

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 197.

The Principles of Nature.

THE NEW AND THE OLD.

Is there any rational belief in the occurrences of the spiritual manifestations (so called) recorded in the Bible?

Does a rational belief in the occurrences of the spiritual phenomena recorded in the Bible necessitate, upon the laws of consistency, the acceptance of modern spiritual manifestations?

Can mankind be raised from mere FAITH into a KNOWLEDGE of spiritual things?

These questions, involving the vital interests of every man, woman and child, demand of this nineteenth century, a solution. In the discussion of these questions are involved the unchangeableness of God, (or nature, if any person prefers the term,) the uniformity of the nature of man, the reliability of his perceptive capacities, his veracity, and the faith of Christendom in all time. It may be reasonably expected that a faithful journalist, devoted more particularly to the exposition of modern spiritual manifestations, would put on record a fair statement of the views concerning this subject, held by the several prominent denominations of Christians, and their treatment of the recurrence of phenomena similar to those which form the basis of their faith. In doing this, it may be expected that we should take the statements of the most prominent preachers and journals of the several denominations. Accordingly, we publish this week an extract from a sermon delivered by Rev. E. H. Chapin some time since in our hearing. The extract, with the text upon which the sermon was based, is as follows:

EXTRACT FROM MR. CHAPIN'S SERMON.
And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received his sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.—Acts 9:18.

1. See, my friends, was the conversion of Paul; and now, so far as many who hear me are concerned, I might leave the narrative just as it stands, and pass to the specific practical lesson which I propose to draw from this incident. But there are others who have certain queries and speculations in regard to the narrative, which I deem it right to consider. These queries and speculations may be said to concern three points involved in this transaction—the integrity of the narrative; the nature of the light above the brightness of the sun; and the character of Paul and his conversion.

2. As to the first point—the integrity of the narrative—I shall be very brief. I would merely say that whatever discrepancy may be discovered between the statement of Luke in this ninth chapter of Acts, and those of the Apostle in the twenty-second and twenty-sixth chapters, are perfectly reconcilable upon any generous principle of interpretation.

Mr. Chapin explained these instances of alleged discrepancy, and then went on to say that

3. Passing from this to the second point—the nature of the great light, I feel inclined to vindicate the statement in the narrative from anti-supernaturalism on the one hand, and what I trust without any great breach of courtesy, I may call a *pseudo* or false supernaturalism on the other. As to that kind of philosophy which repudiates any occurrence above the ordinary routine of nature, I challenge its premises as a sheer assumption. As to the point upon which it is to be met, that depends upon the remoteness or nearness of its ground to the circle of Christian faith. If it denies the groundwork of Religion altogether—denies any Power and Intelligence above nature—any realm of Spirit outside the realm of matter—then it is to be encountered by all those arguments based on the tokens of design in the outward world, based on the faculties and instincts within us, based on the logical necessities of the case, which go to prove the existence of a God and the reality of spiritual things. But if this philosophy draws nearer to the ordinary lines of reasoning, and affirms the existence of a God, and assents to the doctrine of spiritual facts, then, I ask, why should we reject such an account as this, of a supernatural light? If the Being whom we call God answers to the conception of what such a Being must be, he can not be controlled by nature, but controls it. The laws of nature producing its ordinary phenomena, are simply the expressions and energies of his own will; and if to this we reply, "True, but his disposition never changes—His intention is always the same; and, therefore, the course of nature which he has decreed must be a perpetual course;" I answer, in the first place, that we don't know all of nature; it has depths of mystery that we have not explored; we can not classify its apparatus and processes.

4. And, in the next place, nature is only one realm of the divine operation. Material laws work for material purposes—work for the uniformity and integrity of this outward shell of things. But there are not spiritual laws working for spiritual purposes, by other channels than those of electricity and gravitation? And if the spiritual purpose is to be subserved by an overruling or overflooding of the usual or material law, this does not argue any change in the divine intention; for it may have been the intention of God to do so from the beginning, and this very overflooding or overruling may be precisely the thing that fulfills that intention. This so-called supernatural act may itself be involved in the net-work of laws; may itself be a law, the very characteristic of which shall be its infrequency. For infrequency does not argue change or vacillation; and the largest measure of human experience by no means determines all the methods by which God may work; it only determines the methods by which, thus far, he has worked.

5. There can be no *a priori* objection to the light that blazed around Paul, if it can only be shown that the transaction had a spiritual purpose worthy such a transcendent phenomenon. There can be no objection to it in the mind of any one who believes in a spiritual Deity, moving all this realm of outward nature as the apparatus of spiritual results, and controlling it.

6. And this very ground of a worthy occasion, is the basis upon which I would oppose the claims of what I call a *pseudo* or false supernaturalism. Those who occupy that position would be very apt to say, "True, we believe in this great light that blazed around Paul; we believe that such things, transcending the routine of nature, are not only possible, but frequent; we believe in such things now, and welcome that great light as shedding confirmation upon modern mysteries and marvels."

7. I say, in reply to this, that the real supernaturalness and grandeur of such a vision as that which Paul had, consists in its rareness, and its object. I can receive no mere troop of wonders, however inexplicable they may be, as demonstrative of an extraneous agency, or proofs of a superior Intelligence. If they are nothing but wonders, calculated to make the hair stand on end, and merely perplex us by their mischief, the most that could be claimed for them would be an evil agency, and this, of course, all well-disposed persons will have as little to do with as possible. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," says the poet—and so, I believe, it lies about us always—the spiritual realm, separated from us only by a veil thinner than we may think. What intimations may come to a solitary soul here and there; what mystic experiences this one or another may treasure up in his own secret memory, I pretend not to say.

8. But one thing I know, God has drawn a veil between the world of body and the world of spirit—I believe for a wise purpose. He has given us natural eyes to see the natural world without us—natural ears to hear the sounds within this world; for here, at present, is the sphere of our work and our discipline, and that very discipline is in the exercise of a faith that does not yet see what is behind the veil; withdraw that veil, and there is no reason for our abiding in the flesh; make that communication frequent, and the supernatural becomes the natural, and loses all the impressiveness of grandeur that pertains to its infrequency.

9. So I believe that our spiritual communications are not to outward senses, but the inward faculty—not by audible knocks on material substances, but inward rappings in the soul. At least if there comes any external communication from any Divine sphere—and I am sure we should shun the contact of any other—I believe it will be rare, and for a great purpose like that which came to Paul on the road to Damascus. I can accept such a manifestation when it comes once or twice in the course of ages, on a field as broad as the mid-day sky, for the great object of smelting the nature of a Paul into a force and a fire that shall cleave and rock the world; but I can not accept such a manifestation as spiritual and divine when it comes merely as a wonder, to excite amazement and curiosity; drumming upon dinner-tables, pulling and pinching, flinging billets of wood, and pieces of crockery; informing me of the age of my grandfather, or where I can find a lost token.

10. I can not accept any act of mere wonders, however strange and enigmatical, as divine and spiritual communications, that present the other world as a state decidedly unfavorable to the development of the intellectual faculties; that give us undignified Washingtons and demented Franklins; that make the author of the *Organon* talk nonsense, and the phoenix-fire of Shelley or Keats dissolve in a drizzle of watery moonshine.

11. Let me be understood: I am not reasoning on the ground of that materialism which I have just endeavored to refute. I do not say that communications from the spiritual realm are impossible; I do not challenge any private claim of this kind. But as to manifestations whose only characteristics are publicity, marvelousness, and aimless mischief, I do say that I think too much of divine spiritual things to accept them as emanating from any such source. There is no necessity of logic that compels us to believe that an uncommon communication is a transcendent truth. A world-wide moral purpose makes a wonder credible, but no amount of mere wonder can make nonsense respectable, or grotesqueness divine.

12. If I were asked what is the origin of these wonderful phenomena, I reply—I don't know, and really don't care.

13. But as to their result, so contrary to moral sense and common sense, I am inclined to refer them to those mysteries of psychology, or those processes of matter, of which we as yet know so little, rather than to the great spiritual realm of light and progress, and immortal energy.

14. As to the miracles of the New Testament, they do not stand as mere unintelligible wonders. If they did, they could not authenticate other wonders; but they stand in the magnitude of their purpose, and in their own character; their beneficence, their moral sanctity, their results are a fitting drapery to the spirit of Jesus, and the expression of his divine love and power.

REMARKS UPON THE ABOVE.

I will accept Mr. Chapin's "generous principle of interpretation," in order to reconcile the discrepancies in the Bible narrative of Paul's conversion. But the summary manner in which he attempts to dispose of "queries and speculations," relative to "the integrity of the narrative," hardly comports with the almost universal disregard by the promulgators of this narrative, of the testimony of equally credible living witnesses to similar phenomena now occurring. To reconcile this requires something

more than "generous principles of interpretation." I have myself seen lights similar to those described by Paul, and have heard voices speaking as it were out of heaven; and all persons with me at the time saw and heard the same things. We neither "trembled" nor "shook," nor were we "struck speechless," neither were we "astonished," nor did we "fall to the ground," but, on the contrary, as rational beings, we conversed with the Spirits. I do not remember that it occurred to us to ask whether we were "worthy of the transcendent phenomena" we were witnessing, or that we conceived them to very much transcend our Father's goodness to us his last children. We had heard of his similar kindnesses to his former children, and were not so sure as some persons seem to be, that the family in these last days had degenerated below his notice.

