

SPIRITUAL TIMES,

A WEEKLY ORGAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF SPIRITUAL & PROGRESSIVE TOPICS,

A REGISTER OF PASSING SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA,

AND

A MISCELLANY OF SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities; it presents us not only with the semblances, but with the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the Spiritual, but to the Material world. It is easy to imagine that we are dealing with the absolute and enduring, because we associate our thoughts with the external and apparently lasting, but, on reflection, we discover that the only absolute and enduring facts are beyond the tomb.

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“You must all Believe in Spiritualism, for the Truth will come out.”—*Spirit-message delivered at a public meeting, January 18, 1864*

The Spiritual Times.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1864.

THE BATTLE OF SPIRITUALISM.

The opponents of Spiritualism are not only numerous but diverse in their modes of antagonism. One party object to spiritual communion on the ground that it is ridiculous and puerile for reflective beings to be engaged noting the antics of stools and tables said to be under the influence of some intelligent, independent, unseen, agent or agencies. Another party, admitting the facts of spirit intercourse, can see no good in it. Another party not only can see no good, but they can see nothing but the Devil in all the communications which purport to come from the spirit world. There are objections of every size, sect, form, and grade—those who want satisfying, by ocular demonstration, that any single one of all the phenomena ever *actually* takes place. Those who having found out that the phenomena are substantial and beyond dispute, still harp upon the old string of magnetism, and think they have settled the matter for ever and aye. Those who have not quite settled what is the primal cause of the manifestations yet; who nursing their pet dogmatisms cry out against the truth of Spiritualism if it does not exactly square all sides with them. It is all very well to meet in circles and have a little genial and friendly amusement with tables, &c., but so long as nothing further is mooted, nothing important will obstruct us, and there is a clear field—this is the logic of a vast number of persons. Only let Spiritualism confine its operations to amusing the young and even the old, but it must not claim holier and higher work, if it does, it is calculated to run counter to the essential doctrines of our religious faith.

What nonsense! Spiritualism, if true, must unfold its mission, whether it offend or please. Are the divine truths it inculcates to lie throttled in the grasp of pet prejudices? It may and does run counter to error, and those only who make a religion of error can say that it runs counter to their religious faith. If ignorance has fostered prejudices and assumptions, does it follow that they should be “the all in all,” through all time. If Spiritualism breaks the thralldom of doubt, and opens up a certain knowledge path to immortality, proving that sin

attracts sin, and goodness coheres to goodness, that no mere sectarian views of God and Christ and immortality will weigh a feather's weight in our favor in the great judgement of our life actions, which judgement is ever going on in this life and in the next, shall we desecrate its holy uses by merely making it the vehicle of amusement? After eighteen centuries of Bible teachings, how comes it that the world is yet so very far off from that revivifying Christian character which the Saviour exemplified in his own life? The fault is not in Christ's pure lessons of love; but in the sad fact that men, calling themselves His followers, have been clinging to the skirts of old pagan rituals, and have brought with them through the ages, the idols of earth, and have been worshiping them and not Christ. Spiritualism is the Iconoclast which is destined to break the mere earthly images which have been so long worshiped. Spiritualism has its true mission, not only in peace but in war. Peace, as taught by Christ in his lessons of love and divine forgiveness; and war, as is likewise taught by Christ in his character of saviour from sin and eternal death. He wared with the prince of darkness and with the foes of evil on every hand, but he did it all in love and not in vengeance. It is absurd to suppose that wrong is to be uprooted without digging at its roots and pulling it up with strong efforts. The very effect of a good action is to stir into motion the stagnant pool of wrong. A kind smile will sometimes pierce the evil heart like a foeman's poignard; how much more may a kind deed cause pain to the wrong doer. It is impossible to act in an opposite direction, whether that action be good or evil, without producing a counter or irritating effect of a greater or less extent. All life is at war, and millions of foes are battling against it. The very air is inoculated with the warriors of pestilence and death. We have foes from before and behind, and it behoves us to be wary and wise, or we shall find ourselves fettered and defeated on all hands. We are compelled by outward and inward influences either of good or evil.

If we desire good we can only gain it by waring against evil; therefore, to argue that Spiritualism is not to be aggressive, is about as reasonable as asking that it may not progress. Whilst there is a single opponent to its progress it will be impeded, if it does not assert its majesty by proving its power.

Spiritualists must remember that the antagonism of opponents calls for counter antagonism on their part which grows out of a simple defence of their principles. It is a very common thing for opponents to place barricades in the way of truth, and then when the obstructions are removed by the adherents



of truth, to call-out "innovation," "aggression," and all the other terms of the character in vogue.

It is no use mincing the matter, Spiritualism has a hard-sustained battle to fight. Let us, like good soldiers, buckle on our armour, and fight valiantly for the good old cause. We say *old*, because we find that only some of the modern forms of spirit-communication can be said to be new, whilst Spiritualism itself is as old as the human soul.

It is, of course, easy enough for those holding priestly offices, and exerting a vast influence over their flocks, to shout "Devil" at every evidence of spiritual reality which does not come up to their stale notions of what constitutes God's truths. They will find very impressionable believers among their own flocks, of course, and to them appear very knowing. However, to say the least, the Devil is a very accommodating "old gentleman," and is about the best friend these idle investigators have.

Very similar, but not so bold, is the cry of the Materialists who discover the phenomena of *seances* to be real, but who palm the whole difficulties of the subject on magnetism, cerebral automatic action, &c., without stopping to enquire how magnetism can be charged with intelligence, and made to move tables and other heavy substances, giving information unknown to the members of the circle. They content themselves with their theories, and vainly think they settle the matter.

The battle goes on between the Spiritualists and the materialistic philosophers in and out of the churches, and it must be fought out.

Spirit upon Spirit.

PART THE FOURTH.

The evening of the 21st February is here continued.

But the embryo must possess sufficient of life to maintain the spirit connection. Thus, when the spirit enters the embryo there must be vitality enough to maintain an equilibrium of the two forces. The sex of the human or animal is not determined at first, but there is a stage when the stronger vital forces direct the development, and thus characterize the sex. Now, when a child dies free from sin or impurity, it is taken by spirits of some near relative, and conducted to a sphere where the spirit will be developed according to the primary law regulating spirits (A).

(A.) More than a year and a half prior to this (says Judge E. in a note), and through another medium, I received the following:—"Those who die in infancy grow up to manhood, and are instructed in the spirit world in those things which they ought to have learned here. It is a misfortune and a violation of a law of nature to die in infancy, because the object of their first stage of existence is thereby thwarted. In the spirit-world infants are placed in a sort of intermediate condition between the lower and the higher, and they are attended and taught by superior spirits. They are never without such attendance, and although they are carefully instructed, yet their condition is in some respects unfortunate; for, though by their early death they escape the physical sufferings of this sphere, yet that very ignorance of our sufferings takes away from them the capacity to enjoy the happy change which they would attain if they remained here till maturity. They know nothing of the contrast between that stage of existence and ours, which adds so keen a zest to the enjoyment of those who depart from this sphere after having experienced all its sorrows and sufferings. Another disadvantage is, they never have many of the feelings and emotions which a longer continuance on earth would have taught them, and which enter much into the happiness or misery of the next state of existence."

