

THE
Spiritual Magazine.

APRIL, 1868.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. THOMAS SHORTER.

ON Tuesday evening, February 11th, a meeting was held at the Assembly Rooms, Harley Street, Cavendish Square, for the purpose of presenting Mr. Thomas Shorter with a testimonial, in acknowledgment of the services he has rendered to the cause of Spiritualism. The rooms were well filled, many of those most prominent in the ranks of Spiritualism being present; and the meeting was most cordial and enthusiastic. The speeches were interspersed with vocal and instrumental music, and readings by Mr. D. D. HOME, which added much to the enjoyment of the evening. Robert Cooper, Esq., was in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN said:—We have met to do honour to one who has rendered great service to the cause we all have at heart. It would have afforded me much pleasure to see the gentleman in the position of Chairman whom the committee had invited to occupy it—I allude to Mr. William Howitt; but, unfortunately, it is not our privilege to meet him here this evening. I will now request the secretary, Mr. William Tebb, to lay before you any statement he may have to make.

Mr. TEBB.—I will first of all read a circular which sets forth the circumstances under which this testimonial to our esteemed friend, Mr. Shorter, originated, and which is as follows:—

The services of Mr. Shorter in the cause of Spiritualism are familiar to all who embrace this faith as the great dispensation of the present day. From the earliest establishment of Spiritual Journalism in England, Mr. Shorter has devoted all his energies to advance the knowledge of it by his pen. In the *Yorkshire* and *British Spiritual Telegraphs*; in the *Spiritual Magazine*, and in the *Spiritual Times*, his zealous and able exertions have been constant and prolific. Besides his contributions and personal assistance in the production of these journals, he has published separate works on the subject of the most solid ability and permanent value. His *Confessions of a Truth-Seeker* is a treasury of

facts and arguments on this most vital of topics; and his late elaborate work, *The Two Worlds*, is a compendium of the history of Spiritualism second to nothing which has yet been produced in this department, and which, therefore, should be in the hands of every true Spiritualist.

These services have not only been given wholly gratuitously, but the publication of his books has been to him a pecuniary loss.

In the midst of these most valuable labours in our grand cause, and unquestionably in no small degree in consequence of them, a calamity of the most grievous kind has fallen upon him—the nearly total, and, it is feared, the ultimately total loss of his sight. This deep trial has compelled him to resign the situation which he had held for upwards of twelve years, and paralysed his chief means of support, as well as that genial exercise of his faculties which, to a literary man, is the source of life's real happiness.

Under these circumstances, the friends of Mr. Shorter, or, in other words, the friends of Spiritualism, feel it a sacred duty to endeavour to raise such a fund as shall, by judicious investment, remedy in some degree the failure of his ordinary resources—a failure which adds to the severity of the affliction by its occurrence in the prime of life.

I am happy to be able to announce that this appeal has met with a generous response; the amount of the subscriptions will be shortly stated to you by the Chairman. It has been my privilege to count Mr. Shorter amongst my personal friends for some years. I esteem him not more for the great fidelity which he has exercised in this cause than I do for his excellent qualities of head and heart as a man.

Some twelve or thirteen years ago, Mr. Shorter became deeply interested in the reported facts of spirit manifestation and communion, and which had begun to attract some degree of notice in this country. Some of these facts had been brought under his personal notice by a member of our committee, Dr. Dixon, and that gentleman has assured me how thorough and complete were his investigations, sparing no labour and refusing no evidence that would tend to throw light upon the subject. At length, after satisfying himself of the facts, and carefully considering every explanation and hypothesis that had been offered to account for them by mundane agencies, and finding these utterly inadequate to meet all the proved facts of the case, he became convinced by the evidence of the facts themselves of the great truth which we now call Spiritualism—that the spirits of the departed can and do, under certain recognized conditions, communicate with us—that the future life is not a theory or a hope only, but a demonstrated reality; and to the religious or philosophic mind I do not think there could be any experience more interesting, or any conviction more important than this.

With what disposition our friend accepted this truth, may be judged from an extract, which, with your permission, I will read from the first article he ever wrote on the subject of Spiritualism. It appeared in the second volume of the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*, November, 1856, and is as follows:—

I do not know that I can relate any phenomena but such as the majority of your readers are probably already acquainted with, and I know that there are many whose experience, could they be induced to relate it, would be found more valuable and interesting ; but, believing that no man has a right to regard truth as his own private property, to be locked up in his strong box for his exclusive use, and then buried with him in the earth, but that it is a trust to be faithfully administered, and for which the holder will be held to strict account, I cast my mite into the treasury, and trust that those who are richer will be impressed to go and do likewise.

How faithfully Mr. Shorter has fulfilled this high trust, and acted up to this high conviction of duty is known to many of you. He has advocated Spiritualism wherever and whenever an opportunity has been offered, but especially by his pen in the pages of the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*, and afterwards in the pages of the *British Spiritual Telegraph*, and as joint editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* from the year of its commencement, in 1860, to the present time. The book I hold in my hand is a work by him, entitled *Confessions of a Truth-Seeker*. It is a narrative of his experiences and investigations, and its pages will shew how carefully and minutely the subject has been inquired into by him, and I do not think any investigator of the spiritual phenomena could have a better work put into his hands. This more recent and elaborate work, entitled "*The Two Worlds, the Natural and the Spiritual* ; shews that Spiritualism, which we call modern, is really coeval with the human race, that it belongs exclusively to no sect or persuasion, and is not a new religion, but a primal truth that lies at the foundation of all religions. The book abounds with curious and interesting ancient and modern testimonies illustrative of this fact, giving evidence of extensive reading and research ; and I am only stating the opinion which I believe generally prevails, and one which I have heard frequently expressed, when I say that it is one of the most valuable contributions to spiritualistic literature yet made.

At the time I speak of, when our friend first began to promulgate his opinions, it required no small amount of moral courage to advocate a subject so unpopular ; some of you will recollect what sort of reception Spiritualism met with at the hands of the public. By the press it was generally ridiculed, and every literary embryo could write an *exposé* of the phenomena ; by the scientific world it was treated, as you know, with derision ; and by the religious world (from whom certainly we might have anticipated better treatment, seeing that the pages of the Bible teem with accounts of spiritual manifestations), it was ascribed to Satanic power ; and not only so, but it was falsely said that our lunatic asylums were filled with the victims of this delusion. Notwithstanding this opposition, and I have no doubt to some extent because of it, Spiritualism has made

great progress during the last twelve years ; for

Truth struck to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers ;
But error, wounded, writhes with pain,
And dies amidst her worshippers.

I will not pretend to say, for I do not know, having no authentic date to guide me, how many Spiritualists there are in Great Britain ; but the number must be considerable, and is rapidly increasing. I am informed that there are in the county of York alone 150 circles ; and the last number of the *Spiritual Magazine* states that in the town of Wolverhampton, where a short time ago there was but one Spiritualist, there is now a society numbering about seventy. There are spiritual journals in Paris, Naples, Bordeaux, Turin, Milan, Palermo, and Geneva, and I believe in Holland. The phenomena of spirit-manifestation have appeared in almost every civilized and semi-civilized country on the face of the earth ; but the greatest triumph of Spiritualism has been in the United States of America. I speak from personal observation, having been in every one of the Northern and in many of the Southern States, and I may say that there is scarcely a village of any considerable size where there are not regular meetings held Sunday after Sunday for the elucidation of the philosophy of Spiritualism ; and I speak also from observation when I say that I know of many church edifices built and originally used by the Baptist, Methodist, Universalist, Calvinist, and other denominations, which have been purchased by Spiritualists, and are devoted to their purposes ; this is particularly true of the Eastern or New England States, where the highest education and culture prevails. The lowest estimate I have seen of the present number of Spiritualists in the United States—that of Mr. Hepworth Dixon—is three millions, whilst the well-informed opponents of Spiritualism, no less than its advocates, place the number considerably higher.

Amongst Spiritualists here to-night I need scarcely stop to answer the enquiry,—what good has Spiritualism done ? though this is a question that in this age of utilitarianism is often put to believers. It has, like all other truths, enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge, and opened the mind to the reception of other truths ; it has rolled back the stone from before the door of the sepulchre of doubt and unbelief and despair, and has answered the question put by a prophet poet of old—“ If a man die, shall he live again ? ” It has healed the sick ; made the lame to walk ; given consolation to the mourner ; and taken away the fear of death ; for to a true believer in spiritual communion death is no longer the king of terrors, but—

The kind and gentle servant
Who with noiseless hand, unlocks
Life's flower-encircled door to shew us
Those we love.

It is in this work that our friend Mr. Shorter has been engaged, to which he has given the best powers of his mind, and the best years of his life; and he has done it without pecuniary reward; with no recompense, indeed, except that happiness which always springs from a noble work well done. In the close exercise of his faculties, he has been overtaken by a serious affliction; I am afraid to say how serious, but it is known as detachment of the retina, and is I believe rarely curable. I will not, however, dwell upon this painful topic, but hope our friend will derive consolation from the fact of knowing that he has the sympathy of all who have watched his career—of all Spiritualists who have been witness of his great services, and particularly, may I say, of those who are assembled here this evening. And I will say more, that when the history of this great movement is written, and the names of its early advocates and apostles are committed to posterity—of those earnest men and eloquent women who have in an age of hostility to the supernatural sought to establish a diviner creed, to unfold a more hopeful destiny for the human race, and a nobler view of God's providence, there will be no name more worthy to be recorded than that of our friend Mr. Shorter, whom we have assembled to honour this evening.

The CHAIRMAN.—I will not occupy the time of the meeting by expatiating on the merits and services of our friend Mr. Shorter; I cannot, however, forbear to express my own indebtedness to him for bringing conviction to my mind both with regard to the phenomenal facts of Spiritualism, and, more particularly, with regard to the value of those facts. Almost the first book I read on the subject was Mr. Shorter's "Confessions of a Truth-Seeker." I agree with Mr. Tebb that it is one of the best books that can be put into the hands of an enquirer on this subject. I also agree with him that "The Two Worlds" is a most valuable work, and displays profound erudition. Mr. Shorter has recently published a pamphlet called "What is Religion?" which has received the high encomium of the Rev. J. Page Hopps, who says—"There is enough in this little book to set up a whole regiment of divines with nourishing food." Mr. Shorter, in addition to these works, has either as editor or a constant contributor, sometimes both, been associated with various journals and magazines, and chiefly with those devoted to social and political reform, to the promotion of education, and to psychological inquiry; and he has also edited

several works which shew him to possess an extensive knowledge and a tasteful appreciation of English literature.

I will now proceed to the principal part of our business this evening—the presentation of the Testimonial. I have here a sum of about £250. The number of persons who have contributed to this amount are about one hundred and twenty, the amount of their subscriptions varying from £25 to 2s.

The CHAIRMAN then, turning to Mr. Shorter, said:—Mr. Shorter, I have much pleasure in presenting this testimonial to you as a slight acknowledgment of what you have done for our great cause; and with it I tender you the expression of the high estimation in which your services are held, and the best wishes of the contributors, and, I may say, of this whole company. We all pray that you may be long spared to labour in this great cause for the good of our common humanity.

Mr. SHORTER.—It is very rarely, of late years, that I have been accustomed to hear the sound of my own voice above the level of ordinary conversation, or before a greater number of persons than might be assembled in my own parlour; therefore, even under ordinary circumstances, I should feel some hesitation and embarrassment in speaking to an assembly like this; but, were the practice of public speaking ever so familiar and easy to me, I might well, on this occasion, rise to address you with palpitating heart and stammering lips. But I feel somewhat reassured when I ask myself the question—What, after all, could any language, however eloquent, convey more than is expressed in these most sincere and simple words, “Friends, I thank you?” I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your kindness in presiding on this occasion, and for the kind and generous words concerning me that you have uttered. I thank the gentlemen who have formed my committee for the trouble they have taken in this matter, and especially the Secretary, because I know that his onerous labours have been given amid family troubles, the distractions of illness, and the cares of business. I have to thank many who are not here this evening—many whose personal friendship I have not had the privilege of making, many who are living at a distance, some in foreign lands, but who have illustrated the law that material spaces are no impediment to spiritual sympathies—that we are ever nearest those whose spirits are kindred to our own. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your presence here to-night, and I thank all—present or absent—who have contributed to the very substantial evidence of their goodwill which your Chairman has just presented me; and in relation to which, I would here say a few words of personal explanation.