There are no discrepancies between my own testimony and that of others who witnessed these phenomena, requiring "generous principles of interpretation to reconcile." Myself, and the company who witnessed them with me, are by no means the only living witnesses to phenomena of this kind. I will guarantee to produce one hundred equally credible witnesses of such phenomena, to one witness—or even the record of one person's testimony—to similar phenomena found in the Bible or other contemporary publications. I claim that, under similar conditions, the children of God whom Spirits visit in these days, are as likely to perceive and comprehend truly the things which do appear, as the children of this family were eighteen hundred years ago. We do not consider a man in a state of fright—in which St. Paul seems to have been—so reliable as one in a sober, dignified, meditative condition. Hence, if there is any difference as to the integrity of the narratives concerning spiritual manifestations, it must be in favor of those of modern times. Spiritual phenomena have become so notorious within the last six years, that no preacher in America is to be excused on a plea of ignorance; neither can any one be excused for disregarding the current phenomena because they were not taught in their college classes, or because no record of them is not found within the lids of the Bible, or their existence allowed by their creed. Neither shall the Jewish mode of crucifying the senses in deference to creeds, and transforming the utterances of heaven, "I have glorified thy name and will glorify it again," into thunder, avail anything to our modern clergy. Neither shall the assumption that they are the chosen mediums for spiritual things, or their unkind insinuations that our statements are not reliable because they have not seen the light, neither heard the voice, avail anything. The light of the sun at mid-day is too notorious with the common people for them to give heed to any man who may say it depends on his shutting or opening his eyes.

Hence our "query and speculation" is unanswered. What will our spiritual guides do with this and other testimony of similar character constantly accumulating? Can Christianity afford to magnify the testimony of Paul, and deny the testimony of equally credible living witnesses all around us? It seems to me unfair and hazardous to say that the truth, influence and grandeur of Christianity rest on the "rareness of the phenomena on which it is based," and that their frequent recurrence would destroy its truth and efficacy. If Christianity can only be sustained by crucifying the evidences of our senses in deference to the superstitious influence which ignorance and antiquity lend to it, the sooner it is crushed under the ponderous wheels of accumulating common sense the better. Will the promulgators of Paul's narrative hazard the assertion that I, and those to whom I refer as credible witnesses, are mistaken and in a state of hallucination as to what "our eyes have seen and our ears heard"? If so, Paul must be subjected to the same criticism, and his narrative will need the accumulating superstitious reverence of two thousand years more, before his integrity can be successfully used as a juggernaut to crush out common sense. I am for the defense of Paul's narrative, and will not stand by consenting to his impeachment by his professed friends. Although he was in a state of fright at the time, I believe Paul stated the truth of his own experience. I do not say that his simple narrative has not since been tinkered to fit the creeds, or powder to the superstitions of men; nevertheless I believe it still contains the truth substantially. I claim to believe this and other spiritual phenomena recorded in the Bible, more firmly than any person does or can, who has not had an experience similar to those who furnished that record. And this is the legitimate result of the recurrence of these phenomena in our day. This not only proves an unchangeable paternity of the common Father, but a similarity of perception and comprehension as characterizing a universal brotherhood. Our observations and understanding of these phenomena do not conflict with those of the elder children of this great family.

The reason why our testimony is not regarded to-day as being equally reliable as that of persons who testified eighteen hundred years ago, is set forth by Mr. Chapin in paragraph number eight. He says:

Here, at present, is the sphere of our work and our discipline, and that very discipline is in the exercise of a faith that does not yet see what is behind the veil; withdraw that veil, and there is no reason for our abiding in the flesh; make that communication frequent, and the supernatural becomes the natural, and loses all the impressiveness of grandeur that pertains to its infrequency.

In other words modern spiritualism is objected to because it carries the multitudes through the foggy, dismal swamp of faith to the realm of glorious realities, where we shall not need to teach our neighbor, for all shall comprehend the truth, from the least to the greatest." I do not conceive that passing

from faith to the knowledge of things hoped for, removes any of the reasons for abiding in the flesh," unless it be those which consist in the services one may render in magnifying the importance or value of faith which in the transition becomes an unimportant and valueless thing. I never believed our heavenly Father to be so unkind as to create and clothe us with flesh for the mere purpose of tormenting us with so utterly worthless a thing as blind faith. And yet the energies of Christendom seem to be combined to magnify its importance. Faith is an essential element in all hierarchy; hence its adoption as the chief cornerstone by every denomination of Christians. The more unscrupulous of these denominations make it the test of salvation or damnation of immortal souls, for the purpose of wielding its ungodly power more effectually. Faith is the harp of a thousand strings on which the clergy keep up an eternal jargon, for which the people must pay or be damned (at least according to the self-styled Evangelical religion). The only discipline, if it can be called such, which faith exercises, is to dehumanize man and use him as a cringing tool of its assumptions and blind authority. As Christ redeemed some of God's children from the curse of the law eighteen hundred years ago, and brought them into the condition of faith in spiritual things, so modern Spiritualism has unfolded and elevated many of his children in this age, from the curse of faith into the knowledge of spiritual realities. Faith was the mere dim shadowing of a better country; modern Spiritualism lands people on its shores, where the law has no power, and faith is swallowed up in knowledge, and man stands in his full stature and dignity, divested of selfishness and creeds, loyal only to truth.

I do not understand what Mr. Chapin means by the following language:

Make that communication frequent and the supernatural becomes the natural and loses all the impressiveness of grandeur that pertains to its infrequency.

What is natural, and supernatural? and by what rule, and where, shall the division between them be made? According to popular usage, everything is natural which is understood, and all else is supernatural. To the child everything is supernatural; to the adult (at least mental,) but few things, if any, are supernatural. To people under the law, or circumscribed within the realm of faith, all things are, and ever will be, supernatural. Reason in them lies dormant—a useless, forbidden thing. Hence, when we ask them to give "a reason for the faith that is in them," their reply is, "We are forbidden to exercise reason in relation to spiritual things." These persons are mere automatons. A parrot is capable of giving as intelligent reasons as they themselves are. I am sorry that there is little or no effort on the part of the clergy to get people out of this deplorable condition. True, the clergy make a show of reasoning for them, but they, too, revolve within the pale of faith, and it does not amount to anything. The moment a man speaks out boldly, the cry of infidelity is raised, and he becomes the carcase around which the wolves gather to devour him. The basis of all supernaturalism is superstition and ignorance. It is as natural for Spirits to communicate with mortals, as it is for mortals to communicate one with another; the proper conditions only are wanting to make such intercourse frequent. And suppose "all the impressiveness and grandeur that pertains to its infrequency is lost," shall we turn a deaf ear to the melting words of our dear ones to save it? I perceive no particular grandeur in the silence of Spirits, unless it be in leaving others to talk about them. There always has been a fear in some minds that the realities of the spiritual world would be disclosed to the common people. To prevent this, the Catholic Church forbids the reading of the Bible by the masses, for the reason, doubtless, that the "impressiveness and grandeur" of its presentation by men in broad phylacteries will be lost. Protestantism is but fragments of Catholicism, and it, too, is alarmed at the prospect of open intercourse between Spirits and mortals. Away with such fears, and let the people come to the fountain of truth and be filled.

Mr. Chapin says:

5. There can be no *a priori* objection to the light that blazed around Paul, if it can only be shown that the transaction had a spiritual purpose worthy such a transcendent phenomenon.

Will Mr. Chapin oblige us by showing wherein spiritual purposes were better subserved by the conversion of Paul, than they would be by a conversion of himself to the realities of similar phenomena to-day? His vocation is to urge the significance of such phenomena, so far as he can comprehend them from a record, and through the impotency of mere faith. But could there be added to his eloquence the fervency of a zeal based upon personal experience, so that he could speak with the power of knowledge, he would not only "cleave and rock the world," as he says Paul did, but in comparison, would turn it upside down, and destroy the stumbling-block of faith with the unquenchable fire of knowledge. When we consider the naked fact that Paul never carried his disciples beyond faith in spiritual things, and that so weak and undefinable as to become the bone of bitter contention for universal Christendom, we must question the transcendent purposes, or rather the results, of the phenomena as set forth by Mr. Chapin; and especially do I question the justice and propriety of magnifying God's purposes, and the results of spiritual phenomena in the days of Paul, in order to institute unfavorable, untrue, and humiliating comparisons with modern manifestations. The fact that the devotees to the old dispensation of spiritual things universally persist in drawing comparisons between the most splendid phenomena of which the Bible furnishes any record, and the most

insignificant phenomena of modern times, is a sufficient answer to the claims in respect to the transcendent purposes and results of the ancient spiritual manifestations. Faith being the culmination of the old dispensation, and having a shadow merely of the good things to come, and not the very image of things, has never made the comers thereunto perfect or just in comparing spiritual phenomena. Hence, the light overshadowing Paul, and the audible speech and intelligent communication of which he was the subject, are compared with "drumming upon dinner-tables, pulling and pinching, flinging billets of wood and pieces of crockery." Why, if such comparison must be made, did not Mr. Chapin select some such examples as are recorded in Matt. 8:28-32, or Matt. 17:14-18; as these would be more in correspondence with the character of the modern phenomena which he instances? And why, again, does he mention these examples, and convey the inference that they fairly represent modern spiritual manifestations? If he believes this, it may constitute an excuse for his objecting to these phenomena, on the ground of unworthiness of purpose. But it will not excuse his answer to the question, "What is the origin of these wonderful phenomena?"—"I don't know, and really don't care!" Whoever chooses to remain ignorant of any subject, should keep silent.

I am at a loss to understand what Mr. Chapin means by the following language, which occurs in paragraph number seven:

If they [the phenomena] are nothing but wonders, calculated to make the hair stand on end, and merely perplex us by their mischief, the most that could be claimed for them would be an evil agency, and this, of course, all well-disposed persons will have as little to do with as possible.