R. Many infant souls pass immediately into other bodies; many are taken early, either from mercy to them or their parents—as some would have either inherited diseases or sins from their ancestors.

Q. May I ask whether, in the Creator's scheme, the moment of birth is predetermined, and thus the astral influences fixed by Divine Providence in reference to the future circumstances surrounding the life of the new-born person?

R. The time is fixed, and there is a great influence from the heavenly bodies; but it must be borne in mind, that all these influences are subordinate in a very great degree to the will of man, who has the power to subdue them, if he has the strength and resolution.

Q. But a person born with an unfortunate horoscope, endowing him with no strength of mind, would appear to suffer injustice!

R. No. Injustice cannot abide with God. No doubt that such is often the case; but if some imperfection had not arisen either through the errors of himself or parents, sufficient strength would always be found to conquer all trials. If a weakness arises from the visitation of the fathers upon the children, so will the consequent errors be dealt with lightly.

It is placed under the teaching of individuals, who are specially charged with the education of children, and thus they are taught all the primary knowledge necessary and suitable to their young minds. Spirit is, of all organized beings, more susceptible of impression than the most refined material organization; and thus it is that even in the strongest bodies, capable of resisting the effect of the most potent causes, there is often the greatest yielding; and when in a state of entire humanity from animal influences the child is taught by spirits pure and developed, how great must be its progress! They do not increase faster in size than children on the earth, but the proportionate development of mind, or, as we spirits term it, internal, is beyond comparison.

They soon are capable of appreciating and understanding some of the laws of God which affect nature; and, as their ideas are not mixed or amalgamated with the crudities of animal organization, they are more clear and comprehensive than even those of some spirits who have been in the spirit land for years.

They have a just idea of God and his connection with all creation, animate and inanimate, and as they are necessarily pure, their affections are manifest in their attachment to the friends and relatives on earth. Little children have often special missions confided to them, and are often sent to earth to perform offices and duties of a high character; for spirits are not judged by age, but by purity. It is a law here, that pureness of mind is certain evidence of ability; for the spirit who can love God without guile, can also understand all the laws which bind man to man, and those also which God has established for the government of the same. Little children are selected to accompany their parents during their stay on earth, and the mother is often surrounded by developed spirits even of those children whose birth she had not numbered with those living or dead: and when, in some dark hour of trial, when the hopes and anticipations of life have been blasted—when the mother is struggling under an affliction worse than death—that of a drunken husband—with children surrounding her, and she striving to support and educate them, or, when from some cause, the bond which binds husband and wife is sundered, then it is that the spirits of their children are sent to earth—clothed in forms of dazzling beauty, and gifted with powers to soothe and calm the troubled spirit of that mother, gently and yet serenely instilling hope, where before was dark despair, and raising the drooping heart to look with confidence and trust to God, who is a husband to the widow and father to the orphan: and here let me remark, that when you say that time blunts the shaft of sorrow, you mean what I know to be true; that little spirits delegated for this especial office, so impress the mind of the afflicted—so charge it with the properties of their own nature, that gradually the mourner loses the poignancy of his sorrow, that by and bye it is like a troubled dream.

R. As to losing the remembrance of sorrow, this is a law full of mercy, which has existed from the beginning. The spirits have often messages of comfort to inspire even when unseen and unthought of.

Judge Edmonds then said:—"As you say man is connected to the material world by his body, and to the spirit world by his spirit, why is it that the former and its influences are so much more perceptible to the mind than the latter? Is it owing to what I may call the fall of man? That is, his descent from the original purity in which he was created, and his being tainted by the education and circumstances which surround him?"—and it was answered:—

That spirit perception in the ancient days was clear and distinct, I believe, and think I know. Now, what you consider the fall of man is only the great change in his mental and natural nature, produced by the increase of numbers, the wants and necessities which arose around him, the occupation of his thoughts with the circumstances of his material life, and the entire direction of his mind from spiritual things to objects of earth. When there were few persons on earth, and the spirit intercourse was frequent, of course the minds of men were directed to spiritual things; but when the world was more thickly peopled, then it was the necessities of life compelled man to work, to develop, to invent, to construct, and these occupations prevented that freedom of spiritual communication which existed previously: but man has never lost that inherent property; this is proved by the erection of temples among the earlier pagans, and churches among Christians; and even among savages scarcely elevated above the brute, there is always worship of some kind of spirit, which they believe is either good or bad. Spirit seers existed in all ages; and were man now less engaged in things of life, he would, in his present state of progression, see spirits without trouble, and talk with them. As it is, the ascendancy of spirit over mere materiality, is one reason for the spirit intercourse of the day.

R. This is a good explanation, and also shows how the progress of the mind of man goes on; for man must labour much more now, and necessarily more with the mental faculties than with mere bodily labour.

The remainder of the fifth section of Judge Edmonds' book contains a few remarks on the power of spirits to visit other earths, and the extent of the spirit spheres, together with the assurance that all spirits have their duties. On this it was remarked:—

R. All spirits have their work in the great universe. Much has been said, it would only be a repetition.

The remainder of the evening of the 21st of February, was devoted to the consideration of other subjects. However, on the 28th February, after an evening's converse, at which this Editor of the *Journal* favoured the writer with his presence, the following dialogue took place, which is given to illustrate the familiar rapidity of question and response, almost always immediate.

Q. Are you willing to remain a little longer?

R. Certainly.

Q. Shall I continue to read Judge Edmonds?

R. Yes; but you must not tire either of you.

I began to read:—

Section Six, April 17th, 1853.

I mentioned, I think, in my last lecture, that the development, both spiritual and material, of the present generation, was one of the causes of these phenomena, which so confuse and perplex the wise. Those of whom are investigating this subject, from a desire to arrive at truth, I trust will follow me through my reasoning, eschewing what you do not at present understand, and reflecting seriously on what appears plain and reasonable.

What the nature of all the concurrent causes was, which influenced this manifestation of spirit communion with material organization I cannot pretend to say; but that they were by no special direction of the Creator I am satisfied. All of you must be convinced that the age and the race are far in advance of their antecedents; that the mental development of man has, in fact, placed him but little lower than the angels, in the adapting of all circumstances to the improvement of his condition, and in the exhibition of those properties, which evince his genius, his power, and his will.

R. I think this is not quite true. I do not think man is nearer the angels than he ever was. That there is great progress, there is no doubt; but often the unlearned are more pure-minded and right-thinking upon heavenly subjects than the learned. These spiritual manifestations have been made more plain in order to give man a certainty of a future life, as so many had become doubters; but we must not think that cleverness alone renders man more perfect. The mind and talents must be commanded by the will which must be turned to do all things in love and charity.

