

Life,—and its Issues.

SPIRITUAL MONTHLY

AND LYCEUM RECORD.

J. H. POWELL, EDITOR.

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The Spiritual Monthly.

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INAUGURAL.

IN accordance with a time-honored salutary custom, we offer an inaugural. First, because we deem it proper to start friends with the reader; second, because this is the proper place to make known our programme, so that the reader may know what to expect in future numbers of the magazine. We shall aim at all times to present the needed rather than the fanciful idea, remembering that our work is in the field of progress and not merely in the pathway of fiction, although when called upon, we shall wield the pen of fiction in the interest of progress, and thus, whilst we interest, aim to instruct the reader.

Spiritualism, "the great fact of the age," is spreading rapidly in all countries. Indeed, this could not be otherwise, for its marvelous phenomena are made manifest wherever mediums exist, and they exist the world over.

It will no longer do, in presence of its astounding facts, to pooh-pooh, turn away in disgust, or shout "humbug." The truth *will* make itself known. "Let truth and falsehood grapple." Spiritualism, to us, means *Life, and its issues*. Our definition is concise, yet full of profound meaning. Our programme is based upon this definition.

That which is of life is of God, and belongs to Spiritualism. It is the work of wisdom to garner the grain and sweep away the chaff in the world's granary.

"The Spiritual Monthly and Lyceum Record," therefore, will fail in its purpose, if it fail in practical uses. We trust that inspiration and strength will be ours for the work we feel called upon to perform.

We design to offer a magazine that shall be a welcome guest at the fireside. Whilst aiming to please, we shall aim to avoid all

personal exaltation at the expense of eternal principles. With *justice* for a shield and *humanity* for a motto we shall, if true to the light within, — whatever may be the fate of our Monthly, — realize the joy unspeakable attendant on duty fulfilled. This ought, at all times, to be satisfactory to reformers.

The great need of the hour, in our judgment, is radical reformation. Spiritualism is both conservative and progressive, conserving all that is true and eschewing all that is false. It is the Iconoclast that dashes to pieces the plaster gods of superstition, but it cannot damage a stone in the temple of Eternal Truth.

"The Spiritual Monthly and Lyceum Record" is designed to supply a need. It will avoid party politics, but embrace universal politics, which enter, whether we will or no, into all the avenues of common life. Its base of operations is scientific and essentially practical. That which can be scientifically demonstrated is alone capable of moulding universal conviction. Spiritual phenomena, we contend, are scientific, and capable of being demonstrated to the most logical thinker. We shall deal with facts, trusting to their stubborn reality for results. Next in order comes philosophy. *Cui Bono?* Establish the facts of spirit power — the *Cui Bono* is answered with readiness. Nothing exists without a purpose. Almighty wisdom acts in the fall of a sparrow. It acted in the mind of Newton in the fall of an apple. First, fact; next, philosophy; last, but not least, religion. These naturally belong to Spiritualism. Religion, the one thing needful, is not form, ceremony, Bibles, prayer-books, priests, and popes. These all may exist, and religion, which is love, be exiled from the soul. Religion, like the sun in the heavens, glows in the sky of humanity. It will be our mission to advocate on spiritualistic principles, "pure and undefiled religion." Our road is straight before us. We hope to turn neither to the right nor left, but to press on, obedient to "the truth that maketh free."

The "Lyceum Record," whilst it adds to the usefulness of the magazine, will offer illustrations in abundance of the wisdom originating Children's Progressive Lyceums, and perhaps aid, in some degree, the beautiful work of child-culture.

Our programme is before the reader. Shall we be sustained to carry it out? That is a question time will answer. We have no party or sect to gratify. Our instincts are with truth; our happiness in the service of humanity. Others might perform the work better. We shall do our best, admitting only of such productions as serve the cause of truth and merit the attention of the reader.

We append a more extended summary of the principles we deduce from Spiritualism, which will form the rock upon which we hope to build: —

1st. Spiritualism recognizes God, the Father of all spirits, as the one Supreme Governor of the Universe.

2d. It places no ban on conscience, and holds freedom of thought sacred in every human soul.

3d. It accepts "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" as the text of all its discourses.

4th. It judges not, lest it be judged, the motives of others — whilst it aims to judge the tree by its fruits.

5th. It asks for no servile adhesion to doctrines that lead to exclusiveness, walling out souls for differences of creed.

6th. It aggregates truth wherever found, gathering inspiration from THE GREAT FOUNTAIN SOURCE — and rejects no gospel bearing the signet of divinity.

7th. It repudiates all cant, insincerity, and hypocrisy, — and deems an unpractical religion ungodly.

8th. It calls for devotion to truth on the part of its members as the cardinal article of its faith, and chooses martyrdom, if needs be, in preference to recreancy.

9th. It regards man as a dual being born of God, — born to an immortal inheritance, which Church and State can neither create nor annul.

10th. It further holds the GOLDEN RULE and the NEW COMMANDMENT as essentials to soul-progress.

11th. It maintains that crying, "Lord, Lord," will not suffice to bring heaven down to a man's soul, — but that doing God's will consists in obedience to the soul's highest prompting.

12th. It claims that religion, the "one thing needful," is not a mere Sunday cloak, to be worn only for the day and cast off for the rest of the week, — but that it is a dress that should fit the soul, and be worn every day, in the home, the mart, the senate, and the church.

13th. It does not feign the thing it is not for the sake of appearance. Whilst regarding becoming pride as a virtue, it ignores that "vanity of vanities," which "grows upon what it feeds" in the realm of fashion, to the subjugation of the principles which hallow human character.

14th. It proscribes none who desire communion.

15th. It regards heaven and hell as states of soul, not localities, and believes moral perfection unattainable on earth, yet it inculcates the work of uprightness as man's divine privilege and duty.

16th. It calls for no oath of allegiance to incomprehensible dogmas, but sees in practical religion the simplest and purest truth.

17th. Like Jesus, it regards service to humanity as a work pleasing to God.

18th. The ministry of angels, and the constant presence of "the cloud of witnesses," together with spiritual providences and inspirations in manifold means and ways, are embraced by its Gospel.

19th. It looks to the knowledge of the life that is, and the life to come, as the real saviour of man.

20th. It deems duty to God and man all-important to the True Life, and aims to draw together natures that live for each other.

21st. Holding individualism sanctified by religion as one of its cardinal points, it can only be true to itself by being charitable to all.

J. H. POWELL.

THE SPIRITUALISM OF DICKENS.

THE death of Dickens has directed the eyes of mankind to his life and work.

Rarely do the world's great men achieve the almost universal fame which he won. Nor was this fame reared on mere sensational exploits in the Republic of Letters. Dickens was a solid builder. His castles rest not in air, but on adamant bases.

He had common failings, — who has not? Under the influence of his better moods he wrote, fearless of Mrs. Grundy, in the interest of humanity, and deservedly won the sympathies of his half-a-world of readers.

He was not recognized as a Spiritualist, but, on the contrary, a bitter opponent. Instance the many attacks from his own pen and the pens of others, which appeared in "All the Year Round."

This was manifest in the man's outer life; it was not the faithful copy of his inner being. To get a clear view of the inner Dickens, we must read his works. His pictures are stereoscopic, and glowing with life. In his inspirational moods our great novelist forgot his prejudices, and unconsciously incorporated into his plots the machinery of Spiritualism. Like Shakespeare, and all master creators, he was necessitated to build upon spiritual foundations.

Strange, that genius should depend on spiritual verities in its grandest flights, and yet, as in the case of Dickens, boldly declare utter disbelief in spirit phenomena.

It is pleasing to recall the many beautiful thoughts scattered throughout the works of Dickens on the subject of death. An archangel could not write with more delicacy: —

"The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion. The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion — Death! Oh, thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet of Immortality! *And look upon us, angels of young children with regards not quite estranged when the swift River bears us to the Ocean.* [Dombey.]

We italicise the latter sentence to direct the attention of the reader to the perfect Spiritualism represented. "Angels of young children." Not angels, a distinct order of immortals, as some erudite theologians maintain in the face of the Bible and psychical fact.

Again, we quote from "The Chimes":—

"The spirit of the child, returning innocent and radiant, touched the old man with its hand, and beckoned him away."

What is this but Spiritualism "pure and undefiled"?

"'Now,' he murmured, 'I am happy.' He fell into a light slumber, and, waking, smiled as before; then spoke of beautiful gardens, which he said stretched out before him, and were filled with figures of men, women, and many children, all, with light upon their faces, then whispered that it was 'Eden,' and so died." [Nickleby.]

Here is another passage bearing upon the same theme, which we cannot readily let pass. If it add no weight to the testimony of Dickens against Dickens in favor of Spiritualism compared with the preceding extracts, it will do the reader good, for it is like a wreath of fresh flowers laden with exquisite odors.

"It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would seem, almost, as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may these patient angels hover around us watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered and so soon forgotten."

It is unreasonable to suppose that Dickens could write so beautifully on death and immortality and not himself believe in spirit-life and spirit-influence under proper conditions. But, it will be urged that he was a believer in Christianity, and in presenting the passages we have extracted only proved his devotion to the Christian faith. We are not now discussing the Christianity but Spiritualism of Dickens.

The following singularly beautiful passage from "Our Mutual Friend," recording the quaint inspirations of the little doll's dress-maker, illustrates some of the phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism.

"'Talking of ideas, my Lizzie,' they were sitting side by side as they had sat at first, 'I wonder how it happens that when I am at work, work, working here, all alone in the summer time, I smell flowers.'"

"'As a commonplace individual, I should say,' Eugene suggested languidly, for he was growing weary of the person of the house, 'that you smell flowers because you *do* smell flowers.'"

"'No, I don't,' said the little creature, resting one arm upon the elbow of her chair, resting her chin upon that hand, and looking vacantly before her; 'this is not a flowery neighborhood. It's anything but that. And yet, as I sit at work,

I smell miles of flowers. I smell roses, till I think I see the rose leaves lying in heaps and baskets on the floor. I smell fallen leaves, till I put down my hand — so — and expect to make them rattle. I smell the white and the pink may in the hedges, and all sorts of flowers that I never was among. For I have seen very few flowers indeed, in my life.'

"'Pleasant fancies to have, Jenny, dear,' said her friend, with a glance towards Eugene, as if she would have asked him whether they were *given* to the child in *compensation* for her losses.

"'So I think, Lizzie, when they come to me. And the birds I hear! Oh!' cried the little creature, holding out her hand and looking upwards, 'how they sing!'

"There was something in the face and action for the moment quite inspired and beautiful. Then the chin dropped musingly upon the hands again.

"'I dare say my birds sing better than other birds, and my flowers smell better than other flowers. For when I was a little child,' in a tone as though it were ages ago, 'the children that I used to see early in the morning were very different from any others I ever saw. They were not like me; they were not chilled, anxious, ragged, or beaten; they were never in pain. They were not like the children of the neighbors; they never made me tremble all over by setting up shrill noises; they never mocked me. Such numbers of them, too! All in white dresses, and with something shining on the borders, and on their heads, that I have never been able to imitate with any work, though I know it so well. They used to come down in long, bright, slanting rows, and say altogether, Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain? When I told them who it was, they answered, Come and play with us? When I said, I never play! I can't play! they swept about and took me up and made me light. Then it was all delicious ease and rest till they laid me down. Whenever they came back, I used to know they were coming before I saw the long, bright, shining rows, by hearing them ask altogether, a long way off, Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain? And I used to cry out, Oh! my blessed children, it's poor me. Have pity on me; take me up and make me light!'