Does he mean to signify that he would sooner adopt the orthodox theory of devils, than a rational theory of the Spirit-world and its inhabitants? I have never understood Mr. Chapin to be what is called an ultra-Universalist—that is, one who believes that at death men are in the twinkling of an eye transformed into deities, and sit with folded arms in the realm of divine perfection and wisdom; but I supposed he adopted the progressive theory in respect both to time and eternity. If so, what is the office of death? Does it do anything more than separate the natural (or earthly) body from the spiritual man? Does death, in itself, in any way affect the living, intelligent energy or immortal Spirit? If it does, somebody ought to show it. I maintain it does not, and appeal to Scripture nature, reason and Spirits, who have experienced it, for verification. [But unless called upon for the proofs, I will not take time and space to present them.]

If death does not change the man, but his condition of existence only, then it follows that the inhabitants of the Spirit-world are merely men, women and children, who enter there in the same mental, moral and spiritual states in which they left this sphere, and so remain until moved, by their needs or desires, to an examination of their condition, and to efforts to supply their wants. It is to be hoped that the supply of these needs will be such as to contribute to general elevation, and if so there will be no further necessity of taking advantage of, and deceiving, one another, as is customary here in order to acquire the means of supplying the needs of the physical body. If this be so (and of this I think I have more assurance than mere faith furnishes) it is evidently a state more favorable to improvement than the earthly state. But until Spirits learn something in their new condition, beside what they had learned here, they remain unchanged. If a man here is unscrupulous as to the means employed in acquiring those things which contribute to self-gratification, he will exhibit the same characteristics there, until he perceives his folly and grows out of it. So if a man is a bigoted sectarian here, and conscientiously believes that these spiritual communications come from the Devil and hisimps, and that a stop ought to be put to this alleged unlawful intercourse, he will say so from the spiritual spheres through the raps or other means of communication which he may discover. He will be under the self-righteous persuasion there, as he was here, that he is the chosen of God to give this warning. He does not mean any harm in either case; he thinks he is doing God's service. Of course he is hallucinated with the idea that those who differ from him, here and there, are of the Devil. Spirits behind the veil, in the state of many persons in the earth-form, seeing such religious superstitions, may think it no harm to indulge in a little frolic with such people. Doubtless many instances of this kind occurred in the ancient as well as in the modern spiritual phenomena, though the ancients were probably very much like us to-day, and thought it not expedient or profitable to record more of this class of the manifestations than were necessary to represent it.

When we consider that people in all the grades of earth-life are becoming inhabitants of the Spirit-world every day, hour, minute and second of time, it is strange that some should continue their habits of drumming upon dinner-tables, pulling and pinching, flinging billets of wood, and pieces of crockery, sometimes with marked significance, and sometimes otherwise? Can not Mr. Chapin conceive of some friend in the Spirit-world who would like to see what effects would be produced on his mind by informing him through raps on a table, "of the age of his grandfather, or where he could find a lost token"? I am quite sure that some of his friends in the earth-form would like to see what result would be produced on him by such a spiritual manifestation. Now if these friends should go to the Spirit-world before his conversion, very likely they would try the experiment.

"There can be really no *a priori* reason why the light that blazed around Paul" should not also light up Mr. Chapin; and many of his friends would be glad to see the illumination. But how would the world to-day treat such a phenomenon? Would

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTAN, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1856.

SHAKERS AND SHAKERISM.

The article written by F. W. Evans, which appeared in our last issue, together with the lecture delivered in the Tabernacle, by the same, on Thursday evening of last week, has excited considerable interest in a portion of the public mind concerning the peculiarities of that singular people called the SHAKERS; and we have concluded to respond to a seeming public demand by giving the following sketch of the history of that fraternity, and description of their leading spiritual and social characteristics. Many of the facts of this history will be peculiarly interesting to our spiritualistic readers, illustrating and demonstrating, as they do, their cherished doctrine of an existing intercourse between the natural and spiritual worlds.

The Shakers are, and always have been, professed believers in, and subjects of, spiritual manifestations; and the interior movements on which this portion of their claims is based, have now the sanction of an uninterrupted continuance for nearly two hundred years. The affluents from the spiritual world which finally resulted in the formation of the society of Shakers, had its first signal development as early as the year 1688. It commenced in the provinces of Dauphiny and Vivarais, in France, whence its subjects became known in history as the "French Prophets." So decisive was the psychical influence originating in some mysterious source beyond and independent of the minds of its subjects, that some five or six hundred Protestant Christians, of both sexes, suddenly became affected as if by a common spiritual power, and gave themselves out as inspired by the Holy Spirit. Thence the influence extended to others, until many thousands were affected in a similar manner. The physical phenomena attending these internal operations of the Spirit, consisted of twitching of the muscles, heaving of the chest, tremblings, leaping, loss of muscular strength, and falling into trances, slumbers, during which the subjects would utter strange prophecies and fervid exhortations to repentance. Young persons, from the age of six to twenty-five years, of both sexes, were most frequently the subjects of these movements, though no age gave exemption from them. Nor were they always propagated in their public assemblies, so as to suggest the idea of a magnetic or sympathetic transmission from one to another, inasmuch as persons while alone, at their homes or in the fields, would suddenly become affected, and take up the common prophecy, the burden of which was "Repent, for the end of all things (meaning the present order of things) is at hand, and Christ will speedily come to judge the world and establish his kingdom on earth."

This singular spiritual unfolding continued in more or less conspicuous operation for many years, and extended itself into other provinces and countries in continental Europe. About the year 1708, several of these prophets (or "mediums" as they would now be called) went over to England where they commenced exercising their gifts, and soon multitudes were added to their number. They however formed no church compact, and subsequently became scattered, and the prophetic affluents declined among the believers in England as well as on the continent. About the year 1747, a small number of these people who still continued faithful to the original promptings of the Spirit, were interiorly induced to form themselves into a society in the neighborhood of Manchester, under the ministry of James and Jane Wardley. A revival of spiritual influences ensued, and the members of this little society, while assembled for worship, were preternaturally affected with those agitations and shakings of the limbs which gave them the appellation of *Shakers*—the name by which they have been most commonly designated ever since.

Though subject to much bitter persecution, they continued to increase slowly in numbers and in influence, till about the year 1770, when, as they claim, their "present testimony of salvation and eternal life was fully revealed to ANN LEE, and by her to the Society." A few words, historical in relation to this somewhat noted personage may not here be out of place.

Ann Lee was born in Manchester, England, February 20, 1736. Her parents were respectable, but poor, and though they brought her up in habits of industry, they were unable to give her an education even to the extent of teaching her to read and write. From her childhood, however, she discovered a bright and active genius, was religiously disposed, and, as it is said, "peculiarly favored with heavenly visions." These impressions followed her throughout the period of her girlhood, though in consequence of worldly temptations her interior light was subject to frequent obscurities. On arriving at womanhood, she was induced by the importunities of her relations, to lay aside her natural repugnance to matrimony, and marry one Abraham Stanley, a blacksmith, by whom she had four children, all of whom died very early in life. Her religious convictions reviving with great power, frequently precipitating her into deep tribulations of soul relieved by occasional gleams of sunshine, she was induced to join the Society under the ministry of James and Jane Wardley, in the year 1758, being then in her twenty-third year. With these people she continued without any experiences which were specially noteworthy, until the year 1770, when, during her confinement in prison on the charge of having profaned the Sabbath by dancing, she fell into an ecstasy, and, as her followers say, "saw the Lord Jesus Christ in his glory, who revealed to her the great object of her prayers, and the most astonishing visions and divine manifestations were presented to her view in so clear and striking a manner that the whole spiritual world seemed displayed before her." She came forth from prison evidently clothed with a new power, and displayed the singular and awe-inspiring ability to read the thoughts and hearts of those who came into her presence. In consequence of this rare gift, together with the impressive revelations which had been made to her, she was from that time recognized by her religious connections, as the female Messiah—a recipient of the Spirit of Christ at his second appearing, (as Jesus was at his first appearing,) and the first visible leader of the Millennial Church on earth; and ever since then, she has been looked up to by the Shakers as a *Mother in Israel*, even as Jesus was as a *Father in Israel*.

The Shakers do not believe either Jesus or Ann to be the Christ. Christ, they say, is an intelligent holy being from a high sphere, sent of God to redeem the human race; and that he descended at the baptism of Jesus by John, in the form of a dove, and became the guardian spirit of Jesus. They also declare that the same spiritual being was seen to descend upon Ann Lee and become her guardian spirit; and that at her baptism an audible voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved daughter in whom I am well pleased, hear ye her."

The leading practical revelation vouchsafed to "Mother Ann," aside from that which represented her as the female incarnation of the Christ-spirit, was the necessity of a life of entire celibacy and continence, in order that any one might follow Christ in the regeneration; and upon the suggestions of this rule the Shakers have acted ever since.

Many interesting incidents, in addition to those above related, occurred in the life of Ann Lee, which place it beyond doubt that she was a spiritual medium of singular powers. As among these incidents, we may briefly state the following:

The enemies of herself and of the society with which she was connected, who in several instances did not scruple to resolve themselves into mobs to accomplish their purposes, on one occasion resolved to stone her to death on a charge of blasphemy. They accordingly led her down into a valley a little way out of town, where she was followed by four of the brethren. They commenced throwing stones at her, but were not able to hit her, or any of her brethren except one whom they slightly wounded in the temple. Seeing that their missiles, from some mysterious cause, could not be made effectual, they fell into a contention among themselves, and finally abandoned their design. "Mother Ann," in relating these circumstances to some of the believers, said, "While they were throwing their stones, I felt myself surrounded with the presence of God, and my soul was filled with love. I knew they could not kill me, because my work was not done."