Merely observing that the eighteenth century with its encyclopedists and metaphysicians is a clear proof of the necessity of some more open revelation of God's ways towards man, the writer lays down his pen to resume his task of transcription, with thankful earnestness, next week. In the midst of troubles and family afflictions he can only say that spiritual intercourse has been a never-failing comfort and prop.

K. R. H. M.

April 19th, 1864.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of correspondents.]

Christianity as connected with Human Happiness.

SIR,—Whether we consider Christianity as a divinely revealed religion, or whether we regard it as resting on the same foundation as all other religions, to which Christians refuse to grant such a title, there are certain principles and teachings in its sacred writings that interest us particularly as Spiritualists, and also as people striving by all means in our power to diminish the amount of human misery, and increase the amount of human happiness in this world; in other words, as progressists. The first of these doctrines to which Spiritualists naturally direct their attention, since their eyes have been opened by the modern manifestations of spiritual existence, is the spiritual re-birth of Christ as described in Luke, ch. ii. v. 40. "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." This probably is considered by most Christians as a special, supernatural, and divine regeneration, peculiar to Christ's person; and it may be safely granted that as he was specially appointed to establish a new religion, he was a specially endowed and supereminently gifted spiritual medium,—but as Spiritualism directs our attention to the enquiry, what are the Christian rights and blessings which we ought to enjoy in common, as kings and priests, we cannot help coming to the conclusion that this divine re-birth ought to be partaken of by the whole Christian church; though many of us live wholly in the bondage of the flesh, and are obliged to be contented with the belief that at the Day of Judgment, at some future time, which has already been waited for 1,800 years, we shall rise from our graves and attain a spiritual state. In point of fact our Christian belief being much intermingled with Judaism contains opposite and contradictory teaching on this subject. Christianity, however, has undeniably this merit over all other religions, that in some of its sacred writings it distinctly points out and promises the enjoyment of a spiritual life on this side of the grave, in proof of which I will merely quote here the well known passage of St. Paul (ii Cor. ch. 4, v. 5)—"Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord; Therefore we labour that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." For the further consideration of this most important article of Christian faith I refer my readers to my pamphlet, in which for the trifling sum of sixpence they will find more information as to the inspiration of the Bible and Christian Spiritualism than is to be gleaned from many expensive volumes. To return then to the investigation from which I have alighty digressed, we find that John the Baptist partook of the spiritual re-birth as well as our Lord (Luke ch. 2, v. 80). "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit." St. Peter must have enjoyed the benefit also; because when speaking of the spiritual glory to which Christ had attained, and which he displayed at the transfiguration, he says that he was a partaker of the

same glory (ii Peter, ch. 1, v. 16; and 1st ch. 5, v. 1). St. Paul says in Romans, ch. 8, that "we are children of God and joint heirs with Christ;" and in verse 29, "that Christ might be the first-born among many brethren." Why should not all Christians, then, be on equality, as to a free spiritual state? Without doing us this justice the Christian church cannot assure our general happiness. It is true that this state of existence appears to be not uncommon, but as spirits can assume any appearance and act any personation, it is difficult to know with certainty whether they belong to this world or the other. There is a remarkable contrast connected with the heading of this article, on this I think it will be advisable to make a few observations. I allude to an essential difference between the Jewish and Christian religions, which I dare say has not been observed by many of my readers. The former shrouded all its religious operations in the strictest secrecy; "The secret things belong to the Lord our God" (Deut. ch. 29, v. 29). "God showed Moses only his back parts" (Ex. ch. 4, v. 24). "Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was" (Ex. ch. 20, v. 21). "The Lord said he would dwell in thick darkness" (i Kings, ch. 8, v. 12). "He made darkness his secret place" (Psalms 18, v. 11). "Clouds and darkness are around about him" (Psalms 97, v. 2). Christianity, on the contrary, has always been considered to be a revealed religion; that is to say, one that explained and made intelligible to the public its spiritual mysteries. The following texts authorise this view of it:—"For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved, But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God" (John, ch. 3, v. 20-1). "And he said unto them, is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candle-stick? For there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested, neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad (Mark 4, v. 21-2). "Fear not therefore, for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops" (Matthew 10, v. 26-7).

It particularly behoves Spiritualists and friends of progress at the present time, to insist upon this principle of revelation; to determine that the clergy who call themselves in the words of St. Paul, "Ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" should become openly responsible for the performance of their duties like other professional men; that they should cease to act their present character, which is remarkable for its doubtfulness, and assume another, of undoubted honour and respectability. A church that is paid by the state ought to be accountable to the public; it ought to aim at the greatest amount of general usefulness, like our penny postage system. Again, if there are several ways of attaining a spiritual state, ought not our national church to choose that which inflicts the least misery upon us and interferes least with our happiness here? If the perforating our bodies by streams of ice in the winter, and hot blasts in the summer (like the seasons fighting against Sisarah); if the painful destruction of our teeth, to the injury of our articulation, mastication, and digestion; if the dislocation of our legs and arms; if the abstraction of our wills, so that we become incapable of acting with rational consistency; are all unnecessary to a proper system of religious salvation, why should these things be tolerated? Does not the church liturgy say, "Comfort ye my people, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem?" Men usually are sufficiently anxious about their temporal welfare, but ought they not to be much more so about attaining a happy spiritual state. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul. The Bible itself affords justification to us in demanding some security from our spiritual pastors and masters for the due performance of their duty. Our Lord says in St. John, ch. 10, v. 8—"All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers. The thief cometh not but to steal and kill and destroy; I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly."

We read also in Ezekiel a sad account of wicked shepherds, who preyed upon and devoured their sheep (Ezekiel, ch. 34). We cannot therefore reasonably help coming to the conviction that the want of Christian knowledge, and the concealment of the arcana of Christianity for the selfish advantage of the few, are the reasons why our religion has hitherto so little promoted human happiness. And whether or not my readers may consider that the texts I have quoted are sufficient to justify the demand which I recommend to be made for responsible government; reflection and consideration must convince them that peace and happiness, truth and justice, which we pay for (in other words, legitimate progress), can only be obtained by exposing spiritual mysteries to the broad light of day. A distinguished American clergyman, the Rev. T. L. Harris, has published a work in his native country, on the Arcana of Christianity; it is at present out of print and not to be had, but its author is here, and would no doubt, for an adequate consideration, publish an English edition of his book, containing all the results of his long and varied experience. A liberal and enlightened government would gladly seize the opportunity of patronising such an effort.