"'By degrees, as she progressed in this remembrance, the hand was raised, the late ecstatic look returned, and she became quite beautiful. Having so paused for a moment, silent, with a listening smile upon her face, she looked round and recalled herself."

Smelling flowers is not a very uncommon experience of mediums. Mrs. Newton Crosland, the accomplished authoress, reports herself not only as having *smell* but *seen* flowers frequently presented by spirits.

Several instances are already on record of persons hearing the voices of birds invisible to the physical eye. Mr. William Carpenter, the veteran English champion of reform and free trade, since his conversion to Spiritualism, asserts, in print, his faculty of hearing choruses of invisible songsters.

As to the shining visitors, "all in white dresses," it is common for clairvoyants to describe the dresses worn by the spirits that appear to their inner sight.

Admitting the strenuous opposition of Dickens to modern Spiritualism, we nevertheless claim him as one of its apostles. Had he remained longer with us in the form, he might have changed. He has passed to the higher life, at the age of fifty-eight, having carved his name in indellible letters in the rock of eternal fame. Removed from the psychologic influence of caste, which doubtless warped his judgment on the question of Spiritualism, he will doubtless speedily learn that his descriptions of spirit flowers, birds, angel children, &c., were simply symbols of realities, which will endure when earth's material crust shall have rusted away.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

AMONGST painters and poets there was one, in the last generation, who, in a remarkable degree, united both. This was William Blake, whose life may be found among Allan Cunningham's "Lives of the Painters," which has recently been written again by Mr. Gilchrist, and edited by his widow. Blake was a medium long before mediums were talked of. He was born in Broad Street, Carnaby Market, London, in 1757, and apprenticed to an engraver, because his father found it too expensive to give him a regular artistic education. Blake not only painted and engraved his own designs, but wrote poems, at once simple to an extreme degree and spiritual in the highest tone. Of course, everybody considered him crazy, and yet there was scarcely any one, of any pretensions to taste, who did not regard his productions as inspired as they were strange to them. He did not attempt to conceal the fact that he received his poems and paintings, which illustrated each other, from friendly spirits, whom he declared that he saw and conversed with. Amongst these was the spirit of his brother Robert, who had been his great favorite when on earth; and he says that when he had written and painted his first remarkable work, "The Songs of Innocence and Experience," and was in perplexity how best to engrave them, this spirit-brother communicated to him a peculiar process, by which it would be best effected. This process Blake kept entirely secret, and it is admitted to be perfectly original, and the reverse of the ordinary mode, leaving the copper-plate more like a stereotype or an engraved

wood-block,—not a plate engraved in the usual manner, for what the copper-plate engraver sinks into the plate, he left standing.

He asserted what Sir Thomas Brown believed, that friendly spirits gave to artists and authors their best ideas. He declared that Homer, Plato, Moses, Pindar, Virgil, Dante, Milton, and many other of the great poets of the past, came and conversed with him, and sat to him whilst he sketched them. All such portraits display a character perfectly consonant to their historical one. Sometimes one or other of the spiritual world presented himself whilst other persons were with him, and he sketched them at once, to the amazement of the bystander. So he drew Lot, the Taskmaster of Egypt that Moses slew, William Wallace, and Edward I.

Blake was of a most spiritual nature himself. He loved the beauties of earth, but could acquire no love for its wealth. He desired nothing more than the means of the simplest livelihood. "Were I to love money," he said, "I should lose all power of thought; desire of gain disorders the genius of man. My business is not to gather gold, but to make glorious shapes, expressing god-like sentiments." It was the good fortune of Blake to find a wife who comprehended his unworldly nature, and had the most entire faith in all that he said of his spiritual revelations, though she was no medium herself, and saw and heard nothing. She was a most faithful and affectionate wife, assisting him in the labor of working off and tinting his plates, and cherishing him in all his difficulties and depressions, till she saw him pass to that world whence he had had his chief society. Amongst the fastest friends of Blake were Flaxman, the sculptor, and Fuseli, the painter. The latter, as we have seen, was a Spiritualist, and, therefore, could understand and sympathize with Blake, and Flaxman was of a highly spiritual genius, and probably as much a Spiritualist as Blake, but too politic to avow it openly.

The principal works of Blake are "The Songs of Innocence and Experience," already mentioned; "The Gates of Paradise;" "Urizen," the story of a wild, demoniac spirit; "Illustrations of Blair's 'Grave';" "The Inventions of the Book of Job, Jerusalem, and Prophecies." In Blair's "Grave," honest Allan Cunningham says, "The flames in which the soul of the wicked man departs from the body have no warrant in the poem or belief!" But they have warrant in the revelations of modern mediums, and in the discoveries of Reichenbach. Blake undoubtedly saw that light which he drew, as the sensitives of Reichenbach sees it, and as many mediums see

these beaming, flickering flames about living persons. Even Charles Lamb also thought him a most extraordinary man; describes his representation of death, in Blair's "Grave," thus: "In one of his designs, he pictures the parting of soul and body by a solid mass of human form floating off, God knows how, from a lumpish mass—*fac simile* of itself—left behind on the deathbed." The words of Lamb show us how vague were the ideas of death and of soul before Swedenborg and the Spiritualists had stamped on our minds the great truth that the spirit is the true man, the body only its envelope, and that the spirit is as visible and substantial to spirit as body is to body.

It is curious how the revelations of Spiritualists of all times agree in their facts. What Blake saw Swedenborg saw, and all great spirit-mediums have seen. Another fact noticed by Blake is, that there are annoying and thwarting spirits. He asserted that the spirits of *Chiaro-scuro* were demons that persecuted him by tempting him to paint in oil, and to confound the clear, sharp outlines, which are the perfection of art. Titian, he says, greatly tormented him, endeavoring to compel him to paint in oil, which he declared to be ruinous to true art, and never practised by Raphael or Michael Angelo. At times, Blake, like all other mediums, was deserted by his power, and sighed in vain to see or converse with a spirit. In some of his designs there is a wildness that is set down by the unspiritual as crazy, just as the visions of Ezekiel or Isaiah would be set down if the sacredness of the Bible did not protect them from it.

For a further acquaintance with this simple disciple of Christ and of art, this gentle, spiritual, sublimely ideal poet and painter, the reader must consult his works. These two little poems display at once his simplicity and his originality:—

Little lamb, who made thee?

Little lamb, who made thee?

Gave thee life, and bade thee feed

By the stream and o'er the mead;

Gave thee clothing of delight,

Softest clothing—woolly bright;

Gave thee such a tender voice,

Making all the vale rejoice?

Little lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;

He is called by thy name,
 For he calls himself a lamb;
 He is meek, and he is mild,
 He became a little child;
 I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are called by his name.
 Little lamb, God bless thee!
 Little lamb, God bless thee!

TIGER.

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
 In the forest of the night,
 What immortal hand or eye
 Framed thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
 Burned the fervor of thine eyes?
 On what wings dare he aspire —
 What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
 When thy heart began to beat
 What dread hand formed thy dread feet?

What the hammer — what the chain
 Formed thy strength and forged thy brain?
 What the anvil — what dread grasp
 Dared thy deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spheres,
 And sprinkled heaven with shinning tears,
 Did he smile his work to see?
 Did he who made the lamb make thee?

DUTY'S GUERDON. — Besides this earth, and besides the race of men, there is an invisible world and a kingdom of spirits. The world is around us, for it is everywhere; and those spirits watch us, for they are commissioned to guard us; and if we are dying under pain and shame, if scorn smote us on all sides, and hatred crushed us, angels see our tortures, recognize our innocence (if innocent we be), and God waits only the separation of spirit from flesh to crown us with a full reward. Why then, should we ever sink overwhelmed with distress, when life is so soon over, and death is so certain an entrance to happiness — to glory? — *Charlotte Bronte.*

THE MEDIUMS.

BY J. H. POWELL.

CHAPTER I.

THE WIFE'S APPARITION.

"BE attentive to your lessons, and never forget the counsels of your dear mother. Remember, whatever you do, that the eye of God is upon you, and, for aught we know, even your mother's spirit may be near, impressing you to good," said Mr. Humphrey; and he kissed two little sweet-featured girls, Ada and Emily, his motherless children, as he left them in the charge of Miss Peters, at her academy, Clapham, England.

Ada was about ten years of age, whilst her sister was two years her senior.

Mr. Humphrey resided at Southampton, and did business as a shipwright. He was a man much respected, very reserved in his habits, and of a refined temperament. He had prospered in business, and was considered wealthy. Divested of ostentation, he nevertheless permitted his name to head many a subscription list, but it was done to give the *list*, and not himself, importance. Those who knew him revered him, and many a poor widow and sorrowing orphan had occasion to bless him. His religious views were not in the least degree stiff; he had a simple, earnest faith in God, and a hearty disregard for formalism. To *do* good, to him, was more than to *think* good. He loved to mingle with congenial natures, and although he was never known to be over-talkative, he was fond of saying sage and quaint things, which won him the character of being a wiser man than his neighbors. He hated the mere babble of tongues, excited by partizan prejudices, and would turn away from heated disputations, remarking that truth needed no vehement forces to give it authority.

Mr. Humphrey had married when he was only twenty-four years of age, and had found, during a period of twelve years of married life, as much happiness as generally falls to the share of men, who, like himself, make affection, and not position, the primary consideration in matrimonial engagements.

Miss Emily Peerless was the only daughter of an architect, an man of extreme sectarian views, yet withal, a blunt, generous kind of man, who had been well-to-do, but of late years very unfortunate in his professional undertakings. At the time young Humphrey fell in

love, and proposed to wed the object of his affections, Mr. Peerless, the father of the young lady, was a bankrupt.

The lovers met for the first time at an evening *soiree*. They met very often after that to-be-remembered event. It was enough for Mr. Humphrey to feel that he could be happy with Emily for his bride; he had no thought of a marriage-dowry; all he asked was her hand, her heart being already his.

It is astonishing how speedily love finds a way in and out of difficulties. Rugged paths became suddenly transformed into gardens of roses; the very air which may be impregnated with fœtid exhalations from chemical decompositions, to lovers is balmy. Never in the career of human nature, in its progress to old age and death, is such mad conduct perceptible as in the heyday of love. Very shrewd lawyers, who would split hairs with the keenness of a razor, in all matters pertaining to law and ordinary themes, when they fall head-over-ears in love, forget their shrewdness, and positively perform acts of folly which make it a question whether a certificate from two respectable doctors as to their sanity be not, for them, the most proper thing. Very grave, pious, and extremely straight-necked persons, whose features have been washed so often with the vinegar of sanctity, that they have thereby contracted the habit of devoutness, which is marked in their demureness, when they tumble head-over-ears in love, forget their vinegar sanctity, relax their stiffened necks, and lose all gravity in a madness of passion which becomes only the more absurd as it is indulged. It is a very ludicrous farce, indeed, this love, when it is played out by lawyers and parsons; but when shipwrights and such sober-solid sort of beings leave their musty offices and heavy ledgers to do homage to Cupid, although it may not be quite so farcical, it is, nevertheless, a veritable comedy.

Miss Emily Peerless became Mrs. Humphrey, and by a process of figures in the handwriting of the bridegroom, Mr. Peerless got out of his difficulties, and entered anew on his professional duties.

A small villa, about a mile distant from the shipwright's place of business, which bore external aspects of age, was newly fitted for the reception of the bride. It was an ancient abode, but the very habitation of comfort. Mrs. Humphrey had not entered on her wifely career in the old homestead more than a month, when she expressed a desire to have the pleasure of christening the villa. It was a curious request. The husband of course offered no objection. The wife good-humoredly concealed from him the name she had chosen. One day, as the shipwright came within view of his house,

his eye was attracted to the words, *Humphrey Villa*, neatly painted just over the bell on the main post. He laughed heartily at the joke, and displayed his approval by kissing the fair joker.