On another occasion her enemies attempted to starve her by confining her in a prison and leaving her without sustenance. While there she received no nourishment except a little milk and wine, contained in the bowl of a pipe, once in twenty-four hours, which was conveyed to her by one of the brethren by inserting the stem of the pipe through the key-hole. After remaining in this situation for fourteen days, her enemies opened the prison, supposing that she was dead; but they were astonished to find her hale and vigorous as ever, and on being liberated she walked off with a firm step as though nothing had happened!

About the year 1778 she received a spiritual mission directing her to repair to America, accompanied by such of the fraternity as could find it convenient to make the voyage. Her impression was soon after confirmed by coincident visions and other extraordinary manifestations which occurred to several of the other members of the society. Accordingly, "Mother Ann" and several of her brethren and sisters, numbering nine persons in all, embarked on board the ship Maria, Captain Smith, bound from Liverpool to New York, on the 19th of May, 1774.

While on their passage they went forth, in obedience to interior promptings, to worship after their peculiar mode, by singing and dancing. At this the captain was so offended that he threatened to throw them overboard if they attempted to repeat such a performance. Desiring, however, to obey what they regarded as the voice of God rather than the mandates of a human being, they paid no regard to this threat, and a few evenings after, they again engaged in the same exercises. At this the captain was so enraged that he actually attempted to put his previous threat into execution, but was prevented in the following extraordinary manner: There was at the time a storm raging, and as the captain was about to give orders that these inoffensive people should be cast into the sea, the ship suddenly sprang a leak by the starting of a plank between wind and water. The water poured in so rapidly that notwithstanding the exertions of all hands at the pumps, it gained upon them, and the captain and crew were greatly alarmed, seeing no possible way to escape drowning. "Mother Ann," however, maintained her confidence, and said, "Captain, be of good cheer; there shall not a hair of our heads perish; we shall all arrive safe in America. I just now saw two bright angels of God standing at the mast, through whom I received this promise." Shortly after this a large wave struck the ship with great violence, and the loose plank instantly closed, and the leakage was stopped.

Arriving in America, after passing through several vicissitudes, they finally took up their residence in the woods at Watervliet, seven miles from Albany, N. Y., and commenced clearing the lands and establishing buildings, and thus formed the nucleus of the Society which has existed at that place until this day. After becoming established in their new residence, "Mother Ann" and others of the fraternity would make occasional excursions for the purpose of preaching their peculiar doctrines in other places; and these and subsequent missionary labors, together with the influence exerted upon persons who visited them at their homes, from that time to this, resulted in the establishment of about twenty communities in different portions of the northern states, numbering in all perhaps about eight or nine thousand souls.

In its social and religious constitution, the Shaker community may be called a Hierarchy or Theocracy, acknowledging no human head except what is of direct spiritual or divine appointment. In their personal habits, they are devoted, charitable, peaceable, inoffensive, industrious and frugal. Of all other religious communities they may perhaps be cited as most nearly exemplifying the precepts of Jesus Christ. We can not, however, speak of them as an eminently intellectual people; and some of their points of philosophy and interpretations of Scripture seem to us susceptible of very advantageous modifications. But it is not our design, at present, to offer any criticisms on these particulars, though we may merely suggest by the way, that as long as they persist in abnegating the conjugal and procreative relation, rather than reforming and purifying it, and bringing it into that divine order in which lust can not enter, their community will continue to be made up of only the *slivers* which are broken off from the great body of degenerate and discordant humanity, and will have but little power in moving and regenerating that body itself. Still, even this feature of their doctrine may be regarded as true, when applied to persons possessing their peculiarities and idiosyncracies, though (we think) it is not true when applied to thousands of others as pure minded, wise, and upright as themselves.

We regard Shakerism, then, as a divine institution—indeed a portion of the "Millennial Church," but only a portion of it, as the fingers which now write are a portion of my body; and, (of course without compromising other Spiritualists) we would advise all who can harmonize with their peculiar views and practices, and who desire to live a quiet, devout, and industrious life, free from all worldly anxiety, to join them without delay; but any attempts to bring their principles and practices into universal application must, of course, necessarily fail.

We have said that the Shakers have, from their origin, been Spiritualists, and have been subject to frequent manifestations of power and intelligence from the other world. Their spiritual history exhibits nearly all the preternatural phenomena now generally known among Spiritualists, these too occurring at dates long anterior to the commencement of similar unfoldings among "the world's people." About the years 1842 and 1843, however, there occurred among them a special outpouring from the spiritual world, in which the future general extension of the same phenomena was predicted. Concerning these developments we have some information at hand which will be of general interest to our readers, and which we may lay before them in a subsequent issue. But as this article has already transcended its proposed limits, we must forego any exhibition of the interesting facts in this case, for the present.

LECTURE AGAINST SPIRITUALISM.

REV. J. W. DANIELS, of the Advent Mission Church, situated in Forsyth-street between Walker and Easter-streets, has for some months past been in the habit of calling at our office, and conversing with me and others respecting modern Spiritualism, having had free access to our books, making extracts, etc. Mr. Daniels has often said that he was going to preach against Spiritualism, and I have as often asked him to let me know the time, and I would hear him. I have also invited him to preach for us at the Stuyvesant Institute, and to attend the Spiritualists' conference, and present his views; but he has never, to my knowledge, found it convenient to do so. Mr. Daniels sent us a notice that he would preach on the subject of Modern Spiritualism, Sunday, the 3d instant, which notice we inserted in last week's paper. I attended his meeting and heard him gladly. He had thoroughly informed himself of the Bible doctrines of Spiritualism, and seemed to have all the texts bearing on the subject at his tongue's end, as well as the casual utterances of myself and others, and also copious extracts from several of our publications. He commenced by saying that Spiritualism is not new, neither is it more *pretense* or *humbug*. He admitted the phenomena, and their spiritual origin. He said their counterpart might be found in the Bible, under the head of sorcery, magic, necromancy, etc. He went into elaborate definitions of these terms, as well by Webster as by theologians and commentators. He said modern Spiritualism is inspired from the same source as necromancy, and that God had at various times forbidden such intercourse. He maintained that the Bible was the word of God entirely, and he should not care to discuss this question with any person who did not admit this. He quoted from Deuteronomy 18:10, the 8th chapter of Isaiah, the 28th of Job, the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; and from other portions of Scripture, chiefly from the Old Testament.

Mr. Daniels says there are spirits and angels in the invisible world, and that they are distinct classes of beings. He says angels were never human beings on this earth, but were created by God somewhere, the precise locality he did not state. The idea I received was, that they never touched top nor bottom, but were suspended, dangling, as it were, between wind and water, serving God as his messengers within certain limits. He says angels stand before men and are seen by them; that they can eat and drink; but that spirits can neither eat nor drink; and that angels and spirits are not on good terms. He says the Bible prohibits intercourse with spirits, but thinks it is a privilege, and that it is lawful, to receive a visit from one of these angels. He says the witch of Endor was a necromancer, and that Samuel appeared for the purpose of rebuking her and Saul; and this, he says, is the only instance of a saint communicating through such mediums. At the close of his remarks he gave notice that he had just published a book embodying his views of the subject, which he exhibited and offered for sale at one dollar per copy. The book is entitled, *Spiritualism against Christianity; or, Spiritualism thoroughly Exposed*, 300 pages, 12mo. Of course I purchased a copy of the book. By a hasty glance I find there are several engravings, one of which shows a medium tipping the table with her foot, and another portrays the Spirit found rummaging about the tombs and a drove of hogs near by; and the way they appear to be hurrying into the brine is a caution to pork-packers and eaters, and is designed doubtless to cure swine-herds of Spiritualism.

After the benediction, I went forward and greeted Brother Daniels, by remarking that I had been very much interested in his views, and asked if some Spiritualist might be present at his future discourses on this subject, and privileged to correct any mistakes he might make in presenting the views of modern Spiritualists, and assist him by calling his attention to some of the more reliable and significant facts which have come under their observation. He was afraid that might lead to an angry discussion. I signified my willingness to assume the responsibility on the part of any Spiritualist they might select, that his speech and deportment should be as respectful as that of the preacher, which was very gentlemanly. The elders took part in the conversation, one of whom signified his willingness; another did not appear to feel quite confident that the position taken by his preacher was sufficiently impregnable to warrant its exposure to criticism; but the interview resulted in a promise to think the matter over, and inform me whether they accept the proposition or not. I invited Brother Daniels and his people to come to the Spiritualists' platform at Stuyvesant Institute, and state their views of the subject to the numerous brethren there, whom they considered in error. I hope they will accept this invitation, for we certainly do not want to be in error on so important a subject.

We will furnish Mr. Daniels' book to whoever wishes it at the price I paid, one dollar, postage fifteen cents. From the discount, I expect to find the texts and scripture arguments well put in his book, and I hope our friends will buy it and learn all that can be said against our facts and theories. If they want stand criticism, let them fall.

CHARLES PARTRIDGE.

A MOURNER COMFORTED BY SPIRITUALISM.

Br one class of assailants, the communications in Dr. Hare's work, purporting to come from angelic spirits, are actually made to proceed from the supposititious Devil of Scripture. By others it is fancied that there is a serpent coiled amid the leaves. As a tree is to be known by its fruits, it is submitted whether the effect of the volume in question, upon the authors of the subjoined letter, is of a nature to be induced by the tooth of a serpent, the wiles of Satan, or the prospect of the Spirit-world held up by its celestial missionaries, who come with the idea that her child, though dead, yet lives, and may be an occasional visitor through her mundane existence?

LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, January 13, 1856.

PROFESSOR HARE:—Dear Sir—I have read with profound interest your remarkable work on "Spiritualism." The subject is deeply dear to me, and I would relinquish thousands of worlds if I possessed them, to be convinced of its truth. In fact, all other subjects sink into perfect insignificance compared with it. I am passing under the darkest cloud of my life; its darkness is dense and impenetrable; there is one ray only perceptible, and that is the hope I have in connection with this subject. I have recently buried my only daughter, and my loneliness is indescribable. She was taken from me just as she was emerging into "beautiful womanhood."

