hidden shame may be laid open to the spirit's clearer and sorrowing vision, and so his love be lessened. But this fear is cast out by love,—his love to his friend impels him to trust the higher wisdom and the larger charity of the noble dead.

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden shame
And I be lessen'd in his love.

I wrong the grave with fears untrue:
Shall Love be blamed for want of faith?
There must be wisdom with great Death:
The dead shall look me through and through.

Be near us when we climb or fall:
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

Whatever may be the physical conditions spirits require for sensible intercourse with men by physical agencies and human media, for all high communion with the wise and good there must be a preparedness in our inner selves; if we invoke the spirits of peace ere we can receive fitting response, we must be at peace with all and with ourselves. The moral conditions—what we may call the law of such communion—cannot be more finely and forcibly expressed than in these well-known lines—

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest:

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits
They can but listen at the gates
And hear the household jar within.

With the great truths of the immortal and progressive life—the

Trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day,
For ever nobler ends;

and of a present communion with them; are presented other related truths of largest import, but which can receive their due consideration only as there is a deep and abiding conviction of those first fundamental truths. The poet, too, shews a clear, strong perception of our spiritual needs, especially of that need of the union of larger and growing knowledge with a spirit of reverence, charity, and enlightened earnest faith, which I feel it no exaggeration to call the great want of our age. He pleads—

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster.

So would he have the great word grow:—

Not alone in power,
And knowledge, but from hour to hour,
In reverence and in charity.

And while to the full prizing the need and the blessedness of faith, how boldly and well does he rebuke the bigotry and Pharisaism which lifts up holy hands of horror at all and any questioning of its creed, regarding the doubter as a moral leper, and every doubt as of the Devil. He holds a noble sincerity to be the primal virtue—in itself a kind of faith—the one condition indispensable to the attainment of aught worthy of that name. He instances the experience (no uncommon one) of a soul in earnest quest of truth, and its progress through doubt to a stronger faith. To one who tells him doubt is Devil-born, he answers:—

I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone.

But in the darkness and the cloud
As over Sinaï's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold
Although the trumpet blew so loud.

But they greatly err who regard faith in God and things divine as a mere logical deduction, to which you can drive direct through the *Novum Organon* and a course of Paley. It is not the prying intellect that finds out God, but the loving heart that feels Him. It is not along the beaten pathways of controversy, but through the avenue of the affections that the soul approaches God. He comes not within the sweep of our telescopes; but to the simple soul, guileless as a little child, that does the will of God according to its highest light, and seeks to know more only that it may do more and better—Ah, truly! to such God is very nigh; for spiritual nearness is not in local propinquity, but in

approximation to a oneness of feeling and volition, and a community of nature. This is the poet's experience:—

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;
Nor through the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun:

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no more'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear:
But that blind clamour made me wise;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I seem beheld again
What is, and no man understands;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach through nature, moulding men.

From this faith in God—the Infinite Perfection, the loving Father of all—and from the law of progress which we trace in human affairs and in the constitution of our nature and of the world around us, we acquire and rest our firm trust that the same law manifested through all the immeasurable past will be operant in all the eternal future; and joyfully anticipate the final eduction of good from evil, the

One far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.

Evil is transitory; good alone is eternal. Intellect confirms the expectation of the heart, and points to the progress that has been as an earnest of that greater progress that is to be. Science and faith with blending voice cry, "Onward!" Through all her processes and promises, which are also prophecies, nature calls to man, "Onward!" yea, a divine voice within the soul itself calls to him through all its hopes and aspirations—"Onward!" The law of progress, like the capacities of the human soul, knows no limit save the Eternal will. Its language is, "On, on for ever!"

Oh, yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

I have been led to quote from this grand poem more than I intended; but how could I so well set forth its spiritual and sublime teachings in other language? It is a poem that should be not only in the library of every Spiritualist, but in his heart also; and if any words of mine should lead any to read it who have not done so, or any who have, to read it more attentively, my object in this essay will be gained. Combining intellectual subtlety with strength of feeling, it interprets and tempers for us the sweet uses of adversity and sorrow; it illustrates the harmony and correspondence of the outer and the inner worlds; it presents a type of Spiritualism noble and true—a poet's utterance of the instincts and aspirations native to the soul, and of his intuitive perception that these in the Divine order have their proper and corresponding fulfilment. It is a solemn music, inspiring a feeling of holy peace

That gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.

Probably others, like myself, have experienced that there are moods of mind and occasions in life when this poem has a special interest—when it enters into the heart, flooding it with sympathy, calming its agitation, and leading us with all our weight of care to fall, with uplifted hands and holy resignation,

Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God.

"Those who have undergone but slight alterations of their present state, remove but slightly, and along the same plane in space; those whose souls are more radically perverted to evil descend into subterraneous dwellings . . . . and when a soul has made a marked advance, whether in good or evil, by a firm purpose and constant habit, if so united to virtue as to share in her divinity of nature, then passes that soul from its present dwelling to one altogether blessed, and serenely happy; if surrendered to vice, its abode is conformable to its condition. In life, and in every successive death through the long annals of the soul, like meets like, and the natural results of actions are fixed. No man can ever evade this order, inviolably established by Heaven."—*Archer Butler's "Lectures on Plato,"* Vol. II., p. 168-169.

THE SPIRITUAL ATHENÆUM.

THE following Circular has been received. Mr. Home, we believe, has now entered upon his duties as Secretary to the Society, and all communications regarding it should, accordingly, be addressed to him:—

"Many Spiritualists and friends of Spiritualism, considering that a place in London is greatly needed where they may frequently meet, have resolved to establish a Society under the name of THE SPIRITUAL ATHENÆUM, at No. 22, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge. At present, many persons who have been largely gifted with 'spiritual gifts' are without the power to make them known for the general good; while it is certain that several distinguished foreigners, thus gifted, have visited and left London without making the acquaintance of a single Spiritualist.

"The Society proposes to meet the difficulties that impede the progress of Spiritualism, by the establishment to which they draw your attention—where subscribers will have the advantage of intercourse with mediums who may either be found, or who visit England from America, France, and other countries; where books and periodical works in various languages may be received and circulated; where occasional lectures shall be given (written papers being sometimes printed, perhaps quarterly, as 'Transactions'); where a system of useful correspondence may be carried out; where 'experiences' may be communicated and recorded; where, in brief, there shall be a rallying point for Spiritualists and their friends for the interchange of information and for consultation; and where 'sittings,' under judicious arrangements, shall be regularly held with Mr. Home and other mediums.

"It is proposed to appoint Mr. D. D. Home as resident secretary at the institution. He will act under the guidance and direction of a council and an executive committee, one of whom will act as honorary treasurer.

"We believe that Mr. Home's mediumship (free of all conflicting influences) may thus be made wider and more practical in its beneficial effects. We believe, also, that other mediums may be thus enabled essentially to elucidate and advance Spiritualism, and that, hence, investigations into the subject may lead to convictions of its truth.

"It will be a leading duty of the executive committee, acting with the council, to make such arrangements as shall secure facilities for healthy, useful, and instructive communion

to those who seek, as well as those who are willing to give, information "concerning Spiritual gifts;" while promoting social intercourse, aiming at loftier and holier objects, checking the spread of materialism, upholding the truths and extending the influence of Christianity, and bringing closer the bonds of peace and love among mankind, inculcating by another power—acting in accordance with Holy Writ, and co-operating with the Christian teacher—duty to God and to neighbour.

"We, therefore, ask you to give effect to our plan, by agreeing to subscribe £5 5*s.* annually, so long as it shall be satisfactory to you to do so, in order to establish THE SPIRITUAL ATHENÆUM. No other responsibility of any kind will be incurred by subscribers. We wish to limit the number of subscribers to one hundred, but we believe that eighty will be sufficient to meet all requirements—such as the rent of rooms, the supply of a library, moderate refreshments at *conversazioni*—and the expenses of the secretary.

"The following gentlemen have consented to act as the council; those who are thus indicated (*) forming the executive committee. It will be observed that several of the members are practical men of business; and, therefore, that a wise superintendence will be exercised over the proceedings of the society. With the council, several ladies of position and influence will be associated:—

"PRESENT LIST OF COUNCIL

"(*To which additions will be made*).

"G. BROCKLEBANK, Esq., Lombard Street, and Greenwich.
"Dr. ELLIOTSON, Davies Street, Berkeley Square.
"Capt. DRAYSON, R.A., Woolwich.
"Count P. DE GENDRE, 68, Westbourne Terrace.
"H. G. GIBSON, Esq., 33, Mark Lane, and Mecklenburgh Square.
"JOHN HAMPDEN GLEDSTANES, Esq., London and Paris.
"J. M. GULLY, Esq., M.D., Malvern.
"* S. C. HALL, Esq., F.S.A., Barrister-at-Law, 8, Essex Villas, Kensington.
"HENRY T. HUMPHREYS, Esq., 1, Clifford's Inn.
"* H. G. JENCKEN, Esq. (*Honorary Treasurer*) Barrister-at-Law, Kilmorey House, Norwood.
"ION PERDICARIS, Esq., Gloucester Terrace, Campden Hill.
"* H. RUDALL, Esq., 9, Great Tower Street, and the Grove, Camberwell.
"* H. W. SPRATT, Esq., Walbrook Buildings, and South Villas, Greenwich.
"* E. C. STERLING, Esq., 104, Sloane Street.
"The Rev. J. G. WOOD, M.A., Belvedere, Kent.