Spiritual knowledge is worse than useless if it be not used to promote human happiness here and hereafter. If not scattered abroad like the good seed we read of in scripture, it will be reserved for evil and selfish purposes. Moreover, in the controversy that is at present going on about the inspiration of the Bible and its Divine Authority, such knowledge, openly manifested, constitutes the only argument which carries conviction with it; it is absolute demonstration. They who are interested in upholding the present system of religious secrecy, and for that purpose maintaining the plenary inspiration of the Bible, pretend that the human intellect, which, when protected and allowed to be properly developed, can calculate eclipses; foretell the return of comets; measure the courses of the planets; and penetrate in the most astounding manner into the infinity of space, is yet too finite to be capable of judging of God's works, and dealing with the difficulties which we meet with in the book of

Genesis;—the exposition of the Arcana of Religion, the theory and principles of its spiritual operations on body, mind, and spirit, must silence these opponents of religious justice for ever, and if possible, put them to the blush. Lamenting that I cannot aid in such a work, and ardently wishing that some capable person may come forward to execute it, I beg a candid and indulgent consideration of my opinions, from all who through your paper may happen to read them.

THE AUTHOR OF

"A FEW WORDS ON THE PENTATEUCH," &c.

Right or Wrong.

To the EDITOR of the SPIRITUAL TIMES.

DEAR SIR,—Your correspondent, Joshua Wood, asks me a series of questions, and charges me with holding certain opinions. Permit me to reply to the questions and charges *seriatim*. He says—"Is Spiritualism pneumatic—natural law with spirits?"—*Ans.* I believe it is. "Was the telegraphic message sent to a great distance by a means other than by magnetic telegraph, and if so, how was it done? by what law?"—*Ans.* It may have been done by direct magnetic influence of some person in the flesh, or through the medium of some spirit or spirits in the invisible state, but, precisely *by whom* it was done there is not evidence to show.

Mr. Wood says "It is evident T. P. Barkas repudiates the ministry of angels, and denies the doctrine of spiritual communion." I do no such thing; I simply assert that there is not evidence in the phenomena which come under the head of Modern Spiritual Manifestations to entirely satisfy careful enquirers that they have been in communication with the departed spirits of those who professed to have communicated with them.

J. W. then asks the following questions:—

I. "How can God the infinite reveal to man the finite a knowledge of the infinite and eternal, unless through the immediate agency of angels or spirits occupying a place between the infinite and finite, and adapted to the appreciation of man?"—*Ans.* God may reveal himself and the infinite and eternal to man, by means of angels or spirits, or by the spirits of the departed, or directly from himself without any intermediate finite object whatever; and He has, according to the Bible records, revealed himself in all these modes, and has also, according to the same records, permitted Satan and his legions to deceive and torment mankind.

II. "In communicating with man would God select messengers from some foreign realm, or the spirits of departed human beings in sympathy with man, and best capable of interpreting between God and man?"—*Ans.* For the most part the Almighty has selected agents from some "foreign realm" to communicate his messages to man, viz.: angels; and has scarcely, if ever, used departed human beings for that purpose.

III. "If the Bible Spiritualism is to be believed on the testimony of dead men, long centuries ago, should not Spiritualism be believed on the evidence of those now living?"—*Ans.* I do not see how any rational man who fully enquires into the phenomena of Spiritualism can deny its reality, but, it is one thing to believe that we are in communication with the invisible spiritual world, and another and entirely different thing to believe that those spirits who do communicate are the *bona fide* beings whom they represent themselves to be.

IV. "If psychology, illusion, collusion, electricity, od-force, magnetism, biology, demonology, or anything else can account for Modern Spirit Manifestations, may not everything of a similar character revealed in the Bible be also accounted for by the same law, and on the same grounds?"—*Ans.* The occurrences described in Scripture, with the exception of the consultation of Samuel by Saul, are different from those of modern spirit manifestations, and attempts at necromancy or consultations of the departed are in many cases expressly forbidden. The great mass of finite spiritual communications in the Scripture records profess to be those of angels rather than of departed human beings, so that modern spiritual manifestations may be nothing but demonology, and the substance of Bible Spiritualism genuine heavenly communications.

V. "Can imperfect mortals expect perfect communications from God, angels, or departed spirits, while imperfect mediums are of necessity used as the agents?"—*Ans.* We cannot expect absolutely perfect communications, but merely communications adapted to our capacities. We do not appear to have anything perfect in nature, all things seem to be progressive; and probably all things in the spiritual world, as well as in the natural, are progressive, or have within themselves the germs of progression, and therefore nothing in the absolute sense is perfect, or incapable of advance.

Mr. Wood says, "Will Mr. Barkas be kind enough to give us his theory in full." I may briefly state that my theory is simply this:—that we have no satisfactory evidence that the persons who profess to be communicating are the persons who are communicating.

I am, truly yours,

T. P. BARKAS.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, April 25, 1854.

Personal Experiences.

To the EDITOR of the SPIRITUAL TIMES.

SIR,—As the Widow's mite of old was acceptable, may I be permitted to contribute mine, in favour of the grand truth of Spiritualism. For fifteen years I have studied deeply, and have read attentively every work I could procure in favour of, and against the belief in, the existence of a God and the immortality of the soul, the result of my in-

vestigation was, that I was forced (I say forced, for I assure you I was always desirous of believing in a God, and in a future state), to the conclusion that man was immortal. In the course of my studies, I met with Mr. Rymer's little work on Spiritualism, and after reading it I resolved to examine the subject, and fairly put it to a practical test; I consequently formed a Circle at my own house, and after we had sat round the table for half-an-hour it moved. I then requested that only two persons should touch the table with one hand each. I then sat on the top of the table,—still it continued to move rapidly. A few days after this, I paid a visit to Mrs. Marshall a Medium, and told her I was an anxious enquirer into the subject of Spiritualism. After an examination of a small though heavy Loo table, Mrs. Marshall asked me to sit down by it; in a few minutes loud knocks were given under my hands. I asked with surprise whether those sounds were caused by a Spirit, in reply—three loud knocks were given. The table was then raised entirely from the floor and thrown against me. Five raps were then given. Mrs. Marshall said the Spirit wished to communicate with me. I was directed to take a pencil and point to the letters of the alphabet, I asked the Spirit to give my name,—Mrs. Marshall not knowing my name, I thought that would be a good test. I pointed to the letter A, then B, and so on, till I came to the letter H, at that letter I expected to get the raps, but to my surprise they were given at the letter S. I remarked to Mrs. Marshall, that this was a mistake. I then began again at the letter A, and when I came to M, the three raps were given; I told Mrs. M. this was all wrong. She asked the spirits whether they were right? and in reply, the affirmative three raps were given; I continued and found they gave "SMITH HENRY," and not Henry Smith as I expected; I mention this to show that a name was given, first that I did not expect, and one I am sure the Medium did not know, as I was a perfect stranger to her. The following sentence was then given:—"You will have Spiritual power given you in God's own good time." The table then rose about a foot from the floor, our hands only touching the top. Loud knocks were then given on the table, on the walls, and on the floor. The Medium asked how many Spirits there were in the room? in reply three distinct kind of raps were heard. At my request they all knocked on the table at once. I need not tell you how astonished I was; I exclaimed—"I am again but a child, the learning of my life is negatived in an hour?" A few days afterwards I paid a second visit to Mrs. Marshall, accompanied by my wife and friend. On the table I placed a locket containing some hair of my wife's deceased mother. In a few minutes the table was raised and thrown towards my wife, at the same time loud raps were given. My wife then pointed to the alphabet, the name "Emma Minton," was given, and this delightful communication followed:—"Dear Child—I have watched over you, rejoice, I am with God. Good Bye." During the Séance my wife was raised from the floor, as she sat in her chair, about eight inches; Mrs. Marshall was drawn from the table; I, too, was removed from the table, by the invisible power. The table, at my request, was raised about two feet from the ground. We only holding our hands above it but not touching it. I asked Mrs. Marshall whether if we went to another table the Spirits would follow us, she said she believed they would. We then placed our hands on a large loo table, and instantly knocks were heard. On leaving the table, to my astonishment it rapidly moved after us, following us without any one touching it. My next experience was at the house of a friend. A party of five sat down to a heavy loo table—I will only relate what occurred to myself—I was told the Spirits would write on a slate, if I held it between my knees, I held one firmly therefore as directed, and in a few minutes I felt it three times forcibly pulled, I did not let the slate be taken from me as I wished to feel the power which pulled it. I was three times touched on the leg by the Spirit's hand, and felt the impression for an hour afterwards; knocks were heard on the table and piano; I asked questions mentally which were answered correctly. On Friday last, while we were at dinner, with a friend, a Medium, whom I had invited to spend the evening with us,—the end of the dining table, the weight of which is not less than 154 lbs., was, without our touching or thinking upon the subject, several times raised more than a foot from the floor. I asked the Medium whether the Spirits could make the table heavy or light at their will? Three loud knocks were given in reply, I then tried to move the table but found it impossible, the extra weight was then removed and the table rendered light, I could then move it with ease. The Medium then asked the Spirits to raise the table from the floor, *our hands not touching it*, one side of the table then rose more than a foot from the carpet, and was held suspended in the air for about a minute. At a subsequent Séance an accordion was played on by the Spirit of my wife's departed mother. The word "God" was written on a slate with a black lead pencil. A cross was also drawn on the slate with a pink colouring matter, the Spirit in this case producing the colour, as there was no paint or colouring matter of any description in the room. I was removed in my chair, from the place at the table at which I sat, to another place by the Spirits. We were touched by the Spirits, many times during the evening. All this to you, sir, is nothing new, but I hope these facts may lead others to examine for themselves. We must not expect sceptical persons to believe all our statements, but beg of them to form Circles at home. As for myself, I am now convinced of this fact that there is a living intelligence distinct from the body. I am perfectly sure that the Spirit of my wife's mother came to us on that day, and has been with us on many occasions since. I most sincerely hope that those who doubt the immortality of the soul, when such proof can be given them, will not refuse to search into the subject for themselves. I invited a city friend to come to my house and see for himself, or to have a Medium at his own home, but his reply was—"No, Spiritualism is opposed to all my knowledge and judgment,—I will not see,—I will not hear." I rejoice that I thought it possible there might be "things in heaven and earth not dreamed of in my philosophy." What a feeling of joy and love I now feel. I can now teach my children the truth of the immortality of the soul. With me it is not faith,—for I know it. I have had proof, and can give it to others; and can

say with truth—"the grand secret of the age stands revealed—it is mine—I have found it. Now let the world laugh—I am immortal!"

I am, sir, yours truly,

HENRY SMITH.

61, Oakley Square, London.

Spiritualism versus Orthodoxy.

ARTICLE 2ND.

SUPREME DEITY OF JESUS THE CHRIST.

Listen, Listen, Listen, ye prophets, ye seers, ye priests of the Modern Christian Church, who have taught untrue and unscriptural doctrines of the Divine Jesus. Listen to the words of Jesus Christ himself, who spake as never man spake; allow the man whom ye worship and adore to SPEAK FOR HIMSELF, and calmly weigh his own words in their exact literal and grammatical meaning. Go back to the days of Christ—walk in the highways and bye-ways of Palestine, and listen to the words as they fall from his own lips. It is well that Christ's own voice should be heard once more, to let the world know that the victories of reason over prejudice and superstition are but so many triumphs of his immortal name, which is synonymous with truth. And "Ye, whom say ye that I am?" and Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the SON OF THE LIVING GOD." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; BUT MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN." When he says that he is one with God, he takes care to explain his meaning, by repeating more than once, that he also desires THAT HIS DISCIPLES MAY BE ONE WITH GOD LIKE HIM. From the commencement to the end of his ministry, from the first word to the last he uttered on Golgotha, in all his conversations, in all his preachings, at the well of Samaria, at the pool of Bethesda, upon the upon the lake of Gennesaret, upon the Mount of Olives, in the garden of Gethsemane, before the tribunal of Pilate, from the top of the cross, in his last breath to his friends, his executioners, his mother, his brothers, even to the evil spirits who tempt him, and to God,—to God who sustained his drooping courage, and by whose Spirit he was inspired, he has but one cry—"I AM THE CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." All that He possesses was given unto Him by His Father in Heaven: whether physical, moral, or spiritual gifts,—all, all are alike referred to the same source.

1st.—HIS LIFE.—"As the living FATHER hath sent ME, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER, so he that hateth Me, even he shall live by Me."—*John's Gospel, 6th ch., 57 v.*

2nd.—HIS MISSION.—"Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying,—Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not."—*John, 7 ch., 28 v.*

3rd.—HIS DOCTRINES.—"My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me."—*John 7 ch., verses 16, 17, 18.*

4th.—HIS POWER.—"I can of my own self do nothing."

5th.—HIS DISCIPLES.—"I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me."—*John 7 ch., verses 6, 7, 8, 17, 18.*

6th.—HIS GLORY.—"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me."—*John 17 ch., verses 1, 4, 5, 22, 23, 24.*

7th.—HIS ONENESS WITH THE FATHER.—Neither pray I for these alone, but also for those that believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us.

8th.—HIS LIMITLESS KNOWLEDGE.—Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the Son; but the Father only.—*Mark, 13 ch., 32 v.*

9th.—HIS EQUALITY WITH GOD.—My Father is greater than I.—*John, 14 ch., 28 v.*

10th.—HIS EXISTENCE BEFORE HIS BIRTH.—Before Abraham was, I am; that is, the light of my gospel was known and foreseen before the days of Abraham. Abraham saw my day, and rejoiced.

11th.—HIS DEATH.—Father, into thine hands I commit my spirit, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

12th.—AFTER THE RESURRECTION.—He says to Mary in the Garden, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

13th.—AFTER THE ASCENSION.—After the ascent of Jesus the Divine Master, on the descent of the Pentecost the comforter, Peter, one of the twelve apostles, speaking from impression, says:—"Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him, as ye yourselves also know." What can be plainer than this? Here one, no double natures, no mysteries, no absorption of human nature into the divine nature, nor of double bodies and double consciousness; all is plain, simple, and easy. Jesus the Son of God, nothing more, nothing less. We might go on to the Epistles, and fill a volume with quotations. We will just give one quotation, and we have done. It is from 1 *Corinthians*, 15 ch., verses 24, 28. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." What more can we require? This is decisive, yet three-fourths of the Christian world deny this doctrine, although it is read as a mummery and more nominal service over every corpse interred by our Christian Churches. To sum up scriptural evidence, we find that 20 times in Scripture God is styled the God of Jesus Christ; 40 times in scripture Jesus is called a Man; 68 times is God styled the Father of Jesus Christ; 19 times is Jesus called a Prophet; 80 times is Jesus called the Son of Man; 56 times,

the Sent of God; 120 times the Son of God; 19 times as praying to God, &c.; 450 peculiar epithets are applied to God, none of which are applied to Christ; 1300 passages show that God is a Being distinct from Jesus Christ. This ought to be satisfactory so far as the law and the testimony of Jesus and his apostles, and of the scriptures are concerned.

Modern divine revelation confines this testimony. It is true we have the "seers," Swedenborg and Jacob Behmen, who have each used their seership to overturn the scriptural doctrines just given, and have taught theories from the spirit plane contradictory to reason, revelation, and science. Here we find the followers and disciples of both these seers opposed to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and also of the teachings given in modern spiritualism. The reason is obvious because their creeds and theories are alike opposed to ancient and modern revelation. Modern Spiritualism is fast exploding the errors and the blunders of the seers of the 17th and 18th centuries. Let us take as a specimen a quotation from the Revelations, given through an American lady medium in 1861. In a work recommended by the Honourable Judge Edmunds, as a work of God, no mere mortal power could do it. This lady medium, in a communication given from the Apostle John, writes as follows:—"We would wish to make ourselves clearly understood in what we have said regarding the birth into this world of Christ our head. Men have much to learn and unlearn; the pride of human reason must be abased and they must understand that there may be some things that are past their comprehension while in this finite state. One of these things is the real character and present position of Christ. He was truly the "God with us;" as he was conceived in the fullness of the God principle; He was pre-ordained by Almighty wisdom to be the Saviour of men. His first work was accomplished when he expired on the cross. His second mission is in progress, and its fulfillment may be looked for. Christ is not God; neither is he equal with God, for that is an impossibility; but at the same time he is the highest created being that has ever been developed on your sphere, and to Him we all look as our king and head—our leader and director—our teacher and guide in all we undertake for men's benefit. Why do we do this? Simply because Deity has put all things into his hands. He is the appointed Messiah of the world, and fitted for his high office by his superior development in all wisdom, love, and knowledge. He is the nearest approach to Deity you will ever come into connection with, or ever see in our "spirit home." The "God principle" will always remain as it now is, an unscen, though ever present power, from which Christ Jesus our Lord, as well as we, His followers, derive our wisdom and happiness. Though Christ is so high and so good, so powerful, and yet so full of love, for the whole human family. Still He is not God—He is not to be worshipped as God; but He must be ever loved by his faithful followers, &c. See further communication from the World of Spirits, Page 161 and 162. Foot note by Apostle John in the "Second Coming of Christ." For further information here, we have modern divine revelation of Jesus Christ and his apostles; and setting to rights the false and mixed revelations given through Behmen and Swedenborg on the nature of Christ. Listen again to the voice of St. Paul the martyr, through the same medium. Men in general have no higher conception or realization of the true nature of God than the mote in a sun-beam, in which it is lost and extinguished. Adin Ballou in his excellent little work called "An Exposition of Views respecting the Modern Spirit Manifestations" says, page 22—"There is but one God, an infinite spirit, and the father of spirits. He loves all, and eternally seeks their good by all-wise and fitting means. The man Jesus, of Nazareth, was brought into the world with especial fitness to receive and communicate the spirit of God in perfect purity and fullness, whereby the Father spirit, dwelling in Him, constituted Him the Christ, the Saviour of the world. The Holy Ghost so called is the God spirit, acting, in, on, upon, any finite being, or at any particular point perceptible to finite natures; so that there is one infinite divine variously manifested, as the Father in the Son, or by the Holy Ghost." This view of Christ Adin Ballou tells us, is sanctioned by 999 communications out of every 1000 received from the spirit plane.

"Finally to sum up the whole matter, we may say in the language of the seers, that in Christ Jesus our Lord are found—1st. The God principle or celestial degree; 2nd. The Image of God or Spiritual degree; 3rd. The Image of Man or natural degree."

This is all the seers ought to have said—all that revelation reveals—all that reason and modern Spiritualism teaches from the loftiest and purest spirits of the spheres. May the blessing of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit the Comforter, rest and abide with us, shedding down upon us the blessing of angelic communion, and of communion with the Father of Lights, now and for evermore.

Yours sincerely,

D' ESPRIT.

A HINT TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS.—"If, said Napoleon, "I were at the head of affairs in England, I should devise some means of paying off, or reducing the national debt. I would appropriate to that purpose the whole of the Church livings, except one-tenth (always excepting those with moderate incomes), in such a manner that the salary of the highest among the clergy should not exceed £800 or £1,000 a year. What business have those priests with such enormous incomes? They should follow the directions of Jesus Christ, who ordered that as pastors of the people they should set an example of moderation, humanity, virtue, and piety, instead of wallowing in riches, luxury, and sloth. I would appropriate to a similar purpose all sinecures, except those enjoyed by men who had rendered eminent services to the State, and, indeed, even those might be rewarded by giving them some office in which they would be obliged to do something."—*Napoleon at St. Helena, Vol. I., pp. 351-5, edition 4th.*

Poetry.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE GHOSTS WE CANNOT LAY.

The sea is clear and calm, and the hills are swathed in gold,
 The sky with sapphire hue is over the sea and wold;
 Yet thou and I this day, wife, nurse griefs of yesterday,—
 That haunt our fretted lives like the ghosts we cannot lay.
 The sea-gulls skim the wave, and the larks sing in the air,
 All nature throbs with joy, while we are depressed by care;
 The lambs skip on the downs, and children with laughing eyes,
 Gambol on velvet lawns, as happy as Paradise;—
 Yet thou and I are sad, while the world gives out its gladness,
 And all the bliss around but mocketh us into madness.
 If we're not mailed in craft, we wear not the world's disguise,
 That shields, on fortune's road, the life that liveth on lies.
 For years we've dreamed and toiled, and over the Crossian prize,
 Like *ignis fatuus* gleams, recedeth before our eyes;
 Our pilgrim-feet aspire to attain the promised land,
 And bleed on the flinty path, led on by devotion grand.
 We know 'tis sinful to sigh for jewels we cannot win,
 Yet, in a sorrowful mood, we dare to indulge the sin.
 Our hopes, like bladders blown by the children in their play,
 As bubbles of beauty rare, have burst in the light of day.