I am very respectfully yours,

Test Fact.

THE *Spiritual Messenger*, published at Cincinnati, gives the following fact, which may be reckoned among the number of those which clearly establish the existence, in the alleged spiritual phenomena, of an acting intelligence altogether independent of the minds of the human mediums through which it is manifested:

A gentleman by the name of Allen was present at a circle held at the house of a family with whom he was intimately acquainted in Oxford, in this State. To his surprise the Spirit of a departed brother made a communication in which it was stated that the departed had left a watch in possession of a person in Indianapolis, whose name was given. Mr. A. placed no confidence in this statement, but some time afterward, having occasion to visit that city, he called upon the person indicated, and on making inquiry ascertained that the deceased had left him a gold watch such as had been described, for which he was to pay eighty dollars, but not having the money at command, proposed to deliver the watch to the relatives. After a full explanation the watch was transferred, and is now in possession of the living brother.

Spiritualism in Florence, Italy.

THE New England *Spiritualist*, of February 2, gives an extract from a private letter of a literary gentleman from Boston, who is now sojourning in Florence, Italy. It will be seen from the extract that Spiritualism is obtaining something of a foothold in that city, at least among its floating population and the more progressive minds of its permanent residents:

We venture to make the following extract from a private letter from a well-known literary gentleman of this city, now in Italy: "I have made the acquaintance of Hiram Powers, the sculptor. He has a truly spiritual mind. He is a clear, pure thinker—open, candid, well-poised in his judgment. He is a rational believer in the phenomena of modern Spiritualism. Mr. Hume has been spending some time at his house, but is now at the villa of Major S—, a little way out of Florence. I have not seen him."

"Spiritualism is creating a great excitement here. An English gentleman told me to-day of being present last evening in company where there were two mediums suddenly developed whilst they were sitting around the table, making fun. The tables began to move in earnest; raps were heard, and some astonishing communications were given. Yesterday I went on an excursion with a noble Roman, who himself introduced the subject, and asked me, with great anxiety, if I could by any means arrange an interview between him and 'the medium from America,' meaning Mr. Hume. The priesthood, more consistent than our clergy, admit the spiritual origin of the manifestations, but denounce them as diabolical."

Since the foregoing was placed in the hands of our printer, the Newark *Daily Advertiser* of January 21st has been placed in our hands, containing a letter written from Florence, upon this same subject. We subjoin the following extract, leaving the writer's attempt to father the manifestations referred to upon the spirits of devils, to pass for what it is worth:

FLORENCE, December 27, 1855. In obedience to the injunction of the Apostle, "Prove all things," some of the Americans here have taken advantage of the late visit of a clever "medium," Mr. Hume, of Boston, to investigate what is termed modern "Spiritualism." The results have been various in various minds. Some few may be biased, by the wonderful manifestations witnessed, in favor of "the Spirit"; some attribute all to a new development of natural laws, and some to downright sorcery; but none, who have seen for themselves, to legendarism. Indeed, the simplest of the marvels revealed through this "medium," could not be produced by the most adroit juggler, at least without machinery and accomplices, which he certainly has not had here to aid him. Is he not aided then by invisible agents? Are not these things such as have in all ages been attributed to witchcraft, even by our sensible Puritan fathers? What other name can be given to that power which can call up forms purporting to come from the realm of shades, as the witch of Endor did the likeness of Samuel for Saul, after God had departed from him, and he could get no response save from "a familiar Spirit"—the power that brings shadowy hands to write, which perhaps writes judgment against itself as truly as the mysterious handwriting on the wall convinced Belshazzar; or which can give illusive matter to these hands, so that they seem to the touch fleshy and warm!

ROBERT OWEN AND THE SPIRITS.

A RECENT steamer brought us from Robert Owen, a package of printed communications which he has from time to time received from Spirits touching various branches of the doctrines of reform, to the advocacy of which his long life has been devoted. As a specimen of these communications, we transfer the following to our columns:

The Eternal Father's divine government of the physical and moral worlds, the fixed method in which it is maintained, and the instruments by which it is accomplished, shall become more and more clear, evident and comprehensible, to mankind, in proportion to the extent and accuracy of their knowledge of truth—the substance of all science. In order to understand, first, the Eternal Father's divine government of the physical world, mankind must become accurately acquainted with their own organization, and their relation to external nature. Mankind must study and ascertain the fixed natural laws, according to which their physical and mental health, their intellectual and moral powers, are uniformly promoted and secured. This knowledge will alone enable them to regulate their conduct rationally, to control the occurrence of disease, and the natural endurance of physical life, and to ascertain the fixed laws which govern the moral world. Faith in the possibility of successful realization, is the primary condition to the attainment of knowledge; and the discovery of truth, is the only object of all rational research.

The Eternal Father conferred upon man a physical organization, made up of distinct systems, each system being appointed to perform definite functions in the economy of physical life. Between each system and all the others, fixed relations are established, and between each and all of them and external nature; so that the natural endurance of physical life and health results from, and accompanies, the harmonious action of the whole; while pain, disease and premature death are the unavoidable consequences of their deranged, disproportionate action. The Eternal Father, also, conferred on his son, man, mental faculties, which are calculated, if cultivated, to enable him to observe, comprehend and not in harmony with the fixed laws which regulate those organic systems of his physical constitution. It is, therefore, in the careful study of the sublime structure, beautiful functions, and harmonious, unending laws of these vital systems, that mankind can alone find out the fixed method of the Eternal Father's divine government of this department of his works.

Man does not possess a single faculty, power, or propensity, which is essentially, in its own healthy condition and function, inclined to evil, to error and wrong, as the sham systems of "CLERICAL INVENTION" teach their blindfolded dupes. On the contrary, every intellectual faculty and moral power of mankind has a natural sphere of action. And it is only their abuse and misdirection, through ignorance and the force of unfavorable influences, that lead to evil and to that which constitutes crime, misery and suffering. Mankind always possessed, and possesses now, a capacity, if cultivated, for the acquisition of the knowledge of truth; and both their capacity, and the constitution of the external world, are arranged in harmony, to render them powerful, prosperous and happy, if they pursue and discover this knowledge in the right direction, or miserable if they neglect it, or pursue it in a wrong way. The physical and spiritual worlds were always, and are now, governed by fixed laws, designedly adapted by our Eternal Father, to human nature, body and spirit, and are calculated to serve as constant and lasting guides to all human pursuit and conduct—to the discharge of all the duties and requirements of life. Perfect morality, it will be seen, is produced by the harmonious action of all the human powers and faculties. Morality, therefore, consists in a practical course of life, allowing and demanding the harmonious action and exercise of all the human powers, of body and spirit. All the sciences and systems of philosophy which ever existed in the world, have not exhausted the fields of truth—the grand groundwork and measure of all science and philosophy, and which is represented more or less partial in many of them. New sciences and systems of philosophy are, therefore, progressively possible, and absolutely necessary, until all the interests of human nature are demonstrated, supplied, and practically secured for man upon earth.

The knowledge of these truths, can alone practically instruct mankind how to perform their duties with success and satisfaction upon earth, and in a manner worthy of their own divine dignity, and eternal destiny. The knowledge of these truths constitutes the solid information which mankind stand in need of; and the promotion and communication of this knowledge among the human race, should, therefore, be the grand all-engrossing object with every immortal spirit who has tasted its cheering and all-sustaining benefits. It is the highest duty, it is the greatest privilege, of all who would have divine truth spread abroad throughout all the nations of the earth—who would have pure, vigorous, practical morality, prevalent among mankind—who would have every human spirit, filled with painless peace, and the radiant hope of a blessed and useful immortality, to do their utmost to promote and patronize this knowledge, in order to disperse the dark pestilential clouds of ignorance and superstition, centuries of which misdirection have collected among mankind upon earth. Rise up, then, and come forward, all ye degraded slaves and scoundrels—all ye spirit-galling, greedy, grasping, graders of the poor—all ye ready-tongued preachers of sor/d selfish maxims in the market-places—and all ye who are ingloriously and devotedly grovelling in the dust of labor-forned wealth, crime, and help forward this great spirit-liberating cause! Unite and come boldly forward, all ye generous glowing patriots and philanthropists, whose spirits are ever yearning for the welfare of your town-trodden race, come and help forward the triumphs of truth, and the reign of justice, wisdom, and love among your fellow-men upon earth. (Signed.)

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, ADAM CLARKE, THOMAS CHAMBERS.

New-York Conference.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GRAHAM AND ELLINWOOD.
STUYVESANT INSTITUTE, January 30, 1856.

Mr. Jones did not think it well to interrogate the Spirits concerning doctrines, as the Spirits who attended a person entertained beliefs like his own, and would but confirm his views. If any one had any great error concerning doctrine, the Spirits attending him had the same; hence there was as much conflict in the views of Spirits as in the views of Spirits in the form. If persons would have harmony, they must look to something else—the word of Christ, to the law and the testimony. The Word, however, should not be taken literally, but in its spiritual sense, which was perfectly consistent with the Divine truth. That was the Word. The letter of the Word was written according to appearances, often contradictory, and pages of contradictions might be cited. But in the true sense there was nothing contradictory. To arrive at this true sense there were required a certain humble state of the affections, and a knowledge of the laws of correspondences—that long lost science of sciences.