"22, *Sloane Street, Knightsbridge.*"

PRESENTIMENTS.

THE *Cornhill Magazine* for October contains an article on this subject, which shews a good deal of what, in sporting phrase, is called "hedging." No sooner does a writer for the Press begin to touch any question which has a relation to the spiritual, than his organ of cautiousness seems to be at once stimulated into an almost preternatural activity. He is so circumspect—so careful not to commit himself—not to be confounded with "the quack, who has his nostrum of spiritual manifestations always at hand, and who wavers between occult science and open knavery" (a phrase of such fine courtesy to those with whom he differs in opinion ought, surely, to earn for the writer a conspicuous place in the next edition of Mr. Disraeli's *Amenities of Literature;*) that the reader is often considerably puzzled to know what he is driving at, and has to follow the advice of Polonius to "by indirection find direction out." But, with many reserves and qualifications, it seems pretty evident that the writer in the *Cornhill* does believe some cases of presentiment to be of supernatural origin; so, at least, pronounces our critical and sceptical contemporary, the *Spectator*. Some two or three instances of this "true presentiment" given by him (one especially, said to be original), are worth reciting. The article, however, suggests the remark, (which applies to the Press generally) that, while our contemporaries are altogether incredulous of anything of this kind that we, or any Spiritualist, may publish, and are especially clamorous if our instances are not fortified with the name of the writer, as well as with the name, date, place, full particulars, and all corroborative testimony; they in their own proper persons when they commit themselves to print on such matters, are remarkably oblivious to all these little considerations. Not that we wish to impugn their accuracy,—there are no doubt reasons which they consider sufficient for withholding these particulars; only it is rather awkward to have *two* canons of criticism, one to apply to your neighbour, the other—quite a contrary one—to be applied to yourself.

To return, however, to our stray sheep—the writer in the *Cornhill*—and his article, an abstract of which we propose to lay before our readers. After a few preliminary observations, he proceeds:—

"We may safely lay it down as a rule that the essence of a true presentiment is that it shall be spontaneous. It must come at a time when you have no reason to look for it, when you are not under the influence of any fear or anxiety from

known causes, when perhaps you have some difficulty in its interpretation. You must not be ill, and think you have a presentiment that you will not recover. You must not be away from home and have a presentiment that some calamity has happened there. You must not know that a friend is in danger, and have a presentiment of his death. You must not have reason to suspect a man, and have a presentiment that he will cheat you. And why? Because in all these instances there is a simple natural cause for fear or uneasiness. In all matters where there is a natural cause we give more weight to it than to another, which may be the real cause, but is beyond the bounds of probability. If a man who suffers from heart disease is found dead on a roadside or in his bed, we at once attribute his death to his complaint, though it may afterwards appear that he was murdered. But if the man was perfectly healthy, and was known to have an implacable enemy, we should be more apt to think of murder. And so it is with presentiments. If they can be accounted for in any natural way, we must hesitate to receive them. Even where a natural solution covers some of the facts, it does not always cover them all, and very often when we have argued away the main points of the story, there is just so much left that we are forced to say, 'whether the presentiment be genuine or not, this is something that no science can explain.' Call them by what name you will —presentiments, coincidences, or anything else, there are many cases which you can settle to a certain point, but no further. Many of these are admitted into the class of presentiments because they are too strange to be explained by natural laws, though they are not really presentiments."

By straining natural possibilities to the utmost, we may, in many cases of presentiment, just barely escape the necessity of attributing them to a spiritual origin. Omitting, however, the instances which the writer in the *Cornhill* considers of ambiguous, perhaps wholly natural, origin; there are, confessedly, a few others which he does not see how to account for in that way, which "seem to answer all our requirements." One of these is the case of Henry IV. of France. "He felt the ghost of the dagger in his breast, long before the murderer Ravaillac armed himself with it. Rest fled from him; the thought seized on him in his house, drove him into the open air; the coronation feast of his consort sounded to him like a funeral; he heard, with boding ear, the footsteps that sought him through the streets of Paris." Another instance is—"what seems the most genuine case of a presentiment, an event occurring to Czar Paul four or five days before his assassination. He was riding, and he turned suddenly to his Grand Master of the Horse, saying, 'I felt quite

suffocated—I could not breathe—I felt as if I was going to die. Won't they strangle me?' The incident was related to the Russian general officer, in whose papers it is recorded, the very same evening by the Grand Master himself. It was no doubt natural that a Czar should expect to be strangled, but why should he have had this feeling of suffocation, and why should it have come to him so few days before he was actually strangled?"

A very remarkable instance is related, with the prefatory remark—"What we want to establish a presentiment is something preternatural, an involuntary and unaccountable feeling.

"A good instance of this was communicated to me by a near relation. A young lawyer, who had chambers in the Temple, had a nodding acquaintance with an old gentleman living on the same staircase. The old man was a wealthy old bachelor, and had a place in the country, to which he went for a week every Easter. His servants had charge of the place while he was away—an old married couple, who had lived with him for twenty-seven years, and were types of the fine old English domestic. One Easter Tuesday the young lawyer was astonished to find the old gentleman on his Temple staircase, and made some remark about it. The old man asked him into his room, and said he had received a fearful shock. He had gone down, as usual, to his country place, had been received with intense cordiality, had found his dinner cooked to perfection, and everything as it had been from the beginning. When the cloth was removed, his faithful butler put his bottle of port on the table, and made the customary inquiries about master's health, hoped master was not fatigued by the journey, had enjoyed his cutlet, and so on. The old gentleman was left alone, his hand was on the neck of the bottle of port, when it suddenly flashed across his mind—'Here I am, a lonely old man; no one cares for me; there is no one near to help me if anything should happen to me. What if my old servant and his wife have been cheating and robbing me all the time? What if they want to get rid of me, and have poisoned this bottle of wine?' The idea took hold of him so strongly that he could not touch his port. When the man came in again, he said he did not feel well, would have a cup of tea; no, he would have a glass of water and go to bed. In the morning he rang his bell, and no one answered. He got up, found his way downstairs; the house was empty, his two faithful old servants had vanished. And, when he came to look further, he found that his cellar, which ought to have contained two or three thousand pounds worth of wine, was empty, and the bottle they had brought him last night *was* poisoned.

"I have told the story at length because it has not appeared in print before, and because it seems to answer all our requirements. The only place in which you can find a flaw is one which after all does not affect the whole. It is this:—Did the butler, in putting the wine on the table, betray the slightest discomposure? If he did there might be good cause for the suspicions of master being aroused. But if master suspected a servant of twenty-seven years' standing, is it not likely that he would have remarked it openly? A look, a tone, a sign of trepidation or uneasiness, would hardly have suggested such a train of reflections. There is also a remarkable accuracy about the train of reflections which leads one to a preternatural cause. Granting that suspicion was aroused, the solution arrived at was neither the easiest nor the most likely. The singular thing is that the master should have yielded so readily to the impression, and that it should afterwards have proved accurate in the most minute details. Another point in this story is remarkable. It so seldom happens that presentiments of any kind are acted upon that Wallenstein may well deny them the name of warnings. Yet when, as in this case, they have been acted upon, it is shewn that they do not merely predict the inevitable."

Passing by some remaining instances of a less striking kind, we quote the conclusion of the article, as confirming what has been recently said in the *Spiritual Magazine* as to Shakespeare's recognition of the supernatural element in human affairs:—

"If a presentiment warns you of anything, you do not escape it by refusing to listen to the presentiment; on the contrary, you make it inevitable. This, I think, is the moral of the presentiments given us by Shakespeare. In all that he gives us, the warning is neglected and the fate comes. The simplest of them all is Hamlet's, and it is the strongest proof of Shakespeare's belief in them.

Hamlet. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Horatio. Nay, good my lord,—

Hamlet. It is but foolery; but it is a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike anything, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Hamlet. Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come: if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all.

"At first we might think Hamlet's feeling was natural. He had detected the king's villany, and he knew his own counterplot would not long be secret. But it is plain that he suspected nothing in the challenge to fence with Laertes. He never once examined the foils, or measured them, but picked up the first that came to hand, and took the length on trust. Just before,

when Horatio warned him, he had said, "The interim is mine," and he clearly looked forward to having things his own way till the next news from England. Desdemona's presentiment does not bear the same tests. She had no reason to apprehend a violent death, but she had enough to apprehend from Othello's anger. He had struck her, and called her the vilest names. To her assurances of innocence he had answered by taunts when they were alone, and by coldness in public. Coming from a man she loved, these unkindnesses would have the utmost effect on a woman, and would throw her into a deep state of depression. 'A sort of gain-giving' would naturally trouble her, and exclude every chance of real presentiment.

"Undoubtedly the most curious cases in Shakespeare are those of Romeo and Hastings. And what makes them so curious is that any man desirous of overthrowing Shakespeare's belief in presentiments would naturally appeal to them. Hastings has just been dwelling on the smoothness and cheerfulness of Gloster, and inferring from Gloster's openness and sincerity that he is offended with no man there, when Gloster sends him to execution. Romeo has just said—

> If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
> My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
> My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne;
> And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit
> Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.

The next moment his servant returns with news of Juliet's death. From these two cases an opponent of presentiments would argue that Shakspeare was on his side. He evidently believed that an unusually joyful mood was the forerunner of disaster. The Scotch consider that a man in very high spirits is on the brink of a calamity, as the servants in *Guy Mannering* said the guager was *fey*. Wordsworth says that when our minds have mounted as far as they can in delight, it sometimes chanceth that, without any apparent cause, they sink equally low in dejection. Shakspeare supports both these theories. Now, if we look a little closer into the matter, we shall find that the presentiments which seem to deceive are even more genuine in reality than those which are most simple and straightforward. Hastings' presentiment was not the favourable view he took of Gloster's mood; though he persuaded himself into thinking that it was. His real presentiments, as we learn afterwards, were unfavourable, but he would not listen to them. He had made up his mind that all must go well, and, in consequence, he neglected every sign that bore against his view, and dwelt too strongly on whatever seemed to support it. Presentiments being involuntary and unaccountable moods of the mind, it is utterly impossible for what you

observe in another man's bearing to inspire you with such a feeling. You may distrust him involuntarily, or not be able to account for your distrust; but, at the best, your feeling is instinctive. And this was not the feeling of Hastings, for he was able to explain his confidence in Gloster. Instead of yielding to impressions, whose source he could not divine, but which were too strong for him, he reasoned himself into other impressions, and found his mistake too late. Romeo's presentiment is of another character, but is even stronger. If he had known the truth he had the best reason to be cheerful. By feigning death, Juliet had freed herself from restraint, and had sent a message to him that he might bear away. How was the presentiment to know that her message would miscarry, that Romeo would hear another account, and act without waiting? Had he but trusted to the presentiment, instead of his own rash judgment, his tragedy would not have had a tragic ending. As it was, the presentiment did all in its power. It warned him of something good, and he refused to believe it. But it was because he refused to believe the good that evil came on him; because he thought himself deceived that he insisted on deceiving himself. You cannot blame your guide for misleading you if you will not follow his guidance.

"Notably enough none of the characters in Shakespeare do follow that guidance. They did not believe in presentiments as their creator did. After all, the question of obedience to such warnings would seem to be decided by considerations quite apart from their genuineness. In the story I have told, the only trial of the old gentleman's faith was a bottle of port, and he made the sacrifice of it. But when a man runs the risk of being ridiculous in the eyes of the world, of seeming a prey to idle fears, of breaking up the senate till another time when Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams, he flinches from the ordeal. And thus, as preachers are always telling us, the world is too much for us. We listen to the supernatural voice so long only as the natural voice is silent. To a great extent this is true; but I hope I have shewn in this paper that we have some justification. We cannot safely be guided by presentiments till we have the means of knowing when they are genuine. And this we cannot know. But we can do something towards knowing it, and by means of that we may steer our course between the dangers of blind subservience and blind mistrust. We can examine our reasons for any feeling, and when we can find no cause, or shadow of a cause, for joy or sorrow, we may conclude that something unseen moves us. Whether we obey it or not is another question."

A FEW STONES FROM THE QUARRY OF TRUTH TOWARDS BUILDING HER TEMPLE.

By William Howitt.

Amid all the contradictions, difficulties, trivialities, spiritual falsities, and doubts resulting therefrom, attending spiritual enquiries, on casting our eyes over the broad field of Spiritualism, and noting the facts which stand up here and there like islands in an ocean, we perceive, with profound satisfaction, that these facts as developed in various times and places, and occurring to different persons, even in continents and parts of the two hemispheres, widely separated, and in individuals unknown to each other, present a singular identity of character; family features unmistakable, and such as demonstrate their origin in certain fixed and eternal laws. These are the permanent results of a vast and world-wide experience; the rudiments of a science, yet to be perfected, which shall sweep away utterly the old dream-land of metaphysics, and give birth to a living science of psychology, constructed not of abstractions, but of realities accessible to the enquiries of all men. Herein lies the true and indestructible value of Spiritualism. All that is false in it will die off like the fogs from a morning landscape, and leave the landscape clear and beautiful under the full resplendence of the unclouded sun of truth. Whatever is false will perish, because it is false; whatever is true will remain for ever, because it is true.

From this already ascertained knowledge we derive too a guide through the often bewildering labyrinths of spiritual experiment, of eminent consolation. We learn not to trust every communication, but to wait when there is anything dubious, certain that its genuineness or spuriousness will be made manifest by what will come after, sooner or later. Time will try every assertion as with fire; and though it may burn up a number of things and messages which we would fondly have held fast, it will leave us in the residuum, truths of such value as will far outweigh all that has been proved mere (though glittering) dross.

I propose, in this paper, to point out three doctrines of Spiritualism, which, I believe, will end in establishing as many spiritual laws, every one of which will, so soon as it becomes generally acknowledged as such, have a profound influence on human motive and life. The moral responsibilities which these doctrines bring to light are of the most momentous kind; their illustration of the wisdom, and justice, and indestructible continuity of operation in God's law, is most awfully luminous, and throws on the teachings of our Divine Redeemer, "the Way,

the Truth, and the Life," a flood of light which will leave every mortal creature, once instructed in this great code of the universe, without a shadow of an excuse, when the great book of judgment which he carries in his own soul shall lie open, on his entrance into the kingdom of the spirit.

WHAT ARE BOOKS?

Books, according to our notions, are certain thoughts, facts and observations written down and then printed, bound up, and sent forth into the world by an order of middle-men, called Publishers, who, for the most part, flourish exceeding on the vendition of these books, whilst the writers of them, except in very rare instances, do not flourish on their sale: in many cases suffer, and have suffered incredible hardships, poverty and disappointment, from these their productions. For my part, I never see a vast library without feeling a most melancholy sense of all the labour, the sufferings, the persecutions, and the wrongs which have attended the production of those numerous volumes. I seem to see crowds of happy enthusiasts, seated over manuscripts which are irradiated by the loveliest light of hope and joy, gradually changing into a crowd of astonished, depressed, pauperized or broken-hearted men, out of whose decaying forms rise plump apparitions of affluence, fatness, and jollity, which assume the shapes of bibliopoles living in goodly houses and driving about in gay equipages, which have no other foundations than the volumes of these melancholy and disinherited men and women.

Whence comes this continuous condition of things? Spiritualism alone can explain. It is because authors originate the souls of books, and publishers originate their bodies. Those who originate soul will, of necessity, reap their harvest in soul, whether good or evil: those who originate the material portion of books will, of necessity, reap the material harvest. Such are the laws of matter and mind; such only can be the results. In proportion only as authors step out of the mere region of authorship, and assume the cares and mix themselves in the functions of the material concerns of books, will they participate in the material benefits of them. Each world, spiritual and material, will assert its own specific rights, and yield its own specific fruits. That which is spiritual will be spiritual still; that which is earthy will be earthy still. To the end of time, there will be the poor author and fat bookseller.

But what are books? Books are not merely certain blocks or masses of paper, print and binding,—books have a soul as well as a body: but Spiritualism alone has made this clearly manifest, and has made demonstrative not only the calamities but

the responsibilities of authors. Since I have been a Spiritualist, I have found spirits continually reading what I wrote, as I wrote it. They have come, again and again, at our evening *séance*, and, through the indicator, declared for or against what I had done that day. On one occasion, a well-known and beloved spirit came and said that I had described the climate of a certain country too gloomily. I replied, "Every word I have used is based on the best authorities." He answered, "Quite true, but you have given too much of the dark in proportion to the light; therefore, though every word is true in itself, it is false in its proportion; and the general picture is too sombre." I promised to reduce the shadow—and did so. I hoped that that evening my beloved critic would be satisfied. On the contrary, he asserted that I had not yet hit the true balance. I tried a third time, but with no better success. I then said, "As I cannot satisfy you, tell me exactly what I shall say." The words were given, and I printed them, and I am quite sure that the true end was thus obtained.

Lately, when I wrote an article on Bettina von Arnim, the spirit of Bettina, accompanied by that of her friend Günderode, presented itself. Bettina said she wished to say something to me. I replied, "Say on." "Let me speak to you in German," she said; "it is more easy to me. I wish you to correct the date of my age as you have given it in your article on me." "But this article," I said, "is still in my desk, unseen by any one." "No matter," she replied; "I have read it, and the date of my age is wrong." "But how can it be wrong?" I said; "for I have followed the best authorities." "No," she said, "you have followed the Lexicons, and they are all wrong; my own date only is right." "Then," I said, "you are the most wonderful child that ever lived. For a woman of three-and-thirty to have written those letters to Goethe would have been admirable; but for a girl of thirteen—those dissertations on music and other things—you must have been a wonderful child indeed!"

Günderode—"It is just as you say—she was so."

I corrected the date.

Spirits have continually come and spoken of books lately published here, as having been read by them. "What!" I have said, "have you our books in the spirit-world?" "Certainly—all of them." I expressed my astonishment. They have always replied—"You do not understand yet, amongst you on the earth, the real laws of matter and of spirit. You have your books enveloped or rather deposited in matter. As beings enveloped in matter you could not otherwise read them. But the spirit of the book is spirit. It issues from your spirit, and, therefore, is

and exists in this our spiritual world. It exists to us as a spiritual thing; its matter, so necessary to you, does not exist for us."

"How, then, do books circulate with you?"

"They are all, as they issue into existence, submitted to the judgment of the spirits of just and enlightened men."

"What! you have critics in your world too!"

"Yes, but the antipodes of your critics. Ours, you hear, are the spirits of just men. Noble, true, impartial; having no personal spites, no prejudices, but observing in love, and determining in justice."

"And can all books circulate all over the spiritual world?"

"By no means. Such as receive the approbation of the spiritual judges are promulgated through the higher spheres by the demonstration of God. The rest go, as men go, all to their own places. Their moral qualities decide their location and field of circulation. The great law of spiritual magnetism draws everything to its own."

"What, then," I said, "everything written goes on for ever asserting the good or evil that is in it."

"Exactly so. Thoughts are spiritual realities. Nothing can annihilate, nothing can stop them from their legitimate operation upwards and downwards. They go on in their own specified life power."

"But what an inexpressibly awful idea of moral responsibility you thus give us. If a man writes that which 'dying he would wish to blot,' he cannot do it."

"Certainly not! Spite of himself it will go on operating for evil, and with a rapidity, a fecundity, and a zest which you have no conception of, because you cannot comprehend the nature of spirit and spirit-life. The evil once let loose by a writer can never be recalled; it will go on intensifying the hells, and accelerating in the spirits of the intermediate spheres the tendency thitherward. But let it be understood that the action of good spiritual labour in books is equally operative upwards: for, born as we are all on the earths, we love to drink still of their spiritual fountains—to combine our sentiment with the sentiment of those whom we love there. The ocean of life spreads through all worlds, and there is flux and reflux between them. Therefore, the noble writings of men gladden the bosoms of angels, and hence it is said, 'They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmanent; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.'"—Daniel xii. 3.

Let us now reflect on the ideas here communicated, and we shall see how truly philosophical they are. How exactly this must be the case according to the laws of spirit and matter. Thought and the material vehicles of thought are as essentially

separate things, as are our souls and bodies. Each substance must confine itself to its own world. Matter will serve us in its vehicular quality, whilst we are in matter; but what is born of the spirit is spirit, and exists and goes on operating in the world of spirit according to its essence, good working good, evil working evil. Let this grand truth once be here established as a truth, and the revolution in moral action must be enormous, or the guilt of guilt be enormously augmented. What writer or what individual in conversation or life, once thoroughly understanding this great principle of the universe, this great law of God, would willingly incur the tremendous responsibilities attached to its abuse?

THE LAW OF SUICIDE.

Swedenborg tells us that suicides are still, by a link which nature has not yet broken, but which they themselves have broken as far as in them lies, chained to their bodies, and drag them about with them in the spiritual world. This is not to be understood of the gross and complete body, which is decomposing in the grave, but of some material, though to us invisible, portion of it, which the unthwarted operation of nature, would in due time have left behind.

All the spirits which have come to us have asserted much the same thing in other words. They have stated that suicides in the spirit-world are treated there as deserters from this world and intruders into that. That, having taken the management of their lives out of the hands of God, into their own—having substituted their own arbitrary will for His will expressed in the conditions and limitations of what we call nature—God leaves them to their own assumed action, and withdraws the action of His providence over them till the natural period of their earthly existence has expired. They are not where He placed them, and where the operations of His providence regarding them lie. They are where they have no business to be, according to the laws and designs of the owner of and ruler of the universe; and must suffer the inconveniences of the situation which they themselves have created. They are in the condition of persons who have quitted the spot where they may be wanted; and have put themselves in a position where they may be very much in the way of the persons and the machinery which are legitimately at work there. They have violated the order of God's regimen of the world, and, so far as they have been able, have thrown it into confusion. They must, therefore, submit to the knocks and jostles, and pushings here and there, which their out-of-place place may inflict upon them.

They complain that they do not enjoy a full and perfect life.

No, certainly, they have not waited to come to the perfect birth into the spiritual world. They are untimely children there—abortions, unperfected, unripened. They have anticipated the genuine offices of sacred and all-beneficent nature, only to fall behind into the limbo of crudities and monstrosities. Such is the law of suicides; but like all God's laws, it has its modifications, according to the circumstances under which the breach of the law has been perpetrated. The lower and narrower organization of the individual, of course, reduces to a certain degree the moral responsibility: the amount of distressing circumstances which have depressed, rendered desperate and even insane, the sufferer, are all weighed in the account of the Great Judge, who will assuredly do right. The prayers of friends are also represented as availing much for the amelioration of the doom and condition of the suicide. Love is the law of God and of the higher spirit-world, and, therefore, the prayers of love are operative on behalf of the unhappy suicide.

Yet, under the most ameliorated condition of the self-murderer, the spirits represent his fate as most melancholy. "Oh! sad, sad! and terrible," they have often said, "is the condition of those who break the wholesome limits of nature, and rush unbidden into the presence of God!"

Soon after I had written the article on Günderode at Heidelberg, last autumn, Günderode herself came. Some of our dear invisible friends said, "Here is Günderode."

"Ha!" I exclaimed, "tell me how she looks. She was a lovely young creature on earth, and must, I imagine, have advanced into pre-eminent beauty and knowledge." "On the contrary," said our spirit friends, "there is not a trace of beauty about her. She appears poor, destitute and miserable." She herself confirmed this. Instead of having progressed, as I supposed, into the higher regions of knowledge, intellect and felicity, she said the fate of the suicide had been hers. She had remained, as it were, an outcast from the homes and sympathies of those who had been duly called to the inner life. Instead of the growth of intellectual wealth, she was suffering atrophy and penury of soul. She had been in a semi-state of existence—a sort of death in life, conscious of suffering, but unable to rise or escape out of it. "But when I heard," she said, "that you had written a kind paper on my mortal life and fate, I felt it was the first stirring of the love of God towards me. I thank you fervently for your sympathy. Pray for me, for I now awake to hope; loving spirits are around me; now a new life begins."

As Günderode destroyed herself in 1806, at the age of twenty-six, she would in 1865 have been eighty-three, which we may suppose was the natural term of her earthly life.

"But how happens it," I said, "that you have not been amongst your own friends and relatives." "Ah!" she replied, "that is another of the calamities of suicide. It takes you out of the sphere of the friends gone before; and as for those left behind, new ties weave themselves gradually over the vacant space that your lawless departure has left. You become, as it were, superseded by new loves and connections; you become an alien, thrown out of your own proper standing in the works of life, and forgotten. It is not so with those who are called early away by the great King of Life and Love. Love streams up after them; and they are not, like the suicide, lost in a dreary and icy dormancy of wretchedness, but are allowed ever to hover around their beloved ones still in the flesh, and keep alive between them all that affection which is the sweetest element of the life of heaven.

Here again, let this law of suicides become a recognized fact in the spiritual knowledge of mankind, and what an influence must it exert in deterring unhappy people from the grand mistake of suicide. Let them but understand that in endeavouring to escape from temporary, though often no doubt overwhelming, evils here, they rush to others that they can no longer be said "to know not of," but to a certainty of still greater ones. That they do not escape from "the appointed time upon earth," except by plunging into a worse state for that appointed time. That "God is not mocked;" he will still maintain his supremacy, and compel them to serve for their allotted time. That they only perpetrate a cruel mockery on themselves, only enter on a defective, dilapidated, abortional existence, conscious of suffering but incapable of flying any further from it; and if the conscious certainty of retribution can have any weight it must have it here. By having placed in a clear point of view the fearful hereafter of the suicide, Spiritualism will have rendered a great benefit to mankind.

THE STATE OF DARKNESS AND ISOLATION AFTER DEATH.

Those who have been accustomed to spiritual *séances* are only too familiar with the numbers of spirits who come to them, complaining of their living in a state of constant darkness and isolation from other beings. Perhaps the condition of an old man whom I well knew, may explain that of many of these. His spirit, presenting itself at a *séance*, said that he had been for a considerable time after his arrival in the spirit world, blind. This was startling news, as he had in this life the perfect use of his eyes; but he explained it in this manner. Although on earth he led a regular and even nominally religious life, it was one only of religious formalism and real deadness. He had

never really exercised his spiritual senses, and on entering the spiritual world he was blinded by the light of it, and it was long before he recovered his sight. He was, too, at first, very deaf, though not deaf here, from similar causes.

Numbers of spirits complain of being in the dark, and where all is desert and lonely. We have known one spirit which carried its insanity with it into the inner world and was only cured there by spiritual remedies. These circumstances tend to shew that our diseases and impurities are all really in the spirit, and only manifest themselves in the body as a consequence, the body being the organ of the soul. A new light, if this be true, is thrown by Spiritualism on the nature of disease.

But the greater portion of those living in darkness and isolation in the other world, confess that it is the natural consequence of their being destitute of spiritual light in this life. "The light of the body is the eye," said our Saviour, "but if that light be darkness, how great is that darkness." Here, then, we come upon a grand truth which makes these words of Christ most significant. If we do not cultivate spiritual light in this life, on arriving in a world purely and only spirit, we have no light at all. And as regards the dreary isolation of which such spirits complain, how perfectly philosophical is the sequence, that if we have lived here only for ourselves, in the state of retribution we shall find ourselves alone. If self has been our total love and object, it must of necessity be everything where only what is real exists. This is again the identical philosophy of Christ: "The measure that you mete to others shall be meted to you again." These are grand truths of a religion which has hitherto been treated as a religion of sentiment and poetry, rather than of strict and essential fact. This is the philosophy of a religion which still remains "a light shining in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." It is a philosophy which says, such as we make ourselves here such we shall find ourselves there. If we do not love God with all our hearts and souls, and strengths, but as an empty form and phrase, we shall find Him there but an empty phantom to us. We shall not "see God," nor feel Him. If we do not love our neighbour as ourselves we shall have no neighbours, or only such as the priest and the Pharisee were in the parable of the Good Samaritan. God is good and bountiful, and will give us what we love, if it be only ourselves! If we love nothing else, he will give us nothing else. Such is the law of life, of spiritual reality and of recompense. What we sow we shall reap, and nothing else.

In the *Spiritual Magazine*, Vol. V., p. 247, in the experiences of Hornung, will be found an article on the condition of Voltaire,

as communicated to Mrs. Sweet, the wife of Dr. Sweet of New York. "In this most eloquent paper, Voltaire depicts the darkness and silence in which he found himself on awaking in the spiritual world; a darkness more than Egyptian; a silence unbroken by the presence of a single living soul. Here he remained till he was completely emptied of himself, and inspired with a most vehement desire for human sympathy. This desire grew to a frenzy that in the earthly condition must have become madness, and he found himself calling humbly and impetuously on God to give him light, and the inexpressible solace of the communion of other souls."

In the second article on Hornung, p. 246, we find the spirit of an old lady, who had been well known as a very clever but wicked woman in Vienna. This spirit spoke in the most eloquent and wise manner. "Be assured," she said, "that there is another and a spiritual world, where there is recompence. Punishment and forgiveness, despair and felicity, eternal joy and terrible torment,—who shall now doubt of these things, when the dead themselves come back to proclaim them? Comfort inexpressible; balsamic assuagement of your anguish, joyous hope springing up in the depth of your misfortunes. These are the rewards of the faithful and the good, and yet you do not believe." Yet this wise spirit had not escaped out of her darkness. In it she said she was disciplining for the light, and thanked God for it. That she said was her "life, her hope, her inspiration."

In a vision by Emma Hardinge given in the *Spiritual Times*, of April 14th, of this year, we have a most eloquent and impressive description of her visit in spirit trance to the region inhabited by the soul of an English nobleman whom she had known in her youth. He was a man who had lived exclusively for self and self-indulgence; and she found his abode in a city of great towers, and magnificent abodes furnished with every environment of luxury and splendour; but all was dark and utterly solitary. She asked if she were alone, and was answered, "No, myriads are around you, and wander and feel as you do, but none see the others or you. It is the condition of entrance to the spheres of self-love, that the eye shall behold naught but self, realize no other existence. They toiled in earth-life to obtain this state; here they reap the harvest they have sown."

Pause here, and compare this system of strict results from actual causes, this system of self-punishment, and God's over-ruling work of retribution and restoration in it, with that of the eternal fire system, which has so signally failed to deter mankind from selfishness and crime. We cannot believe in a God of love who puts helpless, shrinking creatures, though fallen and faulty, into eternal fire. It is a contradiction so utterly opposed

to reason, that reason sets it aside as the lumber of the dark ages. It is a system founded on gross misunderstanding of the words of our Saviour. If we abhor Moloch who only passed children *through* the fire to him, how can we love a God who keeps countless millions in fire for ever? The result of such revolting dogmas are before the world in universal profligacy, universal selfism, and denial of the gospel, thus mischievously misinterpreted. But here we have a system taught by the spirits not to supersede, but to explain Christianity, which makes that which we sow, spring up and grow, whether corn, or weed, whether fruit or poison-berry, whether palm-tree or bramble; and through all the hand of God laying down the guiding clue which leads to retribution and restoration.

But what a system of awful retribution, notwithstanding! What tremendous responsibilities! Some of them, perhaps, not to be escaped from for ages! The writer, or the speaker, or the doer, setting afloat spiritual agencies for good or evil, that will go on for ever raising or ruining all that they can enter into and possess in their onward career of vibration. And no stopping, no turning aside, no recalling them! The suicide, leaping from the rugged path of earth into the regions of desolate abandonment, of helpless remorse, and the shivering, half-awake chill of a mangled existence. The selfish and the sensual, living in dolorous darkness and absence of social communion and sympathy. No glance of a bright eye falling on them in the light of heaven's day; no sweet accent of love reaching the hungry ear! All blank, deathly, and heart-devouring emptiness and silence. And in all this the consciousness that nothing else can exist for us, because we have sown nothing else, have cultivated nothing else; but have let the very faculties which can reach and lay hold on whatever is good, and genuine, and noble, die out of us from disuse. So to live till it shall please God, in answer to our earnest, our long and agonizing prayers, to re-create the germs of these divine qualities in us. To touch them with the spirit of life; to warm them with the sun of love; to water them from the fountains of that divine sympathy which brought down God's compassion to our lost and rebel race.

Well, here we have principles of a theology which is at once in accordance with Christianity in its offers of life to all—in accordance with nature and with reason. We are shewn that as free agents we are the architects of our own fortunes in the other world as in this. God's help is proffered us, and all the benefits and heritages of prayer. If we ask this we shall have it; if we do not ask it, but go on in our own will, we shall find that the spirit of the will has shaped the future as well as the present for us. We shall exactly have what we have given our

affections to: and that out of this self-created condition, we can only come by a veritable new birth, and by a process counter to that by which we have entered into it. All is law and growth, made genial or ungenial, happy or unhappy, loveable or odious, by the sun of love, or the raw atmosphere of mere worldism, whose light, like that of the moon, has no heat in it. In this intelligible system of divinity, however, the aid of the all-loving Ruler of the Universe is ever invocable. There is no shutting out for ever; no everlasting burnings; no day of grace entirely over: for its Author and Founder is the same who came to seek and save that which was lost; who bade us poor evil creatures forgive not seven times but seventy times seven, and who is infinitely more placable than we are; the same who went and preached to the spirits in the prisons of eternity; thus demonstrating to us that he is pursuing his work beyond the grave, and is resolved to restore all things.

CRYSTAL-SEEING IN LANCASHIRE.

VISITING lately friends in the county of G——, I met at their house Mr. P——, a man of high scientific attainments, and master of the Free School in the neighbouring village. In the course of conversation we discovered that this gentleman was an earnest enquirer into the phenomena of Spiritualism; having first been led to feel an interest in the subject from his knowledge of "crystal-seeing."

Mr. P—— kindly furnished me with the following curious particulars connected with the occult powers possessed by the lower classes in busy Lancashire, where, as in the "Castle of Indolence,"

> "One great amusement of *their* household was,
> In a huge crystal magic globe to spy."

Mr. P—— was born in Manchester, of parents in humble circumstances, and in Manchester and its neighbourhood his childhood and youth were spent. The first thing which awoke his curiosity regarding crystal-seeing occurred when he was about seven or eight years old. One of their neighbours went to enquire after the well-being of her son, from a seeress in Copper Street: the young man enquired after, was a soldier, and stationed at a distant place. The seeress said, that she in her crystal beheld the young man standing in a line of soldiers. Upon this she handed the crystal to the enquiring mother, who, greatly astonished, also quite clearly perceived her son, and

observed that he came forth from the line and stood in front, apparently as if to observe her. The mother's surprise was naturally great, and upon subsequent enquiry from the young soldier, it appeared that he had at that particular moment acted precisely as witnessed in the crystal. This circumstance was much talked about amongst the neighbours, and was frequently referred to by Mr. P——'s mother.

A man named Clegg, who was well known as a Methodist preacher, travelled as a canvasser for a clockmaker; indeed, both he and Mr. P——'s father travelled for the same tradesmen. Thus the two wives, Mrs. Clegg and Mrs. P——, were acquainted, and often met. Next door to Clegg's wife lived a woman who possessed the gift of crystal-seeing; she and Mrs. Clegg were upon terms of intimacy. One day the seeress said, "Let us see what your husband is doing!" She then looked into her crystal, and described "a road and a gate near a bridge, and the whole landscape, also Clegg standing beside the gate." All of which trifling details proved upon subsequent enquiry from Clegg to have been entirely correct, and filled the minds of these simple people with great wonder. Clegg distinctly remembered having stood beside this gate, which was close to a canal bridge at Staleybridge. This circumstance was also much talked about.

In after years, when Mr. P——, grown into a young man, was master of a large national school at D——, near to Manchester, he discovered that the sexton there, and his son, were crystal-seers. Gradually Mr. P—— convinced the sexton of his interest in his occult gift, but not without considerable difficulty, since it was a hard matter to persuade him that any *schoolmaster* could possibly believe in the magical powers of a crystal! One day, however, in all secrecy and solemnity, Mr. P. was summoned by the sexton up into the ringing-room, where he was presented with a crystal, as a gift, and with a small book, as a loan. The book contained the names of the spirits presiding over the different days of the week and influencing the crystal—as, for instance, Mercury over Wednesday, Venus over Friday, &c. Upon this occasion, the sexton exhibited none of his seership, but Mr. P—— himself speedily developing the gift, the two subsequently were accustomed to make use of the crystal together; the sexton "working the crystal"—as it was technically called—that is to say, calling upon the presiding spirit of the day according to the prescribed formula, and directing the class of vision to be sought for in the crystal, whilst Mr. P—— would be passive, gaze into the crystal in as abstracted a condition of mind as possible, and relate what passed before him—one, in fact, being the mesmerizer and the other the mesmeree. This mode of "working" the crystal

appears to be general throughout Lancashire, and Mr. P—— observed that he could always see more clearly in the crystal when under the control of a powerful "worker" than if he exercised his seership alone. He, in his turn, possessed the power of "working" the crystal for other seers. Mr. P—— observed with regard to his own gift as a seer, that it had never been developed to its fullest extent; that his visions remained always more or less dim or uncertain, but that during the series of years in which he was accustomed to use his crystal frequently, the crystal appeared constantly full of visions, in fact was never free from them. The "crystals" used in Lancashire are made of glass, about the size of a hen's egg, convenient in size and form for holding in the palm of the hand. The usual mode of using the "crystal" is to hold it between the thumb and finger very near to one eye, and look through it, with that eye, whilst the other one is shut. The objects present themselves almost immediately in the glass egg, if the person using it be a seer. Mr. P—— bought a second "crystal," at a shop in Manchester, out of a large basket nearly filled with similar glass eggs. These "crystals" are frequently exhibited for sale in Manchester in quantities, a proof that there must be a large demand for this magical commodity.

Mr. P—— remarked, that frequent as were his *séances* with his friend the sexton, their manifestations never rose above the plane of earthly clairvoyance. It is a very common pastime during the long winter nights for those who possess the gift of "seeing" to select certain of their absent friends, whom for the amusement of themselves and others present, they will watch—frequently for hours together—and many is the joke, and hearty the laughter on the morrow, when the seers and their unsuspicious acquaintance meet, and they are told what they were doing and where they were the night before. As a rule, however, the gift of seership is kept a secret from the uninitiated, or at all events amongst the people themselves, on account of the great fear in which they stand of the "police." When a person joins the fraternity of seers then he first discovers how wide-spread is the gift, and how great the multitude of those who "peep and mutter." There are numerous professional seers and seeresses, and these modern "Lancashire witches" and wizards are most frequently consulted by the wealthy classes. Mr. P—— believes that the crystal-seers in Lancashire may be counted by many hundreds. Years ago, in Stockport alone, he knew of three hundred. Nor does Mr. P—— incline to believe that this gift is peculiar to Lancashire alone; he imagines on the contrary that it will be found spread more or less throughout England.

The sexton took Mr. P—— to see a seeress named Martha,

who resided in the neighbourhood, the object being that Mr. P—— should make the acquaintance of this woman. She was an extraordinarily good seeress, and had a son of eleven or twelve, who worked in a brick-field, and was as good a seer as his mother. Mr. P—— used occasionally to visit this woman; she was a good-natured woman, ordinarily good looking, and very ignorant. Occasionally she would not be able to see anything reliable through her crystal; the crystal, to use her expression, being "full of evil." Evil conduct, drunkenness, or debauchery of any kind always brought about this condition of the crystal, and not unfrequently Mr. P—— has been asked through prayer to bring the crystal into an "orderly" condition. The signs of the evil influence hanging over the crystal were numerous and easily recognized. This woman, as well as others gifted like herself, would foretell the future events in a person's life if required, and could read characters with remarkable accuracy, frequently saying that such and such a person was evil or good; and also could distinguish disease. It occasionally happened that when requested to "look into the future," she and others would decline to tell what they saw, probably having beheld some pain or evil foreshadowed, which they could not bring themselves, or possibly were not permitted to reveal. Time connected with the fulfilment of the visions seems to have been indicated by the appearance of a moon or moons in the crystal. Various other signs of a similar character are understood by the seers. As a rule the visions beheld by this seeress, Martha, as well as by the whole Lancashire guild of seers, appear to possess but little symbolism, and simply to treat of

> Familiar matter of to-day;
> Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
> That has been and may be again.

Mr. P—— mentioned that Martha described to him his present place of residence in G——shire, years before he had ever seen it, together with various other details, all of which, in course of years, gradually developed themselves into external actual occurrences.

Once Mr. P—— took a local preacher amongst the Wesleyans, who had greatly scoffed at his belief in crystal-seeing, to witness the power of this woman. The preacher had always declared that if once he came and talked with his friend, that he should "set him all right, and upset all such foolish fancies." They together visited Martha. Upon this occasion, it happened that it was Martha's son, the lad who worked in a neighbouring brick field, who acted as seer. Being only just returned from his work, and tired, he was at first disinclined to exercise his gift; after some persuasion, however, he consented to do so. The local

preacher (whom we will call Mr. L——) asked for a description of the place where he himself worked at his trade. This place was a curious one, with a good deal of unusual and intricate detail about it; and in it lately had occurred a robbery, regarding which he was at that time considerably troubled. To his surprise, the most accurate description of the place was given, even to its steps up and steps down, and of the wooden shed outside; also, the way was described by which the robbery had been effected. L——'s astonishment was great. He next proceeded to enquire whether the boy could see a little son of his, who was at a grammar school far removed from that neighbourhood, giving no clue as to his son's appearance or whereabouts, any more than he had done in the matter of the workshop. The bricklayer's lad had scarcely looked into the crystal before he exclaimed, as if highly amused, "Ay, by gum! what a queer cap he has got on!" This referred to the square collegiate caps worn by the boys at this grammar school. L—— was greatly impressed by this recognition of the cap, and returned home with Mr. P——, fully convinced that "there was something in crystal-seeing." He talked everywhere about his experience; indeed, he made the acquaintance of a seeress in his own neighbourhood, who, exhibiting further wonders, fully completed his conversion.

Years afterwards, when the "boy in the square cap" was grown into a youth and went to college, he also, interested in "crystals" like his father, borrowed one from Mr. P—— and took it with him to Cambridge. There one day he put it into the hand of the daughter of his bed-maker, who when she looked into it, instantly proved to be a seeress, and to her own surprise and that of the young man himself, described with great accuracy the place from whence the crystal had been brought.

Mr. P—— also lent one of his two crystals to two school-master brothers, who taking it home with them directly discovered that the wife of one of them was possessed of the gift of seeing.

At D——, the scripture-reader heard of Mr. P——'s new-found knowledge, and stood out against such "superstitious folly;" nevertheless he was willing to go with Mr. P—— to witness the powers of the seeress Martha. He made numerous enquiries concerning the incumbent, who had been away from his charge for a considerable time. The scripture-reader was in constant communication with the absent clergyman, but his intention in making these enquiries was to test the seeress's power. She described the internal complaint from which the incumbent was suffering, the place where he was residing, the house, and various curious details connected with it and the neighbourhood—all entirely unknown to her. There was no mistake, no blunder, nothing that the scripture-reader could

controvert, but no deep impression was made upon him. A sceptic he went, and a sceptic he returned.

By-and-bye the infant-school mistress became infected with Mr. P——'s belief in crystal-seeing, and wrote concerning it to a sister who lived in the north of Yorkshire, some seventy or eighty miles away. The sister was a most positive sceptic, and disbelieved the whole matter, was in fact disgusted by it. The sister out of Yorkshire having come to D——, it was arranged that a party including both sisters should visit Martha without giving her any previous notice. Having arrived at the house of the seeress, the party arranged themselves around the table and it was agreed that the sceptical sister should take the initiative and ask all questions. Forthwith she proceeded to make enquiries from Martha concerning her home in Yorkshire, as to how it was situated, how many windows there were in the house, what was the shape of the garden, &c., &c. All the answers being remarkably correct, the seeress next described with careful minuteness a somewhat singular pony-carriage, but one particular she declared that she could *not* describe; this was the exact colour of the horse. It proved that neither could the Yorkshire lady herself describe the colour of this animal; she said that it was a curious "mottle" for which she knew no name. Nevertheless no impression whatever was made by Martha's seership upon the sceptical sister. As in the former case of the scripture-reader, a sceptic she had gone thither and a sceptic she returned.

Such are the chief facts related to us by Mr. P——, who interspersed amidst his crystal-seeing reminiscences, certain curious experiences of hauntings and knockings in Lancashire, to which we may possibly refer on a future occasion. Our friend, Mrs. O——, confirmed Mr. P——'s statement by her own recollections of Manchester life. At the time Mrs. O—— resided with one of her brothers in Manchester, she, like most well-educated persons of the nineteenth century, entertained the profoundest contempt for the so-called supernatural, and paid, therefore, but little heed to various curious stories which floated around her. Since her residence in Manchester having become somewhat less respectably sceptical, she has regretted her inattention to these tales, and especially being only able to recall the outlines of the following little history.

Alice G——, a young woman who was occasionally employed as assistant in washing in the house of Mrs. O——'s brother, told a servant there that she had been to consult "a woman who looked into crystal," and that, amongst other things, she had seen, and described to her the young man whom in course of time she was destined to marry. That subsequently she went

with a friend to Liverpool by an excursion train, and that whilst walking with her upon the sands, they encountered, with another young man, the identical predestined lover beheld in the crystal; that, as in the crystal, his back was at first turned towards her, but that instantly, and before he turned round, she had recognized him, and that he was a sailor as had been described to her. It appears that the two young men entered into conversation with the two girls, and invited them to take a sail with them in a boat, which invitation they accepted. An acquaintance thus sprang up, which ended in Alice G—— engaging herself to marry the young sailor. Mrs. O—— knew Alice well, had heard of this vision in the first instance, and of her subsequent engagement, but leaving Manchester, had not heard whether the marriage had been accomplished. The last incident of which she recollected hearing in this humble romance, was, that Alice had again been to consult the seeress. She had heard nothing for a considerable time from her lover, and was beginning to fear that he was either dead or had deserted her. The seeress after consulting her crystal, assured her that she had seen him; that he was both alive and true to her; that he was across the seas in a curious country, which Alice thought must be China; that he had written repeatedly to her, but that his letters had been kept back by his sister, who lived in Liverpool, and desired to break off the engagement, as she considered Alice much "beneath" her brother.

This half-remembered fragmentary story is at least so far worth recording here, as it confirms Mr. P——'s account of the prevalence of modern "Lancashire Witches."

A Peasant Woman amongst the Cevennes. — M. de Caladon, of Aulas, a man of cultivated mind, speaks thus of one of the Cevennois preachers, a female servant, named Jeanne. "She was a poor, silly peasant, aged about forty years, assuredly the most simple and ignorant creature known in our mountains. When I heard that she was preaching, and preaching wonderfully, I could not believe a word of it; it never entered my head that she could have the boldness to speak in a company. Yet I have several times witnessed her acquit herself miraculously. When the heavenly intelligence made her speak, she—this ass of Balaam had truly a golden mouth. Never did orator make himself heard as she did; and never audience more attentive, or more affected than those who listened to her. It was a torrent of eloquence; it was a prodigy; and what I say is no exaggeration—she became all at once a totally new creature, and was transformed into a great preacher."

A CURIOUS NARRATIVE.

THE *Cork Constitution* of August 28th, has a communication to the editor signed "JS. Colthurst," enclosing a letter, which he says "on Saturday last I received from a lady of fortune and position in England. This contains a curious narrative," &c. This narrative is published in full by the editor. We give it slightly abridged, but in the narrator's own language:—

My narrative of well authenticated facts begins in the midst of that very cold winter of 1854—when quadrille parties were skating in the London Parks, and the Serpentine had the honour of Royal presence, and when the combined armies in the Crimea were suffering from the severities of freezing, that I visited the home of a family I had been acquainted with nearly 30 years. This family (consisting of Mr. and Mrs.——, their son, daughter and niece,) had been eminent for spiritual gifts from their earliest infancy—vision—interpretation of vision—prophetic warning—spiritual sight and spiritual teachings in various ways upon national events as well as upon common occurrences for daily advice.

The lady soon learned that the family were visited with some of the phenomena now of such frequent occurrence. She was told, "Oh, we have the table-tipping and rapping all about the place—on the floors, on the walls, on the window glass. Oh, we have so much to tell you." Continuing her narrative, the lady says:—

I stepped quickly in, on my left hand was a back parlour, where stood a round table, covered with tea-things, and all the essentials of bread and butter, plates, &c., &c. The chairs were around, as they were left when all had risen to greet me. The cups, filled to the brim, steaming away, milk-pot full of milk. As I went in, up sprang this table, bowing itself about most gracefully, the cups steaming and rocking, while amidst a roar of laughter, I sprang forward involuntarily to catch hold of the milk-pot, being sure the milk and all the rest would be flowing about the floor. I seized the milk-pot, while Mrs.—— cried out as well as she could for laughing, "Never mind, nothing will be spilt or hurt, let the spirits do as they will;" and certainly it was a splendid performance—for there stood the table off the floor, rocking about just as the joy of my coming was causing it to do, and this joyous mode of expression was cheerful in the extreme. . . . . .

In a few days I went again in company with Mr.——, who has since left us for the spirit-world, and who has lately given us a valuable communication of his experience there. We met a party of literary men, among them was the late Mr. Smith of the *Family Herald*, and some very interesting powers were shown. . . . . The evening passed away and all was cheerful and we parted with a promise that I would go again soon. I did so—but I saw before I knocked at the door that death had been there. The house was closed, I felt sad, and said as the door opened "Oh, I see how it is." "No, you don't." "But —— is gone." "Yes, but he soon came back again; come in and you'll see." On going upstairs I was greeted by an old square table, which was covered with flower pots, some with plants and many empty, and some broken and all lying about in a pell-mell state. This low old table took a leap, threw itself about and rattling all the rubbish together, making buoyant attitudes, shaking the pots and rattling them all enough to smash them to atoms, and yet none of them broke or fell off though these boisterous tossings continued some time. It was impossible to help astonishment and laughter although we were all sad.

"Who is doing this? I asked; Mrs.—— said "Oh, it is ——, he is so happy, and he is come back to tell us so—he is so glad to see you are come—he came back a few hours after his body died, and we were all sorrowing for him, but we are now so glad we don't seem to know what to do for gladness.

Conversation was then carried on by questions; and the answers, purporting to be given by ——, were by rappings and jumps, or knocks on the table. . . . . But now the day for the interment had come, Mr. —— kindly went with me, and it was twelve o'clock before we reached the house. The family were waiting for us. They said they could not do anything until we came, but that they had been spiritually told all would be right. There certainly was much to do, yet all went well. At last the time for the undertakers came. I then asked the spirit of Mr. —— if we could do any more for the body than we had done. We were made to understand that he did not care a jot what we did, that he had left his body and he cared nothing at all about it. We remonstrated, and told him that he had been talking with us, and that he saw our wishes to do all we could out of respect to his memory; but he became quite violent, and declared he cared nothing about what we were doing for his body; he told us it was most delightful to leave the body, and if that was what was called death he should like to die many times, and he knew he should die many times, for he had many changes to pass through, and each was a death to the last. I then asked him if he would go with us to the funeral. "No," and again, violently, "No." He would not go.

So here it ended, and the funeral party went, and we returned, and all went well until—while we were taking tea—a woman came rushing in and sat down in a very excited state. This was ——'s eldest daughter of his first marriage. The table, with the flowerpots, began dancing about, and there was a general clatter, while she said that her father had been to her house, and had walked all through the streets with her. (This woman had, for years, habitually seen spirits), and so it was made clear that ——'s intention was to visit his daughter, and to bring her to us while we went to the graveyard.

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS IN AMERICA.

THE Spiritualists of America are greatly given to the assembling of themselves together. They have their periodical lectures, meetings, conferences, and State and National Conventions. Their Third Annual Convention has been just held. A report of it has appeared in several successive numbers of the *Banner of Light*. This Convention seems to have been specially and honourably distinguished by attention to the subject of Education. Not only has it taken steps for the promotion of Children's Progressive Lyceums throughout the country, but its Committee on Education recommend, "That the National Convention of Spiritualists of these United States found and endow a National Spiritual College, where a true education in the arts and sciences, and the most complete and symmetrical development of body and mind be the objects sought." That is a grand idea. We hope it may be carried out to the full with all the success that it deserves.

P. B. Randolph, who was over in this country two or three years ago, and whose trance-discourses rank with the best, is now the recognized leader of the movement for the establishment of schools for the children of the freedmen of his adopted State of Louisiana, and especially for the establishment among them of a normal school for teachers. He has had a long interview with President Johnson, who has given his countenance

and subscribed liberally for the promotion of this object; as have also General Grant, General Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau, and several of the most distinguished American statesmen. This plan, too, met with the hearty support of the Convention.

The same journal contains a report of the "First Great Spiritualist Camp Meeting at Pierpont Grove, Mass." An interesting feature of this meeting is thus reported:—

M. Joslyn of Boston, a totally blind boy, still in his teens, with a fine spiritual look in his countenance, was next introduced. He said in substance, "I cannot see you, but I feel you; and I see angels all around me. When no other hand guides me, then they guide and protect me, and I know I can trust them always. They have never failed me in the hour of need. When all seems lone and dark around, then their light dawns on my spiritual vision, and their dear companionship is near me. I feel their warm love flowing into my soul, and I cannot help loving you all. I *know* Spiritualism is true. I often see beloved ones shining around in the light of heaven; because they live, I know we shall live for ever. Once I only *believed*, now I *know*, and this knowledge is the richest boon of my life. Spiritualism is my meat and drink; it is my theme wherever I go. I love to dwell on that beautiful spirit-land, where all shall see eye to eye, and where there shall be no blindness—no night nor darkness, no clouds nor storms, and where loved ones wait to greet us home, amid songs of everlasting joy and never withering flowers. We have everything to encourage us, with this spiritual gospel as our faith, our hope, our knowledge. No matter how hard our lot; no matter what our work may be; we know all things work together for our good. Our hearts overflow with love, and if we are true to our faith, we shall have no condemnation for anybody; we shall be careful what we feel, think and say; we shall not speak unkindly of the church. Let us live down all that is said against us, and not return evil for evil. Forgive, though it be seventy times seven, as Jesus did. Let the right feeling go out from our hearts, not only now at this meeting, but at all times. We must do something more than talk and profess; we must live aright."

The Rev. U. Clark, referring to his mother who had been in the spirit-world thirty years, concluded a speech as follows:—

Through all the labours, sufferings, slanders, poverty and woe of long weary years of wandering as pioneer evangelist, I have been sustained, as I am still, by the love of that angel mother shining down through every night and storm. No matter what our lot or labour may be, only give us this celestial gospel, and in our inmost souls we can sing songs of hope and joy like the sea bird, which sings loudest and sweetest amid wildest storms and deepest thunders. On the shores of the Adriatic Sea, the wives of the fishermen go down at twilight, and sit and sing and listen, till at last they hear their songs echoed back by their husbands across the vast stretch of intervening waves. So amid life's intervals, we may sit and listen, till we hear sweet voices coming back from the dear departed, and bidding us to a banquet of peace and love which all this wide world can never know. Do you remember the familiar story of the fisherman father, whose little boy was placed upon a high rock by the side of the ocean, in order that he might call out to his father over the waves, in case the father became enveloped in fog or storm? "Steer straight to me, this way, father," was the cry of the boy, and the father, hearing, landed in safety. The little boy died—the father was disconsolate, till at last from out the spheres he heard the voice of his angel boy, still exclaiming, "This way, father." And from that hour the father was guided by the celestials. O, amid life's ordeals, its nights, its storms, its bounding billows, let us hear voices from beyond, and these frail barks of our being shall ride triumphantly over every tempestuous sea, and land us in safety, with an angel welcome,

On that silent shore,
Where billows never break nor tempests roar.

Correspondence.

INVOLUNTARY DRAWING AND WRITING.

To the Editor of the Spiritual Magazine.

Weston-super-Mare, Sept. 24, 1866.

SIR,—The contents of this in the main, Mr. B—— may have told you of, and if so you will have a double narrative, if not, the account may have a special interest for you.

A medical man here was called in a few months back to two lady visitors of the place, distantly related to the Beaufort family, and who had imbibed the opinions of the Plymouth Brethren. A talk about the Davenports arising, the subject veered to the more intimate spiritual manifestations of spirit writing and drawing. They were both, as might have been expected, entirely incredulous; but as they were willing to read Mr. W. M. Wilkinson's book on *Spirit Drawings*, the medical attendant lent it to them, and one or two conversations ensued in which the ladies both manifested the same disbelief. Shortly after, the one who was his patient being much better, they left; but a few weeks after, about a fortnight back, returned and called on the doctor, when the lady who had been his patient told him that she had a series of "involuntary drawings" which had been finished in the interim. She had no serious opinions on the matter, but thought she would let the thing have its chance; and when the first (which was executed with great rapidity, and much to her astonishment) was finished, the pencil dropped from her hand, and she was some time before she could recover her breath from fear and wonder. The pencil with her is held perpendicularly, and when a drawing is finished the pencil drops from her hand as involuntarily as it works till then. In general the work is very rapid, and when it is slow she makes an effort and gets rid of the pencil; but on recommencing, say, the next day, the work is invariably taken up from the same point. The curious fact is, she had as she says no wish to be developed as a medium, does not now even believe it to be spiritual, but only "involuntary;" and attaches no meaning to the drawings, and, indeed, knows nothing about it but the bare fact. The first drawing, as described to me, was a sky or heaven of pendulous flowers of the loveliest forms, in the centre of which was a ship with a distinct cross on the stern; beneath was a rock, on the scarp of which stood a female angel looking upwards, and with something in its hands, but what, I

am told was indistinct; the figure and hands being further turned than the face.

In the series of 30 drawings the figures are very numerous, in fact, in some of them multitudinous; but all have the Persian veil dropping from the upper lip over the mouth and chin. One drawing represents the Pope with his tiara falling into three distinct parts and off his head, and a crowned figure in the left above pointing to the right. The lady said to her sister, "There must be something to which that figure is pointing," and instantly her hand was carried to the right of the paper, and a comet was drawn.

In the same way she has written, but backwards, so that the paper had to be held to the light to read it reversely, or from the top to the bottom of the page, and then so very minutely that she could not read it without strong glasses. Now, the curious part of the affair is that neither the lady herself nor her sister have any opinions about the matter, or any idea what these drawings mean, and consequently they have no wishes or predilections on the subject; they are merely indifferent, and present no animus of repugnance to these manifestations. This is briefly the tale as I heard it from their medical friend.

Yours very truly,

W. E.

THE DAVENPORTS ON THE CONTINENT.

As many of our readers may like to know what the Davenports are now doing, and the reception they are meeting on the Continent, we subjoin a short note received from Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld on the subject:—

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

Sir,—The Antwerp paper, *Koophandel*, September 5th, tells us, the hall in the Harmony yesterday again was crowded. The first representation had already spread the renown of the brothers Davenport and Mr. Fay in our town, and everywhere the marvellous facts exhibited through their mediumship are discussed.

In the last *séance* they held here the committee invited a gentleman from the audience to assist them on the platform. This gentleman caught hold of one of the hands which had appeared in the opening, and was seen by all to grasp it firmly. When the brothers were released he declared loudly to the audience that he had greased his hand with a blackening stuff of a very adhesive nature, so that he and all felt confident that the hand he grasped would shew the marks. He examined closely the hands of the mediums, but not the slightest trace of the greasy matter, to his great wonder, could be discovered. Similar experiments with these mediums have often been tried, and with the same result.

Yours truly,

Antwerp, Sept. 12, 1866. C. D. HOLMFELD.

Mr. Robert Cooper also has kindly forwarded us the following letter from Ira E. Davenport:—

La Haye, Oct. 7, 1866.

Friend Cooper,—In my last letter I promised to write you again shortly. We returned here yesterday from Rotterdam, where we gave three public *séances* to very large and highly respectable audiences. The people who came to see us were the first people of the city. The admission was four and a half francs. Previous to going to Rotterdam we gave two *séances* in this place, which is the Brighton of Holland. Here, too, the people who came were all of the first society, and were highly pleased with the manifestations—so much so, that we have been invited through the newspapers of the town to return and give more *séances*, as many persons wish to see us who could not avail themselves of the previous opportunity. So, on the whole, we have concluded to repeat our *séances* here for two nights more.

About a week since we had a paper sent to us, containing an announcement of some sleight-of-hand man; that he was in possession of our "secret," and intended to give public explanations and illustrations. I immediately wrote a reply, warning the public to be careful in paying their money to this man until he had proved himself worthy of their patronage, by accepting a challenge to meet us for five thousand florins a side, and making good his pretensions. We have heard nothing from the gentleman since.

On the whole, we are very well satisfied with our experience in Holland so far. The probability is, that we shall stay in this country two months yet.

Yours truly,

I. E. DAVENPORT.

FROM EMMA HARDINGE.

Our readers, and her many friends in this country, will be glad to learn that (after a very rough passage) Emma Hardinge safely reached New York, where she was cordially received, and is now lecturing to large audiences. From a private letter sent by her we make the following extract relating to the late Rev. John Pierpont, of whom we gave a slight obituary notice in our last number:—

Last week died brave old John Pierpont, at the age of 83. He was one of America's sweetest poets. An Unitarian minister, he was expelled from his Church for advocating fearlessly the cause of temperance and abolition. As a lecturer in both these causes, he was indefatigable and most eloquent. When the war broke out, the brave old patriot, at 77, tendered his services as chaplain to the army, marched with the youngest, and bore the heat and burden of the day. He became in the last years of his life a warm Spiritualist, and advocated with his usual energy and fearless truth this most unpopular cause. Last week he presided over a Spiritualists' convention of ten thousand people. At its close he went home, fell asleep calmly at night, and awoke in eternity: his arms meekly crossed, and a smile on the brave old soldier's face—good old sentinel dying at his post of duty! Shall we live such lives, or at 83 years hope thus to pass away? I fear not. Next Friday we hold a public commemoration in his honoured memory; the speakers are to be his friends and cotemporaries, Ralph Woddo Emerson, Bryant the poet, Horace Greely, and his last but not least admiring friend and fellow-labourer, Emma Hardinge. Truly, I believe his spirit will be in the midst of us.