April 26th, 1864.

J. H. POWELL.

THE MEDIUMS.

AN ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL TALE.

By J. H. POWELL.

—o—

"Now, now, Charles!" began Mr. Peerless, "I thought you were a man of strong mind, and incapable of giving heed to such superstitious nonsense."

"I do not suppose my mind is any weaker for having discovered some new facts which were not of my philosophy before."

"On the contrary," said Mrs. Peerless, "it is evidence of its strength."

"Only old women, with nerves like electrical wires constantly at work, place any reliance on the thousand and one trumpery ghost tales you hear; for my part, I should think I had taken leave of my senses were I to heed them;" and Mr. Peerless gave a broad-toned chuckle with the best possible good-nature.

"By what line of reasoning, Mr. Peerless, do you establish the conviction that you have not taken leave of your proper senses, by ignoring the study of supernatural phenomena?" inquired the shipwright.

"Oh! oh!" replied Mr. Peerless, with another laugh, "you see my opinions are founded upon the opinions of universal experience, and must be sane; your's are only accepted by a few, and must be wrong."

"Here I must beg permission to differ from you. I find in all ages, among the learned and the illiterate, the majority of mankind have been believers in super-mundane or spiritual realities. There have, it is true, been a thousand and one different modes or ways of putting the question forward, but the absolute idea of spirit has been almost universally accepted."

"And do we not read," added Mrs. Peerless, "in the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments, that spiritual visitations were of common occurrence?"

"I cannot give in to either of you; have I not told you that my opinions are the opinions of the majority of people? what more do you want? There can be no such things as ghosts, only in imagination, conjured up in the senseless brains of poets and old women! And I am truly surprised to think that Charles should so far allow himself to be defuded into accepting a single fact in their favor. But I suppose it is grief for our child's death has turned his brain."

Mr. Humphrey looked a little awry as he heard his father-in-law's last words,—he began to see that his position was not an easy one, if his sanity were to be called in question. He turned to Mrs. Peerless—

"Well, mother, just look me full in the face, question and cross-question me, and then say if you think I am mad."

"La! nonsense, Charles!" exclaimed Mrs. Peerless, "you never appeared more in your right mind than now, since I

first knew you. Peerless ought to apologise to you; indeed he ought."

"Why, what for?" ejaculated Peerless, "I know Charles is sane enough on all subjects connected with material things, but I must hold by my opinion, that in spiritual matters, owing to grief for his widowhood, he is not quite so fortunate." And while he spoke he gave an extra full-faced laugh.

It was Mr. Peerless's jolly, good-natured, bluff manner of holding fast to his imperatives that relieved them of half their offensiveness. Mrs. Peerless knew her son-in-law's disposition too well to fear that they could offend him; yet she could not resist telling her husband that he was out of place in condemning authoritatively a belief he had never taken the trouble to examine. He only retorted with his usual laugh, emphasising the pronoun, "I am satisfied my opinion is the legitimate one, therefore to trouble about examination is a useless waste of time."

CHAPTER V.

To a man uncaring for public applause, or much private, social intercourse, there is little to regret in being necessitated to confine himself within the range of home or domestic life; but this results from habit, and habit is a strong tutor. It is very different when great principles lay hold of his heart, and he feels that he "lives not to himself alone," that his destiny lies in apostleising and informing his race. Mr. Humphrey was of all men the least disposed to emerge from his peaceful abode to mix in the outward strife of sect and party. His nature shrunk involuntarily from such a terrible ordeal, but he was impressed by influences which he dared not deny, and which he feared to disobey. Day after day he recalled to his mind the spirit-message which urged him to devote his life to the spread of Spiritualism, and he never did so without a vivid recollection of the sign. He felt irresistibly stimulated to fulfil the injunctions of the mysterious agents that had visited him on that ever memorable night; but he reflected long and frequently on the difficulties which would rise before him like so many impassable barriers. He felt strong in conviction, and valiant-hearted enough, but he nevertheless felt himself standing, as it were, alone. He now felt the need of some coadjutor, in whom he could place confidence, and whose sentiments and designs were in sympathy with his own. It is all very well, he thought, to retire from public intercourse, and to realise genial pleasures in the truly peaceful solitude of domestic life, when one has nothing to think about save the ordinary common everyday experiences; but how vastly different it is to leave one's customary solitude in order to propound doctrines which are not readily expounded to the thoughtless, and are obnoxious to the foremost thinkers of the age. There was ever the opinion of Mr. Peerless as to his sanity uppermost in his mind, causing him to argue to himself, that if a relative took him to be mad, there was no reasonable expectation that strangers would not believe him so. Mr. Humphrey had too much penetration not to perceive that the single mention of the facts of spirit presence which had taken place in his own experience would necessitate rumours of the kind. This was his one great fear, because if that did not exist, there would be some probable chance of his own testimony being taken by the majority of those who knew him. He thought so, but he had other experience later on, which put a different light in his mind. There was, however, the one ardent longing for some friend to be near him to consult with, and to aid him. Mr. Humphrey coned over in his mind every person he knew, both in and out of Southampton, and could not think of one that appeared to him likely to treat the subject fairly. At last he endeavoured to stimulate his mind to the effort of propagandism, seeking for no other than the aid of the Holy Spirit.

It is desolation itself to work in a world of wrongdoing, with no companion or fellow labourer. Mr. Humphrey felt so, but he remembered that history had its long list of isolated heroes who had, in all their various positions, conquered the difficulties of ignorance and prejudice, making for themselves, by the simple influence of their great wills, glorious destinies. These real heroes were *solitaires* from the fact of their own elevation above the multitude. Men may walk side by side over the rough and thorny path of being, and only recognise each other by comparisons, bringing body to body in parallel positions; but there can be no real companionship without a soul-fellowship. The gods live in atmospheres of their own, like the stars. A train of thought similar to this kept Mr. Humphrey's mind employed, and had the effect of

convincing him that if he entered on his task alone he would not be the first hero of the kind by many thousands.

It is remarkable how man reasons himself into convictions according with bosom intentions. When once the heart is earnestly set upon a task, the head involuntarily sets to work to prove it the most easy of accomplishment, and the most sensible, or, at least, proper thing in the world. Mr. Humphrey instinctively felt it to be his duty to act upon the injunctions of the spirits, and instead of waiting to reason on the wisdom or folly of allowing himself to follow their strange instructions, he reasoned himself into obedience with the greatest ease. His heart was made captive by spiritual influences, and nothing was more likely than that his head should nod assent.

The great difficulty with him now was to decide upon the best plan of operations. He was fully prepared for action, but he was too cautious to act without legitimate and wise consideration.

The "Cruiser" was under weigh, but she had been delayed a day over her time. It happened, as misfortune would have it, that Timsons' traveller, the night he should have sent off the order he received from Reuben, was taken ill, and in the excitement which prevailed he forgot all business matters. The consequence was that not only was Mr. Humphrey disappointed, but one or two other shipwrights as well. Then, as if to make disappointment doubly irksome, Mr. Thomson discovered that he could not comply with his neighbour's request, being informed by his own foreman that the quantity of timbers required would place themselves in jeopardy, since they themselves were hourly in expectation of the arrival of ships for repair.

When Reuben learnt this Mr. Humphrey was at Shirley, but the foreman did not know it. He was, in consequence, in sad trouble, because he understood thoroughly his master's business promptitude. He did not allow time to be lost, but immediately sent a telegram to Timsons. The result proved his sagacity, for the timbers were despatched at once, yet the delay occasioned caused the "Cruiser" to be kept at her moorings a day beyond her time.

Mr. Humphrey narrowly escaped a great sacrifice of money for his blunder, but "a miss was as good as a mile" in this case. The proprietors of the "Cruiser," although indignant, consented to accept an apology, and the matter ended.

Some men require many lessons, many times repeated, before they take their import, and prove they profit from them. This was not the case with Mr. Humphrey; he wisely made his experience ward off future blunders. Reuben Welch, his foreman, had been in his service for more than ten years, and during the whole time had always proved himself trustworthy and attentive to his duties. His employer had long esteemed his services, and had often displayed his appreciation of them by small presents, which Reuben valued above price, for he had a heart in the right place. It occurred to the shipwright that it would be the wisest possible thing he could do if he reposed more trust in him than hitherto, and made him understand that he was to take the responsibility of conducting the firm entirely upon himself. If this could be managed, Mr. Humphrey felt that he could safely carry out any future plans of action he might accredit, for the spread of Spiritualism, without being constantly worried with items about timber and wages.

"Reuben," commenced Mr. Humphrey, "I shall possibly need to be away from the office for days, and perhaps weeks, together."

The foreman opened his eyes wide,—“Indeed, sir, I shall be sorry for that.”

"There is no necessity to disguise matters from you, Reuben. I have for some time past had evidences that our spirits can, under peculiar conditions, return to earth after they have left the body."

"You surprise me;" exclaimed Reuben, "I have always been taught to believe that death carries the spirit away from earth, and that it goes either to Hell or Heaven, to await the final judgment. If that be so, sir, pray how can you believe what you say?"

"Reuben, listen! Theology has much to answer for," said the employer, kindly, "the teachings of the sects have paralysed the true springs of the human soul, and given it in exchange nothing but dogmatic garbage. There is a thick crust of materialistic doubt clinging to our religious faith, and we fail to see the spiritual realities around and about us, because we have been blinded by prejudice and dogmatism."

Reuben listened reverentially; he quite forbore to question, because he felt his own intellectual littleness, but he was,

nevertheless, sorely puzzled to understand fully the meaning of Mr. Humphrey's remarks. It is true the foreman has paid little attention to the subject and was of all men the least disposed to torture his brain with conflicting opinions, which, in his opinion, could be productive of little good. He was a good hard-working shipwright; a very honest, plain, sensible man, but his vocation had not placed him in the way of theological or technical studies of any kind out of the department of his trade. He entertained a high opinion, and who did not, of Mr. Humphrey's integrity and intellectual powers. It was, on most topics, enough for him to allow his employer to think for him, because he had not formed the habit of thinking for himself. Reuben was one of those easy-going people who trouble themselves little about the metre of mental progress, ignorance was indeed bliss to him; yet he was a sturdy, honest, practical workman, one whom Mr. Humphrey might fail in convincing of the realities of spirits but who, nevertheless, had a strong, thorough, Saxon earnestness about him which belongs to true metal.

No one knew Reuben's value better than his employer, and the foreman knew it, and was gratified and grateful. Mr. Humphrey had never shown that coldness towards Reuben, which belongs to the ice of position, and so often freezes up affection between employer and *employee*, congealing the warm blood of the rich in the presence of the poor. The shipwright was always the same in his dealings with his friends, equals, or his servants. Thus he won not only respect but affection, and those who were the most beneath him in position had the most convincing proof of the christianity of his character.

There was nothing very singular to Reuben that Mr. Humphrey should converse with him, but there was novelty in the subject he chose,—novelty to Reuben of the most startling character. Mr. Humphrey saw the respectful attention paid by his foreman as he spoke, and was resolved to give him the principal facts in his experience. In doing so he thought he would, by way of preliminary, ascertain Reuben's opinion as to his sanity.

"Before I proceed to give you the facts upon which I base my convictions, will you speak freely, and say whether you do not think I am mad?"

"Mad, sir, mad! how can you ask me such a question?" exclaimed Reuben, with an utter stare of amazement, which gave more evidence of bewilderment than his features had before assumed, "I should say I was mad myself to think so."

Mr. Humphrey smiled. "Now, Reuben, we understand each other; when I have done, I shall be pleased to hear your opinions on what I shall tell you. I merely asked you the question to convince myself that I should not be talking uselessly. I am confident, from what I know of human nature, that I shall be pronounced insane, by those who do not know me, and probably by some who do. But I must not allow such mad remarks to obtrude themselves on my notice."

"Certainly not, sir."

The employer gave briefly a correct statement of the spiritual visitations he had received from his wife, and a detailed account of the mysterious spirit-writing. When he had finished he looked into Reuben's eyes, but they were so widely distended, and there was such an air of absolute anguish in the expression of that honest man's features, that Mr. Humphrey, in spite of the sacred character of his words, was irresistibly forced to laugh aloud, saying, "Tut, Reuben, don't look so woefully horrified, there are no ghosts here."

Reuben looked about him cautiously, as if he were not quite satisfied of that. After a lapse of a few minutes his face regained its wonted expression, and, on being requested to give his opinion on the marvels he had heard, he said—Master, I am almost dumb with surprise; and yet, in spite of the seeming improbabilities of the matter, I cannot but believe all you say you have seen was real; but it is such a horrible thing to talk to spirits, that it frightens me to think of it; and while he spoke he reflected on the wonderful nerves which his employer must possess, to be able to speak upon the subject with such coolness, and he ardently longed for a state of utter thoughtlessness.

"Now we will come to the question I have to consider," said Mr. Humphrey, in his usual kindness of tone, "You have hitherto been faithful to me, Reuben, and I doubt not will continue to be so; therefore I propose to entrust you with the management of the firm whilst I am fulfilling other more important, because spiritual duties."

(To be continued.)

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