A GENTLEMAN said, that in the year 1818, after praying for Divine assistance, he had received a communication from Jehovah, in which certain principles for the amelioration of the condition of mankind were laid down, and that period spoken of as the "dawning of the day" which had been spoken of by prophets. The elevation of mankind, and the amelioration of their condition were to proceed upon the education of the different departments of man's nature—physical, intellectual, moral and religious,—and in providing for their various wants he had discovered the principle by which a nucleus could be formed, around which the whole race could be harmonized. Whatever infidels might say, every knee should bow and every tongue confess to God.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS. If it would be in order I would relate an anecdote to illustrate the idea that investigations consist in something else besides coming in contact with spiritual phenomena. Investigation is a true sense, to my mind, consists in a discovery of causes, and I do not know how a person can be enlightened, except it be by such original and persevering determination of mind as leads down its soundings to the very bottom of a question, and being true to its own laws and instincts, honors its own nature, and therefore the author of it. Anything less than such a deep and thorough searching, is not worthy the title of investigation.

I have many facts in my own experience which entirely contradict some of the positions taken by the preceding speakers. While in the city of Hartford, there called upon me a lady who was a member of a church, but unexpectedly to herself became a medium for impressions, which were clear, definite, and every way satisfactory to her own mind. From word to word she wrote on with great assurance, and always with a praise to God on her tongue for everything that came. She was devoted, and believed the Bible to be entirely an emanation from the Divine source. Therefore, on the philosophy that like cleaves to like, and that Spirits in the other world seek their counterpart here, she, of course, should have attracted a Bible believer—persons entertaining sentiments identical with hers. There was a beautiful radiance all over her countenance. It was a deep, settled, and almost frightful excess of enthusiasm. I have often seen such expression. It is the sure sign of the lack of true investigation. She said immediately on entering the hall, "Mr. Davis, I understand that you have had some impressions from the spiritual world. Did you ever hear of any person getting a communication from God?" "Certainly," I replied. Then I brought to mind of course the whole Bible history, and the historic development of religion, which is tremendous and frightful to contemplate. She then said, "Do you ever get anything from God yourself?" "Certainly," I communicate with him every time I breathe. In fact I have never supposed, since I have had any reasonable consciousness, that I could exist, or breathe, or move, without a Divine emanation and Spirit. Therefore I live and move and exist in him." "No, no, I mean, did you ever get into your mind words directly from God?" "Never." "Well, I have a communication. It is signed 'God.'" She took out her communication and read it. It was a very sensible communication indeed. It was really of importance in her view. Its purport was, that the Bible was written by chosen penmen, imparting truths deeper than those penmen supposed, in order to meet the wants of the century in which it was written, and those of all the succeeding centuries, up to the very notch of the nineteenth, when the race had, by a natural operation (which was not described) suddenly outgrown the whole letter, and much of the spirit of the Bible; yet the Lord wished to preserve the book from annihilation. He said science had outstripped it, and philosophy had seen beyond it. He had appointed her to come to me and say, that from the high throne of Heaven he had chosen me out of all the inhabitants of the earth to re-write the Bible, and adapt it to the wants of the nineteenth century, and for two thousand years to come; and he gave many reasons why I, especially, was qualified to take hold of that business and go on with it. I considered a few moments. The communication was signed "God," and she believed it. I then ran the risk of shocking all her religious prejudices at once; for I sometimes discover, as the surgeon does, that amputation is better than any sort of palliative methods, in order to save the whole body from corruption. So I thought I would even amputate, perhaps, our friendship, a principle being better to me than friendship itself. I therefore told her the next time she got in communication with God to give him my respects, to tell him that I considered that there were too many Bibles already in the world for the world's good; that any more would be to add insult to injury, and that I was too much engaged in other matters to undertake any such business. She was shocked of course. Her enthusiasm was changed into a sort of abhorrence of the blasphemy of a man in whom she expected, of course, to find instantaneous approbation, and a cheerful acceptance of the mission. She said demurely that she would comply with my request. In ten days, as I desired, she returned and said she had given my respects to God, and he had said that he was not the God of the universe, and never pretended to be. Upon asking her if she could get in communication with him then, she soon opened a spiritual correspondence with "God." I asked him why he signed his name "God." "Because I am all the God this my charge can comprehend." "Do you mean to say that you take this method to deceive her?" "No." "But why did you give her this message?" "Because I saw no other way to bring her into connection with you, and to bring about the conversation that has passed between you, and the result to grow out of it." "Do you mean that you are a very high and illustrious Spirit, and a God over many?" "Not at all; I am only a God in the sense of administering to the needs of my charge, and helping her into a new dispensation. I am her guardian angel, do not believe in her doctrines, and wish to convert her from them. I have not been deceiving. I gave her that message to secure your conversation, and thus turn her mind into new channels." "Do you mean to go on with her now?" "I have her confidence, and I will go on with her development." I saw her about three months afterward. She was greater than all the churches; that is, happier; she was further from creed, but not less devotional; and what is not less, a good neighbor; but entirely devoid of the idea of great importance attaching to her because she was an agent in the hands of God.

Dr. Gray took it to be the dictate of all sound investigation—a maxim of all good experience in spiritual intercourse—that the medium can not tell, by his or her consciousness, whether he or she is communicating with the spiritual world or not. This rule ran through all time, not excepting the Jewish. In the nature of the case it was absolutely impossible to devise any absolute testimony from the consciousness of the medium. Modern fact shows that the medium may be impressed by persons in the form, and feel precisely as to his consciousness as though he were impressed by persons in the spiritual world. This conclusion he would apply to every record of history concerning communication from the spiritual world. He had a right to his "say," equal to David the Psalmist, to Swedenborg, or any other person who had supposed they were speaking from the spiritual world. The test of the origin of a communication is not to be found in the consciousness of the medium. A man under the influence of what is most outrageously called psychology, would perform with the utmost gravity the most ridiculous, the most bizarre pantomime, and receive as true and from the highest divine source the greatest absurdities of doctrine. The earliest records of Greek and Roman literature ascribed the frenzy of the medium to the highest source. He believed the Jewish prophets were not to be excepted from the general rule. Every time they entered into a trance, they supposed themselves to be in communication with Jehovah. They called the whole spiritual world, in one complex, God-Jehovah. It required Mesmerism to show that persons might come into precisely the same state as that called inspiration, by the influence of minds in the form. If, then, the test of origin is not to be found in the consciousness of the medium, where is it to be found unless in the matter enunciated. If it be true, it is of no consequence whether it come from the earth-sphere, or from the seventh heaven. If it be error, pursuit after the source is equally frivolous. A calm indifference toward the source is the true position of every Spiritualist. He must shake off the shackles—must look at the thing enunciated, and try it by the supremest court of judicature, his own interior sense of truth and justice. Your authoritarians are forever quarreling with his neighbor about Orthodoxy—about a train of imper-

fect testimony. The Speaker approved of that good old rule of the Stoics: "I am a part of universal nature. If I want to know the laws which shall keep me in health and happiness, let me study the laws of Nature." To the Speaker nature was the exponent of God's holy will. He wanted no authority; he wanted knowledge. He felt happy to be emancipated from all authority, except the authority of Truth—and truth, as the brave old Jackson said, as he understood it.

A GENTLEMAN agreed with Dr. Gray in regard to the test of truth. He attached no importance to anything because it claimed to come from God, from man, or Spirits. What gave it any importance was its subversiveness to the amelioration of the condition of mankind. He would ask of anything communicated, if it would help to put bread into the mouths of the hungry; clothing upon the backs of the naked; place man in a condition to supply his own wants; place every man, in the language of the prophet, under his own vine and fig-tree, so that there shall be none to hurt, molest or make him afraid. He would ask the same question concerning Spiritualism.

Dr. GRAY said that Spiritualism had placed him under his own vine and fig-tree, so that there was no one to molest or make him afraid, and he had felt less and less scared as he progressed. He agreed with Dr. Partridge, who was to him a great philosopher, a burning and a shining light; that the church of the future will be in the individual man; that every man should go to work and develop harmonically. He wished to see the time when each individual of the race should be set under his own vine and fig tree, in the higher things of his nature.

RELIGIONS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME.

THE following extract from an article by our friend Dr. J. W. ORTON, published in the New York Sunday Courier, of January 27, will be perused with interest and profit by the readers of the TELEGRAPH:

The phenomena of Spiritualism, however caused, breaking forth suddenly among us to the confusion of science, the affright of theology, and the astonishment of the world, have disturbed old concrete channels of thought, and opened new ones; and given the human mind a start which is of more importance to the advancement of the race than any other event of this teeming century. The philosophy of mind; the co-relation of matter; the nature and office of spirit; the laws of health, moral and physical; social relations, including governments; the universe and its life, together with all dogmas and opinions of the past, are all up for review and settlement, and form parts of the vast inquiry which Spiritualism, in its strange advent, like the dropping of a bomb in the midst of a defenseless multitude, from whose explosive power there is no escape, has forced upon us. It is like an immense plow, turning its huge furrows to the very core of things, laying bare their hidden recesses, their springs, and sources, and uses, and ultimate intent; and those who believe, and those who do not believe, are alike compelled to take part in the investigation. Even with the most dogged opponents, the new ideas are insensitibly oiling and softening their old opinions, and giving them a new dress; so that on looking at the most unpromising classes of enslaved minds among us, enough may be discovered to warrant one in saying, if only below his breath, with Galileo, "it moves—the world does move."