It has been said—said in print—with direct reference to this

testimonial, though I am satisfied in no unkindly spirit, "That while the whole system of pecuniary testimonialism, as the expression of sympathy and honour, in reference to services done in the cause of what is spiritual and divine, is of a very questionable character, it seems most singularly out of place in reference to those who work in the cause of Spiritualism."* Well, paradoxical as it may seem, I entirely concur with the spirit of that remark. I fully endorse what our Chairman has said, that this is a work in which every man should feel it a great privilege to be called upon to labour. I do not say that those whose whole time is given to this work, or who have to give so large a portion of their time to it that they cannot follow any of the ordinary avocations of life, should not be paid for their services: I think they should, and generously, too; but I say that those who are not under this necessity should feel that the work is its own reward. I believe nothing more contributes to individual happiness, to nobleness and elevation of character, than the devotion of a considerable portion of our time to some noble and wholly unselfish work. Such humble service as I could give to the cause of Spiritualism I have felt it both a duty and a privilege to render without thought or expectation or desire of acknowledgment or reward. The hours I have spent in its advocacy and illustration have been amongst the happiest of my life; my work has been its own—a sufficient, an ample reward; and when my friends, at various times, have asked me to allow them to arrange for the presentation to me of a testimonial, I have thankfully declined, reminding them that I did not need it, and that Spiritualists had many urgent claims upon them. When, however, in the midst of these and other labours I was overtaken by an affliction which not only made it impossible that I should continue to follow my employment, but also prevented my seeking or accepting any other; when it was uncertain whether or how long I could maintain a roof over my head, and when the same friends then again pressed this suggestion upon me, and offered their services, I felt that it would be a morbid delicacy and false pride that would longer refuse; and that, under these circumstances, I might freely accept the aid which had been so kindly and freely offered without degradation or the forfeiture of self-respect. You will, I am sure, be glad to learn that other friends—friends mostly of an earlier date—who have known me in connection with other efforts, have, like yourselves, come forward in the most considerate and generous spirit to relieve me from any such apprehension as I have alluded to as among the possible consequences of my affliction; and now

* *The Recipient*, January, 1868.

my only misgiving is, lest any should have been prompted by their generous feelings to tax themselves in my behalf who were not well able to afford it, or to an extent beyond what their means would amply warrant.

The kindly feelings you have manifested towards me is, indeed, a source of great comfort to me, and an encouragement for the future. I, indeed, cannot experience the pleasure that would be afforded me in seeing the faces of those to whom I am now speaking; but I know—I feel the outflow of your generous sympathy and kindly feeling, and I rejoice in the assurance and consciousness of this sympathy, not only on personal grounds, though I should indeed be insensible and cold in heart were I not deeply touched by it, and did I not fully respond to it; but I rejoice in it also on other grounds of a more general character; for, if I were to cast the horoscope of the future of Spiritualism, I should seek its signs not in the rank or wealth of its adherents, not in the size and style of the buildings in which they meet, not by process of counting heads, not in monotonous uniformity of opinion, but in those deep sympathies which underlie all differences, in those feelings which knit heart to heart, and soul to soul in the furtherance of its great principles, and in the strength of which a handful of earnest men may contend successfully against all the banded hosts of ignorance and error.

I know that, however sincere the feeling that prompted it, the generous acknowledgment with which your Chairman has enhanced the value of the gift presented me owes much of its glow and colour to the warmth of personal friendship, and that the expression of feeling of this meeting, so far as it is rendered to me personally, is due to a combination of circumstances rather than to any special merit of my own. There are many who have laboured in this cause with more ability, and, I trust, greater success. I would add my meed of testimony to the great and important services rendered to it by one whom our Chairman has named this evening; who has served it not only by his advocacy, but still more by having thrown into the scale a life-long reputation and a name which has become a household word—honoured and revered wherever the English language is spoken, or English literature is read. I am sure we all feel the obligation we owe to Mr. William Howitt; and whilst there may be sufficient reasons which prevent some from fully following the noble example of open avowal of unpopular convictions which he has set,—considerations involving the interests and feelings of others, and which we are bound to respect; yet, I say that his brave example should shame the pusillanimity of those Nicodemians who shelter themselves behind the shades of night and the mask of anonymity for no better reason than because

they dare not face the banter of their club or the terrible frown of Mrs. Grundy. I feel bound, in this connection, to mention the name of another gentleman, and in his absence I do so the more freely: I refer to my old friend and colleague, Mr. William Martin Wilkinson, but for whom the *Spiritual Magazine* would not have been established or have been continued to the present time, and in whose quiet persistence and strength of character I have always felt we had a reserve of force adequate to any emergency. And if I do not mention others whose names rise to my lips, and some of whom are now with us, it is because I know that there are delicate and sensitive natures that would shrink from any approach to this open and public proclamation of their worth and services. Whilst I cannot lay claim to such services as these have rendered, I may say, I think without egotism, for it is the simple truth, that, at least, I have done what I could. I have endeavoured to be faithful to my highest light; I have given of the best I had, and have spared neither time nor pains in illustration of those principles we hold in common, and which are so dear to us all. I have endeavoured to advocate these in the spirit which I deem most accordant with their nature, and most conducive to their general reception. I have felt that our work was one not of demolition, but of construction. I have sought, and in conjunction with the friends with whom I have acted, I may say *we* have sought, not to assail, and perhaps, however unconsciously, misinterpret the faith of others, but rather to strenuously assert our own; not to dwell upon, and, it may be, to magnify points of difference, but to insist upon the fundamental points of agreement which underlie those differences, and by following them out to their logical conclusion and practical application, to eventually remove them, or, at least, and in the shortest possible time, to reduce them to their lowest terms, and to have them held in such a spirit as that they shall be no bar to union in practical effort to make the world, or some small portion of it, a little better than we find it. In a word, our aim has been not antagonism, but conciliation. We have sought to carry not the sword, but the olive branch; not to blow the trumpet-blast of war and throw down the gage of battle, causing those whom we would win to put on their armour, and let down the drawbridge, and fasten the gates, and take down from the wall spear and shield and battle axe to meet us as enemies; but rather to so approach them that they should welcome us as friends—heralds of those white-winged messengers of the skies who would fain manifest their presence to them, and take up their abode with them, and do them good. We have sought to link knowledge with reverence, freedom of thought

with the sanctities of faith; to cause Spiritualism to be regarded in its true light—not as the shibboleth of a sect, but the expression of a universal truth, the language of our common humanity, the utterance of the deepest instincts of the soul.

And now, putting aside all that may be considered as personal in the proceedings of this evening, I will just say a few words in reference to a question which has suggested itself to my mind, and probably to the minds of many others. The question may be naturally asked—What has been the result of the labours and sacrifices of these past years, as seen in the present position and prospects of Spiritualism in England? I might answer that question in the usual way. I might refer to such facts as those to which allusion has been already made. I might tell you that a dozen years ago, when my investigations into Spiritualism commenced, its believers were very few, and were persons of very humble position. It was difficult to find a circle of investigators in this metropolis. Not a single book on the modern phenomena had been written in this country. It had no representation in the press; and was, in short, little more than an echo from the great Western Continent. Now, although I cannot say it has spread in great waves of progress, as in the United States, yet I can say that there are circles of investigators dotted over this metropolis, and still more thickly studded in the North of England; that Spiritualism has penetrated into all ranks and classes of society—especially the educated and cultivated classes, and has its representatives in all professions—physicians, lawyers, divines, men of science and of letters. But though all this, so far as it goes, may be satisfactory, and, in its own way, a sufficient answer to the question, it is not one on which I care very much to insist. In truth, I think we are all apt to concern ourselves too much about results. I will not say with some, “let us leave results to take care of themselves;” but I think we may safely leave them to a higher wisdom than our own. Let us be faithful to God and to our own souls, and we may rest assured in the faithfulness of God. It is the business of the husbandman to break up the clods, and plough the fields, and sow the seed, and then—

Be gracious, Heaven!

For now, laborious man has done his part.

Doubt not that soft dews, and gentle rain, and genial sunshine will cause the seed to germinate, and bring forth “first the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear;” and that in due time the field will be glorious with the bending harvest of rich, ripe, golden grain.

Eighteen centuries ago occurred one of those terrible catastrophes memorable in history. A fair Italian city, teeming with

life, full of grace and beauty and the adornments of art, was visited with one of those dread convulsions which make the tragedy of nations. The earth shook and rent, the volcano poured forth its fiery lava, and clouds of burning cinders fell over the doomed city. As they hurried to and fro, seeking safety in flight, the clamour of men, the shrieks of women, the screams of children were mingled with the roar as of a hundred thunders, and it seemed as though the last night of the world had come, and the very gods were about to perish. Still descended the remorseless fiery rain, until the housetops were covered by it, and all who had not escaped, perished in fields and gardens and streets, or in their dwellings were immured in a living grave, walled in by fire. In the terrible confusion of that fearful day, the sentinel at the gate looking towards the burning mountain had been forgotten; but it was the duty of the Roman soldier, come what might, to remain at his post until relieved at his guard or discharged from it by his superior in command. And there he remained; the shower of burning ashes falling thick and fast around him till they covered his lips, and Death—the superior in command on that dread day—discharged him from the post he had so nobly filled. That silent mound—that city of the dead, lay unnoticed, forgotten, till, after seventeen centuries, it was again opened to the light of day. There was the city, its shops and its theatres, its temples and palaces, as if their tenants had just left them; and there, too, were the skeletons of those tenants, exhibiting, in many instances, the ruling passion strong in death. There the miser, clutching his bags of gold;—there the reveller at his wine cup;—there the devotee bending before the altar of his god;—there others crouching in cellars for safety; and there—standing erect in a marble niche in the city gate, was found the skeleton of the Roman sentinel, clad in rusty armour, the helmet on his head, the bony fingers closed upon his spear. Brave true soldier, faithful unto death! Oh! many a choice treasure of art, many an antique gem may have been recovered from that buried city, but none to equal in value that pattern of duty nobly done, the priceless pearl of heroic fidelity of that unknown unnamed Roman soldier! It is an example for all time. He has done well, nor Cæsar at the head of victorious legions could have served his country better. Though dead he still speaks to us. He tells us that though we may not all be born to high command, we may all be faithful in our several spheres of duty, however humble these may be. All may earn the commendation—“Well done, good and faithful servant,” if only we are faithful to the talents, few or many, committed to our charge. All may be soldiers in God’s great

army of loyal souls if faithful to our posts of duty, though it be only to keep guard at the city gate:—

God does not need
 Either man's work or his own gifts: who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

We speak of success and failure, and it may be rightly, if we mean only that in this or that particular instance our shafts have hit or missed the mark at which we aimed; but I believe that, in the absolute sense, there is no such thing as failure;—that there is a necessary relation between action and consequence;—that in truth, and in the sight of God, success is always proportionate to desert; though the success may not be of the kind,—may not come in the way or at the time that we expected it. Of this we may feel assured: that no true word is ever spoken, no good deed is ever performed in vain. It may sometimes, to our view, and in moments of discouragement, appear otherwise. We speak, and few come to listen; we write, and few care to read; but are we sure that the visible audience is the only one;—that our thought is read only by mortal eyes? We receive influx from the spirit-world, and where there is influx, shall there not also be efflux? Depend on it nature is a strict accountant, and keeps her books by rigid system of double entry; that for every credit there is a debit posted in her ledger. What mean those burning tides of inspiration which sweep over the soul, not only when the impassioned orator is addressing large assemblies, or the poet pouring forth those breathing—rather *inbreathed* thoughts all recognize as inspiration; but even as we traverse the busy street, or meditate in the quiet field, or in the silence of our solitary chamber;—thoughts and feelings which we feel originate not in ourselves—of which we are the mere theatre? What is it, if it be not this, that we are links connecting the two worlds—that there is a great solidarity of humanity in this world and in all worlds—that we belong to the vast republic of the skies—the great commonwealth of souls? I know indeed, how little—how very little we can do even at the best;—I know how, as we advance in life, our hopes and feelings become chilled by bitter frosts of experience. In youth we start full of high hope, it may be with some band of inexperienced enthusiasts with vague but generous purpose like our own; the world lays all before us to be conquered by our mastering wills, and it seems an easy or at most not an impossible task to build up some fair new moral world which shall realize all our brightest visions; but as years roll on we find by many a disappointing experience how vast the dispro-

portion between our powers and our aims;—we soon make the discovery that the world is a very stupid old world, not particularly anxious to be enlightened; that refuses to be converted, and smiles at our youthful vanity and presumption. And as our great schemes of world-mending after glittering a moment, like bubbles in the sunshine, collapse and vanish into air; there comes the reaction to our high-wrought expectations; and then follows the temptation to ease and self-indulgence. We ask ourselves—why should we labour and struggle to so little purpose, or for a posterity that will not know us? Let us lay our barques by the shore, and in this green island of soft repose forget our cares; we will eat of the lotos root, and bask in the sunshine of song, and dream pleasant fancies and drink and be merry, and let the busy world go its way. Or we are tempted to make the most of the world *for ourselves* after a different fashion; to subside into another class of meaner ambitions and lower aims; and so, yielding to this, it too often happens that the young enthusiast who went forth with such high feelings and earnest purpose, at last declines into an old age of respectability and money-making, of churchwardenship and port wine; and ends his days it may be “greatly lamented” on the tombstone; and, perhaps,—nowhere else. Well, from this temptation a true Spiritualism is our best deliverance, chiefly for this reason: it inspires us with a conviction of the priceless value and dignity of the individual human soul, of man as a spiritual being; it make us realize this as we have never realized it before. It may be to some a commonplace—so commonplace, indeed, that they have almost ceased to prize it; their apprehension of it has become so dulled with its repetition that the words sound in their ears with almost as little meaning, and as little sense of their truth, as they have to those who question or deny that man is a spiritual being. Spiritualism brings this truth home to us with perennial freshness and force; it is a constant presence with us—our daily strength, and the lamp which guides our feet from stumbling in the night. It corrects the tendency to overlook the individual in the crowd, and makes us feel habitually the worth of our brother-man, whatever his condition or lot in life may be.

We are apt sometimes to be overawed with the grandeur and vastness of the universe, but what after all are the shining galaxy of stars that stud the milky way; what are suns and systems of worlds, save as the theatre of intelligent, rational, conscious life? They neither know nor understand. Man measures their orbits, and weighs their density, traces their path through the heavens, calculates their return, and learns the laws which govern them; and thus in comprehending, he transcends them:

Mind, mind alone, (bear witness earth and heaven) !
 The living fountains in itself contains
 Of beauteous and sublime.

And so, I believe that in the sight of God and in the exact scales of the Divine Government, a single human soul outweighs a universe of dust. Thus, then, we may be reassured. Our work is not in vain. Our word goes forth—whither? It is uttered, and soon forgotten; but it perhaps finds—though it may be, unconsciously, a lodgment in some human heart, requiring only some nourishing soil of experience—some favouring air of circumstance to quicken its latent life, and cause the seed sown to bring forth sheaves that can only be fully gathered in the great harvest-field of eternity. And we, ourselves, are not only sowers of the seed, but the field to be cultivated, and in our own souls we reap the harvests of our labours. Let us, then, bate no jot of heart or hope. If we but bring home conviction to a single soul, great indeed is our reward. For my own part, if I have been instrumental in bringing but a single ray of light to one darkened spirit, or lightening the burden of one sorrowing heart; better still, if I have been the means of bringing any soul to Him who is the source of all strength—the fountain of consolation, the joy of the sorrowing, and the rest of the weary; if borne down and staggering under life's heavy burden, it has been led to fall with all its weight of care upon

The great world's altar-stairs
 That slope through darkness up to God;

and in its suffering and need to

Stretch lame hands of Faith, and call
 On Him we feel is Lord of all;

I thank God for so great a privilege, and am well content.

And so, ere at the close of these proceedings we go our several ways, some to bustle and some to meditate, let this to-night be my parting word. Not in the prosecution of a search for wonders, however strange and startling these may be, not even in the gratification of a rational curiosity, however innocent and laudable, will Spiritualism realize in us its perfect work; but only as it strengthens us for the performance of the duties of daily life, as it develops and strengthens the thews and powers of mind and heart, and prepares us for the great Hereafter. Oh! there are times when we need all the strength and consolation it is so well calculated to impart. When we stand by the bed of sickness and see the form wasting before us; or as we stand by the open grave of one we love, and feel that the hand we have clasped in friendship we shall clasp no more, nor hear again the voice on whose gentle accents we have so often hung; that the eyes that have so often looked in ours with tender affection shall light

up for us no more; oh! we feel not merely the necessity of belief and hope, but we require to have the undoubting assurance, that there shall be for us a permanent re-union. We long to have an earnest of that union; to know that all that is best and truest in those we love is around and about us, and as we gaze on the vacant places of our now desolate homes which correspond to the vacant places in our hearts, we stretch out our hands to the unknown whither they have gone, and

Cry to them softly—"Come nearer, come nearer,
And lift up the lap of this dark, and speak clearer;"

and lo! from behind the cloud of sorrow, and from behind the darkness of the eclipse of faith, shines forth the Sun of Immortal Life, and bends the tear into the arch of promise and irradiates it with all the hues of hope: and lo! gentle voices come to us—they move not the currents of the air, but strangely stir the places of our souls, and they say, "We are with you now, we may be with you ever, if only you are worthy." Aye! that is the word—if we are *worthy*. It is the office and work of Spiritualism to make us worthy:—worthy of the high nature God has given us, and the great destiny he has placed before us;—worthy of the great Hereafter;—worthy to join lovers, and friends, and kindred, and kindred souls;—worthy the companionship of the wise and good of all the generations gathered and gathering;—worthy to enter into the rest and to realize all the blessedness of our true, our future, our eternal Home.

Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE, on being introduced by the Chairman, spoke as follows:—It has frequently been my mission to speak for, and to, those who have been afflicted with what I consider to be the greatest of all earthly bereavements—namely, the loss of sight. We justly esteem this precious sense so highly that we regard its loss as the greatest calamity that can befall us, and the contemplation of those who have been thus afflicted naturally calls forth the strongest emotions of our sympathetic natures. Remembering then the real suffering I have experienced, when gazing on the piteous upturned faces of the blind, I at first shrank from the invitation to be present to-night—an occasion when I was required to speak of this great calamity in connection with one whom I esteem as a highly valued friend, and regard in the light of a public benefactor to the cause which my life is spent in advocating. A little reflection, however, convinced me that there were circumstances connected with this meeting which were calculated to change our emotion into rejoicing, and elevate our human sympathies into reverent gratitude to the great good God who has surrounded our afflicted friend with so many rays of Divine light and blessing. In the first place, we may all remember that on some occasions of our lives, our

sympathies no less than our charity may have been taxed, to contribute to the wants of others. I think I speak of a very general though not perhaps a too creditable sentiment, when I say, that such occasions generally afford us opportunities for self-complacent gratulations on our generosity, and to some extent create feelings somewhat akin to humiliation in the recipient of our bounty. I am sure it must be a source of gratification to us all to feel that no such sentiments can find a place in this assembly to-night; on the contrary, we must all realize both for ourselves and our friend, that the occasion of our meeting this night, is the performance of a SIMPLE ACT OF JUSTICE; nay more, that the utmost that we on our parts can do, must still fall short of the meed of gratitude—a thankfulness that we singly and collectively owe to Mr. Thomas Shorter, as the fearless and able exponent of that cause which is so dear to our hearts, and in which he has taken upon himself many a cross of martyrdom which would otherwise have been visited upon us. Experience alone can teach us what those suffer who are compelled to brave public opinion in the maintenance of unpopular truths. Experience alone therefore can enable us to conceive of the debt we owe to one who is content to make himself the target for the shafts aimed at our hearts; who can and is willing to be the exponent of our misunderstood faith; who represents us fairly to the world when circumstances or disability keep us silent; and who in fact by pen or voice, becomes the champion of our faith, or conscience, and stands as a shield of defence between a sneering ignorant public, and our inability to do ourselves justice in its eyes. All this, and much more than my imperfect words can depict, Mr. Shorter has been for us, as a representative man and talented writer on our much-abused and ill-understood faith.

We all know—for I presume I am addressing for the most part an assemblage of Spiritualists—that the world has directed a virulence so marked against Spiritualism that it requires no common courage to avow oneself one of this despised body of believers. Though the days of the rack and thumbscrew have passed away, those of moral martyrdom have not. I have seen vast numbers of persons who, from the press, pulpit, rostrum, and in every direction where the public ear could be reached, have been vilified without the chance of response; have borne persecution in public, private, and social life; have seen their names slandered, their faith misrepresented, their belief scorned, and yet no opportunity afforded them for a word of response. What, then, must have been our feelings when one, both gifted by nature and study, stands forth and represents our thoughts, and places himself as a shield

between us and the world. We cannot render gratitude enough to such an one. And we must remember that in this advocacy of our cause our friend has not only arrayed himself as a soldier, but cast in the very means that "sustains his house," his living, his good name and fame, and all that these are worth, jeopardising the very daily bread which supports him, for the sake of the truth he has avowed. I know of none who could give more—I know of but few of us who have given as much. Do I claim too much for this meeting, then, when I pronounce it to be a response to the imperative call of that justice which Spiritualists owe to Mr. Thomas Shorter? There is something more which we should not forget when we gaze upon our friend with all the deep, sympathetic yearnings which our hearts must ever feel towards those who bear the burden of human affliction. I have invariably found that the law of compensation which the great, good Father bestows even before we ask it of Him, is peculiarly manifest in the case of those bereft of sight. It seems to me that no sense is really withdrawn; that though one of the external avenues of those senses is closed, the force and power remains, and is admirably distributed through the rest, stimulating them to such strange and preternatural excellence that I have sometimes watched the motions of the blind and could scarcely realise the extent of their affliction. So beautifully is the Divine hand thrown around God's afflicted children that they might truly say—

My vision thou hast dimmed that I may see
Thyself—Thyself alone.

Amongst the blind I have seen not alone such an extraordinary deepening of the faculties that remain, such an extraordinary evidence of perception; but it is obviously clear that when the windows of the soul are externally darkened, there are avenues within through which divine light shines, and enables the soul to look out and see celestial beauties far higher than those that are closed against earth.

The last point of consolation and congratulation which our friend enjoys is the fact that he is a Spiritualist. Before the dark day came, a fountain of light was opened for him, which gave him eyes to see into the heaven of the better world. If there should be for him no sun, no moon, no stars; if the beautiful, many-coloured world should smile on his sightless eyes no more, there is a vision perpetually shining upon the eye of his soul—a consciousness of that most glorious light that is waiting for him; which, I am satisfied, must be a perpetual and undying spring of joy for him. If any of us now—those I mean that fully realise the value of the faith we call Spiritualism, were asked to exchange it for any one of the senses we enjoy—

oh! which of us would hesitate to choose? I believe that if the day should come over again that we should go back to the darkness we were in, and in a moment if, with those little, despised, tiny raps, or those strange and ill-comprehended telegraphic movements of ponderable bodies which form the alphabet of the glorious word IMMORTALITY; with those simple signs before us, (to speak of none others) when in a single instant we could realise that the air was full of ministering spirits; that those we loved were not lost, but were stronger, brighter, better, more glorious; that they were permitted constantly to minister to us, and were opening up to us that Divine knowledge—God is love, man is immortal, and eternity is progress; when these are no longer beliefs but established facts, which of us would not, were it required, cast aside one by one his senses, and say, “Steep me in adversity to the very lips; shut against me all the avenues that lead into the cold hard earth; but leave me the glorious light of another and a better world, surround me with the precious ministry of angels, give me spiritual eyes for my earthly blindness, angel feet to guide my faltering steps to heaven, and the voices of dear spirit friends sounding in the ears that are closed for ever to mortal tones, and I can cry, ‘Thy will, not mine, be done! oh Father: I murmur not.’” Yes I am convinced that the sunlight of this physical globe and all that it reveals, is darkness compared to the glorious light of Spiritualism that now illuminates the way of our afflicted friend.

You have been informed that Mr. Hepworth Dixon has given the number of Spiritualists in America as 3,000,000. In this statement I quite agree with him, provided only I am permitted to add upon the latest and most reliable statistics 8,000,000 more; but though our numbers look pretentious on the other side of the Atlantic, I am fain to admit that in Great Britain we can compensate by quality for what we lack in quantity; and when we have in the front ranks of Spiritualism in this country a Howitt, a Wilkinson, and a Shorter, I think we need not care to count our numbers. Mr. Thomas Shorter, like the brave Roman soldier he spoke of, we may be sure will ever be found at his post: though, perhaps, like him, nameless to the generations of the future, he will be known and recognised by his faith. When I remember that he has that glorious mantle of Divine Providence about him which has been made so singularly manifest in the consolations of Spiritualism, we, as his warmest well-wishers, can afford to trust him to the dear angels who are lamps to his feet, and are ever kindly instrumental in adapting means to ends. We, as his anxious and grateful fellow-workers, can, like him, wait for the opening of the gates, whose radiant

gleamings are already about his pathway, and anticipate a rejoicing meeting beyond "the beautiful river," in the land of never-setting suns, and the unfading light of eternity.

Mr. D. D. HOME, previous to his concluding reading, quoted and commented on a paragraph in the *Morning Post* on the death of Sir David Brewster, and which expressed regret that Sir David had not some years ago more thoroughly availed himself of the opportunities afforded him for the investigation of Spiritualism, and that he had been led to make contradictory statements concerning it.

The Rev. S. E. BENGOUGH, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said that he could not do so without reminding those who were present of the prominent part that gentleman had taken in the advocacy of Spiritualism, and of the sacrifices he had made for it.

The resolution was briefly seconded by Mr. T. GRANT, of Maidstone, and carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN, in reply, said that his reward was in doing his duty to this cause, and he trusted we should all recognise it as our duty to do what we could to promote its recognition in the world.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

AN EASTER DISCOURSE.

By the Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.

A BELIEF in the resurrection of the body (a very different thing from the resurrection of the *dead*;) is one of the cardinal faiths of Christendom. And, strange as it may seem, this belief seems to hold its own where other doctrines—fragments of ancient error—have been openly renounced or quietly ignored. Men do not think about it—do not, for a moment, pause to reflect or reason upon it—but go on solemnly talking about the last day, the final judgment, and the resurrection of the *body*, as though no doubt could possibly exist as to these strange dogmas—the growth of old-world speculations and lingering earth-born dreams.

Who cannot recollect listening, in early childhood, to some marvellous description of the last day and the universal resurrection? I well remember an amazing description of that tremendous scene: the sounding trumpets, the opening graves, the call to judgment, the rising dead, the re-uniting of the scattered particles, the rush of buried men from the dark, deep, ocean blue, the ascension of the just, and the re-uniting of the body with the long-forlorn and widowed soul that could not

enter into the joy of its Lord till it got the poor body back again! The preacher's face is peering at me even now: the sensation of the still cool church that summer afternoon, with the beautiful stillness broken only by the solemn fervent tones, even now creeps over the spirit: the echoes of the awful words that seem so out of tune with the blessed world outside, are about me now. Since then, in grave books, the same things have been read: and from grave lips the same things have been heard. Here, for instance, is the doctrine deliberately and seriously stated by a grave modern divine—"Suppose now, therefore, that my body, or that portion of it, at least, in which its physical identity may consist, were at this moment resolved into its constituent, atomical ingredients, and that these were dispersed through the composition of this globe, or even through the boundless extension of the visible creation,—who that considers the infinitely varied applications of which this (divine) supremacy is capable, can rationally doubt, whether the collection of these particles would be either immediately or subsequently, possible to that Almighty Being in whom this absolute supremacy resides? This interrogatory, which is applicable to any *one* body, may, with equal confidence of success, be proposed in reference to any larger number of bodies, how different or protracted soever may be the successive intervals of their dissolution or the entire periods of their duration in that dissolved state. The evidence adducible from revelation, to prove the practicability of all these particles being ultimately collected, is, therefore, triumphantly conclusive!" Dear old somnambulist of the nineteenth century! clinging so anxiously to thy "atomical ingredients,"—thy so soon to be scattered "particles;" canst thou not trust thyself out of thy grave clothes? What fancied misery will be thine presently; till the cruel grave gives back its precious tenant, and thy "particles" are "collected" that thy soul may rush in once more and rest from its houselessness and naked dismay! Strange, that underlying all the lip-belief of Christendom respecting the soul, the future life, and the judgment to come, this fantastic earthy old-world dream of the resurrection of the *body* should give shape and tone to all.

But it is not difficult to account for this, strange and inconsistent as it may seem. Men, for the most part, can form no idea—can, at all events, *rest* in no idea—of a real existence out of this body. And even though they are able to rise to some recognition of the distinction between the body and the soul, yet they are utterly unable to conceive how a "disembodied spirit," as they are pleased to call a spirit freed from the *present* body, can have a perfect and happy existence till the divorce is repealed, and the earthly vehicle is restored. Hence

the dreary bewilderment that clings to nearly all our thoughts concerning the other world and its citizens. We think of a "disembodied spirit" with a shiver: it is, to us, a kind of spectre,—a thin shadowy, unsatisfactory thing, which we can hardly call a *being*,—a bodiless existence, very much to be pitied as a poor houseless "spirit" that sadly wants the old tabernacle back before it can be of any use to Heaven or to itself. Now all this may be very natural, but it is very dark, very gross, very earthly, and very pagan. It all comes of reversing the Apostle's charge to "walk by faith and not by sight." We have read, or practised, that counsel backwards—we have walked by *sight* and not by faith. We reckon that the *seen* is the reality, and that the unseen is the unreality:—that the material here, under our hands, is the true, and that the "disembodied" object is the shadowy. We seem to forget the Apostle's words—"the things that are *not* seen—*they* are the eternal." Let us dare to *think* about it, and we shall see that, in clinging to the resurrection of the *body*, we do not believe in the Apostle at all—that we are clinging, in fact, to that very thing from which he tries to deliver us.

Plainly, then, this belief in the resurrection of the *body* is a dreary mistake, the result of our earthly notions of things, of our grossness, of our unfortunate delusion that the present substance is the most real, and that we can be nothing unless we are clothed in an *earthly shell*. It does not strike us that, perhaps, the jewel is more precious than the casket. It does not occur to us that when the bird escapes from its cell, new songs and fresh felicities may be awakened, which, before, were all unknown. It does not occur to us that, perhaps, after all, we are *now* in our imperfect state, and that the *real* eye-sight, the *real* speech, the *real* sense of hearing, with all the final and truly awakened faculties of the man, are yet to come. It does not occur to us that, so far from the body being necessary to us, it is really, to some extent, a hindrance—that it hides more than it reveals—that it is an encrustation—a kind of earthly vehicle, useful enough during our temporary stay here, on our way through God's Universe, but very useless for any real and permanent purpose connected with the life of the beings to whom, for a few days and for a passing purpose, it affords a temporary home.

But an objector may say:—How then do you read that magnificent description by St. Paul of the resurrection and of the state of the departed,—that description to which men have listened over ten thousand graves, and, to the solemn music of whose words, the falling clods have given a kind of dreadful undertone, while the heart went on before to that august and

awful day when the bursting grave should yield its prey? Does not the apostle, in that great chapter, teach the resurrection of the *body*? Yes, I reply, but *not of the body we commit to the grave's cold care*. So far from teaching *that*, he teaches the very opposite, and strives, with an almost painful anxiety, to turn our thoughts to *another* body with which the new world has to do. So far from teaching us to look down to the tomb as the sealed habitation of the being who shall one day be redeemed from its solitude and decay, he points us, with a consecrated eagerness, to the abode where the risen one already shines with more than the fancied glory of some final latter day. For this reason, we venture to say, that St. Paul is misunderstood by millions who read this chapter; and misunderstood, simply by reason of our unfortunate habits of thought, which make us unable to conceive of anything being "body" but this which *now* we recognise as such; and because no other thought is present to the mind than that the *material* body is necessary to the complete and real life of the soul.

The meaning of the whole of that grand chapter is concentrated in the 44th verse, where one of the greatest truths ever given to the world is set forth in one brief and simple saying,—What you put into the grave, says Paul, is dishonour; but *that* is not raised: what is raised is *glory*. You sow a *natural* body, he says, but that which is raised is a *spiritual* body, for "THERE IS A NATURAL BODY AND THERE IS A SPIRITUAL BODY." There are *two* bodies, then!—the present which is the temporal and the gross; and the future which is the immortal and the spiritual: the one, after a few years of use, is hidden out of sight, never to be resumed because it will never more be needed,—the other rises into the new world and higher life for which it is adapted. Even so there are two kinds of substance,—that which is at present brought into contact with the body, being like itself; and that with which spirits have to do. The one we call the material, thinking of it as the real; and the other we call the spiritual, thinking of it as the spectral. But, in reality, what we *now* call the real is the spectral, since it is "passing away," while the *other* is the real as being changeless and immortal. You put the *seen* body into the grave, and fancy that the soul will need the resurrection of *that* before it can be complete again. You look into the cold, dark dwelling and say—He shall rise again. O slow of heart to believe! O blind of eye to behold! *That* will not rise again! *That* poor, weary, worn-out vesture will not be needed any more. Farewell to it for ever! The spirit is promoted beyond *that*. The resurrection is already accomplished, and, in a new world where all things are new, the liberated spirit has got far beyond its earthly needs.

When this is understood, *Paul* will be understood, and the life to come will cease to be an unsatisfactory dream, and the departed soul will be pictured as an immortal reality in an immortal world: and then, farewell to our poor dream that in the world to which God shall promote us, our spirits will wait to be re-united to the bodies they left behind; farewell to the dream that the reality of the spirit-world is less actual than our materialism here. Ah! let us not linger round the charnel house. When the mortal body is given to us it is but as a vehicle and an instrument: when it decays it is because we have done with it and need it no more: when we are delivered from it, we shall have got, in our experience and in our gains, too far beyond it to wish for its return; and to return to it would be more impossible than for the strong wise man to return to the toys and the prattle of his childish days.

With the old-world dream of the resurrection of this material *body*, and that gross fancy that the soul will *need* such a body, the idea of a future general judgment-day will go. Solemn and sublime as the conception may be of a final universal judgment, after or amid "the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds," it must be put away as only a grand translation of a childish dream. God's universe, let us be sure, has not to *wait* to be brought to judgment. It wakes to judgment every day: it lies down under the awful scrutiny on every succeeding night. We are in His presence now: His records are made as fast as our deeds: His daily pardons are as ample as our daily prayers: His judgments are as certain as our sins. There will be no sterner tribunal—no profounder judgment—no more perfect sentence—than is passed upon us every hour: and for each of us, the last day will come when we shall see this world no more—when we bid the sweet sunlight good-bye, and close the record of our brief introduction to our immortal life, and go with that record to the King. Then, for us, the heavens will pass away as a scroll, and the stars will drop from heaven, and the trumpet will sound, and we shall arise: and when friends and mourners wait around the silent clay, and the tears of our beloved consecrate the dust of our tomb, the eye of faith may then behold all the solemnities, the grandeurs, and the realities of the only resurrection-day this world shall know, when the grave shall give up its dead even while we stand by it; and the spirit, which is the true man, shall rise to meet the waiting messengers of the skies.

And now, dear friends, there is but one word more to say. How often have I to stand here when this place is deserted by all save the little funeral train! How often does my solitary voice break the solemn stillness here,—these places all vacant;—

only a little company of bowed and sorrowful faces here! Ah! my friends, what an insupportable burden it would be to me, coming so often, if I could not tell of a triumphant, of a risen, Christ, the life of all who trust in him! They are not here, I say—they have risen. For our God is not the God of the dead but of the living, since “*all live unto Him!*”

“Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.”

But whether here or there, we have but one Leader, one Saviour, one glorious Life: and only Death is dead. Yes! life is the good news of Easter time. Farewell to the cross, the grave, the silence, the despair: the cross is twined with flowers to-day; the grave is an open door; the silence is broken by whispering voices of dear dear absent friends; the despair is changed for a glorious Easter song; a light from heaven floods all our cold, dim earth, and kind and tender escorts wait to guard us on the way.

Come death; come night,—nay rather, come morning sweet and clear,—sun that shall no more go down,—life that shall no more wither. Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen.

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE AND PRAYER.

To the Editor of the “Spiritual Magazine.”

SIR,—Mrs. Hardinge altogether repudiates the doctrine of special providence, and yet admits the efficacy of prayer to bring about *special* events; and although I have asked for an explanation, I have not succeeded in getting one that satisfactorily meets the apparent contradiction. I have communicated with Mr. Howitt, who has been kind enough to give me what I consider to be very conclusive reasons for a belief in the doctrine which, in terms, Mrs. H. so vehemently condemns as erroneous and unfounded. If there is no “Special Providence,” how can we account for the wonderful feats performed by the Huguenots, as related at page 144 of *The Two Worlds*, by Thomas Brevior? It appears to me that these historical facts are more rationally accounted for by the same author (than by Mrs. Hardinge) in his pamphlet, *What is Religion?* at page 40, beginning with the words, “My present purpose,” to the end of the paragraph.

As I think it very desirable that the lecturers and authors engaged in the dissemination of the important facts and principles of modern Spiritualism should endeavour to be at one on the subject, I should be glad to see it discussed in the *Spiritual Magazine*, with a view of bringing about as clear a notion as possible on a very recondite and abstruse point of doctrine.

Yours, &c.,
INQUIRER.

THE discourse in question ought fairly to be taken in connection with the explanations subsequently given, and the full import of which, if duly considered, largely qualify in some important respects the view first stated—perhaps to a greater extent than even the speaker was fully aware.

A careful review of the whole question, and of the views put forward concerning it, has strengthened our conviction that the differences of opinion on the subject to which our correspondent refers as existing among the advocates of Spiritualism, are more apparent than real, and that upon due examination it will be found that these differences mainly resolve themselves into questions of definition, use of terms, and modes of statement; perhaps, also, in some degree, to the different posture of mind in which the question is approached. About the facts which constitute the premiss of the argument we apprehend there is no difference among well-informed Spiritualists, and this encourages us to comply with the wish of our correspondent for the further discussion of the subject in the pages of this Magazine, believing that mutual explanation, by removing misunderstanding, may bring about that fuller view and closer agreement which our correspondent thinks it so desirable to attain.

We will begin by giving an example of what is ordinarily understood as Special Providence, and as we are writing chiefly for Spiritualists, we take it from the autobiography of one who is well known to many amongst them. In *Incidents of my Life*, pp. 167-169, Mr. D. D. Home relates the following instance of what he calls "Miraculous Preservation:"—

We left London the 24th of July, 1860, for the Château de C—, near Paris. One of the most remarkable interpositions of Providence which have ever happened to me occurred at this place. Many doubt the possibility of such interpositions, but I have not been allowed to doubt them, and I have to thank our Heavenly Father that I have so often been made aware of His ministering care and kind Providence. I do not suppose for a moment, because of this, that His Providence is more over me than over all His children; and I believe that, in looking back over our past lives, there are none of us who can fail to recognize the finger of God directing and protecting them, often in some remarkable and even almost physical way, though generally, perhaps, through means apparently more remote than those which saved my life on the 16th September, 1860.

I had just returned from Naples, whither I had been to visit a friend—but who had passed from earth before I arrived—and I found my health affected by fatigue of travelling and mental depression. Being recommended to take much out-door exercise, during my stay at the Château de C—, I used to take with me my gun—more that it might be said that I was out shooting than for any great attraction the sport has for me. The Château de C—, distant half-an-hour by railway from Paris, stands in a beautiful old park. Some of the trees are of very great height; one of the largest, a northern poplar, stands a quarter of a mile from the château at an angle of the park, where it is separated from the outer grounds by a hedge. To this spot, when there is much shooting going on in the neighbourhood, the game used to come for shelter; and I, who am but an indifferent marksman, could get easy shots by planting myself by the hedge.

On the day mentioned, I had been walking with my friend, Mons. T—, and on his leaving me, I bent my steps to this favourite corner, wishing to take home a partridge. As I neared the hedge, I stooped and advanced cautiously. When close up to it, I was raising my head to look for my game, when on my right I heard some one call out, "Here, here!" My only feeling was surprise at being thus suddenly addressed in English. The desire to have a good look-

out for my game, overruled my curiosity as to whom the exclamation had come from, and I was continuing to raise my head to the level of the hedge, when suddenly I was seized by the collar of my coat and vest, and lifted off the ground. At the same instant I heard a crashing sound, and then all was quiet. I felt neither fear nor wonder. My first thought was that by some accident my gun had exploded, and that I was in the spirit-land; but, looking about, I saw that I was still in the material world, and there was the gun still in my hands. My attention was then drawn to what appeared to be a tree immediately before me, where no tree had been. On examination, this proved to be the fallen limb of the high tree under which I was standing. I then saw that I had been drawn aside from this fallen limb a distance of six or seven feet. I ran, in my excitement, as fast as I could to the château. My friends, seeing me running, hastened to the window to learn the cause of my disturbance. As soon as I recovered my power of speech, I told them how God, by his good angels, had saved my life, and they returned with me to the scene of what I must call my miraculous escape.

I will not attempt to portray the feelings of those present, but if ever heartfelt prayer of thankfulness ascended to God's holy throne, it was then and there, from us all, even to the servants, who broke off twigs to keep as mementoes of the mercy shown me.

The limb which had thus fallen measured sixteen yards and a half in length, and where it had broken from the trunk it was one yard in circumference. It fell from a height of forty-five feet. The part of the limb, which struck the very spot where I had been standing, measured twenty-four inches in circumference, and penetrated the earth at least a foot.

This may be taken as a typical instance of what are called Special Providences. In a previous article under this heading (No. 12, Vol. IV.) we have given several others from standard works in history, biography, and philosophy; and the number of such cases might be multiplied almost indefinitely. It is necessary to bear in mind the multitudinous variety of these facts to appreciate the full force of the *cumulative* argument they present, and the futility of such explanations as "chance," and "unconnected coincidence."

Now, what are we to do with such facts? and the lives of some persons (Jung Stilling, for instance) are obviously full of them. Call them by what name you will, explain them how you may, you cannot alter their essential character; they are felt to be the special acts of an invisible, occult, mighty, intelligent, beneficent Power, that guides, warns, succours, and preserves the individual human being from danger and from death.

A Universal Providence is sometimes asserted as though it were the antithesis of Special Providence, and negatived its existence. But in fact the two coalesce, the one implies the other. There is a Universal Providence, which, like the blue sky, bends over all; and this is one with the Particular Providence, which bends over the individual as tenderly as a mother over her sleeping babe. The truth is that all Universals are made up of Particulars, and *of nothing else*, neither can they be. A Providence over everybody in general and nobody in particular—which extends to the whole human race but to no

individual member of it, is an impossible contradiction. Take away all the parts and what remains of the whole?

Nearly all the confusion of thought we have met with on this subject it seems to us arises from regarding "Special Providence" as synonymous with "violation of Natural Laws." It is agreed that these laws are instituted by, and are the expression of, Infinite Wisdom; that they are perfect, immutable, and are never violated. And this is right, provided only (and the proviso is a most important one) that it be rightly understood.

The Eternal Cause

Acts to one end, but acts by *various* laws.

These various laws may be regarded as ranging in series one above another. Thus at the base, so to speak, we have mechanical laws; above these, chemical laws; above these, electrical, magnetic, vital laws; above these again, spiritual laws; and so, on, and on, till at the end we come to the One Supreme Law, of which all laws, and all systems of laws, are but the varied expression and manifestation—The Will of God. This, as far as we know it, is the Order of the Universe, about which "philosophers" talk so much, and often comprehend so little.

Now, each law, each system of laws, so long as it moves only in the direction of its own plane of action, is on that plane immutable, but how is it when these are considered, as they actually are, not in isolation from each other, but mutually related and interactive? What is the master law of these laws? It is very simple and of universal application. *The higher law governs the action of all laws beneath it.* Thus, gravitation depends on the nearness or distance of the particles of matter to each other; but this law is subordinate to that of chemical affinities, which acts on the particles of bodies according to their several qualities; the law of the attraction of affinities, or of what may be called physical sympathies, overcoming the law of mechanical cohesion. This law of chemical affinities rapidly resolves the physical organism of man into its constituent earths and gases; but this law, again, for seventy, eighty, a hundred years,—so long as the organism is in connection with the life-principle in man, is held in check by the operation of this higher law of life.* Carry this still farther into the realm of man, and at the bottom of the scale we have the law of appetite; above this, reason, or the law of mental control; higher still and governing all, conscience, or the law of duty; and which followed in an enlightened spirit with loyal and loving heart is the willing sur-

* Even admitting the new doctrine of the Correlation of Force, the equation between the several forms of force is one of *quantity* only and not of *quality*; and we should surely seek the original type not in the lowest but in its highest form.

render of the free spirit to the Spirit of God, and is what we name Religion—the law of man's highest nature as a spiritual being.

Or if we look at man in his relation to Nature, we find the same law of the subordination of the lower to the higher; the whole realm of Nature lies beneath him to be subjected to his will. Already by the force of his will, and the exercise of his intelligence in studying and availing himself of its laws, Nature is made tributary to his masterful mind; the wind grinds his corn, the waves carry his merchandise; the sun is his artist, and Electricity—a more than winged Mercury—bears his messages from continent to continent, accomplishing the feat of Ariel—

“I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.”

And is this law of subordination of the lower to the higher limited to what we call “natural laws?” Do not even our Secularists, in defining science as “the Providence of Life,” unconsciously recognise the analogy between the intervention of man in Nature, and that intervention in Nature from above it, which is called Providence. If man can operate on the chain of causation in Nature, what is to prevent free spiritual intelligences acting on the same chain of causation from a higher point, and producing commensurate effects? Why may not a spirit whisper to one man a monition of danger, impress the mind of another to relieve a fellow-creature in the extremity of need, or snatch another in the very moment of peril from impending destruction?

But this, it has been said, as though it were some disparagement, is only “a sort of Providence at second hand.” Well, if by this is only meant (and I can attach no other meaning to it,) that it is Providence acting by mediate agencies, I at once admit it, and ask—Is not this in entire harmony with all we know of the course of Providence? By what other means known to us does Providence ever act? God provides abundantly for our physical sustenance; but this not by immediate creative act, but by mediate agencies of seed and soil, of sun and shower, co-operating with human industry and skill. It is the same if we survey the field of history. For example, how does God deliver a people from bondage? Not by direct interposition; but he raises up a Moses, a Cromwell, a Lincoln, and through them comes the command—“Let my people go.”

What then if it be *the law* of special Providence, as it seems to be, that its purposes are carried into effect by mediate agencies—mainly, as it would appear, by universal spirit-ministry divinely appointed to this end? Are blessed acts of mercy and deliverance not *special in relation to us*, because like acts are extended to others also? Or are they less providential that they occur through the ministry of those whose nature is

kindred to our own—it may be the very beings, whom on earth we the most tenderly cherished, the most fondly loved?

It is not then necessary to the idea of Special Providence to suppose Deity interfering with His works, as though, like man, not foreseeing the future, He knew not how to act till the crisis came; but it would be strange indeed if His power of special and timely action was more limited than that of man; provision for this being indeed included in the Divine plan as an element in the very laws which it is strangely supposed to violate. “What do we mean by *special* providences? These of course must all be included in the orderly operation of laws, or consistent with them, and yet we must not lose the idea of a distinct personality, and personal, timely agency on the part of the Divine Being. . . . He is infinite and universal, acting at once in all and through all. What, then, is a special act of His. We answer, it is not a departure from the regular round of things, but it is just so much of the universal as is more prominent to our perceptions, or more important, as affecting an individual, or many individuals, and also, as taking place by a higher law than the merely natural and likewise involving more spiritual agencies. Everything that transpires is of Providence, because it is some ultimate from the Divine Essence, either orderly or disorderly, and by the very necessity and correctness of the infinite procedure, it is either provided or arranged for, designed or permitted, by the Infinite Being. But some things are more manifestly so to our perceptions, as we see the wonderfully divine means which have led to them. There is, therefore, *no speciality at all*, in respect to their taking place without law, or contrary to law; but when we come to see, in many particular and more prominent instances, how very wonderful the providence is, and how it has manifestly occurred by the operation of some higher laws than pertain merely to earth or nature, even the agency of spiritual beings being used for the production of it, then it becomes what we call *special*: but it is special, not as taken out of the universal, but as included in it; yet as projecting out of it *to our view*, so as to convince us of more than mere laws, and of personal and divine agencies working with those laws It is manifestly more special for an angel to approach and influence me, or any friend for me, than for me to be blessed with the common air of heaven, or the sight of the green grass, or the light of the sun. The regulations of the atmosphere, of light, and the growth of vegetation, come under the head of *natural* law. . . . But do not the angelic ministrations come under the head of *spiritual* law? Surely there is something in the contemplation of *angelic* performance—help from the heavens—and in the personal *will* and

effort which an angel, like a man, puts forth in our behalf, which takes the occurrence out of the common order of nature, and invests it with a divine speciality and importance. These, then, although in a high sense special providences, yet are no more out of the sphere of law and order, than the growth of the grass or the falling of the rain. They are special with man, but not with God. Highly opportune and timely, but with God they were always so! They come under the operation of a *higher* law, and of personal agencies acting *by* those laws, and that is all the difference. Yet this is a difference which wonderfully affects the heart of man. It touches more peculiarly his *religious* nature, and causes him to look up."*

And here we touch upon a very vital and practical application of the argument—its relation to prayer. It is asked—Should we ask the All-Wise to set aside His laws and change His purposes for our convenience? A very pertinent question, truly, to those who hold the Pagan notion of prayer; but according to the idea of prayer which Christ has given us, we address ourselves to God not to change His purposes in conformity to our will, but so to *change our hearts* that they may be in harmony with *His* will:—we aspire to be like Him, to hold communion with Him, and when we spread out our wants before Him it is in submission to His Infinite Wisdom. We surrender ourselves to God; He is our Father; and like children we place our hand in His that He may lead us as He will.

But if God knows our wants before we ask Him, what need of prayer? None, certainly, so far as He is concerned. But what if prayer be itself an inspiration from Him to bring us into closer union with Him?† What if it descends from Him as the

* *God in His Providences.* (Chap. viii.) By WOODBUYELL FERNALD.

† Dscheladeddin, a famous Mahometan mystic, illustrates this in the following story:—

"The sick man lay on his bed of pain. 'Allah!' he moaned, and his heart grew tender, and his eyes moist with prayer.

"The next morning the tempter said to him, 'No answer comes from Allah. Call louder; still no Allah will hear thee or ease thy pain.'

"The sick man shuddered. His heart grew cold with doubt and inquietude, when suddenly before him stood Elias.

"'Child!' said Elias, 'why art thou sad? Dost think thy prayers are unheard and unanswered, that thy devotion is all in vain?'

"And the sick man replied: 'Ah! so often and with such tears I have called on Allah; I call, Allah! but never do I hear His 'Here am I!'

"And Elias left the sick man; but God said to Elias: 'Go to the tempted one; lift him up from his despair and unbelief.

"'Tell him that his very longing is its own fulfilment; that his very prayer, 'Come, Allah!' is Allah's answer, 'Here am I!'

"Yes, every good aspiration is an angel straight from God. Say from the heart, 'O my Father!' and that very utterance is the Father's reply, 'Here, my child!'"

This little story so beautifully told is (as Mr. Wilkinson remarks) worthy to be preserved not only in our heads, but in our hearts.

fountain of all holy desires, and thence takes its rise in the human heart, to ascend again to Him who gave it and return with blessings to the thirsty soul? What if prayer be the very act or state of mind best fitted to receive and appreciate the blessing? What is the essence of prayer? It is the soul's sincere and supreme desire; verbal expression is not necessary to it; it may be—

The burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near.

The demand must precede the supply—we must ask that we may receive—we must seek if we would find—the want must be a real one, and the need be felt ere it can receive its appropriate satisfaction. It is not Dives with his sumptuous fare and rich clothing, but the beggar Lazarus, that needs food and raiment. The soul no less than the body must feel its hunger and its nakedness that it may be fed and clothed. This is *the law* of prayer, and it is universal in its operation. We see it even in the physical world. The earth is parched, the grass withered, the tender lily droops and pines—Nature lifts up its mute prayer for the gentle summer rain, and lo! in response, the blessing and blessed rain descends in copious showers upon the gladdened earth.

How often do we hear it repeated that Man is the Microcosm, and how little do we think what it implies! Translated to a higher plane the processes of nature are repeated in the soul of man. We are told that every atom of matter attracts every other atom—that every atom of our earth attracts and is attracted by every atom in Orion, or Uranus, or farthest space. We are told again that there is an attraction by which atoms are detached from the mass to which they adhere and unite according to their several affinities. Is there then this attraction of matter to matter, and no attraction of spirit to spirit? Do atoms draw together and mingle according to their likes, and is there no corresponding law governing the atoms of humanity, binding together kindred natures which meet and freely mingle according to the attraction of each for each? Yes, there is a law for spirits corresponding to the attraction of gravity in physics—we call it *sympathy*,—there is a law by which spirits are freely drawn into their several societies, and we name it *spiritual affinity*.

Prayer then is in its highest sense, the lifting up of the soul to God;—the turning, as it were, of our faces to the East, that the Sun of Righteousness may shine upon them, as the flower turns its loving eyes sunward;—the opening of our spirits to the holy inspirations of the Divine Spirit, that our wills may blend with His and become one. And secondarily,—the predominant

affection of the mind, whatever that may be, attracts to our aid by the laws of sympathy and affinity, those spiritual beings whose affections are in correspondence with our own, or whose mission it is to succour and defend us on earth, and by whose occult and timely aid prayer is often answered in ways that we know not of; not, however, we may be sure, involving any breach of the Divine laws, but only that larger and better understanding of those laws which enables them when needed to produce effects in Nature which transcend our power, as the man of science produces effects which those who know not Nature's secrets cannot accomplish and can scarcely understand.

Not that prayer is, or is intended ever to be a lazy substitute for the regular labours which Providence has wisely ordained as the ordinary means to supply our natural wants. *Laborare est orare* was a grand motto of the old monks: the habit of cheerful industry is a constant prayer which never fails to bring down a blessing. "But there are cases, and always have been, which, by a complication of human misfortunes, lay out of the reach of the ordinary methods, and where the Divine Providence is especially manifest in the play of *spiritual* laws, by prayers and answers from the ever present all-merciful heavens answers sent in the form of the most material aid." *

* As an illustration of this remark by Mr. Fernald, I here relate a story of the last century:—

In a sequestered part of Scotland, an honest hard-working couple were struggling through life, and frequently found it difficult to gain a bare subsistence, and provide even necessaries for their young family. They lived in a thinly-peopled neighbourhood, remote from town or village, and, indeed, at a considerable distance from any habitation whatever.

The poor man could generally contrive to earn a scanty subsistence, barely sufficient to maintain his wife and four children. At times, indeed, his means of support were cut off; for though industrious when he could procure work, his employment at best was precarious. Sometimes this worthy couple were reduced to great necessity for want of food, when they experienced unexpected interpositions of Providence, by which help was sent to them in the most unlooked-for manner. On one occasion they were reduced to the greatest extremity of want: all their resources had failed. Their little store of provisions was exhausted. The children had received the last morsel their mother could furnish, yet she was not cast down; for Ann Young had learned to trust in the loving-kindness of her God, when apparently cut off from human aid. The day however passed over, and no prospect of succour appeared. Night came, and still no relief. The children were crying for their supper; and, because there was none to give them, their mother undressed them and put them to bed, where they soon cried themselves to sleep.

Their father was much dejected, and likewise went to bed, leaving Ann in solitary possession of the room. And yet she felt not alone: many sweet hours had she spent in that little cottage, apart from the world, with her Bible and her God. Precious had these opportunities ever been to her, of pouring out her soul to God; of spreading her sorrows, her trials all before Him; and giving vent to a full, and now, alas! a *heavy* heart.

But ere she began, that she might not afterwards be disturbed, she made up the peat fire on the hearth. She trimmed and lit the *cruisy*, (a small iron

All life, indeed, is prayer, though it may not be consciously so; and it is one which ever tends to its own fulfilment. The supreme wish of the heart manifested in the chief aim we set before ourselves in life, by a law as inevitable as that which attracts the falling apple to the earth, or affinitive particles to each other, attracts to us those invisible beings who are in the same ruling love, whether it be good or evil, and who influence and aid us in its realization. The miser, those who are in the ruling love of avarice; the sensualist, those whose supreme delight was in bodily pleasures; while those who seek the true

vessel which served as a lamp,) and hung it upon its accustomed place on the wall. She moved the clean oaken table near it, and having taken the large family Bible from among the six or eight well-read, well-worn volumes on the book-shelf, deposited it upon it. She paused however, before opening the sacred volume to implore a blessing on its contents, when the following text involuntarily came into her mind: 'For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.'

That text, thought Ann, is not very applicable to *me*; and opening her Bible, she proceeded to look out for some of her favourite passages of Scripture. Yet, 'for every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills,' was uppermost in her thoughts. She knelt down, and committed her case to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. The text seemed fastened to her memory, and, despite of every effort, she could not banish it from her mind. Yet, thought Ann, it is God's word; and she read the Psalm in which the text is contained. It was, she thought, a beautiful Psalm; but many verses in it appeared to her more suited to her condition than this. Again she prayed; hoping that, while presenting her supplications she might forget it, but with no better success. Still she endeavoured to encourage her drooping heart with the belief of the efficacy of earnest, persevering prayer, and continued her occupation, alternately wrestling in prayer and reading her Bible, until midnight.

Indeed, early dawn found her engaged at the same employment, as at length daylight appeared through the little casement, when a loud impatient rap was heard at the door.

"Who's there?" said Ann.

A voice from without answered, "A friend."

"But who is 'a friend?' replied she, "What are you?"

"I'm a drover; and quick, mistress, and open the door, and come out and help me. And if there's a man in the house, tell him also to come out with all speed, for one of my cattle has fallen down a precipice, and broken its leg, and it is lying at *your door*."

On opening the door, what was the first object that met the astonished gaze of Ann? A large drove of cattle, from the Highlands of Scotland. As far as the eye could reach in either direction the road was black with the moving mass which the man was driving on to a market in the south. And there lay the disabled beast, its leg broken—the poor drover standing by, looking ruefully over it—his faithful *colley* dog by his side, gazing up, as if in sympathy with his master, and as if he understood his dilemma, and knew also that his services could now be of no avail.

The worthy couple were concerned for the poor drover, and evinced every willingness to assist him in his misfortune, had it been in their power. He, in his turn, felt at a loss to know how he should dispose of the animal, and paused to consider what course he ought to pursue. But the more he thought over the catastrophe, the more his perplexity increased.

To drive on the maimed beast was obviously impossible. To sell it there seemed equally so. At a distance from a market, it would not be easy to find a purchaser; and, by remaining in that place long enough to do so, he must like-

riches and the joys of the spirit, are, even on earth united to the glorious company of wise and faithful souls, and enter ever more and more into the heavenly treasures and the joys which it has not entered into the heart of the worldling or the sensualist to conceive.

In brief, then, we find that the criticism supposed to be hostile to the belief in Special Providence and Prayer, is only so to a certain mode of statement of that belief,—to the terms in which it is sometimes set forth, and which by different persons are employed in different senses;—that, at most, it is but the correction of an erroneous conception some may entertain of the

wise detain the whole herd of cattle, which would incur more expense than the animal was worth.

What was to be done? The drover drew his Highland plaid tighter round him. He shifted and replaced his bonnet from one side of his head to the other. "I never," he at length exclaimed, "was more completely brought to my wit's end in my life;" and then turning to Ann, he added, "'Deed, mistress, I must just make you a present of it; for in truth I don't know what else I can do with it; so kill it, and take care of it, for it is a principal beast. I'll answer for it a mart—(see NOTE)—like *that* has never come within your door." And, without waiting for thanks, he whistled on his dog and joined the herd, which was soon seen moving slowly on its weary journey.

The poor cottagers were lost in wonder at this unexpected deliverance from famine, by so signal an interposition of Providence. They had meat sufficient to serve them for many months to come, and in their first joy they totally forgot that they had *no bread*. But He who commanded the ravens to bring to the prophet "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening," did not forget it. God does not work by halves. About six o'clock in the morning, another knock was heard at the door, which this time flew quickly open, when who should present himself but the "grieve," or bailiff, of Lady Kilmarnock (who lived at some miles distance), with a load on his back. Of course, the astonishment of Ann was great, as she asked him what could bring him thus at that early hour. "Allow me," said he, "to enter and to relieve my shoulders of my burden, and *my conscience too*."

He then proceeded to relate how Lady Kilmarnock sent for him the previous morning, to inquire "if anything had happened to Ann Young." To which he replied, that he was not aware that she had met with any calamity, and that when he last heard of her and her family, they were all well. "Then," said her ladyship, "she must be *in want*; for these few days she has been incessantly in my thoughts. I cannot get her out of my head; and I am sure she is in distress. So take a sack of meal to her,—a large one, too, and take it directly. You had better convey it yourself, that it may be safely delivered to her, and bring me word how she is; for I know she would almost starve before she applied for relief." "I fully intended," added the bailiff, "to have brought it yesterday, as Lady Kilmarnock desired; but being more than usually busy throughout that day, I could not find leisure to come, but determined that my first employment this morning would be to fetch it to you."

I have given what I think is even a more striking instance of Special Providence than the above in the article on "Special Providences" to which I have already referred—*Spiritual Magazine*, Vol. IV., page 548.

NOTE.—At that time the labourers in Scotland seldom ate butcher-meat during summer, but at the beginning of winter it was customary to kill a cow. Generally two families joined in the purchase of it, or two or three sheep, for the winter's provender, which was carefully salted for that purpose. This was called "the mart," an abbreviation for Martinmas, being the time of year when the purchase was made.

Divine *mode of operation* in Providence and in answer to prayer,—perhaps only of a loose and faulty definition;—by no means a slight service, for a faulty definition where it does not originate in, tends toward a faulty conception. But this error (if such it be) is far less serious than that which rejects not only the definition, but the thing intended to be defined, and which in this case is a truth of gravest import.

In a future paper we hope to recur to this line of thought in its bearing on the question of Miracles.

T. S.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE LATE SIR DAVID BREWSTER:

IN a biographical notice of the late Sir David Brewster, the *Morning Post* remarks, "His *Natural Magic* was a companion volume to Sir W. Scott's *Demonology and Witchcraft*, and, despite Sir David's skill, by no means explains the legends recounted in Sir Walter's book. It is to be regretted that Sir David, when he had the opportunity, should have refused to investigate phenomena the first sight of which greatly astonished him, and concerning which he unfortunately was led to make contradictory statements." Not only did Sir David "unfortunately make contradictory statements" in reference to these phenomena, but some of his statements were contradicted at the time in the public press by Mr. William Cox, of Jermyn Street, at whose hotel, and in whose presence the phenomena occurred, by Mrs. Trollope, the well-known authoress, and by Mr. Benjamin Coleman, who were also present. More than this, Lord Brougham, who accompanied Sir David, took notes of what occurred, and these differed so widely from the account published by Sir David, that the latter was in great fear lest Lord Brougham should publish his notes, and earnestly implored him to withhold their publication, asking him what the world would think when it found that two sensible men could not agree in their accounts of what they saw. It is to be regretted that Lord Brougham had the weakness to comply with Sir David's request, but as his lordship is now preparing his autobiography for publication, it is to be hoped that these notes will appear in the work as his lordship wrote them. A full account of Sir David Brewster's conduct in relation to Spiritualism will be found in the Appendix to Home's *Incidents in My Life*.

ROME.

According to the obvious teachings of Christianity, both in the letter and spirit, it is idle to talk of a corrupt city like Rome, swarming with filthy beggars, groaning with political prisoners, and ruled by priestly tyranny and superstition, backed by an armed force, as the capital of Christendom. It is folly to speak of a good-natured but weak old man who, figuratively speaking, has no head upon his shoulders, being altogether behind the intelligence of the age, as the head of the Christian world and the head of the spiritual world. It is preposterous to say that Christian nations and Christian governments, which in truth are not to be found upon earth, are bound by the obligations of duty even to go to war if necessary, to keep the Pope in his position as sovereign of Rome. It is manifestly untrue that a temporal kingdom is indispensably necessary for the free and efficient discharge of spiritual duties. It is monstrous and outrageous to assert that the power of a weak old priest, who durst not for the life of him, after Count Rossi had been shot, proceed with his reform projects, is the power of God; and it is a perversion of truth, to apply to a timid old man, who once ran away from Rome from fear of his life, and who is only kept in his place by military force, the text of Scripture: "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder" (*Matt. xxi., 44*). Yet, I do not wonder that a great number of benevolent English people are Roman Catholics. Orthodox religious tenets are professedly incomprehensible in the ranks of Protestantism, where the Protestant principle of the right of private judgment is practically denied, and the Romish principle of speaking and arguing only in favour of pre-established tenets is practically insisted upon, anxious and timid minds unable to understand the doctrines that are set forth, blindly throw themselves into the arms of the Church that professes to be infallible.—*The Rev. W. Hume Rothery.*

SHAKING OF THE DRY BONES.

The Anthropological mind is being "exercised," as the Methodists would say, on the subject of Spiritualism. Following in the wake of the Society in London, the Anthropological Society of Manchester have held a numerously attended meeting, at which a paper was read by its president, Mr. G. Harris, F.S.A., on "The tests applicable to the truth of supernatural visitations." This paper, and the discussion which followed, were extremely interesting; we hope to give a Report of both in our next number.

We are informed that members of the Anthropological Society in London contemplate the appointment of a Committee to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism. This is gratifying as evidence that Anthropologists are gentlemen of enquiring mind, who, finding that these facts have during the last twenty years convinced about as many millions of people, are beginning to think it just possible that there may be some truth in the facts which have led to this conviction. With a view to assist the Committee, we beg to offer the following suggestion:—

We have a strong opinion that in such an investigation, the members of an inquiring committee should read as well as see, and make up their minds as to the value of other people's evidence and testimony, if they expect their own report to be of any value as testimony and evidence, after they have made it.

The range of phenomena within the possible reach of any individual or committee is so much less than the whole that it is not giving the subject a fair chance to submit only a few phases of it, and those, too, to be obtained only under the worst possible conditions.

To obtain a more extended knowledge of these phenomena than could possibly come under their personal observation, the Committee might invite all members of the Society (and other educated persons) to communicate any facts within their own personal knowledge bearing on the subject.

The facts thus obtained might be classified according to the phenomena to which they relate (a good example will be found in the "Circular of a Society, instituted by Members of the University of Cambridge, for the purpose of investigating phenomena, popularly called Supernatural;" and which is given in the Appendix to Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of another World*), and a careful and thorough examination be instituted into the evidence of the several kinds of phenomena.

Perhaps, the group of phenomena connected with Mesmerism would offer the best point for a commencement, as being the most obvious connecting link between the physical and the psychical.

Whatever judgment the Committee might form, an investigation of this kind fairly conducted, could not fail to add to the general stock of knowledge on matters of considerable interest and importance.

THE REV. MR. SPEKE AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

On the 19th of January, on my return home, I found a note from a Mr. Lance, in which he said, "I wish to consult you on a matter of the greatest importance, and as speedily as possible,

you being in your clairvoyant state. I therefore propose calling on you this afternoon at four o'clock. I would not have given you such short notice, had it not been a matter in which life or death is concerned. I may say that I have on a former occasion witnessed your power, and I have heard much more of you from Mrs. Hoskins, a daughter of Sir G. Robinson." At four o'clock the gentleman called again, with Mr. Murdoch, the relative of Mr. Speke. When I was told the nature of the consultation I was inclined to refuse, because for many years I have kept the little lucidity I have for the benefit of my patients. But they appeared so pressing that I consented to give the *séance*. It happened that Dr. Dixon was here to consult me for one of his patients. Therefore, the magnetiser was at hand also.

The result of the *séance* was as follows: "Nothing has happened to him—he is alive—he is alone—the idea of disappearing was sudden—he has not disgraced himself—he has gone to the South of England—he will be heard of very soon."

When the gentlemen left they said, "We only hope, Monsieur Didier, that what you have said may prove true."

Considering that I had nothing to establish the *rapport magnetique* but the hand of Mr. Murdoch, it was a proof of the somnambule lucidity.

ADOLPHE DIDIER.

19, Fitzroy Street, W.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF SHELLEY THE POET, AND
LORD BYRON.

"I have often heard Shelley say, "The poet is a different being from the rest of the world. Imagination steals over him, he knows not from where. Images float before him,—he knows not their home. Struggling and contending powers are engendered within him, which no outward impulse, no inward passion awakened. He utters sentiments he never meditated. He creates persons whose original he has never seen; but he cannot command the power that called them out of nothing. He must wait till the God or demon genius breathes them into him. He has higher powers than the generality of men, and the most distinguished abilities, but he is possessed by a little higher power. He prescribes laws, he overturns customs and opinions, he begins and ends an epoch like a God, but he is a blind, obedient, officiating priest in the temple of God."

Byron also was fully indued with this persuasion, for he says:—"Poetry is a distinct faculty of the soul, and has no more to do with the every-day individual, than the inspirations of the Pythoness when removed from the tripod." In his *Essay on*

Poetry, Shelley more fully develops this sentiment, and says:—
 “Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts on the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpet that sounds to battle, and feels not what it inspires; the influence which is moved, but moves not. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world! They measure the circumference, and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive, all-penetrating spirit, at the manifestations of which they are themselves, perhaps, the most sincerely astonished.”—*Medwin's Life of Shelley*, Vol. II., p. 144.

BIRDS AS CONNECTED WITH DEATH.

Amongst the numerous curious anecdotes of birds as appearing at the window of sick chambers, and even in the chambers themselves before death, and in other circumstances of a like nature, there is one which deserves mention as occurring at the burning of the body of the poet Shelley, near Lerici, in the Bay of Spezzia. It is related in *Medwin's Life of Shelley*, Vol. II., p. 286:—

“Lord Byron, with some soldiers of the Coastguard, stood about the burning pyre; and Leigh Hunt, whose feelings and nerves could not carry him through the scene of horror, lying back in the carriage; the four post-horses panting with the heat of the sun, and the fierceness of the fire. The solemnness of the whole ceremony was the more felt by the shrieks of a solitary curlew, which, perhaps attracted by the corpse, wheeled in narrow circles round the pile, so narrow that it might have been struck by the hand. The bird was so fearless that it could not be driven away.”

“LE SALUT.”—CURES BY DR. NEWTON.

Numbers III. and IV. of “*Le Salut* (Salvation), published by an Association of Spiritualists at New Orleans,” has just reached us. It is published bi-monthly (and will be issued weekly as soon as arrangements permit) in eight pages, four in French, and four in English, and so arranged that they form two distinct papers. It is to be “an advocate of Spiritualism in its broadest sense,” embracing material, as well as moral and spiritual reforms, and expounding the ideas and teachings of Spiritualism, and recording its progress. We learn from it that Dr. Newton has been at New Orleans, treating successfully (and

for the most part gratuitously) a large number of cases. We quote the following:—

As we were in the doctor's office, the two following persons called nearly together to express their thanks for the good they had received:—

John Knight, 94, Notre Dame Street, nearly total blindness, and general health much impaired. He could not read the largest size letters of a poster. He read a small card which happened to be on the table. John has an arm amputated. He said that, since the doctor operated on him, not only his health was much improved, but he *felt* as if the lost arm was restored, and he could move his fingers.

Mrs. Rebecca Helfrich, 220, Derigny Street. Great inflammation of the eyes, extending all around on the face. Total blindness. She could not walk alone, and was brought to the doctor's office. The next day she was enabled to go home alone; and when we saw her, no trace of inflammation appeared, and she was going, basket in hand, to buy her marketings, unassisted by anybody.

Mrs. Mary H. Barnes, Jefferson City, had a very bad rheumatism. She had been a sufferer and invalid for many years. She was carried into the doctor's office, and, after his treatment, she went back to her carriage, and stepped into it without assistance. She is now cured.

We witnessed the two following cases:—

Miss Margaret Truckwell, of Algiers, La., was brought to the office by a lady friend. Her attendant had to speak very loud to make her hear. After three minutes' treatment, she could hear the smallest whisper, and she went forth rejoicing.

Mrs. Burke, corner St. Thomas and Edwards Streets, had a sore foot that she had not put on the ground for three years. She walked with a crutch. The doctor made her quit her crutch, and walk around the office. In ten minutes she went off, and is now cured.

We know of many more cases that we will publish in our next number.

Notwithstanding that Parliament is sitting and the consequent pressure on newspaper space, the daily and weekly journals continue to report incidents of spirit manifestation, of which specimens are attached:—

“SPIRIT RAPPING. (?)

“*To the Editor of the Reading Mercury.*”

“SIR,—Will you please give the following account a place in your Paper?—At Pishill Bank, mid-way between Henlÿ and Watlington, in an old house, lives J. Beisly, a man about 73 years of age, his housekeeper, who is a cripple, and a young girl, aged about 14 years. Beisly has resided in the house undisturbed about 53 years, but for the last eighteen days the inmates have been continually alarmed by rapping on the front and inner doors: upon the doors being opened no one is to be seen; the rapping is continued at irregular intervals through the afternoon and evening: at first the family thought that it was some person playing a trick upon them, and Beisly and a neighbour loaded a pistol and gun and fired out at the front door, but as soon as the door was again shut the rapping was repeated with increased violence; from that time the occupants of the house have ceased to consider it caused by human agency. On hearing of these facts from Beisly (on whose veracity I could rely), I went myself to the house, accompanied by a respectable neighbour, and looked thoroughly over the premises to see if it were possible to solve the mystery. While in the garden in front of the house, we heard ‘rap rap’ on the front door. We then moved towards the door, and again came the ‘rap rap;’ my friend opened the front door, and whilst he had the door in his hand, there came the ‘rap rap’ on the inner

door; he then went in the room and sat down, and I remained outside. The 'rap rap' was again repeated; he then came out and I went in and took a seat close to the door, and then again there was the clear and distinct 'rap' three or four times. We came away both satisfied that it was no human trick. I have been several times since, and have heard the rapping very loud on the door; I have also heard rappings upstairs and at the end of the house. A number of persons who have visited the house have also heard the same noise, and although some have accused those residing therein of being the cause of the mystery, there has been no discovery made up to the present time to prove it a trick.

"I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

"Pishill Farm, Feb. 13th, 1868."

"S. LOVEGROVE.

A WELSH GHOST.

Wales has always been noted for its ghosts, fairies and knocking spirits. A very recent instance of ghostly haunting at Abernant, near Aberdare, is going the round of the papers. The *People's Journal* (Dundee), of March 7th, under the above heading, tells us that the ghost is "locally certified as the spirit of the deceased wife of a workman who had threatened her husband before her death that she would haunt him if he ill-treated her children, and who seems to have had reason for keeping her word. The spiritual influence is chiefly manifested by jugs, chairs and tables jumping about in the house; but the ex-parish constable, who was sent for to lay the ghost, was made the subject of a different manifestation. In reply to a solemn request, he received a blow with a stone, and was laid himself instead of laying the ghost. The police were sent for, and they tied deceased's daughter's hands, thinking she was at the bottom of the affair, but the latest accounts say the ghost continues its manifestations."

Reynolds's Newspaper, of the 15th of March, contains the following:—

"A REMARKABLE VISION.

"A young German lady (still living) had arrived with a party of friends at one of the most renowned hotels in Paris, and occupied an apartment on the first floor, furnished with unusual magnificence. Here she lay awake, long after the hotel was wrapt in slumber, contemplating by the faint glimmer of her night-lamp, the costly ornaments of the room, until, suddenly, the folding doors, opposite her bed, which she had secured, flew open, and the chamber was filled with a bright light, as of day. In the midst of this, there entered a handsome young man, in the undress uniform of the French navy, having his hair dressed in the peculiar mode *à la Titus*. Taking a chair from the bed-

side, he placed it in the middle of the room; sat down, took from his pocket a pistol with a remarkable red butt and lock, put it to his forehead, and, firing, fell back apparently dead! Simultaneously with the explosion, the room became dark and still, but a low, soft voice uttered these words—‘Say a word for his soul.’ The young lady had fallen back, not insensible, but in a far more painful state—a kind of cataleptic trance, and thus remained fully conscious of all she imagined to have occurred, but unable to move tongue or hand, until seven o’clock on the following morning, at which hour her maid, in obedience to orders, knocked at the door. Finding that no reply was given, the maid went away, and returning at eight in company with another domestic, repeated her summons. Still no answer, and again, after a little consultation, the poor young lady was delivered over for another hour to her agonized thoughts. At nine, the doors were forced—and, at the same moment, the power of speech and movement returned. She shrieked out to the attendants that a man had shot himself there some hours before, and still lay upon the floor. Observing nothing unusual, they concluded it was the excitement consequent upon some terrible dream. She was therefore placed in another apartment, and with great difficulty persuaded that the scene she so minutely described had no foundation in reality. Half an hour later, the hotel proprietor desired an interview with a gentleman of the party, and declared that the scene so strangely re-enacted had actually occurred three nights before. A young French officer had ordered the best room in the hotel, and there terminated his life—using, for the purpose, a pistol answering the description mentioned. The body, and the pistol, still lay at the Morgue (dead house) for identification, and the gentleman, proceeding thither, saw both; the head of the unfortunate man exhibiting the ‘Titus’ crop and the wound in the forehead, as in the vision.”

“SPIRIT-RAPPING AND TABLE-TURNING.”

Under this head, the *Northampton Herald*, of March 4th, has the following; which furnishes an instructive instance of how the facts of modern Spiritualism carry conviction even where it is least welcome, and where the mind’s eye is still covered with the thickest scales of theological prejudice. In this case, the old cry of “evil spirits” is avowedly raised to prevent investigation, and we submit that this is much stronger evidence of the “evil spirit” of Sectarianism, than Dr. Scott either has given or can give of “diabolical agency,”—the recognised priestly method of

“accounting for facts which could not be got rid of”—but the thorough investigation of which it fears would be fatal to its influence.

For some months past spirit-rapping, table-turning, &c., has been the topic of much discussion and experiment in this town and neighbourhood, especially amongst the artizan class. Large numbers of persons have become converts to it, and *séances* are held nightly in various parts of the town. The subject has taken so deep a hold on the minds of many that the Bishop and Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in this town have thought it desirable to warn the members of their Church against any participation in the *séances* that are now so common, and on Thursday night a lecture on the subject was delivered by the Rev. Canon Scott, in the School-room in Woolmonger-street, the Bishop being present.

Dr. Scott gave an interesting history of the rise and progress of spirit-rapping in America and in Europe, and read an account, published a few years since in the pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*, of one or two *séances* at which the writer was present. . . . Many persons said spirit-rapping was all humbug and nonsense, but persons who said so were either those who knew nothing about it, or those who did but who would not acknowledge preternatural agency. . . . The *Cornhill* was fiercely attacked for having published such an account, but Dr. Gully, of Malvern, the eminent medical man, wrote to the newspapers the next day and corroborated the account in the *Cornhill*, stating that he was present, and that the account of what took place was a truthful one.

A committee of literary and scientific men was appointed to investigate the phenomena, and the conclusion at which they arrived was, that the facts could not be denied or explained. They had been asked, but had refused, to publish the evidence on which they had formed their opinion. They did not venture to do so. The facts could not be denied, but men were so unwilling to believe in the supernatural that they would not believe the phenomena to be the work of spirits. Indeed, one gentleman, who admitted the facts, said he would not believe in a miracle if it was worked before his eyes. He believed, he said, in Christianity, and the miracles recorded in the Scripture, but he believed the miracles because of Christianity, not Christianity because of the miracles. The facts could not be got rid of, and how were they to be accounted for? By diabolical agency. The supernatural and the preternatural had existed in all ages of the world. Instances of it were to be found in all parts of the Old Testament and of the New; and God, in Holy Scripture, had forbidden dealings with evil spirits. It was not in Holy Scripture only that they read of it. Tertullian and the early fathers wrote of it, and in their controversies with the heathen, appealed as a proof of the veracity of their religion, that they had exorcised the evil spirits from those who were brought to them. The same things were done then which were done now. Persons were put in mesmeric sleep, the spirits of the dead were said to be called up, and all the phenomena that were witnessed now were witnessed then. What was taking place now had been predicted in Holy Scripture, and was to have been expected. These were the “lying wonders” that were to come. The spirits, however, by whom these phenomena were wrought were not the spirits of dead relations but evil spirits, and Christian men and women ought not to have anything to do with them. Catholics must avoid being present even at any of their meetings. Not only was dealing with evil spirits forbidden in Holy Scripture, but any connection with spirit-rapping, &c., was denounced as mortal sin by the Church.

At the conclusion of the lecture a vote of thanks was given to Dr. Scott, on the motion of the Bishop (the Right Rev. Dr. Amherst), who repeated what Dr. Scott had said, that any connection with spirit-rapping was, in the eyes of the Church, a mortal sin.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE SHAKERS.

THE *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland, U. S. A.) contains a letter signed "JAS. S. PRESCOTT, *North Union*, Sept. 18th, 1867," from which we take the following:—

"These manifestations of 'departed spirits,' coming in and taking possession of instruments, of both sexes, and holding converse with those in the body, commenced at North Union in August, 1838, ten years previous to the 'Rochester Rappings,' in small children of both sexes, who were entirely incapable of working any deception, or making the astonishing gifts which came through them.

"They continued for eight years or more in succession, and every individual among us, from the eldest to the youngest, male and female, whose physical organization would admit of mediumship, were used as instruments, to speak and act for the 'spirits'—and the only regret was that we had not instruments enough to take them in, for it was the greatest manifestation we ever expected to witness on earth.

"They came from all nations—from Europe, Asia, Africa, China, Japan, from North and South America, and from the islands of the sea, and they pitched their tents around us; and to us it was the greatest camp meeting ever known on the Continent of America. They came from Spain, Portugal, Arabia, Norway, Sweden, Lapland, and thousands of the Aborigines of our own country, and great numbers from Brazil, in South America, and so great was the crowd that if we had had a thousand mediums we could not any more than have supplied the demand, nor hardly have begun to do so."

In confirmation of the above statement we may mention that in 1843 a small volume was published in Philadelphia, entitled—*A Return of Departed Spirits of the highest character of distinction, as well as the indiscriminate of all nations into the Bodies of the "Shakers," or "United Society of Believers."* By an ASSOCIATE OF THE SAID SOCIETY. An extract from this work is given in Mr. Brevior's *Two Worlds*, page 167.

Correspondence.

A SEANCE AT MR. EVERITT'S.

February 20th, 1868.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I had heard many accounts of the interesting *séances* which have now been held for many years at the house of Mr. Everitt, Penton Street, Pentonville, referred to by Mr. Coleman in the last number of this magazine (p. 83), and of which a short account was given by Mr. Everitt himself, p. 238, Vol. II., New Series; I therefore gladly accepted an invitation to be present at a *séance* there on Tuesday, Feb. 18th. Several well-known Spiritualists were there, fourteen persons in all. The circle was a very harmonious one, though several were there for the first time. Mrs. E— is the principal medium at this circle, which it should be understood is altogether a private one, and in which no person concerned has any interest beyond that which the subject itself inspires.

The *séance* opened with the reading of a chapter from the New Testament, immediately after which a lady visitor—a well-known inspirational speaker, offered an inspirational prayer appropriate to the occasion, and to the portion of Scripture that had just been read. After singing, the light was extinguished, and we were addressed by a voice which held conversation with us for about two hours; consisting chiefly of answers to our various questions. These answers, I may say, in brief, were all characterized by religious feeling, modesty, and good sense. They appeared to give very general satisfaction; the speaker did not profess to know everything; occasionally replying to a question, "That is not within my experience;" or, "I should require to give to that matter further consideration." The voice, I may remark, though not loud, was clear, distinct, and pleasing, indicating, to my mind at least, a gentle affectionate nature. This voice, which was transmitted through a tube or roll of cartridge paper, was evidently a male voice, while at the end of the table whence it came only ladies were seated.

During the evening twinkling, luminous points were distinctly visible to some—though not all present; and spirit-forms were seen, among others, that of a boy standing near the medium, and which, from the description given, appeared to be that of a brother of Mrs. E—, who early in life had passed into the spirit-world.

The lady visitor to whom I have referred was also sensible of the presence of two of her spirit-guardians, and, at her request, certain signal sounds were given by them respectively, by which she always identified them. One of these spirits was that of an Indian chief, and we were startled by the Indian war-whoop, twice given during the evening. It was a short, sharp, piercing cry, not soon forgotten, nor easily imitable. This was followed by clear sonorous sounds on the table—in perfect time, admirably imitating the beating of the war-drum, the sounds at first loud, then fainter, and still fainter till almost inaudible, as dying in the distance; then as if marching round, increasing in volume as they came nearer, and ending with a triumphant flourish. At request, this was repeated. Then we all heard sounds as of mocassined feet beating dance-time on the floor, which sensibly vibrated, under the impact.

Our conversation with the spirit-voice (which had been suspended for this manifestation) was then resumed, and the voice described the appearance and movements of the Indian spirit. It spoke of the varieties of spirit-life, and of usefulness in this world as the best preparation for the next. A lady sang "Angels ever bright and fair;" and the voice accompanied her; and concluded with the scriptural benediction—"The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

I should add we were told that on a previous occasion, the spirit informed the circle that his departure from one sphere to another was represented by riding on a horse. When the *séance* concluded we all plainly heard sounds as of the receding tramp of a horse upon the floor of the room.

Yours, &c.,
T. S.

Since the above was written, we have received the following from Mr. Everitt:—

26, Penton Street, Pentonville,
February 22nd, 1868.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—The following are a few facts in connection with our spirit circle:—In the first place, I may here state that we are now always directed by spirit intelligence as to when and where we shall hold our *séances*; sometimes we are told whom we are to invite, and it is pleasing to know that this is done with an evident knowledge of, and consideration for, my business and other engagements.

I wish that some one who attends our meetings, and whose powers of description are more graphic than mine, would send you some account of the interesting conversations and communications that are given "*audibly*" by spirits. "John Watt" is the name of the spirit who attends our *séances*, and speaks to us more than any other spirit, and whose individuality and identity has, by the last three months' experience, been proved to my mind most conclusively. In more ways than it is possible for me to enumerate here, he has identified himself with the best interests of the mediums, and he tells us that it is his special privilege to have charge of this circle.

He has informed us that he has been in the other world, according to our reckoning, about 30 years; that he was ill about six months, and died of consumption; that he was (when in this world) an engineer, and helped to get out the plans for the first line of railway from London Bridge to Greenwich.

On one occasion, a medium who was a seer, described what he saw at our *séance*. He said we appeared to be sitting under a blue dome, round the bottom of which was a gold band; and at the top was an opening with another gold band round it, and over this opening was a reddish cloud, in which appeared a beautiful, angelic face; that, we were told, of the presiding angel at our circle, and, it was added, the spirit who is speaking looks up to him when he wants any information, and sometimes hesitates in answering us till he gets permission.

When having a *séance* at Mrs. Berry's, "John Watt" said, "I wish you had a seer here to describe the glorious sight over you." We asked him if he could not tell us. "Well," he said, "if your spiritual sight was opened, you would see a beautiful blue dome, like the dome of a cathedral, filled with stars, but which are angelic faces; and at the top is the presiding angel. Ah! it is a glorious sight; I wish you could see it."

We have asked him about the seasons in the spirit world; he says, "that every one lives in the temperature that proceeds from himself, and which is therefore best suited to his state." He said, "The sun never sets, it always appears in the east; and, strange as it may seem, to whichever quarter the angels are going, their faces are always turned towards it; they have no night,—but morning, noon, and evening."

I will now give you an account of the most remarkable *séance* it has ever been my happiness to witness.

Mrs. E—, this evening, had a most violent head-ache, and when "John Watt" came, he said, "Good evening, friends, I see your medium is out of condition, I shall not be able to stay long." We asked him if he could not remove the head-ache; he said, "I will try." He took the tube and made passes over Mrs. E—'s head, which soon removed the pain. He then said, "Mr. Everitt, you have a message for me, have you not?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I know all about it; go on Friday." And after he had arranged our meetings for the following week, Mrs. E— exclaimed "There's a beautiful light!" We looked, and all saw a light rising towards the centre of the room, like the moon in its

first quarter; it moved across the room and disappeared; then arose from the same place, and ascended to the ceiling, a most beautiful constellation of stars, as many as ten or twelve in number, all twinkling brightly, appearing and disappearing so that it was impossible to count them from the quickness of their motion; then came a comet like Halley's with two streams of light diverging from the head, and another, and another; so that there were several of them near the centre of the room. And then, in another part of the room, a much larger light appeared, and remained near the ceiling; in front of it there was a dark embankment of clouds, and from behind them this light streamed up continuously, similar to what may be seen sometimes before the rising of the sun. This we were told represented the dawning of Spiritualism; and it is worthy of remark, that the heads of the comets were turned towards this great light.

"John Watt" kept asking us how we liked the lights, and told us to keep our eyes open, as we should see more wonders; and so it was, something fresh was continually presented—a spirit hand, a spirit arm, a spirit form, was seen to pass through the light, or appear above our heads. The lights were seen for full an hour by the 12 persons who were present, and who testify to the truth of this statement. "John Watt" told us that we should in time see spirits and angels in that light which they themselves produce. At his suggestion we then concluded the *séance* with prayer.

I append the names and addresses of those present; namely,—

Mr. & Mrs. Everitt, 26, Penton Street, Pentonville.

Mr. Charles Everitt,

Mr. White, 30, Rahere Street, Goswell Road.

Mrs. Wise,

Mr. Jones, 34, Rahere Street, Goswell Road.

Miss Jones,

Mr. Towns, 32, Lloyd's Row, St. John Street Road.

Mr. Davis, Old Street Road.

Mrs. Ridley, 11, Brunswick Square, Hackney Road.

Mrs. Childs, 21, Offord Road, Caledonian Road.

Mrs. Sparey, 3, Cambridge Place, Kingsland Road.

Yours faithfully,

THOS. EVERITT.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—After a careful perusal of the defence in your last number, which the writer of the review of Mr. Harris's new works gives of some of his statements, in your number for January, I feel myself uncalled upon, by the facts of the case, to modify any sentence in my former letter. I deliberately re-affirm every statement I have made. If, indeed, my allegation had been that he was the original inventor of certain charges against Mr. Harris, which it was not, his last article would have shewn that I was mistaken, and that he was only the last of a series, but nothing beyond in justification of the statements made; and still more especially nothing in justification of the passage I selected for criticism. I will, therefore, cheerfully leave that part of the subject, as it stands, to the judgment of your intelligent readers.

In the interest, however, of celestial Spiritualism, I do feel called upon to notice a somewhat curious passage, involving, as it seems to me, an utter misunderstanding of Mr. Harris's position in relation to open breathing. The writer says—"Mr. Robson says that Mr. Harris's career reveals a new Spiritualism. We are at a loss to conceive in what this consists. It cannot be the discovery of the inner breathing, for we have shewn that it was known to Swedenborg long before, and to Jacob Böhme still earlier," &c., &c., p. 122.

Now admitting that Swedenborg was intromitted into the state of open breathing, it is, I think, beyond doubt, by any one who has studied his writings

that, with him the state was, as many other of his experiences were, only temporary, granted to him for some present purpose, and suspended when that purpose was accomplished. But, with Mr. Harris, this state of open breathing, with its associated powers, *has become an organic fact*; and is at once the text and measure and reward of his past and present faithfulness to duty and to God; as in the new age it is to be to unnumbered millions of the human race. Mr. Harris is the first, in point of time, who has received this gift from the Lord in its fulness as an organic fact, since the period when it was withdrawn from the inhabitants of this earth, which, according to Swedenborg's testimony, was at the time of the flood; and so its renewal now in this form of organic fact becomes the dividing line of the ages, the herald and sign of the advent of the new, and of the beginning of the end of the old. For, be it remembered, that Mr. Harris teaches that the gift is to become universal, opening a door of permanent divine communication between the receiver and the Lord.

Already it has been received in some or other of its degrees by many who are independent witnesses of its truth and reality, in America, in Europe, and in Asia,—first fruits of the great harvest of organic righteousness soon to ripen on the earth. And so my counsel to the reviewer is that of Gamaliel of old, "Repair from these men and let them alone. If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found ever to be fighting against God."

Yours faithfully,

W. ROBSON.

With great respect for Mr. Robson, we give his letter, and there leave the question. We have put our views of Mr. Harris's writings fully before our readers and from assurances received from many quarters, much to their satisfaction. We have stated our views of the inner breathing with perfect distinctness, and as Mr. Robson must have seen, with this difference from Mr. Harris, that whereas, Mr. Harris, according to Mr. Robson, teaches that "this gift is to become universal," we assert it to be universal now, and to have been so from the creation downwards. We have to apologize to some of our readers for quoting a few stanzas from Mr. Harris's "Song of Satan," in order to shew its real character. One clergyman, a sound Spiritualist, assures us that he was so horrified at the passages that he cut them out of the Magazine, and instantly burnt them lest any of his family should see them. If half a dozen stanzas of this *Carmen infernale* be so shocking to right-minded people, what must the whole composition be? We are quite willing to follow Mr. Robson's and Gamaliel's advice with regard to the New Brotherhood, for as it appears, by the statement of one of its members, that it consists of "half a dozen" individuals, it can not be worth much consideration any way. *Requiescat in pace*. We have received another letter on this subject from Dr. S., but have not space for it. [ED.]

LECTURE ON MODERN SPIRITUALISM.—On Wednesday, March 18th, Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE gave a Lecture on "Modern Spiritualism," at the Cambridge Hall, Newman Street, at which nearly a thousand persons were present. The Lecture was listened to with marked attention; and at its close several questions were asked which were answered by the Lecturer, and apparently gave general satisfaction. It was announced that Mrs. Hardinge would lecture again at the same place, Wednesday, April the 1st, at 8 o'clock, on "Spirit Mediums." We understand that it is contemplated to make arrangements for Mrs. Hardinge to Lecture on Spiritualism in various parts of the Metropolis. We know of no one so well qualified for this work, and with a little co-operation much might be done in this way to make the truths of Spiritualism better known amongst us.