In the course of time the shipwright became a father, and never was a fonder one on earth. The little Emily was the miniature resemblance of her mother; the same subdued sweetness of disposition which belonged to the mother seemed to be imparted to the child. There was, however, a quickness of intellect, amounting almost to precocity, in the child, which belonged not to her mother. Both were nervous, sanguine, and intensely sensitive. In the features, hair, and entire physiogomy, the mother was reflected in the child.

Mr. Humphrey loved both, and found no joys apart from his wife and child.

When Ada was born, Mrs. Humphrey was afflicted with sickness, and never after rose from her couch, in the flesh. Every attention that a kind husband could bestow was paid. Disease for years preyed upon her once robust and beautiful form, till it became haggard and shrunk. Her intellect remained clear, and her pure principles firm, even to the last. It was a painful scene to witness the stricken husband's anguish when he saw her eyes close, and knew that her spirit had gone from its earthly habitation, which was left like a ruined, deserted castle, to fall to decay.

Emily and Ada were too young to realize the full extent of their loss; yet they were old enough to know that a sweet, loving voice, which was familiar to their childhood, and which spoke to them of heaven and angels, depicting the sufferings and glories of Jesus, had suddenly been silenced by the mysterious hand of death.

Mr. Humphrey had now a double duty to perform towards his children, if he could be said to have a deeper regard for them than before.

After the solemn ceremony of burying his wife, he retired alone to his study, and sat in silence, meditating on his wifeless fate and his motherless children. He had, as far as he knew how, performed his duty as a husband and father; therefore, he had nothing to reproach himself with, but he felt the death of his wife to be a sad blow. He silently pondered, and as he pondered, wept. He was a man of strong physical structure, and his ponderous breast seemed to heave like a sea under the strong influence of his grief. A hand was gently placed upon his shoulder from behind. Surprised and electrified he turned round and beheld his wife. Mr.

Humphrey was one of the last men to credit belief in apparitions. But here, in his own study, stood one before him, wearing the sweet smile of his wife, and the ordinary dress which she wore when she was in the flesh. He gazed at her, speechless with surprise, but not fear. She waved her hand to him, and was gone. Cold drops of perspiration fell from his forehead, and his strong limbs were convulsed. Yet his grief was less poignant, and he felt more composed. He put his hands to his forehead, and endeavored to press his mind to a conviction that he had been dreaming, but it was useless. He could no more divest his brain of the idea of the reality of the apparition than he could fly. How to prove, to his own satisfaction, that what took place did not take place, was the most puzzling of all the problems he had ever had occasion to solve. He arose and left the study, treasuring in his own breast the secret of his wife's re-appearance. He had heard very many times relations of ghost stories, and had laughed heartily at them, believing them all simple, fictitious inventions. But the experience of one hour upset that idea which had lived with him for years.

CHAPTER II.

THE INCREDULOUS CONFIDANTE.

Mr. Humphrey was a man of strong nerve, and being a most exemplary lover of truth, he had the courage to meet the supramundane facts presented to his notice, with boldness. He cared as little for the idle jokes of those who laughed at everything but their own ignorance, as he cared for the ordinary gossip of envy. He argued to himself thus:—

“The Bible contains numerous accounts of supernatural appearances, such as the mysterious hand-writing on the wall at the palace of the wicked King Belshazzar, the angel in the burning bush, the appearance of Moses and Elias to Jesus in his transfiguration, Christ's own appearances after his crucifixion to Mary Magdalene and his disciples, the angel's deliverance of Peter from prison, &c. Then putting the sacred writings on one side; profane history of every nation and age gives testimony in favor of occasional reappearances of the departed.”

He paused to reflect, and came to the conclusion that since he could not find an argument to disprove the facts of Scripture and profane history, he ought, at least, to be humble and cautious in his

investigations of the spiritual subject. He had been much affected with the scene in his library, which was known to no earthly being but himself, and whilst he nursed the secret he resolved to satisfy himself, by a persistent investigation, of the absolute verity of spirit-visitations. He could not doubt his own experience, although it was an isolated case which gave him conviction. But, to make assurance doubly sure, or to prove that in spite of his own common sense and open eyes he was only subjected to a delusion of the optic nerve, or of cerebral excitement, he determined on devoting himself to a full, fair, and earnest study of the subject. To him it appeared a glorious idea if it could be proved that the departed can, and do, at times, re-appear on this earth, or manifest themselves in any way whatever; because it would give the theist an argument against atheism, which would be incontrovertible and effective. Now, Mr. Humphrey had mourned for many years the sad materialistic tendencies of the age; he had found moral and intelligent suasion of little use in overturning materialistic prejudices and platitudes; and knowing that these were not only rooted strongly in the soil of avowed atheism, but likewise in the soil of assumed Christianity, he felt rejoiced at the bare probability of establishing a belief in spiritual re-appearances.

With a mind open to conviction, and a brain capable of receiving with caution and analyzing with care all impressions of a disputed character, Mr. Humphrey was just the man to arrive at unpopular truth. He had considered the matter well, and having decided on gaining fresh evidences, he was eager for opportunities through which he might step on to new and higher step-stones of spiritual truth. With his mind thus inspired by earnestness and hope, having sat in a meditative mood for a considerable time, he decided on writing to his father-in-law, Mr. Peerless, and invite him to a *tête-à-tête*, thinking it advisable to make of him a *confidante*.

Taking some paper, he commenced at once to pen the epistle, and had nearly finished when his hand shook nervously, and his pen was guided by some invisible intelligence, and the words, —

“ Dear father, pray come at once, and be serious.

EMILY.”

were written in a curious and bold hand, whilst the signature, to Mr. Humphrey, was as familiar as life. He was staggered, and for a time unable to compose himself. Whilst in the act of writing a communication to Mr. Peerless, he was overlooked by his departed

wife, his object known to her, and her own wish and signature were given through his hand. Surely some mighty purposes were about to be fruitful. Mr. Humphrey opened a little secret drawer in a very miniature-like chest of drawers which had belonged to his wife, and brought forth some letters written by her. He then minutely compared the signature "Emily" with several signatures of the same name, and found a wonderful similarity in all of them. Mr. Humphrey was a strong man, and it was no proof to the contrary, because a few tears — affection's dew-drops — fell from his eyes. He was strong in body and brain, and still stronger in affection. If he had had any silent, secret fears that he was the victim of some delusion when his wife manifested herself in form to him, they were now eradicated. He was *certain* of her presence, for had he not automatically written her signature in her own well-known chirography?

In ordinary life-matters it is a very common thing for business men to hurry on with details, in order that as much work may be pressed into as small a space of time as possible. The very soul of business is despatch, a very necessary thing, but one that may forestall some things more necessary. With Mr. Humphrey, however, business not being neglected, was yet made subservient to more important affairs. He looked upon worldly possessions as existing only for a short term, whilst spiritual possessions existed forever. Therefore, to him the After-Life was the lasting, and this life the vanishing. He followed up his train of thinkings upon Spiritualism with a Spartan devotedness, yet he was assiduous in business. He went to his office, attended to his ledger, gave commissions to his workmen, and did all essential service for worldly success, yet he still stored his mind with evidences of a spiritual and religious character. In business transactions he was acknowledged to be rigidly just, and few who had dealings with him failed to respect him.

It was a settled idea with him not to open his mind to any one on spiritual topics until he had consulted his father-in-law, Mr. Peerless. He was, in consequence, very subdued in his conversations with people with whom he came in contact, for his mind was under the dominion of the new convictions which had so mysteriously operated. It was, therefore, a relief to him to find Mr. Peerless, with his jolly, good-natured face, greeting him with a hearty, cordial shake of the hand.

Mr. Peerless was a shrewd, plain man of the world, of striking angularities of thought. He had a full share of self-consequence,

and had easily contracted the habit of insisting on his own views without due consideration for those of others. He was possessed of a florid, excitable temperament. Not being a cautious, strict logician, he formed convictions hurriedly, but was always certain that his convictions were true because they were his. He had often entered an argument against certain views entertained by his son-in-law on religious and political topics, and had expressed his belief that his own wise remarks were not appreciated. Yet he had the warmest affection for Mr. Humphrey, to whom he owed his present worldly position; therefore, he never cared to continue a debate which did not end speedily in thorough agreement, always expecting the arms he carried to be considered the weapons of victory. Mr. Humphrey was a man more cautious in forming convictions, and more self-abnegating in his defence of them. He wanted truth, and was prepared to follow her through all the circuitous routes of argument. Mr. Peerless, on the other hand, was so certain that *he* had the truth of an argument, that he could not dream of going out of his beaten track, in search of what he did not want, a different conviction to the one he happened to possess. No one could read the architect's character better than the shipwright; and since it may appear singular that Mr. Humphrey, with his convictions of the character of Mr. Peerless, should choose to make of him a *confidante*, before allowing others to learn the marvelous facts of a supra-mundane origin, which had riveted conviction on his own mind, we had better inform the reader that Mr. Humphrey had considered the character of his communication as well as the character of his visitor. He deemed it only right to speak of the appearance of his deceased wife, to Mr. Peerless, he being her father, before venturing to brave public ridicule and laughter by making his secret take wings. He expected to be laughed at by his father-in-law, but thought, at least, that he would not hazard an opinion on the question of his sanity. He knew, likewise, that the general mind in England would be sure to assail a belief in spiritual visitations with ignominy, yells, hisses, and insane aspersions.

It was quite amusing to see the smile of incredulity which shone upon the face of the architect as he heard the shipwright declare, on his honor as a man, that if ever he saw his wife in his life he saw her apparition in the library.

"Nonsense, Charles," exclaimed Mr. Peerless; "you were sad at the memories of the past, moodily thinking of your loneliness and

Emily's virtues, and, as is quite natural, you fancied you saw her before you. Quite a phenomenon, Charles, natural as life, depend upon it. I've read of such cases before this,—they were always attributed to imagination or spectral illusion. *I know you are deceived.*"

Mr. Peerless emphasized the pronoun and the verb, and slapped his son-in-law on the shoulder, finishing with a loud, full blast of conceited laughter.

Mr. Humphrey looked calmly and fixedly into his senior's eyes, and replied,—

"You have known me for the better part of a score of years; did you ever know me over-credulous, or disposed to be superstitious?"

"No, on my honor, Charles, I never did."

"Well then, before you decide this matter so hastily, and vainly endeavor to laugh me out of my convictions, listen. I have carefully read my Bible, and find it full of evidences in support of angelic and demoniac visitations. I have also read of late some ponderous tomes which carry the mind away into the far-off past, and bring it back again to the present time, and I find in them a long chain of evidences in favor of ghosts and ghostly or spirit manifestations. I have, to crown all, seen with my own eyes, your daughter, my wife, smiling upon me, and waving her hand to me, and I was as wide-awake then as I am now. I have also, while writing a note to you, been forced, without my consent, or knowledge, or desire, to write the words addressed to you in that epistle, '*Dear father, pray come, and be serious,*' and you will observe that the signature to that message is very like your child's autograph.

"Pon my honor, Charles, you are most serious, but *I* am sure you are deluded; let me entreat you to weigh well the matter before lending yourself to a fanatical faith, which will inevitably bring you into bad note, and cause you the loss of some of your best friends. Be advised; you cannot conceive how horrible your revelation sounds to *me*, therefore think what the world outside will say."

"Mr. Peerless," said Mr. Humphrey, "let us think what the world inside will say. If we are such cowards as to fear the truth, because our friends and acquaintances feel disposed to ridicule and desert us, we shall obtain our desserts in a tortured conscience."