With the other changes of thought, which the new era has introduced, comes the conviction that all religions are substantially alike. On digging through the gross external shell—the human perversions and distorted forms—in which they all, not excepting the Christian, have become buried, and getting at the spirit and intent, it is found that all, as the central fact, recognize a supreme God of benevolence and love, to whom man is accountable; together with a future state of existence, the happiness of which depends on the life and acts of the individual. This is the sum and essence of all religions, obscured among savage nations by idol or sun-worship, and various atrocious rites; and among civilized nations by symbol or picture and relic-worship, and supplementary teachings, beliefs and acts, though more refined, yet equally abhorrent and cruel; and thus God is relieved from the odium of partiality which would rest upon him had he revealed himself only to a single family or tribe, according to the prevalent notion of Christendom. Neither in their prominent dogmas is there any material difference in these religions. Brahmanism, which in some of its forms is said to constitute the religion of considerably more than half of the human race, teaches the existence of one supreme, eternal, uncreated God, called in Hindoo language Brahma, who made the world through Brahma, the first created being, who became the prince of all good spirits, and through whom the world is governed. How different is this from the Christian doctrine, substituting the name of Christ for that of Brahma? and without doubt the two individuals are the same. The doctrine of the incarnation—the descent of the deity upon earth, and his manifestation in a human form—for the redemption of mankind, seems to have existed in the shape of prophecy or fact, in all ages of the world. Brahmanism teaches nine of these incarnations. Furthermore, it teaches the doctrine of the Trinity, of the fall, redemption and regeneration, and a state of rewards and punishments in the future life. The cruelties which the oriental nations inflict on one another and on themselves—torturing their bodies, casting themselves under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut, and destroying their children—are induced by their desire for regeneration, and the salvation of their offspring while yet in a state of innocence, and to appease the anger of the gods, of which the gradual perversion of their once pure religion has taught them to live in constant dread.

This religion in chief of Asia, is traceable to the most remote ages. The doctrine of the Trinity is plainly represented in the Elephanta cavern, and recognized in the Indian history of Mahabharat, which go back for their origin near two thousand years before the Christian era. It is worthy of remark that the Bramins surround the earth with seven good spheres above, and seven bad ones below, the seventh of the good ones being the abode of Brahma, the first begotten of God.

The same may be said of the old religion of Egypt. In the midst of a thousand superstitions the same central beliefs were preserved. The Egyptians were worshippers of the sun and moon, under the names of Isis and Osiris, or rather they looked up through these natural symbols of the Deity to the one true God. This is evident from the inscription on the Temple of Minerva: "I am that which is, which was, and shall be; no mortal hath lifted up my veil; the offspring of my power is the sun." They believed in the immortality of the soul; in a state of future rewards and punishments, and in the resurrection; as is evident from the care with which they had their bodies embalmed; and the prayer recited at the hour of death, in which the Egyptian expressed his desire to be received into the presence of the gods.

Lying within the myths of the old Greek Mythology, are the same cardinal truths. The Greeks no doubt originally worshipped one supreme God, but as the bold and creative powers of the Greek mind developed themselves through poetry and art, their demi-gods, or deities of their heroes, came greatly to obscure the simplicity of their ancient faith. Socrates and Plato taught the one God and the future life, and the necessity of good actions to happiness. Plato taught the doctrine of the Trinity, and that heaven could alone be enjoyed by the pure. Socrates seems to have had in some sort a prevision of the coming of Christ. As Confucius, at about the same period, or a little earlier, some five hundred years before the event occurred, felt the wave of his approach in Eastern Asia, so seems it to have been with Socrates in Eastern Europe. Confucius spoke directly of the coming of the "Holy Man," whose "name" no one "is able to tell," who, without exerting any act of government, will prevent troubles; who, without speaking, will inspire spontaneous faith; who, without working any violent changes, will produce an ocean of good actions."

These old heathen philosophers, as we are accustomed to call them, without doubt were instructed and inspired of God to perform a great work for their own people, as much, if not as fully, as were Daniel and the later Jewish prophets who flourished at about the same age. Jesus said, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you;" and Confucius, several thousand miles away from the same point of earth, and some five and a half centuries before, said, "Do unto another as thou wouldst be dealt with thyself. Thou only needst this law alone; it is the foundation and principle of all the rest."

My friend, WILLIAM FISKE, who is learned in the spiritual meaning of old Greek fables—old they were when Socrates and Plato taught in Athens—and I hope will at some day, not distant, favor the world with a dissertation on the subject; which could hardly fail to be both interesting and instructive, for we all of us greatly need liberalizing in this direction. The notion that God has singled us out as the sole recipients, after the Jews, of his wisdom and truth, has had the effect to make Christendom proud, narrow and pharisaic. We need to extend the area of our vision, to become more charitable and catholic, to realize that God is no respecter of persons, but from the beginning has poured the full radiance of his light and love on all parts of the earth alike; that all nations have received the same truths, in forms fitted to their stage of development; but that in all, at the present time, these truths divine lie nearly inoperative and useless, buried under the accumulated heaps of rust and rubbish, which a succession of selfish, polluted, self-righteous and quarreling sectarian centuries has heaped upon them.

Original Communications.

THE PARLOR FIRE.

TO C. H. BY J. S. FRELIGH.

May the Parlor fire shine clear and bright,
On the household bands around them,
And the social circles meet at eve,
As in early days we found them—
When they all appeared in their best attire,
And the children romped by the Parlor fire.

Then all who met by the Parlor fire,
Would pleasantly chat together,
Of by-gone times, or of distant friends,
Of the fashions, or the weather;
And the latest news, or a story dire,
Would beguile long nights by the Parlor fire.

By the Parlor fire I remember well
The joyous and friendly meetings;
The glad surprise, and the "welcome home,"
The "Christmas" and "New Year" greetings;
But I look in vain, as I oft inquire
For the absent ones, by the Parlor fire.

O I love to sit by the Parlor fire,
When the winter winds are sighing,
And look at the frosted window panes,
Or the storm-clouds darkly flying,
From the busy world I would oft retire
To the cheerful light of the Parlor fire.

Let us not forget by the Parlor fire,
The poor in their humble station;
Let us go wherever the suffering
Need comfort or consolation,
And relieve their wants, with love inspiring,
That shall cheer and warm, like the Parlor fire.

We may meet no more by the Parlor fire,
Nor in old familiar places;
We may seek new homes, and be parted wide,
With a change of scene and faces—
Let us cherish hope, with the fond desire
That we'll meet again by the Parlor fire.

A VISION.

Is a magnetic state I saw a broad expanse of water spread out before me. It appeared entirely smooth, and was very beautiful. At first I saw nothing upon the surface, nor anything at either side of it. But scanning the country right and left, objects began to appear. Now I saw beautiful fields abounding with fruits; trees bearing and blooming at the same time; grapes hanging in silvery clusters; the groves offering a refreshing shelter to men and animals. Birds of every variety of plumage, as well as volume and beauty of song, made the groves appear a thousand times more enchanting than anything I ever saw before. The trees were not green, but glowed with a silvery brightness, so rich, mellow and radiant, that the bows bent beneath their transparent load, while the light fell in rich and gorgeous profusion on trees, birds, vineyards, fields, gardens, and finally on everything I saw.

Beautiful landscapes now appeared on my right and on my left. Mountains, woodlands, meadows, lakes, groves, walks, lawns, rose majestically before me. My attention now being attracted to the river, I thought to follow it to its termination with my clairvoyant vision, and know where its outlet was. So I followed steadily for twenty minutes or more, at the same time being impressed that I could pass through space at the rate of two thousand miles in two seconds when highly magnetized, and that I had now traversed space at that rate during the twenty minutes. I now saw no banks rising from the river, but the grass and trees grew to the water's edge, though the ground rose gently each way. On my right I saw something rising in the distance like a platform, large enough for one person to stand upon, and of sufficient light to command a view of the whole country. I now saw a man standing upon it, clothed from head to foot, with a staff in his hand, whom I soon knew to be my father. He now made a motion to me to advance; whether I did or not, I soon saw him very plainly. He pointed me to the river at his feet, which I now saw was covered with "vessels of every size and description, from the largest ship down to a boat large enough to carry one man; the prow of every craft was turned from me at first. I could not tell whether they were moving or not. In some I saw the choicest furniture, and silk velvet cushions edged with gold lace, and other things in keeping with these, too numerous here to name.

Now on the opposite side of the river appeared another individual, in similar position as the first; but far beyond, again, on the same side where I saw the first, another appeared standing like the first. These persons were all looking toward me, though I knew none but the first. I now discovered that the various crafts were in motion, but knew not whither they were moving; but while reflecting and looking steadily in the distance, I discovered a city on both sides of the river, far beyond anything I had before seen. Now the light became so bright and dazzling that my temples were so pressed I had to hold them with both hands. My sight for a time was obscured; but in a little time I saw more clearly than before. It now seemed as if the city was encompassed with walls, except on the river side. I soon discovered these walls were not of stone, nor of any solid material, but they appeared like large folds of fleecy clouds. The light now changed from a silvery to an intense brightness, revealing a splendor surpassing anything I had before seen. At this I paused for a time in astonishment.

Resuming my seeing, I now determined to commence and relate to the people (about thirty being present) what was passing before me. As I was about to commence, my father said to me, "Hold, and I will induce Once (a younger brother of mine) to sing a description of what you are now seeing. [Here let me say that up to this point I had not given an intimation to any one that I was seeing at all, nor was Once a medium, and I doubt if he was a believer in Spiritualism at that time.] He struck the tune of the "Carrier Dove," the words, although old, are none the less descriptive and beautiful. I here insert them to show what men have long ago anticipated in the future:

We have heard from that bright, that holy land;

We have heard and our hearts are glad;

For we were a lonely pilgrim band,

And weary, and sad,

They tell us the pilgrims have dwellings there—

No longer are homeless ones;

And we know that goody land is fair,

Where life's pure river runs.

They say green fields are waving there

That never a blight shall know;

And the deserts wild are blooming fair,

And the roses of Sharon grow.

There are lovely birds in the bowers green:

Their songs are blithe and sweet;

And their warblings, gushing ever new,

The angels' harpings greet.

