

THE

SPIRITUAL TIMES

A WEEKLY ORGAN DEVOTED TO THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND
PRACTICAL USES OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM

WE HOLD THAT GOD IS OUR FATHER, MAN OUR BROTHER, IMMORTALITY OUR DESTINY

Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

"The life that now is shapes the life that is to be.

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Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities, presenting us not only with the semblances, but the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the spiritual, but 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.

DR. CUMMING.

THE spiritual question still perplexes the great I AM's of the press, and the Church still holds undue influence over the popular mind. Talk to the majority of people, and they at once allude to Faraday, Brewster, Pepper, Brougham, and Cumming, or even Cummins (of Liverpool celebrity), as authorities against the subject. On the other hand, Spiritualists are ready with their long list of names, including the late Professor Hare, Judge Edmonds, William Howitt, and S. C. Hall. It is a strange habit of the popular mind to lean upon the crutch of authority, which conveniently saves it the trouble of thinking for itself. We by no means believe in the too common practice of accepting or rejecting any theory on the mere strength of authorities.

Men and women had better be ciphers than slaves to the authority, of either king or peasant. Freedom of thought is the culmination of all true manhood or womanhood.

We therefore say to our fellow-beings—think, speak, and act from no authority save that of Truth and Reason. Accept a fact because it is true, not because Dr. Cumming, Mr. Spurgeon, Sir D. Brewster, or any other representative man says it is true; reject it if your own reason pronounces it false, not because the pet idols of certain schools of thought say it is so. There is a sad want of Individuality and true self-reliance; and in proportion as this want exists, there is a fearful distrust of Providence. Has not our Heavenly Parent given capacities to each of us to make us, under proper culture, *Individuals*? If so, each of us should not fail to learn the lesson taught by this fact, and profit by it. Crutches are necessary only to cripples; those who can and do not walk without them deserve to be lame, and will eventually become so from force of habit. It is with the mind as the body, it must be free to act from its own inherent force, or it will become dwarfed and despicable. It is very strange that those who are taught to repose unquestioning confidence on human authorities, in theology and metaphysics, do not solicit the loan of their neighbours' legs, that they may allow their own to wither, after the fashion of their minds. If the thing were possible, it would be less objectionable to borrow legs than it is brains, or the result of brain-labour, which is the practice to a great or less extent. We can overlook crudities and eccentricities, but not idleness in thinking. Let men and women think for themselves, and the authorities in literature, science, and theology will psychologise few, by the simple magic of their names. Is a truth any the less because some unrecognized being utters it? Or is it any the more because some high dignitary condescends to accept it? These questions arise as we consider how the multitude look up to the mountains and the moons, and see them-

selfes small by contrast. On the question of Spiritualism, we have authorities everywhere dragged in. The members of Mr. Spurgeon's chapel are apt to ask what their minister thinks, and to place, not always, but often unwittingly, considerable reliance on *his* opinion. Imagine Mr. Spurgeon's opinion about Spiritualism, canvassed by his own flock. If he said it, was of the devil, how many of his human lambs would disagree with him? If he said it was humbug, who among them would call in question *his* word? The same with Dr. Cumming, a man, whose learning towers infinitely above that of Spurgeon. Multitudes make a demigod of him, and we think, worship him with an idolatry more fatal to their souls' interests, than the idolatry of the heathens is to theirs. Be that as it may, Dr. Cumming has spoken at times beautiful words for Spiritualism, at others, very unmeaning or illogical ones. Some months ago, we gave some extracts from the doctor's works, which we endeavoured to shew proved him to be a Spiritualist. We, this week, in another column, reprint a letter from him, which appeared in the *Zoist*, for October, 1854. It is worthy of remark, that Dr. Cumming is not satisfied with Faraday's explanation of the phenomenon of table-moving; that he vouches for a heavy table with the fingers of a lady laid lightly upon it, in his presence, springing round; and that Satan is not the doctor's stalking-horse, save only in so far as "lunatics" are made by "the absurd excitement which the facts excited in America." If the readers of Dr. Cumming's works, together with all his admirers, could for the nonce forget him as an authority, and take his words for what they are worth, we are bold to say they would, one and all, that is, if they analyzed his statements, pronounce him very illogical, first to vouch for the fact of a lady's fingers being laid on a heavy table, in a private room, when the table sprung round, and then to fly off, after a little breathing space, by saying "I saw much that was curious; a great deal ingeniously done; but I have also seen remarkable things in the feats of tumblers." The account the doctor gives of his sitting makes us understand that he was not in the company of tumblers, but honest people, in whom he had confidence. If so, it is absurd to drag "tumblers" into the discussion, to give him a sorry means of escape from a logical difficulty. If the Doctor saw what he described, and was satisfied of the honesty of the medium, and persons with whom he sat, the hypothesis of conjuring must fall to the ground. Would he employ the same kind of absurd illogic, were he discussing Scripture miracles? We think not. Suppose he took the account of Baalam's ass, and before accepting it as true, referred to the fact that certain ventriloquists of modern days can mimic all kinds of voices, the Doctor might then suppose that the ass did not speak at all, but that some ventriloquist imposed upon Baalam. Suppose the Doctor took the account of Belshazzar's feast, and the mysterious fingers on the wall; and said, but I have seen conjurers produce feats as remarkable, and left on his hearers the impression that some conjuror might have imposed on Belshazzar's Court. Suppose the Doctor took the account of the transfiguration of Jesus,

and said, but I have seen Pepper's ghost, which is very marvellous, and would be more so, did I not understand the scientific principle upon which the modern appearances are produced. We might thus show upon the Doctor's own premises, that he is inconsistent in his mode of dealing with the question, he had better have said nothing about. Dr. Cumming may be a very good and scholarly divine, but he is not a correct reasoner, or he would have avoided the quagmire into which the spirits (were they emissaries of Satan?) have led him. We believe, at the present hour, the Doctor still holds by the old fangled idea of conjuring. He does not deem the question worthy his attention, being possibly too much engrossed in prophesying, and waiting for, the end of the world. He has had evidences from honest persons, that phenomena take place of a character beyond Faraday's power to explain on any physical hypothesis. He does not, like most of his cloth, give the Devil the whole difficulty to carry; but he thinks tumblers may perform the feats, although he knows the lady whom he mentions was no tumbler. He does not think them miraculous, or supernatural, but "mediæval fancies, monkish nonsense, profane and anile fables." Was the *séance* he describes at which he witnessed phenomena Faraday could not explain, a fable? Was he himself an "anile fable," or a "mediæval fancy?" If not, the *séance* was a stubborn fact. If so, it could not be an "anile fable;" and it seems to us one such fact should be satisfactory, even to an authority, like Dr. Cumming, if all the others were "anile fables." There is no necessity even for an authority to run into headlong theories; but he should keep from running into mental bogs. Dr. Cumming has written himself a witness to phenomena, which he says Faraday does not explain. Does he think he himself explains them by talking about "mediæval fancies, monkish nonsense, profane and anile fables?" If he do, all we can say is, that he has a higher opinion of himself than we think any of his most servile admirers could have of him, if they would only forget his authority, and study the subject which he seems so incompetent to handle.

ANOTHER WORD TO THE NATIONAL REFORMER.

THE *National Reformer* of last week contains Mr. Powell's letter, which it previously said, would not be "interesting to our readers." The Editor having inserted the letter, indulges in some disingenuous remarks, which we need not trouble ourselves to answer. We can afford to be "sensitive" and much more, but not to be ignored. The letter having appeared in the *Reformer*, we are satisfied; whether it would ever have appeared in the columns of that journal had we not printed it in the *Spiritual Times*, is a question we leave others to discuss. In notices to correspondents, the *Reformer* has the following:—

We attended, during the past week, at the private residence of one of the most celebrated mediums, a *séance*, which was arranged expressly for our conversion. But the attempt was a failure. Indeed, the "spirits" themselves admitted, after numerous mistakes, that they did not wish or intend to convert us. Endeavouring to be as unprejudiced as it is possible for man to be, the impression left upon our mind was decidedly adverse to any spiritual influence. If other and stronger evidence is forthcoming, we should be glad to see it.

Had this not appeared, we should have refrained from printing any remarks upon the *séance* here alluded to. The facts are briefly these: the Editor of the *Reformer* accompanied us to Mrs. Marshall's; he was favoured with a sitting, and allowed to take his seat at the table without his name being mentioned to anyone. The table gave some strong tiltings, the alphabet being in use, when old Mrs. Marshall declared that a spirit voice had informed her that the gentleman we had with us was a printer. She put the question to him, but he evaded it, saying he wished to attend first to what he was doing. Presently, after some confusion, and some mistakes, his own name, *John Watts*, was given. He then, after a little delay, had intimation that his mother's spirit was present. He wished her Christian name to be given, which was done correctly, the letters signalled, being *Rebecca*. He wanted his father's name the same way; but could not get it. He was desired

to write a number of names on a piece of paper, which he did, but the invisibles answered incorrectly several times. He was told to place paper and pencil under the table, which he did, and in about five minutes, knockings intimated that he was to pick them up, and there, on the paper was written his father's name *George*; he looked a little puzzled, and exclaimed, what bad writing! We pass over a description of the extraordinary physical movements and knockings which all counted for nought in Mr. Watts' estimate of what he witnessed, and beg to ask our readers if they think the sitting was "a failure?" It failed to convert him to the spiritual theory, no doubt; no one would have been more surprised than we should, had it been otherwise. Our object in taking him to the Marshalls, was not to convert him, as he supposes, but to give him the opportunity of testing phenomena, which had never before come under his notice; and we hoped he would do so, giving us the result of his investigation. If he can trace the manifestations to trickery, let him do so, by all means; but let him not by inuendoes, attribute dishonesty to the mediums without backing up his insinuations with evidence. If he cannot trace dishonesty to the mediums, can he deny the facts which we have given? If not, whilst he places great stress on the *incorrect*, will he kindly attempt to account for the *correct* answers he obtained?

"LIFE INCIDENTS AND POETIC PICTURES."*

REVIEWED BY EDWIN EDDISON.

It is customary, I believe, in public meetings, for the chairman, when he is to receive a vote of thanks, to leave the chair, and for another person to take his place whilst he is duly honoured.

I am not certain whether this be so or not, for it has not been my fortune of late years to listen to sparkling flashes of wit which at festive scenes rival the gooseberry champagne that caused the flashing effervescence; or my misfortune to listen to the dull and dreary platitudes which fall on the hearers with a dull, heavy thud, as drizzling, dropping rain falls on wayfarers on foggy days.

Whether the custom I have referred to obtains or not at such times, reference to such a custom, or imagined custom, will assist me to suggest a parallel case. If a chairman (and I once knew a wealthy one who cut himself in two by signing himself chair man) cannot with decorum sit as chairman to listen to his own praises, much less can the editor of a magazine sit down to review his own work in his own magazine. Did he do so, I should, from my knowledge of authors, imagine he had been a partial reviewer. Modest men on their own merits should be dumb, we are told. As, however, the readers of the "Spiritual Times" who have not ordered a copy of their Editor's latest work in the shape of a book, will naturally be anxious to know something of "Life Incidents and Poetic Pictures," I shall therefore venture to offer my services, and politely ask Mr. Powell to descend from his editorial chair, and allow me for the nonce to sit there in order to dissect him, to cut him (through his book) into infinitesimal mince-meat—to break or pluck his aspiring wings with the critic's literary sledge-hammer or pinners—to crush him to the earth as our grand reviewers only can crush the literary aspirant. A reviewer—that is, of the class unhappily too prevalent in the present day—has need only to read a passage of a work here and there (and that many reviewers do no more than this is evident from their frequent misquotations), to be able to demolish a writer who is not one of their clique. A literary man who is on the "staff" of a newspaper or magazine, is, like the celebrated Mayor of Pevensy, "but a man," and is just as likely to introduce a writer into his own charmed circle by a kindly notice, as a grocer is likely to introduce a rival grocer to his own customers. Another motive, too, operates. What more likely to attract notice, and gain a young reviewer the reputation of being smart and clever, than a series of trenchant hits or flashes which cut or consume the unfortunate wight who is exposed to their dire force and fury?

There are men, however, who, secure against rivalry, or from purely conscientious motives, taste the literary champagne, and tell their readers whether it is the child of the true vine or of the gooseberry tree: whether brilliant and palatable; flat or stale; piquant or insipid; digestible and good for body and mind, or affected with a sort of literary rinderpest. Such a one I wish to be in the present case.

Of course, never until men come to be unanimous as to female or other loveliness, or the beauty of a landscape, will reviewers, even when in earnest and disinterested, be all agreed as to the merits of a work. There are men who even now see no beauty in Shakespeare's works, and such there will ever be until the trees upon earth are of the same height.

"Life Incidents and Poetic Pictures"! Aye, we (the editorial "we" is assumed now) see in those Incidents experience of the joy and radiance that illumine our earth and its children with heavenly beauty; the joy and the radiance which come at times, we believe and hope, to the most lowly and unfortunate—but we see, too, as the panorama is unfolded in

* "Life Incidents and Poetic Pictures." By J. H. Powell. London: Trübner & Co., 60, Paternoster-row. (The reviewer of Mr. Powell's work has given his name only as a guarantee that the review is the production of a disinterested and impartial person.)

Mr. Powell's pages, the dark shadows which chill, and dispirit, and weigh down the poor and struggling man; and, looking to the cause of those trailing shadows, we recognize it in those heavy looming clouds which frown down upon the weary pilgrim—the chief of which is that thick almost immovable cloud, Poverty. We see in those Poetic Pictures brilliant tints, but in too many of them they are only relieved by backgrounds of adversity. But there is this consolation for the man struggling with adversity,—if too great an amount of adversity blights, enervates, and kills, a proper amount of it purifies and elevates, and from it emerge men with minds of power and beauty, greater and nobler far than are possessed by those who have never felt the wintry gales, or been on the stormy seas of life.

A youth is reared amongst educated people, and receives their impress. He is sent to college, and leaves it a scholar able to express himself in chaste, pure, perhaps forcible language. Another youth is born in a garret. In that garret or cellar are poverty, misery, squallor, wretchedness, and rags, and by the side of all, dominant over all, polluting the souls of all it touches, is the hideous, the, alas! almost omniscient fiend known as the gin-fiend. That youth, in spite of all these depressing influences, emerges from that garret, and unaided gains a portion of that knowledge so amply crammed into the mind of his more fortunate contemporary student. He writes, and the refined college-man derides him, lampoons him on account of his imperfections, instead of guiding his feet, and praising his noble efforts and their result. As well might the educated parrot shriek out its derision against its untaught fellow; the painted sign-post look down upon the unpainted one! Intellect is not shown or proved by the possession of school, college, or parrot knowledge.

Mr. Powell at the onset disarms the dandy reviewers and critics of literature. In his first page he says:—"I first saw the light in London, in the year 1830. My parents were poor, their poverty being aggravated by the glass." In conventional parlance, we suppose the glass of gin or the glass of beer, adulterated as the vendors of the gin-fiend or the beer-fiend only know how to adulterate, and they do it with a vengeance. The father was what is termed a "good fellow." As gratitude is said to be the feeling produced by the expectation of benefits to be received, so, no doubt, he was a good fellow in the sight of boon companions so long as he had a shot in the locker, and was disposed to give it away. He who conquers a fault, it is said, and said truly, is greater than a hero of the battle-field, and to the father's honour be it recorded, he conquered the powerful enemy, who, no doubt, went shrieking into other garrets, cellars, and gin-palaces. For thirty years he has been a total abstainer from the polluted and polluting, the tainted and the tainting drink. Mr. Powell's is a sad tale, but he, like others who open their souls who reveal their experiences, who point out the shoals, the quicksands, and the stumbling-blocks, in or over which they have nigh fallen or perished, who confess one to another, has more of the hero in him—is cast in a far more heroic mould than the conqueror in a thousand fights and frays.

The man who has the moral courage even to confess to honest poverty, is a great man, and is the object of that writer's remark who said, "The longer I live, the more I respect those who do not succeed (as to wealth) in life;" but he who not only does that, but who reveals his innermost thoughts, emotions, and experiences with an earnest purpose, and for the benefit of his fellows, is, however small his experiences may have been, a public benefactor. Mr. Powell's experiences have been wide and varied. Can want of earnestness, can lax principle, indolence, or assumption, or want of purpose in his at times bitter life-struggle, be urged against him? We can answer emphatically, No. The narrative of his struggles, his wanderings, his achievements over obstacles, opposition, poverty, and adverse circumstances in the weary, if at times exhilarating, battle and struggle of life, is deeply interesting, and, to a student of human nature, to him whose study is mankind, highly instructive. To such a one the brief sketch of the author's life will possess a fascinating interest. One eminent writer said he read with great approval every line of the sketch of Mr. Powell's life the first day he received it; and we must confess to the fact that it has been with difficulty we have laid it down, and to its having detained us from doing that which should have been done.

What are the imperfections of the work? A few indications of the disadvantages of the author's early, nay, his whole at present accomplished life. But do these imperfections militate against the book or its author? No. So far from that, the author can proudly point to them, and say, "See how I have polished my escutcheon, how I have burnished my shield, in spite of poverty, obscurity, hardship, defective education, weed-training, so that these very specks remain only as evidence of what I have conquered, achieved, mastered, in the hard and dreary fight. Notice my coat of arms, once blank, now figured with emblems of perseverance, and illumined partially with beams emanating from the sun of successful achievement. The motto, too, "I have fought in the long-enduring fight and struggle with Fate, and I have received some reward."

Like the speck on the polished stone, which shows the worker's skill on the remainder of the surface; like the mole or spot on the cheek of beauty, showing by contrast the fairness of the fair face, so these small defects in the work before us serve only to show what Mr. Powell, the ex-mechanic, the wild, neglected, poverty-stricken child, has accomplished. They illustrate the story of his life-struggle. Like darkness, they make more distinct the light—that light which he has gained by perseverance.

The author's "earliest recollections carry him back to the public-house orgies, and their concomitants—poverty and ill-temper." "For years we all suffered—suffered" (mark it, dainty reviewer, and ask yourself the question, "How should I have emerged from such wretchedness, misery, and obscurity, such want of mental and moral assistance? What figure should I now cut? what my mental and moral shape and form now?") "from want of food" (the italics are our own; the author makes but light of such privations), "want of clothes, want" (greatest of all) "of happiness." The scene changed. Moral light shone upon the father's heart, and instead of the author and his brother being "neglected,

and allowed to run about the streets, to grow up like ill-trained weeds," the domestic hearth was warmed by brighter fires, and the dearer presence of a reformed father, for whom the brandy-bottle had lost its attractions. How sad it seems when the son has to speak of the father, who should have been the instructor, as having occasion to reform! But the son has the proud satisfaction of announcing the ultimate victory. "It was then (says Mr. Powell) my father commenced the work of reform, first upon himself, then upon his home." Happy, thrice happy, change!

(To be continued.)

THE CENTRAL POWER OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE very follies connected with Spiritualism attest its great central power, as earthquakes and volcanoes prove the existence of the central fires of the globe. It is not given to mere negation to so move and unsettle the chronic opinions and prejudices of whole millions of men and women. The profoundest and most critical scholarship never so deeply moves mankind, never sets the mass in such thorough agitation, never so unsettles the long-established habits of St. Custom, never so rapidly emancipates the heads and hearts of mankind from the tyranny of old opinions. It is given not to those who write about history, but to that power which moves men to act the great drama of life, to create history. Each of the six great historic forms of religion was originally a spontaneous Spiritualism, surging up against the barriers of ordinary life and thought. Modern Spiritualism is the seventh great revival of man's religious consciousness, and, like all its predecessors, is attended with the profoundest agitation, unsettles and submerges the old landmarks of thought, puts all things at risk, asks terrible questions of marriage, of parentage, of government, of society, of religions; asserts the highest virtue to be opposed both to theology and to law; compels us to re-examine the grounds of our faith in God—man and destiny, subsoils all our social life, and drags up into the light of day the smooth, elegant, but rotten hypocrisies of the self-elected saints of the Churches. It is a terrible rebuke to shams. It makes men in earnest, for it kindles their souls at the fires of the morning stars. No wonder that a kind of frenzy takes hold of those freshly-kindled spirits, for numberless are the mockeries which, under Christian guise, its light reveals. It finds baptized villainies in possession of Church and State, and immediately sets off on a crusade against each.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal.*

THE WHISPERED NAME.

(A REAL DREAM.)

METHOUGHT I sat alone at rest, within a meadow fair,
Amidst bright grass and flowerets, yet inly did repine;
When, singing, passed an infant gay, with gleaming, golden hair,
"Come, play with me!" he carolled forth; "these meadows fair are mine."

His dear commands obeying, I, a gleeful child became;
No longer woman sorrow-bound, who craved alone repose,
Was I; no wanderer weary, after feverish quest of fame;
But infant-limbed and infant-souled, as if new born, uprose.

We dance o'er emerald meadows, our loving arms we twine;
Garlands of fragrant blossoms we weave of every hue;
Bright butterflies sport round us; the sun doth gaily shine;
When, lo! dark shadows fleck the grass, and rises evening-dew.

"Oh! joyous brother, speak to me; my heart is sore afraid!"
I cried in pleading accents, "Oh! shield me in thine arms!
These trembling shadows trouble me." The bright-haired child obeyed.
"These are God's shadows, sweet," he said; "then wherefore vain alarms?"

Long kissed he me with glowing lips; then, smiling, bade adieu.
"Sleep, thou, beloved till my return; nor cherish fear of ill."
He said, our Master calleth me; morn will our joys renew;
'Tis blessed to slumber as to sport, when 'tis the Master's will.

"Dear, trembling sister of the earth, wouldst thou my nature know?
My name beloved in heavenly courts all other names above?
I'll whisper it in sweet farewell, 'twill shield all hearts from woe;
'Tis Dauntless Duty, child of Man, but messenger of love!"

I sought his lily hands to clasp, his rosy mouth to kiss;
But, lo! he had withdrawn himself! 'Neath sunset-clouds alone
I stood within the meadow. A holy voice of bliss,
Chanting within my heart's dim shrine quelling grief's hopeless moan:
"Engrave, engrave His sacred name upon that new white stone!"

A. M. H. W.

DR. CUMMING ON TABLE MOVING.

I was asked to go and visit two of the most able and effective performers upon tables in the house of a dear and valued friend, a member of my congregation. I watched suspiciously the whole, from beginning to end. It is important, however, to discriminate two things confounded. There is table-moving, which is one thing; there is table-speaking, or disembodied spirits speaking through tables (as it is alleged), which is a totally different thing. The one may be a scientific phenomenon; the other I shall try to describe as I think it deserves. It may seem presumptuous to say, even with deepest deference, that I am satisfied that Faraday in his letter does not explain the phenomenon. This may be my error, but it is my impression. Whether it be by electricity, or galvanism, or mesmerism, or any other yet undetected motive and subtle element, it is a fact that the fingers of a lady laid lightly on a heavy table made it, in my presence, spin round, lift its legs, stamp the floor, and throw itself into most extraordinary and unbecoming convulsions. Table-turning is an amusement for children. Table-talking is not so. The one is child's-play, the other is either downright nonsense or worse. It is important that we should understand, if possible, what pretends to be above human; for, while expecting miracles and signs supernatural—or, rather, infra-natural—in the last days, we must be on our guard against imposture, and prepare to decide what are and what are not so. My friends asserted in their drawing-room, not only that this new motive power was true (which may or may not be), but that there was something above and beyond table-moving, or the supernatural. It may be electricity, it may be galvanism, it may be neither; or it may be some other natural influence which we do not at present know of; or it may be what Faraday suggests. I am aware there are difficulties in supposing the existence in human fingers of an undetected power, for how does it happen that when people sit down to dine, and lay their fingers on the table, it does not begin to dance? But it is a fact that I saw a table, touched lightly by the fingers of a lady whose muscular powers, I am sure, were not very formidable, rise, leap, and move from side to side in the most extraordinary manner. Faraday, I think, does not, and I cannot, explain this. But it is not, therefore, supernatural. My two friends, however, said that it was supernatural. They set the table in motion, and then asked me to put questions to the supposed spirit which had just taken possession of the table. I said, "No, I decline to do so; I am here simply as a spectator, and have reasons for declining which I need not state. I am here simply as an inquirer; you begin, and I will look on." The question was asked, "Do you know the Rev. Mr. Reeve?" The table gave three gentle taps, which means in the table vernacular, "Yes." "Do you know the Rev. Mr. Fisk?" The table gave three gentle raps, in precisely the same manner. After asking two or three questions about various persons present or absent, and receiving similar polite and courteous replies, my friend asked the supposed spirit, "Do you know Dr. Cumming?" The table positively forgot all the respect due to a lady's drawing-room, and threw itself into a state of convulsive kicking, which made me anxious, not about my creed, but about the table's safety. My friends then asked how many shillings were in my pocket. It guessed eleven, and there were only five. They then asked how many sovereigns I had. It guessed five, and I had only one. It was then asked, "Will you answer Dr. Cumming at all?" The answer, according to their interpretation, was, "No," in the most decided manner. "Why not?" An alphabet was then laid on the table, and certainly the proceeding was very curious. We began: A, the table stood still; B, it gave three taps. That was set down as the first letter of the answer. We then began again: A, the table was silent; B, still silent. We went on till we came to E, then there were three taps. This was proceeded with till the words were made out, "Because he laughs." When I heard this, I submitted that my laughing and incredulity ought to be a reason for convincing me, and not leaving me a sceptic. But the table, or, if not the table, its manipulator, seemed to dislike me excessively. I confess I saw much that was curious; a great deal ingeniously done; but I have also seen very remarkable things in the feats of tumblers in the streets of London, in the tricks of card-shufflers in a room, and in the conversaciones of ventriloquists in a chimney-nook. But I have seen nothing necessarily supernatural about it; and mark, if there be a doubt that a thing is a miracle, it is no miracle. In the days of our Lord there was no doubt expressed by bitter enemies that what He did was miraculous; the puzzle was, "Is it from the Devil below, or is it from God above?" But table-talking is so equivocal that the parties present witnessing the so-called miraculous responses are puzzled to determine whether it be supernatural, or only very clever and talented. Now, in the last days, I look not for equivocal feats and dubious miracles, but for terrible startling manifestations of superhuman power, which shall deceive, if possible, the very elect.

But a word more on this subject. I have read on one side the

Rev. Mr. Close and the Rev. D. Wilson, who have written very ably and admirably; though I do not agree with either as to the grounds of their decision, yet I agree with their conclusions. I have read every pamphlet I could find on the other side, from Mr. Dibden, one of the best and most pious men in London, to Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Gillson, and others who have written in favour of their views; and in reading those various interesting works I noticed that each inquirer of the table got all his answers very much in the direction of his own wishes and predilections. Let us mark well that fact. For instance; according to the Rev. R. W. Dibdin, demons enter into the table and tell lies, and declare that the worship of the Virgin Mary is right; that is, they are Jesuits, or Popish demons. According to Mr. Godfrey, it is the spirits of departed sinners that emerge from hell and confirm every doctrine of the Bible; that is, Protestant spirits. According to Owen, the infidel and the socialist, Voltaire, and Diderot, and D'Alembert, and Paine, all come down from eternal happiness, and tell him how perfectly happy they are and expect to be. According to the Rev. Mr. Gillson, spirits speak against Popery; while, according to Mr. Dibden, they praise it as if they had been the priests of Dr. Wiseman. Now, I cannot believe that an evil spirit would speak the truth, or attest the inspiration of the Bible; for if a kingdom be divided against itself, how can it stand? I cannot, in the next place, believe that an evil spirit would be so stupid a blunderer as to preach the worship of the Virgin Mary to so sound and pious a Protestant as Mr. Dibden. And I never can believe that godly, pious, and evangelical ministers are the *media* by whom devils come from hell to tell lies or truths to mankind. Nor can I believe that "Alfred Brown," the name given by one spirit, could describe his torment, as recorded in the book of Mr. Godfrey; or that any other lost spirit can be, or is, suffered to come up to this world and tell the transactions of its awful prison-house, as long as I read the petition of the rich man, and the decisive answer that was given him. "I pray thee, father, that thou wouldest send Lazarus unto my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. And Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; if they hear not them, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Now, mark you, if the Old Testament alone was sufficient eighteen hundred years ago to render unnecessary and impossible an apparition from the dead to test its truth, the Old and New Testament together are, *a fortiori*, more than sufficient to render unnecessary, unexpected, impossible, untrue, an apparition of a spirit from the realms of the lost for the same object and mission. I expect supernatural deeds before this dispensation closes; but table-talking is not such proof of the manifestation of Satan as we are to look for. Besides, Satan has higher game to fly at; he is at present too busy in spreading German Rationalism, Tractarianism, Popery, and various kinds of moral evil, to have any disposable force and time to spare for such bungling manifestation as table-talking. I admit that there is much in it as a physical phenomenon that is curious, much that I cannot explain; but I protest against the conclusion that, because I cannot explain a phenomenon, I am bound to attribute it to supernatural and miraculous agency. The only trace of the serpent's presence, if such it be at all, that I can discover in the matter, is, I confess, to me a very sad one. It is this: that the absurd excitement it has produced should make lunatics in America; that the monstrous thing should be organized into a church, as they call it, in Philadelphia; that a clergyman should advertise a lecture on the theology of table-talk in the metropolis of the world; and that Christian ministers, of undoubted piety and talent, purity of life, and clearness of mind, should waste their influence and weaken their power by publishing mediæval fancies, monkish nonsense, profane and anile fables—*Zoist*.

PRE-EXISTENCE.

(From the *American Phrenological Journal*.)

A BELIEF that all souls have existed from the beginning was common in our Saviour's time, and was held and taught by many of the fathers of the Christian Church, among whom were Justin Martyr and Origen. Mede, in his "Mystery of Godliness," combats the common belief of the creation of souls at the time the bodies are produced which they are to animate, and advocates what he calls "the reasonable doctrine of pre-existence" as "a key to some of the main mysteries of Providence." Sir Harry Vane is said by Burnett to have maintained this doctrine. Joseph Glanville, rector of Bath, published a treatise showing the reasonableness of the belief.

In 1762, the Rev. Capel Berrow published "A Pre-existent Lapse of Human Souls Demonstrated;" and in the *European Magazine* for September, 1801, is a letter from Bishop Warburton to the author, in which he says, "The idea of a pre-existence has been espoused by many learned and ingenious men in every age, as bidding fair to resolve many difficulties."

Southey, in his published Letters, says: "I have a strong and

lively faith in a state of continued consciousness from this stage of existence, and that we shall recover the consciousness of some lower stages through which we may previously have passed, seems to me not improbable." Again: "The system of progressive existence seems, of all others, the most benevolent; and all that we do understand is so wise and so good, and all we do, or do not, so perfectly and overwhelmingly wonderful, that the most benevolent system is the most probable." Traces of belief in this doctrine also occur in Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimation of Immortality in Childhood."

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises in us, our life's star,
Has had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

Elsewhere, our metaphysical poet sings:—

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirr'd;
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay;
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what Time takes away,
Than what he leaves behind.

The notion enters more or less into the majority of Oriental creeds and philosophies, and found a believer in Plato; indeed, it is a doctrine Platonic that all knowledge is recollection.

Hence it has been asked, whether it is not very possible that, previously to this life, the human soul has passed through different phases of existence, and that it is destined to pass through many more before it arrives at its final rest. Thus, Pythagoras recollected his former self in the majestic person of a herald named Æthalides, Euphorbus, the Trojan, and others; and he even pointed out, in the temple of Juno, at Argos, the shield he used when he attacked Patroclus.

Milton, who imbibed from his college friend, Henry More, an early bias to the study of Plato, hints at the same opinion in his "Comus":—

The soul grows dotted by contagion,
Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved.

In the first volume of Dodsleys's "Miscellaneous Poems," is a poem in Miltonic blank verse, entitled "Pre-existence." Gray called it "nonsense in all her attitudes;" but it contains some fine things in the midst of a great deal of wild turgidity. (*Atlas*, May 28, 1859.)

In *Chamber's Edinburgh Journal*, No. 93, New Series, this "Sentiment of Pre-existence" is stated to have been first described by Sir Walter Scott. This may be correct as to the expression, but not as to the phenomena to which it is applied, as we have already shown. Scott, it will be remembered, was highly susceptible upon psychological matters. The description is thrown into the mouth of Henry Bertram on his return from Ellangowan Castle. "How often," he says, "do we find ourselves in society which we have never before met, and yet feel impressed with a mysterious and ill-defined consciousness that neither the scene, the speakers, nor the subject are entirely new; nay, feel as if we could anticipate that part of the conversation that has not yet taken place!"

We find the following entry in Scott's diary, under the date February 17, 1828:—

I cannot, I am sure, tell if it is worth marking down that yesterday, at dinner-time, I was strongly haunted by what I would call a sense of pre-existence, in a confirmed idea that nothing which passed was said for the first time, that the same topics had been discussed, and the same persons had stated the same opinions on them. . . . The sensation was so strong as to resemble what is called a mirage in the desert, or a caleure on board ship. . . . It was very distressing yesterday, and brought to my mind the fancies of Bishop Berkeley about an ideal world. There was a vile sense of want of reality in all I did and said.—
"Lockhart's Life of Scott."

It appears from a passage in the "Woolgatherer," a tale by James Hogg, that that extraordinary son of genius was occasionally conscious of the same feeling.

Sir Bulwer Lytton, in his "Godolphin," thus notices this day-dream:—

How strange it is that at times a feeling comes over us, as we gaze upon certain places, which associates the scene either with some dim remembered and dream-like images of the past, or with a prophetic and fearful omen of the future. . . . Everyone has known a similar strange, indistinct feeling, at certain times and places, and with a similar inability to trace the cause.

Elsewhere the same writer describes the same feeling of reminiscence as "that strange kind of inner and spiritual memory which often recalls to us places and persons we have never seen before, and which Platonists would resolve to be the unquenched and struggling consciousness of a former life."

In fewer words, the feeling may be described as seeing and hearing apparently for the first time, what we have seen and heard before, though our reason assures us of the contrary. Can anything be more expressive of the sameness of human existence?

Moreover, something is, or seems,
That teaches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams,
Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where—
Such as no language may declare.—TENNYSON.

Mr. Dickens, in his "Pictures from Italy," mentions this instance on his first sight of Ferrara:—

On the foreground was a group of silent peasant-girls, leaning over the parapet of a little bridge, looking now up at the sky, now down into the water; in the distance a deep bell; the shadow of approaching night on everything. If I had been murdered there on some former life I could not have seemed to remember the place more thoroughly, or with more emphatic chilling of the blood; and the real remembrance of it acquired in that minute is so strengthened by the imaginary recollection that I hardly think I could forget it."

Dr. Wigan, in a curious and original book entitled, "Duality of Mind," adduces the impression of pre-existence as an evidence in favour of the double structure of the mind, corresponding with the duplicity of the brain. He says:—

It is a sudden feeling, as if the scene we have just witnessed (although from the very nature of things it could never have been seen before) had been present to our eyes on a former occasion, when the very same speakers, seated in the very same positions, uttered the same sentiments in the same words; the postures, the expression of countenance, the gestures, the tone of voice, all seem to be remembered, and to be not attracting attention for the second time; never is it supposed to be the third time. This delusion (pursues the writer) occurs only when the mind has been exhausted by excitement, or is, from indisposition or any other cause, languid, and only slightly attentive to the conversation. The persuasion of the scene being a repetition, comes on when the attention has been roused by some accidental circumstance, and we become, as the phrase is, wide awake. I believe the explanation to be this: only one brain has been used in the immediately preceding part of the scene; the other brain has been asleep, or in an analogous state nearly approaching it. When the attention of both brains is roused to the topic, there is the same vague consciousness that the ideas have passed through the mind before which takes place on re-perusing the page we had read while thinking on some other subject.

Dr. Draper, who has treated this subject briefly in his "Human Physiology," thinks this explanation, even if correct so far as it goes, is at least imperfect. He says:—

The difficulty in the way of this hypothesis lies in the fact that it offers no explanation of those cases in which we are perfectly persuaded that we have witnessed the thing more than once before. There are circumstances under which our mental operations are carried forward with wonderful speed. Thus, a sudden sound which awakes us, or even a flash of lightning, which is over in a moment, may be incorporated or expanded into a long dream, diversified with a multitude of incidents, all appearing to follow one another in appropriate order, and occupying, as we judge, a long time, and yet all necessarily arising in an instantaneous manner, for we awake at the moment of the disturbance. Of the same kind is that remarkable deception related by those who have recovered from death by drowning, that in the last agony all the various events of their past lives, even of a trivial kind, have come rushing before them with miraculous clearness. Mental operations, therefore, both as regards old recollections and new suggestions, may take effect with marvellous rapidity, and if the sentiment of pre-existence is to be explained on the principle of the double action of the brain, it must likewise be dependent upon the fact here presented."

THE COMING CONVENTION.

We have enlisted in a great, a mighty work, and mankind are watching our movements, and the manifestations of the spirit-world through our mediums, with surprise and astonishment depicted upon their countenances. Those who still doubt, who possess not the knowledge, ask: "Can it be possible that the dead live, and can, and do communicate with their friends in the earth-life?" Let the answer go forth in language so explicit and with facts so potent, that none, however deeply imbued with the tenets of old theology, can gainsay the statements of experiences of the advocates of Spiritualism, that direct spirit-intercourse is no myth, but a positive tangible reality. Then will our glorious religion be instrumental in bringing mankind up out of darkness into light, thus bettering their conditions here and hereafter.

BANNER OF LIGHT.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

AH! I fancy I can hear you now, Mr. Popular Preacher. How can you stand there, dressed up in all your fostering costumes, pampering with the affections of your victims. Oh, how subtle! oh, how cunning! oh, how would-be modest! how daring, too! how mighty in speech! how eloquent! how smooth-tongued sometimes, but how rough and gross at others! How is this, Mr. Preacher? You seem to say, Come into my arms, my darling ones, and my heart shall beat violently for your sakes; but at other times your tongue seems tarnished with the black, swarthy language of heathenish and demonish manufacture. To a spiritual refined person it is hateful. Ah! more than this. If I could speak worse of it, I might, without exaggeration. You (oh, may I not be tempted to speak untruthful! I must speak from my heart; and, having experienced the mental torture of your school, I am compelled to burst my feelings towards you)—you teach us to love our neighbour as ourselves; you teach us to feel for the sick and afflicted; you tell us to forgive our enemies, and love them that hate us; you explain the mysteries of Godliness; you open our affections towards heaven, and teach us to commune with saints or spirits.

Oh, man, thou art a goose, quacking thy dogmatic expressions, and gobbling up the dirt of earthly ambition, and swarming along the shallow waters of popular opinion and every-day custom. Thou standest like a statue fixed upon a pedestal of granite, and thy words are sounds caused by the clockwork theology of ancient times. A singing machine, indeed, thou art, for thou doest just that which thy master, Theology, bids thee, and thou singest the songs of maceration, and thou chantest the hymns of indignation and bitterness. Behold, my friends of progress, how elastic is their poetry! It stretches into the hells of indignation, and springs back into the heavens of imagination, and will twist round their souls like the serpents in the east around their prey. Thus, you may see, more victims are tortured and haunted with devils of dreary and undeveloped minds, approximating imbecile fanaticism and madness.

They sing of "love to God," but forget the starving poor. They pray, too, but to a God of vengeance and hatred towards all other sects but their own. They chant poetry, but manufactured to suit their own purpose, and they preach, God knows, not truth, but stubborn errors, mixed up with Popish narrow-mindedness and bigotry. "Love your neighbour," they do say, but, at the same time, they encourage war and hatred. They intimate something like charity, but do they practice benevolence when they say, "Cursed is he who disbelieveth our report," damnation resteth upon the unbeliever in baptism," &c. All these expressions arise from ignorance and unspiritual minds. Why copy them from any book? If there is a book of God given to man by inspiration, surely such language would become a writer of tragedies and hellish scenes from behind the curtain of civilized humanity, rather than dictated by angels of the departed who have progressed in love, wisdom, and power. Let us, brethren, be guided by truthful messages from the world of beauty and love, up above all discord and earthly troubles. There is a world of Beauty; there is a world of happiness; there is a world of perfect bliss; there is a world of unrestrained wisdom and love; there is a world of ideal pictures in reality; there is a world of imagination in truth; there is a world of thought, and there is a world of forms, and the last is the world of nature. Think freely upon these things, and you will receive impressions through your inner conscience, and be guided by your reason, the choicest gift of God to man. All the divine principles of mind are not given to men to be played with, but are designed to work out a glorious plan in our infinite God's creation. Picture to yourselves all earth's scenery, all the hills and valleys of nature, all the glorious seas of liquid matter, all the skies which overhang them, all the shapes and forms of animals, all the mighty forests of America, all fields of prosperity and utility, all, in fact, what nature is endowed with. Then you cannot conceive of half the sublime creations which God has brought into being, and you, O man! you are a perfect microcosm of all. In you is hidden all these things. You are blessed, ah! blessed a thousand times. Listen! can you not hear in spirit the words, "Come up hither"? Ah! could we open your spiritual eyes and ears to behold and hear, we should then clap our hands with joy, singing, "Hallelujah! hallelujah! for man is born again!" Christ told of these things; but, alas! not the Christians in these times; would to God they did. And now, you Spiritualists of reformation, can you see what is the intention of Deity, our great Jehovah, God of Love? Oh, can we exclaim Thy name, thou Great and Holy One? No; not all the angels in heaven. They cannot exclaim Thy name without falling upon their faces, and sinking into the depths of their own souls. Then it is useless, for they rise again without giving utterance to names. Ah! that nameless He is our soul's creator and preserver. Fly, then, you Spiritualists, into all quarters of the globe, and preach the gospel of endless progression, and sing songs of harmony, and pray (not bray as the ass), but pray in spirit and in truth.

Spiritualism! it is fast rolling the stones of infidelity and scepticism into the wide seas of forgetfulness. Behold how insignificant is the supposed doctrine of Theology when placed by the side of modern facts in the spiritual domains of earthly inhabitance. Lift a hand up to the heavens, and point out one of those bright stars of glory who would dare to contradict the truth of spiritual communion, and yet man in his pride and ignorance has done this repeatedly, and is still doing so. Stand aloof, oh, foolish man! and let the truth shoot its darts into thy mind. Sit at midnight in thine own parlour, and watch. Ask then about spirits, and see if you cannot feel their electric thrills shaking your nervous system. Go to meetings of a mediumistic character, and let us break through the hard crust of materialism, and soften your mind with truth warm from the sunshine of heaven above. Mammon is your God now, but let truth take its place. Come into our rooms of spirit-rapping, and hear the knocks of wonder, and listen to your honest departed friends from your own fireside.

Peep into the secret corners of your own soul, and see what is to be found. Watch for truth in solemn silence, and you may depend upon it you will find it. "I am rather anxious after these things," says some one, "but somehow or other I cannot believe it." How is that, my friend? Can you believe in God? If so, you can surely believe in spirit; and if you believe in those, you are compelled to believe in spiritual manifestations. Come, throw aside all barriers of wrong education, and put on the new cloak of reason, and march along the road of spiritual progress. You will find a guide-post now and then, pointing towards the city of Truth. All men are travelling through life to something better, and will surely find the gate of entrance into the beautiful gardens of Providence, and that monster Death, as you have been taught, will open and give you entrance. Then will your friends meet you, and be so anxious to show you their homes of beauty and felicity. Come, my friends, Death is a servant who takes his orders from Omnipotence, and executeth his duties promptly. Allow me to say that my best friend in the journey of life was death. He gave me rest. He gave me pleasure. He gave me wisdom. He gave me my ticket-of-leave from transportation for life. He gave me my pocket-book of life's memory; he gave me my rod of prosperity, which is love, endless love; and he gave me life eternal, and all that my soul could desire. Say, then, I am a child of death, if you like, and I will not contradict you, for death is life to me, and it will be for you. Come, then, cheer up, and be not so sad when death is approaching, but be ready, by giving heed to spiritual revelations. We cannot moisten your dry and thirsty souls if you do not open the door of spirit belief. As soon as this is done, then we will, by permission, water your mental flowers with heavenly truth, and make them bloom with great rapidity. "Open the door of your heart," says One, "and I will come in and sup with you." So say all the angels of love to all men, but not many give admittance to us. Again, I will impress you with the truth of spiritual communion. These are truths of no little import, and will prove so before long. Investigate the cause of spiritual manifestations, and you will find spirits knocking, knocking to convince you of their presence. And more than this; but first believe in spirits, and then read their knocking language. Oh! may this be a letter dropped into the box of universal postage, directed to all classes in all climates upon earth.—Your affectionate brother of humanity in spirit.

Through the mediumship of

RICHARD WORTLEY.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our Correspondents.

SPIRITS PASSING THROUGH WALLS.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—Two of your correspondents having discussed the power of spirits to pass through material substances, I beg to give a copy of a few words on the matter from the spirits, taken from "Astounding Facts from the Spirit-World."

An acquaintance of mine recently sent a letter by post to the "Morning Star," couched in moderate language, concerning the Davenportes, expressing his doubts of their having been proved guilty of imposture, but the paper declined noticing it.

Respectable journalists are ready to admit what damages the character of their fellow-men, but to withhold what may be advanced in defence. Alas! under such an order of public influence and morality, where are we to be led?—Yours respectfully,
B. D.
London, Oct. 24, 1865.

"I can put my hand or head through a door or wall just as easily as you can yours through the same thickness of water. This testimony seems to clash with Mr. Davis's assertions on the same subject?—I cannot help that; I can readily pass through a cemented stone wall. Have not your spirit-friends left and returned to you while your windows and doors have been kept closed? Yes; we know they have; but why should Mr. D. have made such a mistake?—Mr. Davis has written many beautiful and truthful things, and he has likewise made many mistakes. He will know more when his spirit is wholly freed from his body."

"Where, my son, do you now stand?—At your feet; my head and shoulders are through and above the table, while my body and lower limbs are below it. Can you tell me how you are able to pass through solid substances?—You know that light passes readily through the pores of glass; well, our bodies are composed of elements finer than light, while wood and stone are more porous."

PALMERSTON AT A SEANCE.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—To day my mother has completed her eighty first-year. Shortly after we had sat down to the *seance* which we always hold on Sunday evenings, after church, a spirit requested that the alphabet should be repeated, and we received the following message, the spirit first announcing himself as "Palmerston." "Your husband brought me, as he always thought so much of the proximity of our "birth-days". He remained for some little time, causing gentle undulations in loving greeting, and then left us. We thought that this little incident, strongly corroborative of the interest our dear and invisible friends take in all our joys and sorrows, might find a response in the hearts of your readers. My father used continually, while on earth, to allude to the fact that there were but two days' difference between the birth of his wife and of Lord Palmerston.

GEORGINA Houghton.

5, Upper Craven-place, Oct. 22, 1865.

PROPHETIC VISION OF LORD PALMERSTON.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Dear Sir,—The following account of a remarkable vision that occurred to me may be interesting to your readers.

I was sitting alone after dinner on Sunday, March 19, 1865, in a very passive state of mind, with eyelids closed, when I heard a rather indistinct proclamation or announcement of the disposal of Lord Palmerston's effects. After my attention had become excited, I appeared to be standing before a memorial tablet of mottled black marble, containing, within a chaplet of leaves, supported from the top on either side by a festoon of flowers, held up by two angels, the inscription—

“PALMERSTON, AGED 81.”

I was deeply grieved, and appeared to be walking away with handkerchief to my eyes, when I saw emerging up a flight of steps, through a doorway, a queen and attendants, not Victoria. I passed without stopping, but hesitated whether to raise my hat. I, however, walked on without doing so, and the vision ended.

I had not been thinking of Lord Palmerston, and, besides, I had an idea that his age was about 85. I, however, directly consulted a book containing a short account of his early life, and was surprised to find he would be 81 the following October 20th. It seemed possible, therefore, that the vision might be prophetic of his death about that time, and I immediately wrote down the particulars, and drew a rough sketch of the tablet, and afterwards related the circumstance to a number of my friends, many of whom have already remarked to me upon the coincidence of Lord Palmerston's death on the 18th inst., so close upon his eighty-first birthday. The other parts of the vision may have a figurative meaning.—Yours truly,

THOMAS GRANT.

Shirley House, Maidstone, October 23, 1865.

DEVILS RAMPANT.

A CHURCH TAKEN POSSESSION OF BY DEMONS—MYSTERIOUS NOISES—RESULTS OF AN INVESTIGATION BY THE POLICE.

(From the “New York Times” September 15, 1865.)

CONSIDERABLE excitement has arisen in Jersey City in consequence of groans, yells and unearthly sounds said to emanate from a church in the upper part of Jersey City for some nights past. The first known of these mysterious sounds was some ten days since, when the pastor had occasion to return to the church after evening services, to procure some manuscript which he had forgotten and had occasion to make use of. The edifice had been closed for the night, and was in total darkness. On entering he lit a match to guide him along the aisle, and when approaching the altar at the rear, his attention was attracted by a low moaning sound which gradually increased and at the same time drew nearer to him. To this he at first paid but little heed, presuming it to be the antics of mischievous boys; but presently the sounds changed to seemingly unearthly yells, shrieks and groans from innumerable invisible beings clustered around in close proximity to his person, until finally his feelings were so wrought upon, that he felt impelled to leave the building with all possible haste. The above are substantially the facts of the case, as stated by the pastor of the church to the Chief of Police McMannus, after reports were beginning to be circulated in the neighbourhood that the church was haunted, and he requested that the matter might be kept as quiet as possible, believing that in a few days at furthest he would be able to unravel the mystery, and satisfactorily explain the cause of the sounds. Since that time the church edifice has been thoroughly examined, inside and out, but without unravelling the mystery, and meantime these dismal and unearthly yells and cries are heard almost every night. A couple of nights since, Chief of Police McMannus accompanied by Aid Doyle and Detective E. L. McWilliams, determined to pay a visit to the reported haunted church. They accordingly procured the keys and entered the edifice shortly after midnight. Taking their position in the centre of the church, in total darkness, they had remained there but a short time, when they heard a low moaning sound, apparently proceeding from the vicinity of the pulpit, which gradually grew louder and came nearer until it finally culminated around their heads into howls, yells, groans, etc., and then gradually died away as it came. After a few moments of perfect silence, Chief McMannus drew from his pocket a revolver, loaded with blank cartridge, and fired one charge, when almost instantly the edifice seemed filled with thousands of infuriated demons, making the most hideous noises, and apparently bent on tearing them to pieces. The officers describe having experienced a very peculiar sensation in the head, and finally the noises became so hideous and unearthly, that they made a hasty retreat, apparently pursued by the infuriated demons to the door, which they closed and locked. The officers then crossed the street to the opposite walk, and remained there until daylight, but heard no further sounds, and made no discoveries which would tend to explain the mystery. The people residing in the immediate neighbourhood claim to have been disturbed at all hours of the night, by these demoniac sounds, and a number of them have determined to leave the neighbourhood.

“That which in matter is chemical affinity and attraction, in spirit is love and sympathy; and when men's minds are in a condition to compare the two, I believe it will be found that every property of matter, ascertained in every direction of scientific inquiry, has its corresponding phenomenon in the inner world.”—FROM MATTER TO SPIRIT.

VISION OF “THE NEW JERUSALEM,” AS BEHELD BY JANE LEAD, TOWARDS THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

“THE Lord took me away from my mortal point, and showed me the situation of this great glory, and said, ‘Behold and see the pattern of the heavenly homes and mansions which make up the New Jerusalem.’ And it appeared to me as a city founded upon one square stone, whose dimensions were very large. It was all paved with light flaming colours, appearing like so many various sparkling stones inlaid on the great foundation-stone, which gave forth a lustre as if so many bright suns had been there. Towards the verge or outside of this square stone, were seen many seraphic bodies, wreathing arm-in-arm, and several rows of various spiritual forms, of different ranks and stature. These rows appeared like the stories of a building which were carried up higher and higher in a square figure till it was wonderfully high; and upon the heads of the most inward glorified bodies a covering was spread by one more diaphanous and of greater splendour than all the rest, the height of his person was higher by the head than all the others, who called to me out of this most glorious building ‘To take good heed of all that I had seen, for it had a further meaning, which I was to have revealed when driven by the spirit into the light of mystery, when all deep things do open.’ Oh, my dear Lord, be Thou an all-springing testimony within, and from this new Jerusalem! My spirits being drawn out for a further inquiry concerning this New Jerusalem state, as to what the appearance of it signified for this present time, the foundation-stone thereof gave forth the word:—

“That such a city the mighty Cyrus himself would be the founder of, upon the visible stage of the world, although there be little appearance of it as yet, because the elect stones are at present lying among the rubbish of confusion, who in due time are to be linked together, to make up a strong city of defence, through the gates of which no unclean vessel shall pass, nor whatever is lame or blemished, according as was seen in the pattern.”

Jane Lead concludes her “Revelation of Revelations” by observing, “I have been driven to disclose these great and deep secrets, being assured that this generation shall not pass away before there shall be a fulfilling of what had been revealed and prophesied of in this little tract, and blessed are they who shall have their lot and portion therein.”

CORRELATION OF PHYSICAL FORCES.

Of late years experimental philosophers have been occupied with the investigation of a profound problem. Formerly, the most brilliant phenomena of nature were attributed to the existence of imponderable fluids. But the correlation of heat, light, electricity, magnetism, and chemical affinity, as varying manifestations of force, attributable to modifications of motion in matter, now employs our subtlest thinkers, Faraday and Grove, Wheatstone, and De la Rive. These researches extend even to the confines of the moral phenomena. The chemistry of nature differs from that of the laboratory, and the difference has been attributed not simply to organization, but to the vital forces—a power found only in living organisms. Yet at length the laboratory of Hoffman imitates the processes of nature, especially in plants, and produces some of the most delicate perfumes of flowers and fruits, and even seems on the very verge of the manufacture of its greatest treasures, such as quinine. Some are staggered by the steady march of scientific research into the most sacred sanctuaries of life, and recoil from investigations which trace the growth of the cell in the aviary into the perfect man, as though mystery were essential to faith; or, if it were so, as though there is the slightest risk in ages to come, man will have so stolen the sacred fruit, that no mystery will remain to be solved.—*Weekly Dispatch*, January 20, 1861.

THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

The Davenport Brothers have left for Germany, whether to go on with the secrets of the cabinet, or to amuse themselves, is not said. They will find plenty of credulity, but less cash. Hume was paid as much as 5,000 francs an evening. He would have found that sum difficult to obtain in Fatherland by the same means or medium.—*Court Journal*.

Our reply to the above is this; the Davenport Brothers have been to our office several times during the past week, and are now again in Paris, where they are still going on with the secrets of their cabinet. Where did the *Court Journal* get this lie from?

NOTICE.

A CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS, will take place at the Spiritual Lyceum on Sunday Evening, October 29th, 1865, at 7 o'clock, when Mrs. L. H. Lacy, from America, will deliver an Inspirational Discourse.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CORRESPONDENTS will please to write legibly on one side of the paper only, and as concisely as possible. If this rule is not observed we may be compelled to reject even valuable compositions.

OUR readers will favour us by sending accounts of Apparitions, Hauntings, &c. We wish to give as many facts as our space will admit. Correspondents should allow their names and addresses to appear; accounts of a supernatural character should be given to the public free from all suspicion.

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TO THE TRADE.—The *Spiritual Times* is published at Ten o'clock on Friday morning, at the *Spiritual Times* Office, 14, Newman-street, Oxford-st. and by Job Caudwell, 335, Strand. COMPLAINTS have reached us that the *Spiritual Times* does not always find its way to country subscribers. Those who have difficulty should send to us at the office 14, Newman Street, Oxford Street, W., and we will forward it direct through the post. Subscribers taking four copies can have them post free, by remitting 8s. 8d. per quarter.

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power will be encouraged, and it is hoped facilities may be afforded for the development of such connected with the Lyceum.

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T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

6, Gower St., Bedford square, Oct. 18, 1865.

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