"There is something in that, but *I* am sure you will have a weary life of it, if you are foolish enough to let it get on Change, that you believe in ghosts and all that sort of silly trash."

"That is of little consequence to me, Mr. Peerless; you know I

never cared a great deal for mere popular praise. I was always happiest in my own home, in the midst of my 'household deities.' If I find it in the way of duty to mix more with the outward world for the promulgation of a glorious and eternal truth, believe me, I shall feel no remorse at being laughed at, and pronounced a believer in 'ghosts and all that sort of silly trash.' "

" Well, Charles, as you will ; you have my hearty well-wishes and assurance that *I* know you to be an intelligent, honest, sane sort of an individual ; but what will that avail you when the public publish accounts of your extravagant convictions as proofs of your dishonesty and insanity ? "

Mr. Humphrey took Mr. Peerless by the hand, and looked grateful. He then said, " I may, I suppose, class you with the believers in these supernatural phenomena ? "

Mr. Peerless gave one of his good-natured, bluff, incredulous laughs ; " Oh dear, no ! it would take something more even than your bare word, Master Charles, to convince the father of your departed wife, that she ever came back to earth from her home in heaven. "

The eyes of Mr. Humphrey were fixed on some object. Mr. Peerless looked, but saw only vacancy. Mr. Humphrey took him by the hand, and pointing, said, " There, she smiles upon me, and points to you. ' Emily ! Emily ! ' "

At that instant the medium's eyes were free, the apparition was gone, and Mr. Peerless, having seen nothing, decided that his son-in-law was not *quite compos mentis*.

CHAPTER III.

THE SPIRIT-SIGN.

Mr. Peerless left his son-in-law, quite satisfied that all was not as it ought to be in his " upper story " ; not that he had any conception that Mr. Humphrey, on ordinary matters, was not reasonable and perfectly sane ; but in the case of this superstition of ghost belief *only*, he was not so fortunate. The father-in-law did not tell his son-in-law what he thought, because he knew there would be a slight difference of opinion, if he did, and since he did not like disagreement, and was certain not to fall in with any defence Mr. Humphrey might avail himself of, because to do so would set at naught his own wise opinion, he wisely shook hands and parted, as he gave, by way of *finale*, one of his loud, full, bluff laughs.

The shipwright was left alone, but he was not lonely. He was impressed with the consciousness that he was on the verge of discovering some of the secrets of the grave. He was, as we have shown, a strong-willed man, and being stronger in virtue and faith, he little feared either ghost or mortal. He had, during his whole life, regarded religion as the highest pleasure the soul can know, and had always felt that it stimulates to goodness; and although it was not simply morals, it was impossible to be religious without them. Thus armed with proof-strong convictions, placing some trifling deductions to the account of educated nervousness, he disposed his mind for investigation. He had satisfied himself, having conversed first upon the subject of his heart with Mr. Peerless, and he was not at all surprised to find that the architect looked incredulously upon his statements, but he had no conception that that bluff, jolly, laughing old soul, nursed a sudden idea, that grief for the loss of his wife had touched his brain.

Like a modern Columbus, Mr. Humphrey felt himself the possessor of an invaluable secret. He wanted only time and means to set out on a voyage of discovery, which, in its results, promised infinitely to out-balance the world which the Genoese sailor discovered. The shipwright rose each morning, devoting himself to a perusal of spiritual works, which occupied some two or three hours, then went to his office, attended to his duties, and returned, only to reflect on the theme uppermost in his thoughts.

It is impossible to say how much time is absolutely ours; we appear to live on sufferance, and act without volition. Always in extremes, or verging on them, we scarcely know our own convictions. As a reed is subjected to the influence of the wind, and forced to bend in its direction; as a waif cast upon the tide is drifted and tossed, and washed away by it, do we poor human reeds and waifs find ourselves inclined, drifted, tossed, and washed by the winds and waters of influences over which we ourselves have little control. Who shall discriminate the actions originating from our own free will and those originating from external impressions, spirits, or unseen messengers! Mr. Humphrey, although a man of ordinary common-sense attainments, who, without undue influences in an opposite direction, might be said to be very ready to act from motives relating to physical and moral things, was, nevertheless, found to do many, very many acts, which his fellow-tradesmen and his preconceived convictions would not have credited to him. The fact is, he was susceptible to spirit-influences, and

capable of being guided and impressed by them to any extent, providing their impressions accorded with his treasured conceptions of goodness.

One afternoon Mr. Humphrey was in his office, looking over "The Times," his eye rested on an advertisement:—

"The advertiser is desirous of communicating with persons who can give information relative to Haunted Houses or modern Supernatural Facts. Please address Mr. Jeremiah Forbes, 24, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, London."

Fancy a traveller in the wilderness, parched with thirst, after weary hours discovering water, and you will have some conception of the joy which lit up the features of the shipwright as he read the advertisement. He wanted more knowledge, and had not as yet discovered how to obtain it. It was all very well to read books, and enter one's self on the list of pedantic gladiators who treasure written facts; but in order to satisfy fully the designs of Mr. Humphrey it was necessary that he should be brought himself *en rapport* with the actual spirits. He had only as yet had ocular proofs when the spirit of his wife had come uncalled for, and when she had guided his hand as he was writing to Mr. Peerless, her father. These manifestations were spontaneous; Mr. Humphrey felt desirous to know how he could elicit them when he was so disposed. He was impressed with the idea that Mr. Jeremiah Forbes was the very man of all men, under present circumstances, he ought to consult. He decided on writing to him without delay.

When the brain is under the influence of strong excitement, the memory for ordinary, at the time, secondary matters, may be weak. It was so with Mr. Humphrey. He proceeded to write a full description of his own supra-mundane experiences, and despatched with them an invitation for Mr. Jeremiah Forbes to honor him with a visit.

When the shipwright looked at his watch, and saw that the time was past for postal departures that day, he felt vexed, because he was very eager to get a quick answer from Mr. Forbes. But, like a true philosopher, he resolved to curb his impatience, and managed to regain his equanimity just as his memory received an electric stroke, which made him conscious that in attending to spiritual matters he had forgotten temporal ones. He had that day learned from his foreman that the timber-merchant's traveller had called and been instructed to send in a large stock of timber which

was in requisition. It being necessary that a cheque for a previous quantity of the same material should be sent off per post that day, Mr. Humphrey was unusually disturbed, because he never before failed in settling money matters with punctuality. There was no need for much disturbance of feeling, seeing that a few hours' delay could make little difference with a firm which had for years done business with him. But it happened to annoy him to think that he should have allowed two important matters to be put off. He did not, however, permit himself to lose his temper, which was generally calm. He decided to make the best of a bad job, and was in the act of locking his desk, to finish the business of the day, when, to his utter amazement, his eye caught sight of an envelope, sealed and addressed to him. He opened it at once, and read,—

SIR, — *Our stout old ship, "Cruiser" has just arrived at Southampton. She wants overhauling, and putting into sailing trim for her next trip, which takes place in a few weeks. Will you kindly send some men and get her into dock as quickly as possible.*

For the Proprietors,

JAMES SINCLAIR, *Captain.*

How long this note had lain on Mr. Humphrey's desk was a perplexing problem. He called for his foreman, and learned that he had only a few minutes before gone home for the day. The shipwright felt the occasion imperative; he sent for his foreman, and ascertained that he had brought the note to him while he was busy writing.

"Why did you not speak when you came with it, Reuben?" said Mr. Humphrey.

"I did speak, Mr. Humphrey; but you were so busy you appeared not to care to be disturbed, so I just left the note near your elbow, thinking, as a matter of course, you would, as you have often done before, be sure and pick it up."

"Well, Reuben, it cannot be helped now, we must make the best of a bad job; suppose you send for some men, and attend to the 'Cruiser' at once. I hate delays; they are dangerous."

"I will do my best, sir, but I fear I shall find great difficulty in getting back the principal men for the night,—some of them live a long distance, as far off as Netley,—but I will try," said Reuben; and he went away, leaving Mr. Humphrey to go to his home, reflecting on his mistakes.

All that night the shipwright was disturbed in his sleep; he either heard, or fancied he heard, gentle, distinct rappings at the head of his bed. He was not quite awake, yet he turned over on the

bed and rubbed his eyes, at the first tokens of the noises. Gradually his drowsiness left him, and he listened, with a dim certainty that he had not been dreaming, in the hope of hearing the rappings again. After an interval of an hour's silence, three rather sudden and loud raps came on the wall near his head. Mr. Humphrey was not at all frightened, but on the other hand very bold. He said aloud, "If those rapping sounds come from spirits, please knock on the foot of the bedstead." He had scarcely spoken when a trio of rapid raps was heard by him on that part of the bedstead. Emboldened by the strange success of his experiment, he said, "If you are good spirits give three loud knocks, — if you are bad spirits give one loud knock." He waited a few seconds in suspense, then three deliberate heavy knockings came on the foot of the bedstead. "Thank you; now, if you wish to convey any intelligence to me," added Mr. Humphrey, "give three more loud rappings." Three loud rappings were given.

Mr. Humphrey was puzzled. He obtained answers to questions by intelligible rappings, but how he was to obtain an intelligible communication without putting interrogatories, was to him a profound mystery. He lay a considerable time perplexing his brain with this problem. Meanwhile, the unseen visitants kept up a sere-nade of rappings in all parts of the room. At length the circumstance flashed across his mind of his having had his hand guided by his spirit-wife when he was in the act of writing to Mr. Peerless. With the greatest *sang froid* he rose from his bed, lit a lamp, and dressed himself. He then proceeded to a cupboard, brought forth a writing-case, and taking a pencil and some paper, sat down, saying, "Now, kind spirits, if you wish to communicate with me, do so," and he held the pencil motionless on the paper. Perhaps three minutes elapsed, then his hand trembled and his pencil moved rapidly over the paper. There was legible, bold writing upon it, which he was not long in deciphering as follows: —

Mr. Jeremiah Forbes is a powerful medium.

"Medium for what, spirits! say, please?"

His hand and pencil were again rapidly moved automatically across the paper. He picked it up, and read: —

He is a good physical and trance-medium.

Mr. Humphrey was not altogether satisfied that he really under-

stood the meaning of these words. He begged to be further enlightened, and holding the pencil again on the paper, the words came out:—

Mr. Forbes will explain the mysteries of spirit-intercourse, and the meaning of the different kinds of mediumship.

“Well,” thought Mr. Humphrey, “this is very wonderful! I was not thinking of Mr. Forbes when I sat down to write. It is quite certain that the spirits enter into the secrets of our ordinary life-pursuits, or how should these strange communications come out? He had scarcely finished his reflections, when his hand and pencil were thrown on to the paper, and the words written:—

We often are with you. We read your thoughts, and watch over you with undying affections. We wish you to devote your life to the spread of Spiritualism. We are pleased to know that you are free from fear, and are honest enough to examine before you presume to condemn. Pray to God for daily support; keep your conscience pure, and never fear to preach the truth. We will be with you when you do not know it, and aid you in your holy work.”

Mr. Humphrey read this communication with tearful eyes. He was impressed to say, “Give me some sign that I may know that the unseen communicants are not in any way disposed to deceive me. In the names of all holy beings, from the Father and Son down to the archangels, I beseech you give me a true sign.” He had scarcely finished when he saw one part of his room fill with a phosphorescent light or atmosphere. He kept his eyes riveted on the spot, when to his eager sense was made visible the spirit of his wife. She appeared in robes of white, holding in one hand a miniature cross, and pointing to it with the other. Her face was less pale than when she last appeared to him, but it was still illumined with her wonted seraphic smile.

The vision vanished. Mr. Humphrey was convinced that he was right in taking the advice given him by the spirits, because his own spirit-wife had appeared pointing to the cross, as the sign necessary to confirm his faith in the reality and goodness of the communicating agencies. He held his pencil again on the paper, but there was nothing more elicited. He got up, undressed himself, put out the light, got into bed again, and was soon in the arms of Morpheus.

THE MONITOR.

BY J. H. POWELL.

AMID the deafening din of earth,
The Still Small Voice I hear:
"All mortal plans are little worth,
Unless God's hand is clear."

The world may war and win to-day,
To-morrow, boast and wail;
The granite walls of wealth give way
When social wrecks prevail.

"Be ever true," I heard the Voice
Say to my saddened soul;
"For Worth should be thy spirits' choice
Beyond wealth's wizard whole."

I mused, as one in dreamy mood,
On what the Voice did say;
And unto God, the Great and Good,
For guidance I did pray.

"Be thou my staff in this and all
The ways my feet must tread;
Without Thy certain Hand I fall,
By Thee I would be led."

I mingled in the human crowd
All eager for earth's treasures.
Few thought of Right, and all were loud
For Fashion's foolish pleasures.

I heard the Monitor again;
"Earth's follies last not long;
He is the truest among men
Who walks through evil strong."

I marveled that I only heard
The wise words of the Voice,
Sweet as the notes of some rare bird,
Bidding my soul rejoice.

"The Inward Monitor is near
To whisper warnings kind
Into the saddest sinner's ear
Walking Life's valley blind;"

The Spiritual Monthly.

I heard with joy, and blessed the Power
That orders all things well.

"All souls have God's love for a dower,
And in that love may dwell ;

"But, blind and deaf to heavenly things,
Alas ! we work for ill,
Impelled by wild Ambition's springs
Up Life's steep, rutted hill."

I looked around, and saw a field
Aflood with human gore,
"O God ! hast Thou withheld Thy shield ?"
I cried, with spirit sore.

Then sweetly said the guardian Voice :
"Man's folly brings him woe,
God ne'er deserts him, though his choice
Bring fights and fiends below.

"Experience is man's rich reward
While clay doth clog his feet ;
Through sloughs and fights we reach the Lord,
In Heaven's golden street."

"Good ! but I prithee tell me more :
The ways of Life I see
Crooked and lost on sea and shore,
Perplexing all to me."

"True ; and in this God's will shows wise,
Sight, like the body, grows ;
Good often lies in Ill's disguise,
Night comes at day's quick close.

"Man's finite soul obeys a law,
By reaching out its hands
To grasp at every feeble straw,
Washed on Life's gleaming sands."

[*New York Independent.*

You are no more obliged to receive a tenet, or an opinion, or a statement, or a prediction, or a promise, or a prescription of duty, or a direction how to act in a given case from a *departed* spirit, than from an *undeparted* one. Are we not all spirits ? Have we not all a common nature ? Do not all spirits differ in degrees of goodness and wisdom ? — *Rev. Adin Ballou.*

SITTINGS WITH MEDIUMS.

THE superstructure of Spiritualism is raised upon the foundation of mediumship. It is the recognition of this fact that gives the scientific pre-eminence to Spiritualism over all other existing religions.

Christianity grew up from its infancy nurtured at the breast of phenomena. But in these modern days of Sadduceeism and infidelity in and out of the churches, Christians, so-termed, have a quaking dread of ghosts, come they as angels of light or demons of darkness. They lack the saving grace of demonstration and attribute modern evidences of the ever old and ever new Truth to the Prince of Hell. Had they held by the simple faith of the primitive Christians the phenomenal facts of Spiritualism would be incorporated with the ritualism of Christendom. Says William Howitt in a letter to us: — "The best that can be said of modern theology, as sold and taught by the clergy, who purchase the right to sell it is, that it is an ENORMOUS HUMBUG, and a most scandalous libel on the name of Christ." Spiritualism based upon demonstrated fact, which is the faithful expression of law, has the advantage over every other religion, in regarding fact which is science, philosophy which is reason, and religion which is love.

It becomes, therefore, a part of our duty as Spiritualists, to be just in the recognition and encouragement of mediums.

We shall take pleasure in giving Cæsar his due, and pray for wisdom to guide us, so that we may be just in our reports of the seances we are called upon to attend. Mediums are multiplying in every country. There are hundreds in the city of Boston alone. We hope to help forward some who are behind the scenes, suffering neglect from excessive modesty.

Give us evidence of mediumship, we will not ask from what land the medium is from, who are her friends, and how much money she has in the bank. These are her own affairs, not ours. Is she devoted to her divine gift? Does she wear the jewel of mediumship conscious of its value? If so, we will say, "Well done." If not, offer a stimulant in the direction of right as we appreciate it.

DR. H. SLADE.

Dr. H. Slade visited Boston, remaining only too short a period.

We made the doctor's acquaintance in Rochester, N. Y., two years ago, and wrote an account in the London Spiritual Magazine

of the marvels we witnessed at his rooms. We there expressed our opinion that Dr. Slade is just the medium to introduce to scientists, especially since the manifestations take place *in the light*. Our opinion remains unaltered. The doctor's power has increased.

We were three, the medium making four. All sat round the table, the gas in full blaze. Rappings were heard upon our chairs. Then came the experiment with the pencil and slate. The doctor bit a piece off a slate pencil, not larger than the fourth of a pea, and placed on the slate. He then held the slate under the edge and tight against the table top. A strong force made it difficult for the medium to keep his hold of the slate. We all heard the scratching sound of the piece of pencil on the slate. There was written in a clear hand, —

Good evening.

The 'i' was dotted, the tiny piece of pencil resting upon the dot as though the writing was finished at that point. The slate and pencil was once more under the table as before. The doctor got up from his seat and stood as far from the table as he could, holding the slate with one hand which was visible to the company. The scratching sound again: —

God bless all workers for this glorious cause.

"Thank you."

The piece of pencil was not on the slate. The spirit was requested to restore it. The thing was done in the twinkling of an eye.

A clothes-brush was next placed upon the slate which was no sooner held under the table than it was thrown over the table upon the sofa. This experiment was repeated by request.

A closed silver knife was placed upon the slate and thrown on to the table open. After this, the doctor held an accordion with one hand, the opposite end to the keys, his other hand resting at the time upon the table, and lo! there emitted from the instrument a beautiful tune.

Let conjurers, savans, and materialists keep back the senseless shout of "humbug" until they can perform the same things under similar conditions without spirit-aid; even then, if such could be done, which we doubt, it would not prove Slade a charlatan.

MRS. C. H. WILDES.

It is difficult to comprehend the psychical condition of mediumship. We are all, more or less, so devoted to the ordinary manifestations of life, that we fail to appreciate the *extraordinary* through mediums.

Yet, when some startling psychical phase is observable in the medium, or some intelligence not in her mind is made known to us, we are compelled to hesitate before we write *currante calimo*, "impossible" or "charlatan," as the solution of the mystery.

Strange facts are forcing conviction of their verity on the minds of some of the most skeptical. No wonder, when test mediums, like Dr. Slade and Mrs. Wildes, are placed *en rapport* with them and their spirit guides.

Whilst in conversation with a valued friend, a few days ago, he invited us to accompany him to one of Mrs. Lizzie Armstead's public *seances*, at her rooms, Washington Street, Boston.

Accepting the invitation, we were soon part of an audience of between forty and fifty persons, mostly ladies. The medium sat quietly in her chair, while several of the circle sung. In a few minutes she was under control, which lasted through a series of changed influences nearly two hours. Some dozen or more of the company received tests. Sometimes the medium would call out names in full. In all cases she appeared to touch some incident which called forth the word of recognition from those to whom she was the medium of communication. Our friend, who has lost a much loved wife, was addressed, her name being spoken through the medium. We got nothing, but left the circle impressed with the idea that Mrs. Wildes, formerly Mrs. Armstead, was one of the few test mediums who will be certain to touch some circumstance in one's life to place her manifestations altogether out of the pale of guess-work. Accordingly we took pains to learn all we could of her mediumistic career, and was readily admitted to a private *seance* with the lady. It did not need a test to convince us that Mrs. Wildes is a medium. One glance in her eyes, which evince at all times that strange expression which belongs solely to abnormal states, was sufficient. What might come in the way of test was another matter. She is about thirty-two or thirty-three years of age, of French extraction on the father's side, and a descendant of Lafayette, who is said to be one of her controlling spirits, and of Spanish extraction on that of the mother. Since she was only fifteen years old she has been subjected to spirit-influences strangely astounding to those with whom she came in contact.

Her first knowledge of her medium powers was the result of a rapid repetition of rappings about her feet and all around, as she was engaged washing the stairs. A gentleman who had heard of Spiritualism suggested a sitting, after which she was entranced alone for

a space of thirteen hours. She was promised no great things by the invisibles, but what they promised was mostly performed. Her gifts are varied. She is a natural clairvoyant, and often made to see events of national and world-wide importance which are veritable prophecies.

Sometimes writing appears on her arm and hand. She speaks occasionally Italian, German, and French, or, correctly speaking, spirits influence her to speak, or speak through her in these languages. She was used by an Italian spirit whilst we sat with her. She declares that she has no knowledge of any of these languages save the French. One spirit that controls her gives the name of Abernethy. Another, an Indian, of eleven years' acquaintance, is called Arcah.

President Lincoln, when he was in the form, was gratified at receiving a communication from his spirit-child Willie, through Mrs. Wildes, and sent her a beautiful letter in acknowledgment. Several striking incidents in our past career were given, evidence sufficient to us that a more than ordinary faculty, or power, is with the medium.

"You have a spirit-picture of one very dear to you, have you not?"

"Yes."

Then, in a few seconds, the medium was influenced by another spirit who personated our father, whose likeness is given on the spirit-picture alluded to. Afterwards "our little hindering thing (not) forever gone," Marian, brought flowers, and gave tokens of watchfulness and love.

Several things of a private character relating to business and persons were added to the beautiful marvels of this sitting.

DR. C. T. BUFFUM, of Woonsocket, R. I., and Mrs. E. M. Smith, of Lowell, Mass., held a *seance* together at the house of a lady in Boston. We attended by invitation, and was well gratified. Dr. Buffum, much to our surprise, under the alleged influence of Red Jacket, an Indian spirit, gave a series of excellent tests. The descriptions and names were mostly recognized. To one lady he gave several names in succession without a mistake. Mrs. Powell was entranced and made to personate. The spirit was recognized by Mrs. Smith and proved to be her former husband, who was poisoned in New York. The spirit spoke a few words in French, of which language the medium is wholly ignorant.

PROGRESSIVE DOTTINGS.

WHILST Emma Hardinge and others have been ministering to large audiences in public halls and in groves in the West, the cause of Spiritualism has not been left to die out in the East. During the summer months picnics and camp-meetings have been largely attended.

The Cape Cod camp-meeting we did not attend, but are informed that it was in every way a success. Old and tried veterans reciprocated greetings, and felt the better for being there.

The picnics at Abington were, as usual, feasts of soul-and-body enjoyment to numbers.

Prof. Wm. Denton, Prof. J. H. W. Toohey, N. Frank White, Lizzie Doten, George A. Bacon, A. E. Carpenter, Cephas B. Lynn, A. E. Giles, Ed. S. Wheeler, Chauncy Barnes, and J. H. Powell were among the speakers.

The attraction of the season has been at Walden Pond, sacred to the heart of literature. A couple of picnics and a whole six-days' camp-meeting, under the management of Messrs. Richardson and Dodge. The idea was stupendous and hazardous. Yet the results prove that it was an idea worth conceiving and actualizing.

The picnics went off well,— the camp-meeting better.

The Fitchburg railroad company erected a large marquee and seated it, placing it at the convenience of the Spiritualists and others. Such commodious accommodations New England Spiritualists have hitherto failed to obtain at their picnics and camp-meetings. A noteworthy fact was the attitude of the Boston press: their reports of the proceedings were without exception faithful to fact and free from burlesque and misstatement. This is a good sign of progress and an evidence that Spiritualism is becoming a power that is being felt and appreciated.

A larger number than usual of the regular lecturers and mediums was present.

A student at Harvard, Mr. Enoch Powell, listened with interest to speeches from Spiritualists, and spoke himself, more than once, words of earnestness, which were received in the kind spirit in which they were presented.

The session devoted to the memory of H. C. Wright was a rich soul-repast. The friend of Garrison, Phillips, and a host of good and great men and women, the heroic worker for humanity passed

to the Higher Life, in full harness, at the age of seventy-three. *Requiescat in pace.* He was a veteran worker, true to the God within Henry C. Wright. His half-a-century of unselfish devotion to reform writes its own paenegyric. Such men are not too plentiful. Thank God that Death cannot cut off their usefulness, — only open the gates to wider fields of labor.

The trains from the various points poured into the grounds on the Sunday additional thousands, numbers of which crowded to the marquee to hear the speakers. In the morning, after a telling and beautiful speech from N. S. Greenleaf, Ed. S. Wheeler delivered a lecture on "Spiritualism," which was, in many essential particulars, a masterly essay. Mrs. Sarah Byrnes followed, making some sensible and practical remarks. Bronson Alcott of Concord, the literary companion of Emerson, and the friend of Thoreau, who lived in the woods at Walden, stood forth, by request, and spoke in a fatherly, subdued, and interesting manner. His remarks upon the battle of life, fought by Thoreau when he was in the form, and the manhood of the man, had a charm upon his hearers. He said many excellent things which were broadly free in sentiment and significant of the spread of progressive ideas. The presence and speech of Mr. Alcott deserves record. It shows courage and a sense of justice in the man. He had nothing to gain by coming to a Spiritualist camp-meeting apart from the good he got in it, which we are not to suppose he bargained for with his conscience when he started. He has reached an advanced age, and could, had he been of the stuff of which multitudes are made, have felt glad to glide adown the stream of fashion right into the port of the grave. But no, — he came to the camp-meeting, greeted the long-despised Spiritualists, and expressed sympathy with the work of reform.

Another camp-meeting, who knows, even Emerson may condescend to mingle with us. He would learn, should he do so, that Spiritualists are not a whit more likely to steal silver spoons than anti-spiritualists. We don't feel hurt at the suspicion, although it seemed to us a little hard for America's great word-artist to hink at such an outrageous thing, to express his contempt for the unpopular "ism."

Prof. William Denton was solid and logical as ever, striking, like Tubal Cain, heavy blows at the assumptions of orthodoxy.

Thomas Gales Forster, who speaks under spirit-influence, and is himself wholly unconscious, was made to deliver a discourse on theology, which was one to remember.

Dean Clark recited Lizzie Doten's "Peter Maguire," and made some allusions to "The Lecturer's Club," which had been formed during the week.

The day was glorious and the meetings intensely interesting.

If "The Lecturer's Club" succeed in its project, we may hope to see an end to the system adopted in places of working the lecturer on to a sick bed or out of the lecture-field through paying for services rendered scarcely enough to carry him to the next point of labor.

This state of things can only be remedied by fraternal effort on the part of the speakers. One thing gained, we hope, by this club, will be, frequent meetings of speakers, that they may consult and encourage each other.

The Walden Pond Camp-meeting passed off with little to mar the general happiness. Earnest souls met, and much good was done.

The character of the speaking was marked by stern sense, and argues well for our future as Spiritualists. The human soul cannot long rest content with mere froth of speech for food. It must and will have dishes of science and sense. He who runs may read this in the Spiritualism of to-day.

The committee of the Pierpont Grove meetings, Messrs. Taylor, Vaughn, Cary, and Moody, brought their labors for the year to a close on Sunday, Sept. 11th. They have, during the session, engaged Prof. Wm. Denton, Lizzie Doten, Dr. H. B. Storer, Loring Moody, and J. H. Powell. Besides the regular paid lectures, they have held several conferences which have attracted good audiences. Pierpont Grove is a delightful retreat, of easy access, and withal a favorite place for open-air meetings.

We believe that the committee have made the meetings self-supporting, and look forward to a renewal of them next season.

We must not omit to mention the establishment of the American Liberal Tract Society, with Prof. Wm. Denton as President. Some eight or nine tracts have already gone through the press, seasoned for the palates of the thinking masses. These tracts are bold, uncompromising essays. Shams and absurdities, although introduced in *sacred* mantles, stand poor chance against the metal of the Liberal tracts.

The Evangelicals have taught the Liberals a lesson. Tracts *versus* tracts. God defends the right. The superstitions which have so long fettered the human soul in the name of churches, Bibles, priests, Popes, and kings, cannot forever gall and enslave. The

field is full of valiant workers; they mean work, and can fall, but not fail; and if they fall they will rise again with renewed strength.

We welcome the inauguration of the American Liberal Tract Society, and say, "God speed!" Let our motto be "Excelsior," the eye of our soul set upon humanity. May we avoid all vain boastings and revengeful feelings, remembering that our fight is with principles and not persons.

We have only hinted at the noteworthy evidences that the world moves. The dial of Progress is eternally revolving: we need have no dread that it can ever stand still. All classes, sects, and peoples, are, consciously or unconsciously, aiding the march of humanity. Spiritualists or Liberalists need not take the flattering unction to their souls that they alone are delegated by the Universal Father to keep the machinery of Progress running.

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole."

We need to be largely charitable, which, truly understood, is to be just. Errors of theology and sociology are not unpardonable sins like the sin against the Holy Ghost, whatever that may be. Ignorance can only be overcome by knowledge. Our work is first to get knowledge for ourselves, then impart it to others. If they will not or cannot receive it, theirs, not ours, is the loss.

Let us be sure and watch our own feet whilst we essay to trip others up; to be plain, realize that individual worth should be worn as a jewel of great price, by the leaders of the armies of advanced Thought. The power of Character is potent for good or ill.

Let us be true to ourselves, and never descend to mean things, not even for the pleasure of living many years longer on the earth. Life devoid of truthfulness is worse than death.

"Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."

Dr. H. F. Gardner's closing picnic attracted a good attendance.

The most interesting part of the proceedings, to us, was the morning conference, which was mainly devoted to phenomenal facts.

A. E. Carpenter said that Dr. H. B. Storer, whilst sitting alone, took up a pencil to write whatever might be given to him. A communication on "Authorship" was written, the intelligence purporting to be Charles Dickens.

Although much pleased with the essay, Dr. Storer did not believe that Charles Dickens, in spirit *propria persona*, would be likely to

come to him, and therefore did not credit the essay from the source ascribed. He read the production to him (A. E. Carpenter); both agreed that it was able, and worthy the pen of the great author. It was then decided to place the essay in the hand of Julia Friend, who, without reading a word or hearing anything to give a clue to what had passed, described herself as feeling strangely like a man and an author, and none other than Charles Dickens.

In what degree Julia Friend was influenced by the silent presence of Carpenter and Storer, who *knew* the statement made by the communicating intelligence, it is impossible to say. The fact remains, nevertheless, that the same statement *was* made through two mediums. Let scientists theorize, and if possible, classify these phenomena, and cease holding by the skirts of negations.

A still more complicated and satisfactory evidence of the power of invisible intelligences to manifest a given purpose through more than one medium was described by Dr. Gardner. He said that in the winter of 1862-3, he visited the rooms of Mumler, in Boston. A group of spirits appeared on the plate. In due time he returned to see if a picture were developed. His attention was attracted by a man who was pacing to and fro, apparently in meditation. Presently the man, who proved to be a medium, laid a hand upon his shoulder and said, —

“Dr. Gardner, I believe?”

“Yes; that is my name.”

“You are going to Washington in the course of two or three weeks. You will start alone and meet a medium and obtain important information, which will be the means of saving the city of Washington.”

“Impossible! my business matters are of a nature to keep me in Boston.”

“You *will* go. The way is open. The person who is to give you the information is in Baltimore.”

A day or two after, Dr. Gardner went to Mrs. Conant, with no idea of a sitting. She said, just as he was about to leave: —

“Doctor, you are about to go Washington,” repeating in substance what the medium at Mumler’s had said, adding that he would have a letter or telegram calling him to Baltimore, and promised on the following Wednesday to tell him when he would start; also that he would have a private interview with the President.

Nothing seemed more unlikely. The next day the doctor visited Springfield and called upon an old acquaintance, a medium, and

without expecting anything of the kind, heard from her lips a corroboration of the statement already received from two mediums.

On the Wednesday evening, according to appointment, the doctor called upon Mrs. Conant. She said : —

“The first week in January you will receive the letter calling you to Baltimore, and you will then go to Washington.”

Whilst in Baltimore he met, in company with other persons, a gentleman whose sympathies were with the South, and who was evidently in correspondence with the so-called Confederate government at Richmond, who informed him in substance of a plan, laid and perfected, by which Washington was to fall into the hands of the Confederacy within that present month.

This informant spoke of the plan emphatically as being positively laid, but said that the precise point of attack was undecided.

On arriving at Washington, in company with the medium to whom allusion has already been made, he went direct to the Metropolitan Hotel, and there met the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, and imparted to him in full, the plan laid down as stated, for the capture of Washington. Impressed with the importance of the information, Mr. Owen said, “You must see the President at once;” and immediately went to the White House to secure for him an audience.

During the interview the doctor gave the President a repetition of what he had already given to Mr. Owen.

The attack not being made, the doctor, in the following June, wrote to his informant at Baltimore, in a jocular vein alluding to the fact. A reply was received from him stating that the proposed attack was only postponed in consequence of some movements of the Union troops, which made it impracticable at the time, but it was not abandoned, and ere his letter reached its destination the rebel army would be on its way to Pennsylvania and Maryland to execute the original plan, and that they were confident of success.

That invasion culminated in the rebel defeat at the battle of Gettysburg. Thus, to the letter, was fulfilled events prophesied through three independent mediums.

Do you imagine that the demons are anything else than souls, which, as Hesiod says, wander through the atmosphere? It is therefore neither unreasonable nor strange that souls should come to souls, and impart to them conceptions of future things, occasionally by letters, or by the mere touch, or by a glance reveal to them past events or foretell future ones. — *Plutarch.*

THE TEMPLE HALL MEETINGS.

THE Spiritual Society meetings, on Sundays and Thursday evenings, at Temple Hall, Boylston Street, Boston, keep up their audiences through hot and cold weather. They have no paid speakers, but trust to the occasion for the words of wisdom which may be given from the spirit-world.

It is not to be expected that the oratorical stars of the Spiritualist movement will often condescend to shine down upon the Temple Hall gatherings, "without money and without price." Still the meetings are kept up, and occasionally a real feast of spirit-manna is dropped by angel-hands. We were present on Sunday morning, Sept. 25th, and listened to some beautiful remarks, prompted on the occasion, from the lips of several mediums. Every age struggles and finds expression; so does every soul, sooner or late.

Mediums meet at Temple Hall, and have the opportunity of speaking as power is given unto them. In this they resemble somewhat the followers of George Fox.

Mrs. Carlisle, of Charlestown, in the entranced state, offered a prayer, giving the name of Ephraim Peabody, formerly a minister of Boston, as the controlling spirit.

Mrs. Ellis, in her seat in the body of the hall, was influenced by the alleged spirit of Eliza A. Broad. She spoke with true feeling, and in language unmistakably simple, much to the gratification of the audience. Mrs. Carlisle then delivered a short address, after which the choir sung "Passing Away." The words and tune had a sweet effect, and brought to her feet Mrs. McDonald, of East Boston, who, in the entranced state, made a telling speech on the words of the music.

Mrs. Laura Hatch, the musical medium, gave a *seance* at Temple Hall, Boston, on Thursday evening, Sept. 22d, to a crowded house, for the benefit of the "Medium's Fund."

The medium appeared to be deeply entranced, and was made to play some excellent music. She played difficult pieces with one finger and one hand, and called for subjects from the audience.

"The Tempest," "The War," "The Spirit leaving the Body," and "Happiness," were chosen. Each piece was executed with skill, and called forth applause. A second series of subjects was chosen by the audience, among which was a banjo solo, which was beautifully rendered.

OBITUARY. DR. J. B. FERGUSON passed to the world of spirits at his residence, Nashville, Tenn., September 3d, aged 52.

He was one of the lights of the New Dispensation. Few who knew him felt other than better for his fellowship. We knew him and could not help praying that he might be long spared and rendered physically strong for the work he was so eminently fitted to perform.

He suffered a martyrdom during many years, and that uncomplainingly. His spirit was radiant with promise, and his hopes ever with humanity. God blesses all such heroes, if not in superabundant worldly wealth, in riches of soul which go with it to the land of the immortals, there to realize compound interest in joys

unspeakable. "The stroke of Death is but a kindly frost which cracks the shell and leaves the kernel room to germinate."

The shell of our brother is cracked by the stroke of death. The kernel, his spirit, has now room to germinate. In the confines of his ever-ailing body he was marvelously buoyant. Who, that had the privilege of listening to his magical inspirations can fail to feel that death has not only cut the cords that bound him to earth, but also saddened other lives, which, being human, must needs bear the burdens of human nature. After the storm comes the calm, — sorrow, — joy. Our brother is only taken hence a little in advance of us; gone "out of this room into the next."

LITERATURE.

MIRACLES; PAST AND PRESENT, by WILLIAM MOUNTFORD. Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co.

Hume, Strauss, Renan, and the rest of anti-supernaturalists, are not permitted, unquestioned, to storm the citadel of miracles.

The Church, except in isolated instances, has bowed down to the graven images of materialism, and exiled the spirit of the ancient faith. In spite of the directions of the Church and the assaults of skepticism, the spiritual makes itself manifest; hence the miracles of the present supplement the historic ones, and all who realize the action of disembodied upon embodied spirit grow to recognize the hand of God and angels in the progress of man.

Mr. Mountford's book is a fresh and fitting tribute to the Christian side of Spiritualism. It exactly meets the needs of the churches, and must cause many of the erudite to blush at their long-existing blindness to the manifest teaching of the Scriptures, in which they profess to believe with all their hearts.

"The spiritual blindness of the age is such," says Mr. Mountford, "that often there is not much more light in the Church than there is out of it." This is a truth which none of us can overturn. Every side of Spiritualism is becoming represented, which is exactly the need of the age, as we perceive it.

Taking Mr. Mountford's point of observation we are bound to say that he has succeeded to a marvel in making out a case against Renan, Strauss, and the whole school of anti-miracle writers. But we do not think that "nature" can be compressed into an argument, and "miracle" bear no other definition than the one given to it by the author.

Churchmen will find in this book logic enough to shatter to pieces their false idols, whilst scientists, and even Spiritualists, will find in it much to set them thinking and do them good.

"In order to have the miracles of the Bible answer better the purpose of doctrinal proofs, the theologians of this century have often largely availed themselves of the spirit of the times for the prejudices which it prompts against the possibility of the supernatural in any other locality or age than the Scriptural. But now Chubb, Toland, and Anthony Collins, were unbelievers; and yet they were harmless men, compared with the hapless clergyman who thinks to uphold the miracles of the Holy Scriptures by denying the possibility of any others. He may not know the mischief of his course, but his successor will inevitably develop it."

Thus the author, at the outset, clears his ground and goes on to build his temple of facts and faith.

"Miracles, Past and Present" has the merit of unity of design, and it is a readable, suggestive work. The author has performed his task through years of toil and earnest intent. May we have more such books.

HOWE'S SEVEN HOUR SYSTEM OF GRAMMAR, by PROF. HOWE. Pp. 40. Price to any part of the Union, 50 cents and stamp: cloth bound, \$1.00, and three stamps. Sold at the office of the "Spiritual Monthly."

From a careful perusal of this interesting little work, we are satisfied that the author has given to the world a most useful contribution to the science of language. Within fifty pages of good, large print, we find every essential element that constitutes a good, practical grammarian. It is neatly arranged, well classified, can be read, re-read, and fully digested in the spare evenings of a week. All the perplexing absurdities of the text-books are removed, and the pathway of the student is made clear as sunshine, making it an easy task to become thoroughly versed in the science of language. In a word, the book displays profound study and research, as well as great experience in the art of teaching. THE SEVEN HOUR SYSTEM OF GRAMMAR may be considered the right-hand friend of the teacher, editor, reporter, lecturer, merchant, clergyman, and senator. It reduces the study of this necessary branch of science from tedious years of memorizing to a few hours and minutes of pleasurable pastime.

WILLIAM DENTON, THE GEOLOGIST AND RADICAL; A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH by J. H. POWELL. 36 pp. 25 cts., postage 2 cts. Sold by the Author, at the office of the "Spiritual Monthly."

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No man can read the Bible, or call himself a Christian, without believing that, during the course of time comprehended by the divine writers, the Deity, to confirm the faith of the Jews, and to overcome and confound the pride of the heathens, wrought in the land many great miracles, using either good spirits, the instruments of His pleasure, or fallen angels, the permitted agents of such evil as it was His will should be inflicted upon, or suffered by the children of men. This proposition comprehends, of course, the acknowledgment of the truth of miracles during this early period, by which the ordinary laws of Nature were suspended, and recognizes the existence in the spiritual world of the two grand divisions of angels and devils, severally exercising their powers, according to the commission or permission of the Ruler of the universe. — *Sir Walter Scott.*

THERE was never yet, I venture to say, a religious creed promulgated among men, which so fully and always demanded the exercise of the judgment and the supremacy of reason" (as Spiritualism). — *Judge Edmonds.*

The Lyceum Record.



CHILDREN of the Progressive Lyceum, we design to serve you, and hope to deserve your generous approval. You are favored beyond multitudes of children in being permitted to attend Lyceums, where freedom is the watchword. Be faithful, and persevere in good things. You are to be actors in the world's drama when we older ones shall have gone to the world of Immortals; but we trust to be permitted to look down on your noble achievements and to feel a thrill of divine joy as we recall the interest we took on earth in your well-being. We would not have you think that your Institution is perfect; that could not be under the *regime* of progress; but we know that it is a vast improvement on Sunday Schools generally. You have opportunities that the children of Sunday Schools have not; that is, freedom to express *your* thoughts, and not merely the thoughts set down in books, or spoken from the lips of the teacher. In this freedom you will discover soul-growth and acquire the stature of men and women.

Be good, whatever else you achieve. Goodness is the pearl of great price. Remember the lines of Kingsley: —

“Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
Do noble deeds, not dream them all day long;
And so make life death, and that vast forever
One grand sweet song.”


We don't desire to tire you with lengthy essays, but to present such stories and articles as shall interest and aid you in the work of culture.

We know how difficult the task is that we have undertaken, more difficult than to perform the more elaborate and scholarly work of the magazine. To place ourselves in sympathy with children, and catch the beautiful spirit of their lives is not an easy thing for matter-of-fact adults, given mostly to each other's society. Still, we will try to deserve the blessing of you little ones, and be willing at all times to listen to your prattling, earnest voices. So if you have anything good to say, kind children, we wait to hear it.

LOTTIE AND LUCY ; OR LIFE-EPIISODES.

BY LOUISA S. POWELL.

CHAPTER I. — NUTTING.

T was a small village, inhabited mostly by peasants, at the base of high hills, where Lottie and Lucy lived. They were as opposite in character as the antipodes ; yet they could not keep apart, for any length of time.

The Abbots lived next door to the Dales. Lottie was the only daughter of the former. Lucy the eldest of four daughters and two sons of the latter.

Lottie Abbot was a mixture of benevolence and selfishness rarely combined in such proportions in one individual. She had a good home and kind parents, and more freedom than was good for her. In all seasons she betrayed a selfish indifference to the wishes of her mother, while she feared the anger of her father. Lucy Dale, on the contrary, was an obedient, patient, and exemplary girl. She loved her mother, and would sooner cut off her right hand than willingly cause that mother deep anguish.

Lottie was fifteen and Lucy thirteen years of age at the time our story opens.

A plump, round face, red cheeks and light blue, restless eyes, belonged to Lottie. As in character, so in feature, a widely different description answers for Lucy. Her face was oval ; eyes, dark ; hair, black ; and expression subdued.

No two girls could be found more dissimilar. Yet, by a freak of disposition or desire, they became companions.

Lucy Dale, being the eldest girl of the family, had charge of Ellie, a baby only one month old, which was a heavy responsibility for one so young. The Dales had been well-to-do, but Drink, that demon of the household, had entered their habitation and paralyzed their social prospects, rendering the father a helpless dolt, and, through his mad passion, prostrating the mother, one of Heaven's patient angels, on a sick bed, from which she would never rise again.

The little Lucy was thus, one month after the birth of Ellie, burdened with a mother's care. She was patient and industrious ; the household drudge by necessity.

It was seldom she could find time for a walk, and never went out without carrying Ellie with her.

Work, work, work. No time even to devote to her playthings, — a large doll, a miniature china tea-service, books and many other things, — presents from her fond father in their days of prosperity, days that seemed all sunshine. She could play no longer with them. She was transformed, as it were, from a bright and happy child, into a busy, care-worn woman.

Lucy loved to be alone with Ellie, and was often observed sitting on one of the grave-mounds in the village churchyard, with an umbrella by her side, waiting patiently for a shower. It seemed to her so refreshing to be in the gentle rain, and beautiful to think of the happy days gone by. Young as she was, she could commune with her own soul, and was a philosopher in embryo.

The infant Ellie was taken from her mother's breast and brought up by hand, Lucy having to feed her with a spoon. There were no baby-feeding bottles in those days, or they had not been entered on the list of varieties at the chemist's store of the village.

Night and day the little woman attended to her charge, and was very proud of it. The child grew to love her very much, and would allow no other person to do anything for her.

One afternoon Lucy was sitting nursing Ellie at the door. Lottie was by her side, looking all love and mischief. Lucy felt instinctively that the girl was not trustworthy, yet she could not but feel kindly towards her.

"Come, Lucy, let us go and gather some hazel-nuts or filberts, and have some fine fun," said Lottie, pulling her companion by the frock.

Lucy had got through most of the housework for the day, and had just been to her mother's side and seen that she was comfortable. There could be no harm, she thought, in carrying Ellie into the woods for an hour or so.

On the way, Lottie was more than ever talkative. She said many things, too, that shocked Lucy much, and told several lies.

"I should be afraid," cried Lucy, "of being struck dead, Lottie, were I to talk as wickedly as you. If you do not cease, I'll go back, that I will," and she shed a few scalding tears, for her heart was overwhelmed with grief.

"You're a little fool!" sneered Lottie. "Do you think I care for the advice of simpletons, who are always wimpering about the sin of disobedience and of God's will, of which I know as much as them all."

Lucy felt that she would give the world, if she had it, to be at

home with her mother, and vowed, secretly, to keep from Lottie for the future.

"My mother would be very sad if she knew that I came, and more so if she knew the way in which you talk."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Lottie, snapping her thumb and finger. "I don't care *that* for my mother. Why should you any more?"

They had arrived at the opening to the woods, when, without waiting for another word from Lucy, Lottie darted off, making her way through briars and over fern, eager to have the first pull at the nuts.

Lucy, not comprehending the reason of her sudden disappearance, thought it was the result of anger, and turned back, reaching her home just in time to fulfill a mission for her mother, who was fast nearing the land of spirits.

It is impossible to describe the unhappiness of the little woman as she reflected on her disobedience. A thousand times she resolved to tell her mother and ask forgiveness, but was prevented by the thought that the intelligence might affect her for the worse.

Three hours later brought Lottie to the door. Her pinafore was full of nuts, filburts, and fruit.

"Why did you go back, you silly thing? Look at my trophies!" and she displayed them.

"I don't care, Lottie, how much you have. I shall not make myself unhappy and risk mother's life for you any more."

Lottie laughed aloud. "We shall see! we shall see!" and she went into her own house.

CHAPTER II.—SORREL AND BUTTERCUPS.

Mrs. Dale lingered many weeks; Lucy fearing to make the slightest noise in her movements about the house, lest it should disturb her. As if to make the cup of misery more bitter, Mr. Dale came home sick, and was rendered helpless in a few days.

God only knows how the little woman strove to keep heart under her sad burden. Yet she did keep heart, and worked like a little Titan. She had to do all the house-work; not even the washing was put out, for her parents were too poor to pay for food, much less, help. Ellie was as good as gold, or it would have been impossible for Lucy to have got through her work.

Neighbors, hearing of the sickness of the parents, came to see them, the poorest leaving some trifling present, while some of the

well-to-do talked religion, and left with a pious feeling of having performed a noble action.

Lucy felt instinctive disgust, young as she was, at their selfishness, and deemed real kindness more sacred at that hour than all religious professions or pious homilies.

Amongst the few who aided them was Lottie's mother, who was never so happy as when she could send Lottie in with a basket of fruit, a little fish, and other delicacies that happened to be within her means at the time.

Lottie delighted to do her mother's bidding in these instances, because she had an impulsive, generous soul, which only needed the occasion and angel-promptings to make manifest.

"You are a dear, kind girl," said Lucy, shedding tears, as she took a basket of nice meat and fruit from her hands.

"Don't talk foolish. I am nothing of the kind. You take the things to your father and mother, and don't be a fool crying about nothing."

Lucy wiped her eyes and looked strangely at Lottie. She could not understand her, yet she could not help loving her.

"Oh! I've so much to do, Lottie, and get so little sleep, that I fear I shall be sick soon myself."

"Nonsense, Lucy, what need have you to fret? Let the work go or skim it over. What need have you to be so particular? Who's to interfere? your mother can't."

Lucy was dusting the chairs. Lottie got up, and taking the duster from her, run about the room and dusted the furniture in a hurried and slovenly manner.

"There, that's the way! and she threw the duster at the feet of Lucy, who picked it up and went over the job again with her accustomed care, saying, "Mother always told me that a thing worth doing at all is worth doing well."

"You're a little blockhead to heed her by working as you do. Why don't you come out and play more? It would do you good, and Ellie as well. Why, I declare, the baby is quite pale from not being more in the open air."

Lottie spoke the truth. Lucy knew it, and let fall a few fresh tears.

"It is all well enough to do the work of the house and mind Ellie, but not at the expense of your own health and that of her's."

"What can I do? There is nobody at home except sisters to attend to my parents?"

"Do? Why, just let some of the work slide, and go out for an hour or so. It will do you all the good in the world."

Lucy had visions of meadows of sorrel, butter-cups, and velvet grass. It would be nice, she thought, to spend only one short hour in the meadow. That could not be wrong, especially as Ellie was pale for lack of air.

"I will ask mother to let me go out for one hour, only for one; then I will bustle about and finish the work."

"Ask mother! well, that is more than I should, were I you. But there is no accounting for the follies of some people."

Lucy was silent. She felt that it was only right to ask her mother's permission to go out. Yet she knew that if she said that Lottie had inspired her with the wish, and would probably go with her, that her mother would be unhappy.

Now Lucy would not add a pang to her dying mother for all the world. She hesitated, and at length was persuaded by Lottie to accompany her to the meadow to gather sorrel and buttercups.

When Lucy had satisfied herself that the invalids were doing well she donned her bonnet, and carrying Ellie, met Lottie on the way to the meadow. The day was fine and the air delicious. Lucy thought the birds never sang so sweetly, and she felt herself to be in heaven. It was only a brief cessation from domestic drudgery, yet it had a beneficial effect upon her.

"See, now! did I not tell you right? Ellie's color has returned," cried Lottie, in a triumphant tone.

Lucy could not but admit that the change had been wrought on Ellie by the genial air; and she felt the more happy in consequence.

They remained together nearly two hours, gathering sorrel and buttercups. Lucy essayed to leave several times, fearing she might be needed at home, but Lottie insisted on her staying, declaring that she had not been from home an hour.

Presently the village clock struck five. Lucy colored, and carrying Ellie, and her apron full of sorrel and buttercups, started for home.

Lottie remained, laughing aloud. "Aha, aha! didn't I tell you when we had been nutting that I would have you with me again?"

The pleasure of the afternoon was at an end for the terrified Lucy. She fancied that her mother was calling to her, and she not there to answer. In her hurry to reach home she let fall all her sorrel and buttercups.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS.

1. What is the most sacred thing in life ?
2. Who are the free ?
3. Is Heaven around, within, or above us ?
4. Can we injure others without at the same time injuring ourselves ?
5. How can we best prove to our parents that we love them ?
6. How can we best show that we regard ourselves as creatures of infinite possibilities ?
7. What is religion ?
8. How can we obtain religion ?
9. What is health ?
10. How can we secure health ?
11. How do we know that spirits communicate ?
12. What is the good of spirit communion ?
13. For what purpose do we preach and practice calisthenics ?
14. Ought distinctions of sex or color to weigh down our sense of justice ?
15. Is the authority of any man infallible ?
16. What does Spiritualism mean ?
17. What is the difference between the Orthodox Sabbath School and the Children's Progressive Lyceum ?
18. Is it good to know that man's spirit is immortal ?
19. What were the best words spoken by Jesus ?
20. Did no man before the time of Jesus utter the same truths ?
21. Is originality of expression more important than practical living ?

 LYCEUM INTELLIGENCE.

BOSTON.

Mercantile Hall Lyceum is one of the best conducted in America. We have attended its interesting sessions, and admired its mottoes and targets, which are finely painted.

Here are the mottoes over the platform and at the end of the hall : —

The fear of God is the beginning of folly.

The stroke of death is but a kindly frost which cracks the shell and leaves the kernel room to germinate. What consummate fools this fear of death hath made us. — *Shakespeare.*

FAITH.

Evil is only the slave of good ;
 Sorrow, the servant of joy ;
 That soul is mad who refuses food
 From the meanest in God's employ.
 Day will return with a fresher boon ;
 Night will come with a newer moon ;
 God will remember the world. — *J. G. Holland.*

ETERNAL PROGRESSION.

Broad is the road that leads to life,
And thousands walk together there;
But error shows a narrower path,
With here and there a traveller.

Christian Psalm, improved.

Salvation only through Progression.

'Tis a beautiful belief
That ever 'round our head
Are hovering, on viewless wings,
The spirits of the dead.

The Truth against the world.

'Tis a faith sublime and sure,
When ended our career,
That 't will be our ministry
To watch o'er others here.

The love of God is the beginning of wisdom.

On the 18th of last month we were present. The attendance of children was not great. The session was, as usual, interesting. The answers to questions were mostly marked by intelligence. The calisthenic exercises and marching were excellent. Mr. D. N. Ford, conductor. Miss Mary A. Sanborn, guardian.

WADMAN HALL. — Dr. C. C. York, necessitated by his professional duties, has resigned his position as conductor at this Lyceum. It will no doubt be filled creditably. Let us hope so.

CHARLESTOWN.

The Children's Progressive Lyceum of Charlestown, the second Lyceum organized under the system of A. J. Davis, has just entered on its sixth year, which makes it the oldest institution of the kind in the vicinity of Boston.

Only few of the first workers remain with it, which is to be regretted. Still it has earnest souls laboring for the good of the children. Having survived the wreck of other lyceums, it may hope to press ahead. It is not the feverish anxiety of some of the early workers to gain the haven of success at a leap, which has sustained it, but the indwelling truth, which is the life of the system.

After a vacation of three months the Lyceum will go to work in earnest on the first Sunday in October, in Washington Hall, Main Street.

The yearly election of officers and leaders takes place the second Sunday in October, at which all the children, members of the Lyceum, and their parents or guardians, have the privilege of voting.

Connected with the Lyceum is a Dramatic Association, from which the Lyceum has received much benefit. There seems not a doubt among its present managers, that, could there be found in the vicinity Spiritualists enough, capable and willing, to fill all offices, there would be children enough to fill the groups to overflowing.

CAMBRIDGEPORT.

HARMONY HALL. — This society has recommenced labors for the year. We

have not yet had an opportunity of being present. E. A. Albee, conductor. Miss A. R. Martain, guardian.

PLYMOUTH, MASS.

Plymouth has a flourishing Lyceum of sixty-six members. Conductor, L. L. Bullard; guardian, Miss Alice B. Sampson; librarian, Miss Clara Robbins. The Lyceum has no vacation through the year. Compared with large places like Boston, the success in numbers at Plymouth is gratifying. We trust other towns will follow the example set them by the Plymouth friends. We hope to hear more from them, anon.

Fanny Sayles, ten years of age, Grotto Group, Boston Lyceum, presents the following as her first essay at versification; —

THE BROOK'S REPLY.

“ Oh, sweet little brook, may I ask,
Why you are ever at your task,
Never leaving off to play
All the weary, live-long day ? ”

“ My little child, I'll tell you why,
Like the hours I go laughing by :
I sprang from a spring
And am *made* for to sing.”

A boy was once asked what “ meekness ” was. He thought for a moment, and said, “ Meekness giveth smooth answers to rough questions.”

Nothing can atone for the want of modesty and innocence, without which beauty is ungraceful, and quality contemptible.

Dr. Johnson, being asked to give a definition of “ Nonsense,” replied, “ Sir, it is nonsense to bolt a door with a boiled carrot.”

An Irishman says, Nothing is a footless stocking without a leg in it, and an American says, it is the ashes of gunpowder. Some affirm it is a game at which nobody plays in a place called Nowhere. Some attempt to prove that Nothing is Something, on the ground that it is a noun, and as a noun is the name of anything, that is something. People are often said to rise from Nothing; some of the most deep-rooted of our habits and customs originate in Nothing, and some of the most magnificent schemes of men have ended in Nothing.

Stop that boy! A cigar in his mouth, a swagger in his walk, impudence in his face, a care-for-nothingness in his manner. Judging from his demeanor, he is older than his father, wiser than his teacher, and more honored than his master. Stop him! he is going too fast. He don't see himself as others see him. He don't know his speed. Stop him! ere tobacco shatters his nerves; ere manly strength gives way to brutish aims and low pursuits. Stop all such boys. They are legion; they bring shame on their families, and become sad and solemn reproaches to themselves. — *American Paper.*

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