We have heard of the palms, the robes, the crowns,

And the silvery band in white;

Of the city fair with pearls and gems,

All radiant with light.

We have heard of the angels there, and saints,

With their harps of gold how they sing;

Of the mount with the fruitful tree of life;

Of the leaves that healing bring.

The King of that country he is fair;

He's the joy and the light of the place;

In his beauty we shall behold him there,

And bask in his smiling face.

We'll be there, we'll be there, in a little while;

We'll join the pure and the blest;

We'll have the palm, the robe, the crown,

And for ever be at rest.

After my brother had sung, I commenced and related to the company what had passed before me. Again, the whole river was alive with water craft of every description, bearing passengers of every color, language and clime. Suddenly I discovered a birch bark canoe, putting out into the stream, and on nearer observation I saw a tall fine built American Indian, standing erect in the boat, dressed in native costume. His buckskin moccasins were finely embroidered with hedgehog quills, the tops showing to advantage above the sides of his canoe. He had a beautiful wampum belt about his loins; his keen, black eye was fixed on the city, and he seemed to be singing a kind of chant; though at first the words were inaudible, soon I could hear the following:

There are no enemies in this happy land;

I may with the white man here shake hands.

He will no more drive me from my lands

While the God and the Right commands.

I now inquired of my father what river it was I saw. He

replied, "The river of Life." I inquired the name of the city. He said, "Look and see what is in it." On a closer examination, I discovered large and elegant buildings for the accommodation of the inhabitants, as well as for comers and goers as they journeyed to the spheres. He now told me they were the habitations of the just; that they were not permanent residences, for they were a progressive people, and as they became developed, the law of affinity attracted them onward to fields by them unexplored, and to cities more beautiful and better adapted to their tastes. "So this city you now see," he continued, "is constantly changing its inhabitants; and there are tenements ready furnished for those who come from your sphere; and this is truly a city of refuge to earth's inhabitants." Here he paused a little, but soon resuming, said, "Never be weary in well-doing; those that oppose you will bless your memory when they can not overtake you in the race for the prize." Here he beckoned to me and my two brothers, saying, "Go on!" and looking calmly at me, said, "You have your reward." Turning a little, he said, pleasantly, "My beloved son, good-bye for the present." It is written, "he that hath been faithful over a few things shall be made ruler over many things." As he turned round, I saw a casket under his arm, full of plottings, penellings and speeches that he had taken as he had journeyed through the spheres. The collection seemed to be preserved on beautiful tissues of various colors, and light seemed to shine in between the leaves, and reveal clearly what was upon them.

The above is a verbatim copy of what I spoke at Once Page's in Batavia, January 8, 1854, to a large room full of mediums, unbelievers and believers. I would excuse myself by saying I have been so urgently beset by mediums and others to send it for publication, that at last I have consented to do so. JOHN PAOE.

PLATO A SPIRITUALIST.

SOLOMON of the Bible has the reputation of having been a wise man. He at least has given one evidence of his wisdom in a saying of his, "that there is nothing new under the sun." It has been well said of Plato, "that reasoner well," yet very few of the Spiritualists of our day and generation are aware how much of the revelations of our day find their original in that great thinker and medium, as I shall endeavor to show presently by some extracts from his writings.

Socrates was on trial before the judges for his life, on the following charge: "Socrates acts wickedly, and is criminally curious in searching into things under the earth and in the heavens, and in making the worse appear the better reason, and in teaching these same things to others." Then follows an account of the saying of the Delphic oracle (the Or. thodox standard of those days), "that he was the wisest among men," which he professing to believe undoubtedly, yet disclaims the honor, and goes about among the wise men of that day in hopes that they may explain it to him.

Of one of the great politicians he says: "This man appeared to me to be wise in the opinion of most other men, and especially in his own opinion, though in fact he was not so. I therefore endeavored to show him that he fancied himself to be wise, but really was not so. Hence I became odious to him and others who were present."

Most noble Socrates! look down from thy two thousand five hundred years residence in the Spirit-world, and see the same judgment meted out to the reformers of our day, causing us to doubt, if it were possible, that there is such a law as *progress* in the minds of men. True, they dare not poison now, but the *feeling* is the same.

"After this I went to others in turn, and by the day, O Athenians, for I must tell you the truth, I came to some such conclusion as this—that those who bore the highest reputation appeared to me to be the most deficient in my researches in obedience to the god, and others who were considered inferior, more nearly approaching to the possession of understanding. I went to the poets; taking up, therefore, some of their poems which appeared to me most elaborately finished, I questioned them as to their meaning, that at the same time I might learn something from them. I am ashamed, O Athenians, to tell you the truth; however, it must be told. For in a word, almost all who were present could have given a better account of them than those by whom they had been composed. I soon discovered this, therefore, with regard to the poets: that they do not effect their object by wisdom, but by a certain natural inspiration, and under the influence of enthusiasm like prophets and seers." What better description of Harris, while dictating the Lyric, or any other good writing medium of our day, can we coin into words than the above. But again:

"Oh, wonderful Melitus! how came you to say this? Do I not, then, like the rest of mankind, believe that the sun and the moon are gods?"

"No, by Jupiter, O judges; for he says that the sun is a stone, and the moon an earth."

And again: "Since, then, I allow that there are *demons*, as you admit, demons are a kind of gods. But if demons are the children of gods, spurious ones, either from nymphs or any others of whom they are reported to be, what man can think that they are sons of gods, and yet that there are not gods?"

Now, if we accept the Rev. Charles Beecher's definition of demons, we can plainly see that Plato makes Socrates to believe in the *Spirits*, in opposition to the gods. He was, therefore, a great *infidel*, and deserved death for daring to dispute the orthodox creed of that day.

"For to fear death, O Athenians, is nothing else than to appear to be wise without being so; for no one knows but that death is the greatest of all good to man; but men fear it, as if they well knew that it is the greatest of evils." Next follows a passage which for sublimity, heroism, and true Christianity, is not excelled by any in the New or the Old Testaments:

"O Athenians, I honor and love you, but I shall obey God rather than you; and as long as I breathe I shall not cease studying philosophy, and exhorting you, and warning you, saying as I have been accustomed to do. O best of men, of a city the most powerful—and most renowned for wisdom and strength—are you not ashamed of being careful for riches, how you may acquire them in greatest abundance—and for glory and honor, but care not to take any thought for wisdom and truth, and for your soul, how it may be made most perfect?"

But here have the positive testimony of the truth of the heading of this article. "It may appear absurd that I, going about thus, advise you in private and make myself busy, but never venture to present myself in public before your assemblies, and give advice to the city. The cause of this is that which you have often, and in many places heard me mention; because I am moved by a certain divine and spiritual influence. This began with me from childhood, being a kind of voice which when present always directs me from what I am about to do, but never urges me on. This it is which opposed my meddling in public politics."

"But this duty has been enjoined me by the Deity, by oracles, by dreams, and by every mode by which any Divine decree has ever enjoined anything to man to do."

"It has, then, in reality been demonstrated to us, that if we are ever to know anything purely, we must be separated from the body, and contemplate the things themselves by the mere soul; and while we live, we shall thus ourselves approach nearest to knowledge, if we hold no intercourse or communion at all with the body except what absolute necessity requires, nor suffer ourselves to be polluted by its nature, but purify ourselves from it until God himself shall release us."

Referring to suicides, he says: "Many of their own accord wished to descend into hades on account of human objects of affection, their wives and sons. . . . Induced by this very hope of their seeing and being with those whom they have loved."

Of undeveloped Spirits, he says: "Such a soul is weighed down and drawn again into the visible world through dread of the invisible and of hades, wandering amongst monuments and tombs, about which, indeed, certain shadowy phantoms of souls have been seen, being such images as those souls produced which have not departed pure from the body, but which partake of the visible, on which account they also are visible; for the soul goes to hades possessing nothing else but its discipline and education, which are said to be of the greatest advantage or detriment. For thus it is said that each person's demon (guardian Spirit) who was assigned to him while living, when he dies conducts him to some place fitted to him; but the soul which has passed through life with purity and moderation, having attained the gods for its fellow-travelers and guides, settles each in the place suited to it" (circles and spheres).

A small part of his description of the Spirit-world, and I have done. "But there the whole earth is composed of such, and far more brilliant and pure than these; for one part of it is purple, and of wonderful beauty; part of a golden color, and part of white, more white than chalk or snow, and those more in number and more beautiful than any we have ever beheld, shining among the variety of other colors, so that one continually variegated aspect presents itself to view."

But space will not allow me to make further extracts. Aside from some crude speculations, somewhat like the Pythagorean theory of the souls of undeveloped men going back again into animals, his descriptions are as interesting and as comprehensible as most of those of modern times; and any Spiritualist will find profit and pleasure in reading it.

St. Louis, January 27, 1856.

A. MILTENBERGER.

THE EARLY DEPARTED.

The following lines were received in the "Happy Circle," addressed to the medium, whose infant child had a short time before been transferred to its Spirit-home:

O say not 'twere a keener blow,
To lose a child of riper years;
You can not feel a mother's woe,
You can not shed a mother's tears.

A girl who rears a tender plant,
Or cherishes a wounded dove,
Will love it most when most it wants
Her watchfulness and love.

Time must have changed its fair young brow,
Time might have changed its spotless heart;
Years might have taught deceit, but now
In Love's compassionate morn we part.

Ere grief or pain had wrought decay,
My babe lies cradled in the tomb,
Like some fair blossom torn away
Before its perfect bloom.

MEB.

FAIRPORTVILLE, STATES ISLAND, November 22.

MORE TEST FACTS.

TARRYTOWN, January 27, 1856.

MESSRS. PARTRIDGE AND BRITTON:

