

Rob Cooper

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.

## SPIRITUALISM IN POETRY.

TENNYSON'S "ENOCH ARDEN."

POETRY! What is the use of Poetry? Will it transmute, by wizard-skill, the earth's treasured ore into Great Easterns, and freight them with merchandise, sending them safely across the Atlantic? Will it satisfy the demands of an angry stomach, or put one extra brick on the houses which are already amassed into cities? Will it specify the future price of consols, and regulate the springs of commercial activity? If Poetry will do any of these things it will have a use. If none, of what use is it? This is the way in which Poetry is met by many, but only by those whose souls worship the world's golden calves.

To the extremely worldly minded man, whose nature sinks in materialism, we would say;—Something more than Great Easterns, food for the stomach, houses and consols, is necessary to human life. It is true *you* may not think so; but recollect you yourself do not constitute all life's requirements. How, then, can you reasonably suppose that Poetry has no uses if it do not perform the work of a steam-engine or a banker? You have a mission, doubtless; so has Poetry. Which has the greater mission of the two is a question worthy consideration.

The world's material progress is but the manifestation of spiritual law. Poetry is a spiritual agent; it reigns in the soul's inner temples. Poetry can no more be exiled from the human breast than the sun, flowers, birds, and all that adorn creation can be exiled from the universe. It is become proverbial that Poetry and Poverty go through the world hand-in-hand. But this is not wholly true. Poetry, in rare instances, has been closely allied even with the Stock Exchange, and has actually been the creator of houses and ships as well as divine imagery.

Rogers, Moore, and Tennyson may be enumerated among the few Poets whom the world, from its own platform of consols and per cents, has learned to honour. When publishers can afford to pay a guinea a line for Poetry, as in the case of Moore's "Lalla Rookh," and Tennyson's "Tythonus." It is enough to make even old Dives rub his hands with satisfaction, although he shall fail to comprehend a single idea in the Poetry that is so costly. Taking the exceptional cases out of the argument, of course, the proverb which allies Poetry with Poverty holds true, and the matter-of-fact idolator from his point of observation has much to say which the poor Poet might find it difficult satisfactorily to rebut.

"Man lives not by bread alone," or bricks, or consols, or Great Easterns. The assumption that these are the sole things necessary to his well-being is, therefore, a false one.

We should be blind, indeed, if we failed to see the chain that connects us for a certain period to the ear of Commerce. We cannot, with an Alladin's wand, strike the earth and behold corn, without seed and labour, ripe and ready for garnering. Everything teaches us that steady uncompromising effort is demanded both in the tilling of the ground, and in the acquiring of Fame. The glebe needs ploughing; Labour must put on the armour of resolution, or the harvest will be a poor one. There is a vast distance between the ideal and real. Who does not know what it is to build castles in the air! Every man has some acquaintance with the ideal, and a great deal more with the real (that is, supposing the stern realities of care, and the brick-like forces and facts around us, to be the absolutely real.) Half our lives are passed in dreams, the other half in regrets and pains. Without the dreams a larger margin would be given to the regrets and pains of existence. Let us not, therefore, ignore the ideal, or imagine that what we call the real is the all-in-all. Our lives being divided, we must fain forget not to whom we belong, or to what end we are designed. "We are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward," but other realities beside trouble are in store for us. The man does not live who has not dreamed of happiness, and found sweet delight in the anticipation of it. Here, at one part of our lives we are scrambling for the gold that perisheth, and, at another, pining for higher and holier things. We walk on flints, cutting our feet and groaning with agony, all to win our way to some treasure-house of gold or fame. If we reach it, alas! it often turns out a lazar house of woes. We set our fortunes in the balance against destiny, and are destined to experience the fruits of our folly. The seed we sow will spring to fruit if we only are careful that the soil is in good condition, and the seed properly sown.

We do not gather grapes from thistles, neither do we make banking books of poems; but we gather thorns from thistles, and fruits from trees according to their order. When we seek a knowledge of Euclid we don't ask for Tennyson. *In Memoriam* will not give us a product of figures which will circumscribe the earth; neither will Cocker supply us with subtle philosophies of the soul, and enter with us into the hereafter of the spirit. Each after its kind—that which is good for the body will not feed the spirit. That which ministers to the mere reasoning part of us will not satisfy the spiritual longings which are as much a part of our being as are our hands and feet. We are called upon to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which belong to God. The great Cæsar, Commerce, claims a certain part of our lives, and a great exercise of our energies. We must render them. They are his due. It is madness and wickedness to evade his just demands. But God has also a claim upon us. He claims our willing obedience to His counsels, and demands a living sacrifice of worldly lusts and evil desires for His sake. Shall we give up ourselves wholly to Cæsar and abandon God? or shall we rather serve God first and Cæsar according as it pleases our Heavenly Father? The common staring facts of existence, if no other faces from the

domains of Poesy looked down upon us, would send us mad. The human mind could not possibly dwell monotonously on mere stubborn facts. Relaxation comes to it wearing a thousand graces. It is well that it is so, or the consequences would be seen in mental, moral, and physical dwarfishness. The human body is only capable of limited exercise. Its powers, when exercised, soon become enervated, and unless relaxation be obtained disease would soon climax in death. As with the body, even so it is with the mind; relaxation restores its lost equilibrium, and aids to keep it healthy. If this be so, it follows that those influences which work beneficially in the restoration of bodily and mental vigour are as useful even as the *stimuli* that enervate them when employed in excess.

Take as an illustration some young man who, sits at a desk from morn till eve calculating profits and losses, and casting up accounts; he leaves the ledger and goes home, intent on improving his income, and crowds in the time between tea and bed, teaching arithmetic. He finds a change, it is true, and by-and-bye he marries; children add to his responsibilities, and he needs to toil with redoubled vigour. A few years pass on—consumption makes him her prey, and he lies in a premature grave. Apart from the stimulus of hope and the ambition to rise in the social scale, there were no high incentives to effort. He died young, and was he not sent to his account prematurely? He had the seeds of consumption within him, and the chances were unfavourable to lengthened life—yet, had he paid proper attention to the yearnings of his soul, and occasionally spent a few days with the flowers and birds in the country—had he, in fact, dreamed more and toiled less, he would, in all probability, have lived longer. Many thousands dream too little; in other words, neglect the spiritual for the material, which has no right to *all* their hearts. Taking, therefore, no more exalted view than the mere material view, Poetry can be proved to be of use, and a very good use, in presenting images to the mind which often charm away madness, disease, and death.

“Whatsoever is is right” qualified, may be comprehended. In a sense this axiom of Pope may be taken to mean that God has made nothing without a purpose which we may be too blind to find out, but which, nevertheless, works in the progress of things. The moral evils, resulting from the abuse of good gifts do not come under the category of “Whatsoever is” in the sense, we suppose to be implied. Whether we are right or not in this, we feel it our duty to exercise legitimately all our physical, mental, and spiritual gifts; if we do so, we shall neither ignore material nor spiritual good, but wisely use both, since both have their uses.

Poetry is the guest of the human breast, and wherever man is, his heart being with him, Poetry should be welcome. But it is quite another thing, giving a welcome to the poetic guest, to allowing it to absorb the attention to the disharmony of all secular duties. Many thousands dream too little, and become so much absorbed in practical things that their hearts get hard as icebergs, which the heat of Love alone can soften. People of this class grow up with soulless bodies. Look at them, fearing to praise even the sun, that beautiful natural Poet who sends down his rays of light to translate earth with its beauty and music into a Paradise, because their souls are prostrate at the feet of Mammon, and they have learned to love their idol with *all* their affections! What is the god of day to them! Time cannot be spared from their musty ledgers and golden schemes to shake off the dust of business for an hour or two's luxury with the bright Poet of the universe. Alas! for the victims of matter-of-fact philosophies when the heart beats only in unison with the ringing changes of gold! It is impossible to separate Poetry from man without robbing him of half his existence, and making him an enemy to religion and humanity. Poetry is the natural nectar of the spirit. It is the sweet elixir of Love; the herald of Peace, and the angel that strews Life's pathways with heavenly flowers.

What sermon ever struck conviction to the heart of a sinner which had no touching poetic pathos? What orator ever played successfully upon the chords of enthusiasm and patriotism whose words flashed not with poetic fire? Take the Bible; what book contains passages full

of such sublime poems, in single lines, as that does? Religion is not only a Preacher; she is a Poet. We cannot separate the history or life of the people from Poetry. It has ever wreathed the crown that adorns the brow of humanity, and ever must do so, or humanity must degenerate into automatons. The oldest books we possess prove that we originate little in sublimity of language that can compare with the old Hebrew Poets. Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton—all sing to us through the dim haze of centuries; we catch echoes of their songs, and re-set them to new measures. But if we lack originality of conception we retain an undying passion for the muse. Hence, when a new Poet arises, he is the subject of deep interest; and he must be a lucky being indeed if the critic's tomahawk does not fall heavily upon his heart. No man can maintain a fame as a Poet who has not something sterling in the way of poetic ore. By a lucky accident, he may take the public by storm with something sensational, and, for the nonce, find himself to his surprise dubbed a “Great Poet;” but if the coin be spurious, it will be sure, sooner or later, of being taken at its real value.

“A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.” Present the genuine “thing of beauty;” the world may not appreciate it with eagerness, but its appreciation will strengthen with time, and the immortal assert its claim. The flower may be crushed until its beauty is shorn, but those who think the flower is annihilated may learn that the foot which trod on it crushed its perfume to the breeze, and who shall say whither it was borne? In like manner, genius may be trampled on, but the process will be sure to crush out some beauties which will be borne away to become joys for ever.

Alfred Tennyson has fought his way into public favour, and we readily yield him honour. He has won bays which sit gracefully enough upon his brow. With all due deference, however, for the opinions of certain leading critics, we think some of his later productions cannot fitly compare with most of his former ones. His last book, “*Enoch Arden*,” has excited the most opposite opinions, some critics pronouncing it his greatest, others his least work. The book has had a rapid and large sale, the printers not being able to turn copies out quickly enough to satisfy the demand for them. This fact alone ought to silence those who declaim against the public taste, and urge that it sickens at Poetry. We will glance at “*Enoch Arden*,” and, if possible, discover the greatness ascribed to its author. Fragmentary selections can only convey a faint idea of the Poem, yet we shall present some.

“*Enoch Arden* is wrought out of very ordinary materials. There is nothing in the whole Poem which carries the reader out of the boundaries of actual human everyday life. But there is a sweet philosophy running through it which proves Tennyson to be a man of grand human sympathies and noble magnanimities. The characters of the poem are life pictures, and life-like they act. The measures run along sweetly and smoothly, and, as we read, a pleasant feeling delights us. But where is the charm which stamps “*Enoch Arden*” with immortality? The story is pretty, and well told, and the telling is done quaintly and mellowly; and one of its best merits is seen in its relation to life. The Poet has not soared above the essentially commonplace to mystify us with musical utterances about fairies, elves, and such like, which, in their way, are passingly sweet. But here he looks upon human beings, and essays to transfigure their existence. In doing so, he follows in the track of Poets of a minor caste whose heavy dooms set them to sing while they suffer. We are glad the Laureate has chosen themes of this character because, in doing so, he must have sympathized with the heroic children of labour. It is a very difficult task to create Poetry out of want and abide by the conditions requisite to a faithful delineation of the hard necessities attending it.

(To be continued.)

At Dalton a labourer was sitting at breakfast the other morning, with a comrade and his wife, when he said to them, “I had a wonderful curious dream last night; I dreamt I was smothered twice. I thought I had got out once, and went and had some chestnuts in the wood; but on coming back I got smothered altogether.” After partaking of breakfast, he went to dig in a sandhole, when a slip of earth took place, and he was smothered to death.

SPRIT-MESSAGE, No. 4.

Through the mediumship of JESSIE.

It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We are His children, and the sheep of His pasture. If we are His children, and the sheep of His pasture, why do we wish to go outside the fold? Why do we wish to mix with those that are outside, that aim to annoy us? Is it because they are outside the fold that we do so? Let us rather try to draw them into the fold. You should not return evil for evil. It is peace you want, the peace of God. If your hearts were full of divine love and wisdom, you would be as a light set upon a hill, where many a wanderer's feet will be drawn. Those that are cast upon the way, and cannot get on, know not who to ask for help. The cruelties of mankind choke up the avenues of Faith. Be you as a light set upon a hill, to guide the wayfarer to the temple of Truth. If you were travelling, cold and comfortless, along a dark road with many turnings, would you not be cheered by a light set upon a hill or anywhere, which, as it were, said to you, Come, there is warmth and comfort in store for you? I say unto you, heed not the seducing voice of those who are outside the fold; only strive to make your light burn brightly.

Take heed. Pour fresh oil into the lamp of your faith; let it burn vigorously. Remember the brighter your light, the more radiance it will shed around, but it must be a strong light, or it will soon get extinguished. I say unto you, let your light so shine that it will attract men to you, then you may glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

(The medium, addressing a friend, said)—

Dear Friend,—I would say a word to you. Be not weary in well-doing. In all your difficulties, in all your perplexities, look to Him for guidance and protection. Seek nothing of yourself; ask Him. Seek Him, and be not weary in well-doing.

Question. Can you inform me if the doctrines inculcated in a work I am reading, entitled, "Jesus of Nazareth," are true.

Spirit. Is he not your friend and brother? Do I not love him?

Q. Has the communicating influence there given, presented the true character of Jesus?

S. I know not what you have been reading, but this I know, He is God's beloved Son. If you tread in His footprints you cannot do wrong. He was a noble, holy, more than martyr, whom God loved.

Q. Was Paul the holy man he is said to have been?

S. Was not Paul at first a wicked man? Did he not start to persecute Christ? Was he not converted, and did he not afterwards become a good man?

Q. No; this work says not.

S. I do not think it is true.

I am higher than I was at first. I wish and hope still to be higher. Set a watch on thine own heart. Trust in no book that is written. Ask His guidance, and you cannot do wrong. I will try another time to speak more clearly.

(To the reporter)—

I would speak a word to you. Remember your duty, and let love shine around your path. Serve the spiritual cause. Do what you can for it, and try, if possible, to realise that you have no feeling of your own, whatever, to interrupt your course, then the arrows of the unfeeling ones will pass by as the idle wind, which you heed not. But if you allow each idle murmur to cast a shadow over your soul, it will place a barrier between you and that you are striving to perform, therefore remember and hold fast to that which is good.

Q. Does the spirit speaking know what I have been thinking of doing in the future?

S. That which you think is best, do; but trust not alone to your own thoughts.

(To a little boy)—

Trust to the warning voice of one that would guide you aright. Put faith in God then you will gain happiness. Remember if you do not put faith in him, you will grow up as an idle weed, to be plucked and thrown on one side, to make room for some flower. May God bless you for ever.

May the holy spirit of God so dwell in our hearts, that we may not grow up as guilty weeds that only obstruct men's paths, but that we may grow as beautiful flowers, whose fragrance is delicious. May His spirit soften our hearts, so that we may bring forth the first-fruits of righteousness. May we be enabled to shed a light over men's paths, that shall lead them to Thee. May we all possess feelings of brotherhood, and may we seek and find that which was lost. Grant, oh, Heavenly Father! that this, Thy great truth, spreading far and wide, may be so brilliant that people cannot help coming beneath its rays. Bless and protect the unhappy and forlorn; lead them to see Thy true light. Make them happy. Give unto them that which the world, with all its vanities, cannot take away—Thy peace, love, and protection.

November, 13, 1865.

A PAINTER that would draw a rose, though he may flourish some likeness of it in figure and colour, yet he can never paint the scent and fragrantcy; or, if he would draw a flame, he cannot put a constant heat into his colours. All the skill of cunning artisans and mechanics cannot put a principle or life into a statue of their own making. Neither are we able to inclose in words and letters the life, soul, and essence of any spiritual truths.—CUDWORTH.

A WORKER'S FIGMENT.—No. 2.

THE BRIDGE OF FAITH.

Worn and weary with life, and the cares of the day,  
I sat by stern Duty enchained to my seat,  
But unrestrained thought bounding free, bore away  
On the wings of a day-dreaming reverie sweet  
And the picture, the spirit-wrought fantasy bore,  
Was an inner life gleam of Eternity's shore.

Methought that a voice from the bright summer land—  
The home of God's angels, the bourns of the brave,  
Bade me hasten to join a celestial band,  
And lay what is mortal to rest in the grave.  
But, ah! there are tendrils struck earthward that bind  
The spirit that soars to the loved left behind.

Still it calls me away, but as spell-bound I stand,  
Till the dark pall of Reason falls off from my eyes—  
And Faith shows the way through some mysteries grand  
And benignant new light to my rapt soul supplies.  
That Faith bridges over the gulf with its span,  
And offers a way to redeem fallen man.

How beautiful that bridge, uncorrupted by time!  
Irradiate in heavenly glories it stands,  
A structure eternal—of grandeur sublime!  
Wrought in love to mankind by the Great Spirit hands.  
Oh, what are to thee, all the much boasted gems  
That glow in their lustre on earth's diadems?

I see a great gulf that is cutting in twain  
The pathway that all earthly travellers go;  
In its depths are loud wailings of sorrow and pain,  
Where misery seethes in its cauldron of woe,  
Till the spirit is purged from the grossness that clings  
And Purity's hallowed thought joyously springs.

But as I look down the unfathomed abyss,  
I see there are steps that the fallen ones climb,  
When their spirits aspire to the regions of bliss  
And cast off the bonds of pollution and crime.  
Some ascend to the Bridge, to that Home walking on  
Where, redeemed by God's mercy, so many are gone.

Now the earth-bonds I loosen, and speed on my way,  
And a welcoming chant of sweet melody rings,  
With a deep-swellling chorus, "Come, brother, and stay;  
Come and drink where Love's fount through eternity springs.  
In the summer-land groves, in the home of the blest  
Immortality welcomes thy soul to its rest."

I hasten past some who are halting, uncertain  
If the path they are treading is leading them Right;  
Where I see interposed Erudition's dark curtain,  
And Materialist-vanity, clouding their sight;  
While others cry out in their uttermost need,  
As they droop o'er Philosophy's poor hending reed.

And now comes sweet Innocence bounding along,  
For the gulf has no terrors for Virtue and Worth;  
And the world's friendless outcast the journey makes strong.  
While weary and faint is the child of high birth,  
The despised of all nations, the halt and the poor,  
Who relied on the cross, have their heritage sure!

The air becomes laden with grateful perfume,  
And flowers spring forth through a verdure-clad wold;  
All radiant in beauty, and gorgeous of bloom,  
Such as eyes of God's chosen ones only behold.  
In a rapturous glow, in a dream of delight,  
With the angels I walk, in a halo of light.

And the rare stamp of grace all immortal things bear;  
Peace and Love ever dwelling in concord benign;  
Thought mingles with thought in a paradise fair,  
And permeates all with a beam that's divine.  
'Tis heaven's great carnival! Souls once enlaved  
Hold their jubilee now, by the Bridge of Faith saved.

"Wake, dreamer, awake," said a voice, hoarsely speaking,  
And a child's plaintive cry joined the earnest command;  
"There are duties on earth yielding pleasures worth seeking."  
Then my soul bade adieu to the bright summer land.  
So I gird on Truth's armour, her battle to wage  
In life's little dream, on the world's troubled stage.

But the grand Bridge of Faith scarce can mortal eye see,  
For the vapours of Wrong that envelope it now;  
And the shores of the blessed are distant to me,  
While the world's stamp of Care I must wear on my brow.  
But Hope lifts the veil as the years onward roll,  
Till the Bridge looms in death on the eye of my soul.

Worcester

G. C.

## EXTRACT FROM A WORK BY J. PERCEVAL, ESQ.

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Continued from page 327.

THERE were two or three other delusions I laboured under, of which I hardly recollect how I was cured; one in particular, that I was to lean on the back of my head and on my feet in bed, and twist my neck by throwing my body with a jerk from side to side. I fancy that I never attempted this with sincerity, because I feared to break my neck; and I think I left it off chiefly from being weary of attempting it, partly from the fear of being still more confined in bed, as I once was, with a strap over my breast. Not long ago I threw myself, scarcely thinking of it, into a similar posture, and began throwing myself about; when, recollecting myself, it seemed to me as if I did it in some degree for relaxation, as a man stretches his limbs when yawning, in some degree to promote perspiration, being sensible of a dry and feverish state of the skin. But when I was ill I did it by command, and with the idea of miraculous benefits ensuing. I was also desired to suffocate myself on my pillow, and in various ways; this I never could perform, and I gave it up, weary of attempting it.

I suspect that many of the delusions which I laboured under, and which other insane persons labour under, consist in their mistaking a figurative or a poetic form of speech for a literal one; and this observation may be of importance to those who attend to their cure. I was led to it at Doctor Fox's, and it was very useful to me. During the progress of my recovery there, I kept watching minutely all my experiences, and my conduct, and that of other patients, comparing their cases with my own, and drawing such conclusions as in those painful circumstances I was able; I did this also with the desire of being able to remove the delusions of others. If anyone knew how painful the task of self-examination and of self-control was, to which I devoted myself at that time, every minute without respite, except when I was asleep, in order that I might behave, and with the sincere desire of behaving becomingly, they would understand how cruel I felt it afterwards, when I required my liberty for the further pursuit of health and of strength of mind, to have it denied to me, for fear of my doing any person any bodily harm.

Keeping my mind continually intent upon unravelling and understanding the mysterious influence I was under, I one day saw an old gentleman who had been in China pluck a privet-leaf, and declare it was tea; the same used to smear his face with the red clay, calling it paint. I thought immediately thus—the spirit speaks poetically, meaning that the leaf resembled the tea-leaf, but the man understands it literally. Thus you will hear one lunatic declare that he is made of iron, and that nothing can break him; another, that he is a china vessel, and that he runs in danger of being destroyed every minute. The meaning of the spirit is, that this man is as strong as iron, the other frail as an earthen vessel; but the lunatic takes the literal sense, and his imagination not being under his own control, he in a manner feels it. In like manner, when I was desired to suffocate myself on my pillow, and that all the world were suffocating for me, &c., I conceive now that the spirit referred to the suffocation of my feelings—that I was to suffocate my grief, my indignation, or what not, on the pillow of my conscience; that I was not to abandon myself to my feelings, but to control them, as others did theirs around me. Here, however, let me observe that I suspect the health of the mind and the health of the body, particularly the operation of the lungs, and of the heart, and the state of the blood, to be essentially connected. I believe the healthy state of the mind depends very much upon the regulation of the inspiration and expiration; that the direction "*animus regit*" has a physical as well as a spiritual sense; that is, that in controlling the spirit you must control your respirations. I will instance, in support of this, the stupid appearance of many deaf people, who usually are unable to breathe freely through the nostril, and keep their mouths wide open, a habit very common amongst idiots. I will instance, again, the stupifying effects of a bad cold. Now, the voices I used to hear during my illness at Dr. Fox's, told me that that state of mental perfection they required me to attain to, was dependant upon the proper command of my heart and my head, and, if I recollect rightly, of my conscience, which I was made to suppose dwelt in my bosom. I was repeatedly desired to "keep my head and heart together;" not to let "my head go wandering from my heart," that "if I kept my head and heart together" I should do well; but that this third power, which, if I am not wrong, was conscience, ought to regulate both, if I would be perfectly happy. I understood very little of what I heard at the time. But now I conceive that the voices, when they told me to keep my head and heart together, meant me to think on what I was in need of, or desired; of those subjects or objects my heart and health dictated to me, since the head may be occupied on subjects which are repulsive to the heart, or out of time, and out of place, and out of character; as if a parent who had a family of children

craving for food, were to go idling to a fair to look at puppet-shows; as if a man who had an important appointment to keep, were to lose himself, and all memory of it, in reading a novel. It is evident however, that a man may keep his senses upon his desires with the thought only of gratifying them; and such a man may be of sound mind, according to the ordinary sense of the term, and yet have no thought of his relative position in society, or in the creation. Here, then, conscience comes into play, to know whether the emotions of the heart are just, and how far they ought to be indulged, and reflection taken to allay them; and, if I may be allowed to say so in a matter many make light of, others may think fanciful, I question whether the operations of the conscience and reflection can be conducted but through the medium of the lungs filling the chest at proper intervals, according to the degree of passion of the mind, or of action of the body. Should this be the case, and should a well-regulated breathing be essential to bodily health and mental restoration, it is possible that the effecting of this mechanically even may give much relief. I have certainly found it so, and I cannot help suspecting that this secret, rudely understood, was known to Dr. Fox, or to his servants; otherwise, why should one of the servants have strangled me, at my request, with the strings of my waistcoat? why should throttling and strangling, when resorted to, subdue a lunatic? why did one of the servants, with an iron bar, keep my head under water in the bath for a long time? And may not the virtues of the cold-bath and a shower-bath in the cure of the lunatic patients reside principally in this, that they cause such a violent panting, such a sudden, and, I conceive, often even dangerous and improper action of the heart and of the lungs? I cannot help thinking that there was in the madhouse of Dr. Fox some practical, though ignorant, apprehension of this truth, and, therefore, whilst I give the above figurative interpretations of the delusion that I was to suffocate myself, I do not positively assert that, in this instance, there was no truth in the literal application of it, any more than that it was always suggested by the same train of idea;\* far from it.

For I recollect during my recovery at Dr. Fox's, I used to place myself in the different positions I had formerly occupied, in order to retrace my thoughts, and see if I could account for my feelings. On one of those occasions I sat down in a niche, into which I had been fastened, in the bow at the end of the common room. I experienced then an extraordinary sensation of suffocation, and I found it was produced by the position of every object and of every line in the room being oblique to my visual organs, instead of square; and I have no doubt this sensation caused the idea continually to haunt me when I was seated in that niche, where I passed whole days pressing my nostrils to a wooden ledge that served to support the arm, as in an arm-chair.

Moreover, I have remarked that when my mind is most disturbed, I breathe at that time violently and rapidly, and with difficulty through the nostrils; and I have observed in the glass, when I have been exasperated, my nostrils compressed above and dilated below, reminding me of a bust I have seen somewhere of Achilles. The spirits, also, which I conceived to speak to me, used to direct me to control my breath, and "to breathe gently up one nostril, down another." I have often found, too, that when I am depressed or agitated by any passion, a deep-drawn breath or sigh will change the whole complexion of my thought and the tenor of my desires.

I am afraid that these details will appear tedious and frivolous; but on a subject on which medical men are evidently so ignorant, and usually so thoughtless, and nearly all others are desperate, because they deem it beyond their comprehension, I hope I may be excused in entering upon these minute particulars, though they are but lucubrations on the operations of a deranged understanding; still that was a deranged understanding.

The following are further illustrations of the idea that the lunatic mistakes a poetic train of thought for the reality. I was told repeatedly that such and such persons were my mother, sisters, and brothers, &c. I conceive the idea was spiritual, or that they resembled them. I was told that I was not in England,

\* To make my ideas more clear, let me sum up my arguments or proposition thus: That a healthy state of the mind is identical with a certain regulated system of respiration, according to the degree of bodily action; that the exercise of reflection, or of conscience, is the control of the passions or affections of the mind, is concomitant with, or effected by, a proper control of the respiration; quiet when the mind is quiet, accompanied with sobs or sighs when otherwise. That the mind and the blood being intimately connected, the health of the body depends also on this healthy regulation of respiration, promoting a proper circulation and purification of the blood; that, consequently, the effecting respiration by mechanical means, without the control of the muscles by thought, is profitable to the health of the body, and also to that of the mental faculties, although they may not be, at least distinctly, occupied by any ideas; in the same way as, if several printing-presses are worked by machinery, it may be necessary for the perfect state of that machinery, that all the presses should be in motion, although some may have no types under them.

and I believed it; I conceive, indeed, I know,\* the meaning was, that the treatment I was suffering from the system to which I was subjected was unworthy of England. I was told to wrestle with my keeper. This I conceived so extraordinary that I hesitated; but the spirits told me "they intended me to wrestle with him in civility," and I suppose I was meant to expostulate and remonstrate with him.

I remember, however, that the spirits, or voices of invisible angels, as I fancied them to be, used to sing to me at one time, "wrestle with Herminet Herbert" (that was the name applied to my keeper, Samuel Hobbs); at another—I must hope to be excused for mentioning it—"kiss Herminet Herbert." Both these commands were to me so extraordinary and unusual, that I could not undertake either, until scared by superstitious fear, or cut by feelings which I fancied were those of compunction for doubting and disobeying the goodness of God, and conceiving that I could be wiser than Him who ordered me. At last I obeyed, in trust that it was my duty to do so, and that good would come of it, though I could not understand how. I do not recollect, however, having ever kissed the servant, and seldom did I try to do so, because my feelings of delicacy were stronger than my fears of bodily harm, which did not prevent me from often attempting to wrestle with him. Seldom, however, if at all, did I actually wrestle with this man, though I did with others stronger than him. I used to seize him by the waistcoat to do so, understanding from my spirits that it was what he wished me to do; and yet, not finding him meet me as if he had any desire to grapple with me, I was usually puzzled, and desisted. He was also, though a slight man, of a peevish, hasty, disposition, more ready to strike than the others, and his language was often truly horrible. Perhaps this may have added somewhat to my irresolution; but I conjecture that the very fact that he was slighter and less powerful than the other servants, making him a more reasonable match for me, was the cause that I did not persist in wrestling with him, because the acts of lunacy are preposterous and unreasonable.

For this, again, is one species of lunacy, to mistake a spirit of humour enjoining an act which is an evident absurdity, for a spirit of sincerity, or, as the French say, to take it "*au pied de la lettre*;" as if a father were to say to his child in fun, "Now, run into the puddle;" or, "Now, put your fingers into the fire;" or, "Now, put yourself into a passion," meaning the very contrary, and the child were to take his words as if meant in earnest. So I was ordered to throw myself head over heels over stiles; to throw myself to the right and left, or flat on the face on the floor or on gravel walks; these forms of thought may have been meant as absurdities, for me to do the very contrary; they may also, however, have a spiritual meaning, comprised in these words, Recollect yourself, remember where you are, what you are about, what you want to do, and act accordingly. †

If there is any guilt in lunacy, and lunacy is not a total deprivation of power to understand and interpret commands of this nature, I should say it is here that it is manifested; for it is written, "that no man is tried beyond his strength," and the absurdity of such commands as I obeyed, was perhaps proportioned to my degree of understanding at all times. Of this I am not sure; I used to suspect it when I began to recover, and I thought very ill of myself, and believed that I had been very wicked. Perhaps it was so; but, when I was most low-spirited and cast down by these thoughts, and had so deep a sense of self-distrust and degradation, that perhaps I never could have recovered a sound understanding, that is, spirit to claim the respect due to my situation, if that state of mind had continued, I was mercifully relieved (to myself it was mercy, to him it was barbarity) by witnessing the gradual destruction, and degradation, and exposure of a fine old man, who was placed in exactly similar circumstances to mine own.

I saw him enter Dr. Fox's asylum in every appearance of a sound state of mind; I mistook him for a visitor, a friend of one of the patients. The rude replies of the servants soon convinced me of my error. A fortnight after, this aged gentleman, a merchant of the city of Bristol, besmeared himself over with the

\* In the year 1833, at Sevenoaks, I received early in the morning a letter from a Colonel Austen, a magistrate in the neighbourhood, in answer to an application I had made the previous evening to him. In it he mentioned that on receiving my note he had immediately left his dinner-table to answer it, and that he would take an early opportunity of seeing me. In every respect it was such an answer as a magistrate and a gentleman should give to a person in my situation, and the first example of kind and immediate attention that I had received. The moment I had read it I exclaimed of a sudden, "Now I am in England!" and then I recollected and knew the meaning of my former delusions.

† As further examples of this kind, I may mention the case of a very powerful man in Mr. Newington's asylum, who told me he was as weak as a child—he looked like a child. Another gentleman at Dr. Fox's, on my remonstrating with him for tormenting an old Quaker lunatic, who was affected by *pavor lymphaticus*, replied to me "he believed God Almighty had put him there to amuse him;" and this he said not in joke, but in sober seriousness.

red clay in the yard, calling it paint, and became the annoyance of every being in the common room in which we were sitting. A few days more, and he was fastened, as I used to be, in a niche, in a hard seat, the whole day long, with a belt to the wall, and in a straight waistcoat, his face red and inflamed, his grey head leaning forward on his bosom, his eyes unable to meet the look of any other, servant or patient. Gradually he became more loathsome, and when his meals were brought to him he gobbled them down—I can use no other expression—with pitiable and revolting voracity, without attention to order, to cleanliness—without respect to any object or person around him. This was a picture to me of what I had been, and I said to myself, "Surely, then, this sad state may be the necessary effects of the situation in which we are placed! Surely the lunatic's conduct, however profane, may receive at least extenuation, from the barbarous circumstances in which society connive at his being placed!" and I gathered courage and hope. Till then I had accused myself, and I had sickened at the thought that I had sacrificed reason and self-control to my gullet, to the pleasure of eating and drinking the fat meats and the sour beer that had been set before me. For at my meals, morning and evening, the voices I used to hear flocked about me like bees, and every one, in the tones of some relation or of some friend, begged of me in turn to refuse a piece of meat for her sake, to leave my bread for his sake, and so on. Then, when, one voice told me to refuse anything for her sake, another came to desire me to eat it for her sake, and I was bewildered. I suppose that I was hungry, and that I enjoyed my meals; I could not understand why I should be advised to refuse them. The servant stood by me, joggling me, offering me morsels, saying, "Come Mr. Perceval, make haste; why, you won't be done all day." At length, if I refused, my meals were taken away, or I was rated and scolded, and had them forced down my throat; I, therefore, at length, swallowed everything that came within my reach, without compunction and without discrimination, and often as if it were very humorous to do so; and then I accused myself of selling my soul for a sop of bread and tea, or for a slice of bread and mutton—of sacrificing my immortal happiness for the sensual pleasure of guttling, and this, as I then thought, in a glorified body.

(To be continued.)

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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

### VISION-WORDS.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—According to your request, I forward you a copy of the words which I wrote last week during a *séance* in your room, when Jessie was offering a prayer under inspiration, which you were taking down. I saw these words for the most part in a vision, as I very often do other communications, and wrote them down as the sentences succeeded one another. They are agreeable in sense to conclusions which I had come to long ago from my own experience, as to the duties and high objects to which those are summoned who are subject to the preternatural phenomena of the present age; but I leave it to others to judge of their intrinsic value. The words appeared to me to be addressed to those who were with me at the time, and for Spiritualists generally:—

"Why tarry ye in the gates of Jerusalem? Ride on, and prosper in the majesty of your strength, and make known the glory of the coming Redemption! Prepare ye the ways of the Lord. The time is come when I will speak to you audibly and personally through the power of my mediums, and respect their word, and prepare to obey it. I come, lo! I come, saith the Lord. I have spoken it, and I am true. My word cannot be gainsaid."

On a future occasion I may perhaps return to the impressions and thoughts which succeeded each other in my mind after having written down these sentences. At present I remain, yours obediently,

JOHN PERCEVAL.

London, Nov. 21, 1865.

## JOURNEY TO NOTTINGHAM AND BASFORD.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—The impression was so deeply made upon my mind that I must go to Nottingham, and having obtained of you the name of a gentleman residing there, I opened a correspondence with him, which ended in my visiting that place, where I spent Sunday and Monday. On my arrival on

Saturday I was welcomed to the hospitable home of your friend, and in the evening he conducted me to a small hall, which I found well filled with an earnest, religious people, under the direction of Mr. Shepherd, who has been excommunicated from the Baptist Church for heresy. The meeting was opened with songs, prayers, and Scripture-readings; and, while in the superior state, I was assisted to speak on some portions of the 10th chapter of Matthew, which had been previously read by the leader of the meeting. On Sunday, meetings were also held, morning and evening, at which there were various manifestations through me and other mediums, who were of both sexes.

Monday evening I went to Basford, a few miles distant from Nottingham. Here a Church of Spiritualists has been organized, under the leadership of T. C. Stretton, a quiet, religious, earnest, and devout man. Some of the publications of the Church were placed at my disposal. They are believers in the final salvation of all the human family, and think the millennial age has dawned upon them. Their instructions come from above, through their mediums, and especially, as I suppose, through their leader. I subjoin a statement made by this Church:—

#### “ THE DOCTRINES, PRINCIPLES, AND PRECEPTS OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH.

“ 1st. Make thy house thy church.

“ 2nd. Teach the people to believe in one God only, who hath said, ‘ I am the Lord, and there is no God beside me.’

“ 3rd. That Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.

“ 4th. That Christ having ransomed us from the curse of death without an hereafter existence, we all, without exception, reach the realms of eternal bliss and glory.

“ 5th. That all must suffer—in accordance with the deeds done, whilst passing through this world.

“ 6th. That this punishment is not eternal, but a just punishment.

“ 7th. That it is not a fire and brimstone punishment, but a state of progress, where we meet those whom we have injured face to face; and their taunts and reproaches, and that of our consciences, is the only torture we endure.

“ 8th. That the supposed devil has originated from the word evil, or evil spirits; that there is no such monster as the devil with the extraordinary power ascribed to him.

“ 9th. That there are many evil spirits who have access to our minds, and the more evil we are, the more these spirits delight in our company, and help us on that which is wrong.

“ 10th. That there are good and holy angels who are ministering spirits to the whole human race, and these beings have access to our minds, and the more holy and righteous we live, the more they accompany us, and guard and guide us against the evils that surround us.

“ 11th. That both evil and good spirits have no power to thwart the will of God, but are employed to bring about his purposes.

“ 12th. That it is the duty of all true Christians to endeavour to raise the poor from poverty, and to bring about the happy time spoken of by the ancient prophets, when men shall “ Build houses and inhabit them, plant vineyards and eat the fruits of them.”

“ 13th. That to bring about these great and good things, mankind must look upon all men as their brethren; yea, the most destitute and despised are made of the same flesh and blood, having one common Parent, who sends on the earth his bounties, that all may be happy.

“ 14th. To bring about these great events is the object and aim of the *Universal Church of Christ*, and thus teach men to worship God under their own vine and fig tree, in dwellings erected for the purpose, being the property of all, but none having power to sell.

“ 15th. That by this means poverty and crime will be swept from the earth, and each labour for the happiness and comfort of all; and the Church that carries out these things is the only true Church of Christ, built on ‘ The foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone.’”

I may add that I feel that my visit to Nottingham was opportune, and trust that good may come of it.—I remain, &c.,

J. MURRAY SPEAR.

146, Albany-street, Regent's-park, Nov. 15, 1865.

#### A PREVALENT ERROR.

THERE is an error quite prevalent even among religious people, that of believing only in a Divinity which was, but is not. All admit that God made the world, yet few admit that he makes it. After having spent a whole eternity in the contemplation of himself, it is supposed that some six thousand years ago he spoke the universe into existence, with all its furniture of worlds and beings, impressed upon it its laws, wound it up, as the clockmaker does his clock, gave the pendulum a jog, set it a-going, and then left it to go of itself. Just as though the universe could subsist a moment if the Deity, as its cause, did not remain in it, its life, and substance, and motion! So, though they admit that God has once and awhile concerned Himself with the piece of mechanism he had constructed, and condescended to give a few directions for its management, yet it was all in the past, long years ago. No interference now, no God to reveal Himself to us, who stand in such need of His instructions. So, also, they admit that a Saviour once appeared in Judea, was crucified under Pontius Pilate for the redemption of the world, there is no Jesus Christ now. The Saviour did not rise from the dead, and there is only a traditional Christ in which we may trust. How has the age lapsed into infidelity!

#### ORTHODOXY FOR CHILDREN.

(From the *Truthseeker*.)

ONE of the dreadful logical consequences of the orthodox doctrines of original sin, the atonement, and eternal punishment, is that they apply alike to young and old—to the very wicked and the hardly sinful. There is no light and shade; there are no degrees, no possible exceptions or mitigations. We are all sinners; we all deserve eternal misery; we are all doomed to eternal misery; our only hope is faith “in the blood of a crucified Redeemer.” This is the one message for all; there can be no abatement, no change of threat or of promise. Eternal misery for the profligate and the murderer, and eternal misery for the light-hearted but “unconverted” girl who, though virtuous, has not become “serious” enough to believe herself “in a lost state,” and to trust in “the atoning blood;” eternal death to the little child, even, who does not also believe in the same. Shocking as this may seem, it cannot be otherwise on the old orthodox system of “the lost state of man,” and “the plan of salvation.” The doom is over all; we are all enemies of God; the curse, which is the wrath of God, cleaves to us all, even to the soul of the little child, and only “the blood of Christ,” and faith in it can save the soul. Hence, logically and theologically, there can be no light and shade; no escape for any, except on the conditions laid down; the same for the murderer as for the little child.

Does the reader doubt whether all this is really so; whether this dreadful doctrine of the certainty of eternal misery as the doom of unbelieving children is really held now? We have the proof before us. There is a “London Gospel Tract Depot,” in Paternoster-row, established for the issue, by millions, of “Gospel Tracts.” Amongst these is a series called “Children’s Tracts,” number 8 of which is entitled, “Glory! Glory!” It is an account of a little boy, only eight years of age, who was accidentally injured, the injury soon resulting in death. This little fellow, just before he died, said, “I am going to Jesus! I am going to sing ‘Glory! Glory! Glory!’ in Heaven. I shall stand before the throne of God! I shall see Jesus, for he shed his blood for me! Glory! Glory! Glory!” How came the poor little thing into the possession of the phrase *we italicize*? How came it that instead of feeling, as a little child could easily and naturally be made to feel, that he was lying in the arms of One who would be better to him than any earthly mother, with all her love and care, he was found with this unnatural dogma on his lips? The tract gives the answer, “He had been taught that he was a sinner, but that the ‘blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.’” More shame for those who had taught a child from six to eight years of age that he was a sinner needing the blood of an innocent Christ to save him from God’s doom.

But what we wish to draw attention to is the moral of the story. We shall transcribe it almost entire:—

“My young friend (whoever you that read this paper may be), where would your soul go, if you were suddenly to meet with an accident which should cause your death? Does the thought make you shudder? Well it may, unless you have found Jesus, for if you cannot answer, ‘Whatever may happen to my body, my soul is saved, through what Jesus has done for me,’ I say, if you cannot truly answer this, you are in danger, awful danger, of being eternally lost. *This very night* God may require your soul to appear before Him, and then, if not already in Christ, how shall you escape punishment? ‘Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.’ 2 Cor. vi. 2.

“By nature you are a sinner, and far off from God by wicked works; you have been living in the service of Satan, and deserve nothing but the anger of God. You are in an utterly ruined state. ‘Then, if so,’ perhaps you ask, ‘what must I do to be saved?’ You can do nothing, and God could accept nothing from you; but there is One who has done everything for your salvation; God’s own precious Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was holy and spotless, became a man that He might die on the cross, in the sinner’s place. There He was nailed, there His blood was shed, all to wash out sin.”

All this to little children in a “children’s tract.” The little innocent spirits in the nursery are to be made to “shudder” at the mention of what will happen to them when they are left alone with God. They are to be threatened with “the awful danger of being eternally lost.” They are to wake in the dead of night, and think not how the dear God is looking down on them, and on all His children, to love them and to guard them with His holy angels, but to “require their souls” for “punishment.” If the miserable author of this detestable “Gospel tract” had wished to train up little children to hate and dread the thought of God, he could not have gone about it in a better way.

But not only are they to be trained to “shudder” at God, they are to learn to despise and hate themselves. They are to feel—poor little innocent spirits!—that they are “sinners,” “far off from God by wicked works,” “living in the service of Satan,” “deserving nothing but the anger of God.” In fact, they are to be taught to feel that they are little fiends, vile, detestable children of Satan, that God can only put away from Him, and be angry with. What a doctrine for children about God and themselves! Surely the writer of this tract must be some broken-down Newgate chaplain, whose long and too close acquaintance with the Newgate Calendar has made him incapable of seeing anything else. It is as though one should go from the vile alleys of some filthy town into the sweet meadows far away, to call God’s primroses and daisies the foul names only applicable to the refuse of the streets. We should not like this writer to come for ten minutes into our nursery.

But the worst is to come. The poor child, after “shuddering” at God and hating himself and fearing hell, is expected, naturally enough, to cry in agony, “What can I do?” The answer is immoral; the reason given for it is horrible. “You can do nothing,” says this Gospel-tract writer; “God will accept nothing from you;” only “the blood” of Christ, shed to “wash out sin,” will be of any use. Think of that, parents! You are to teach your children that Christ is a kind of insulted official, who is foolish or heartless enough to be so offended with these

little children, that He will "accept nothing from them." Their little prayers, their pure spirits, their first sweet affections and simple thoughts, all these God turns from, like a sullen man, nay! like a frightful ogre; for while He despises *these* things, He asks for "blood." How horrible, from first to last! But perhaps little children will not feel as we do. They are used to stories about giants, and frightful ogres, and horrible dungeons, and bleeding, conquering knights, who save women and children from the horrid giant's hand. But let these romantic tract writers beware. The children *hate* that dreadful ogre who is so relentless in taking captive poor children, to put them in his dreadful den. They only admire and love the self-sacrificing knight who saves them. This "Gospel tract" will be to them—if it gets into any poor child's hands, which God forbid!—a sort of ogre tale; but it is a dangerous experiment to make God act the part of ogre. The children may be got to praise the good Christ who "sheds His blood" to deliver the "shuddering" children from the angry hands of God. But what will they think of that God?

But we are comforted. This hideous representation of God and of the "plan of salvation," is fast being left to the *remnant* of the once dominant orthodoxy. It is no longer dominant. The best men in all the churches have got far beyond it, and the really influential orthodoxy of our day is infinitely better than the theology of this abominable tract. We have dwelt upon it longer than it deserves; but the measure of our attention to it is not the measure of our belief in its influence, but only of our detestation of its hideous caricature of the Gospel, whose blessed name it takes in vain.

### AN INTERESTING LETTER.

(From the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.)

In crossing Lake Pontchartrain, I saw an old Indian chief, ninety years old, suckling a boy of nine years old. The old man had one large left breast, much larger than a woman's. I had never before heard or read of the like case. His granddaughter died, leaving this infant a few days old, with no other persons in the wigwam or near. The old chief, to still the cries of the papoose, placed it to his breast, and lactation began to secrete from that day, and for nine years he had suckled that boy. His right breast was like other men's.

This circumstance is proof of Professor Brittan's theory of will power. We can perceive the deep paternal yearnings of the old man, holding the last of his race in his arms, and the silent prayer of his soul going out to the "Great Spirit," whom he worshipped, and his concentrated thought produced the result.

A very small remnant of his tribe are yet living on the borders of the lake, and visit the city twice a year, to dispose of baskets, dried herbs, deer-skins, &c. and purchase blankets, calico, beads, paint, &c. They are never known to visit the city during an epidemic. They have a perfect knowledge of the medicinal properties of the vegetable kingdom, and are spiritual mediums without knowing it. To illustrate this, an old squaw, 120 years old, who makes an annual visit to a lady friend of mine (who is a fine medium), always comes direct to this lady, wheresoever she may be residing at the time, evidently led by the spirit-guide. In her broken language, she speaks of seeing and talking with her tribe gone long since to the "happy hunting grounds," and says they direct her how to find her white friends.

N. C.

New Orleans, Louisiana.

### REVELATIONS.

I UNDERSTAND, then, by inspiration, the spontaneous revelations of the reason; and I call these revelations divine, because I hold the reason to be divine. Its voice is the voice of God, and what reveals without any aid from human agency, is really and truly a divine revelation. They in whom this spontaneous reason is active in a high degree, raising them above their fellows into closer communion with God, are really and truly prophets of God. They know more of God, and can tell us more of God, than the rest of us. Rightly, then, are they revered as inspired messengers. Rightly, too, are their words received by the human race as authoritative, and respected as records of divine revelations.

By a peculiar prerogative, not only each individual is making daily advances in the sciences, and may make advances in morality (which is the science, by way of eminence, of living well and happy), but all mankind together are making a continual progress, in proportion as the universe grows older; so that the whole human race, during the course of so many ages, may be considered as one man, who never ceases to live and learn.—PASCAL.

### THE OMNIPRESENCE OF DEITY.

THE question is sometimes asked, Where is the universe? Where is your resolution, intention? In the bosom of your consciousness. So the universe, being God's will or intention, exists in the consciousness of the Deity. The bosom of the infinite consciousness is its place, its residence, its home. God, then, is all round and within it, as you are all round and within your intention. Here is the omnipresence of the Deity. You cannot go where God is not, unless you cease to exist. Not because God fills all space, as we sometimes say, thus giving Him, as it were, extension, but because He embosoms all space, as we embosom our thoughts in our own consciousness. This view of creation also shows us the value of the universe, and teaches us to respect it. It is God's will, God's intention, and is divine, so far forth as it really exists, and therefore is holy, and should be revered. Get at a man's intentions, and you get at his real character. A man's intentions are the revelations of himself; they show you what the man is. The universe is the revelation of the Deity. So far as we read and understand it, do we read and understand God. When I am penetrating into the heavens, and tracing the revolutions of the stars, I am learning the will of God; when I penetrate the earth, and explore its strata, study the minutest particles of matter and their various combinations, I am mastering the science of theology; when I listen to the music of the morning songsters, I am listening to the voice of God; and it is His beauty I see when my eye runs over the varied landscape or the "flower-enamelled mead."

### SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I BELIEVE I see very clearly the signs of the times. Men are not precisely what they were. Knowledge is no longer the exclusive property of the clergy. The laity have been to school, and are going to school; and it is shrewdly suspected by some that there is no special virtue in the imposition of hands, or in gown and band, to enable one to see and know the truth. It is beginning to be believed that humanity in all its integrity is in every member of the race, that each member, therefore, has the right and the power to form his own creed. The church may war against this new state of things, but she will by so doing only hasten the day of her dissolution. The human race is already escaping from her dominion. It demands a reason, and she must give it, or be discarded. She must recognize the authority of pure reason in matters of religion as well as natural science, or she will go the way of all the earth. I say this in no Titanic spirit, but with a deep respect for the Church, and an earnest wish for her future glory.

### A DIFFICULTY FOR THE ANTI-SPIRITUALIST.

Most people, I apprehend, fancy that all supernatural revelations from God have ceased, and that Christ teaches now only through the medium of the written word. But are they aware that to believe so is as good as to deny both God and Christ? To say that God has discontinued his revelations to man, is only saying in other words that all intercourse between Him and us is broken off; which is virtually saying that we are without God; at least, that there is for us no living God, but only a God that was, but is not. A God that was, but is not, is no God at all. To say that there was a Christ who taught men, but is not now, is to assert merely a dead Christ, not a living—*is, in fact, to deny the resurrection.*

### REMARKABLE CASE OF PREMONITION IN A DREAM

WHEN Dr. Harvey, one of the physicians' College in London, being a young man, went to travel towards Padua, he went to Dover with several others, and showed his pass as the rest did, to the Governor there. The Governor told him he must not go, but he must keep him prisoner. The Doctor desired to know "for what reason, how he had transgressed?" "Well, it was his will to have it so." The packet-boat hoisted sail in the evening, which was very clear, and the Doctor's companions in it. There ensued a terrible storm, and the packet-boat and all the passengers were drowned. The next day the sad news was brought to Dover. The Doctor was unknown to the Governor, both by name and face; but the night before, the Governor had a perfect vision in a dream, of Doctor Harvey, who came to pass over to Calais, and that he had a warning to stop him. This the governor told the Doctor the next day.

A FEW earnest working men, Spiritualists, hold meetings at the Alliance Hall, Old-street, on Friday and Sunday evenings. We wish them every spiritual good.

**AN ADDRESS** will be delivered at the Spiritual Lyceum, on Sunday Evening, November 26th, 1865, at 7 o'clock. Subject—"Martin Luther, and the Spirit of the Reformation," by Mr. H. N. Livermore. A Collection will be made to defray Expenses.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

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**ANDREW DAVIDSON,** Liverpool.—We have received your letter and have an answer ready, but as you did not send your address, we cannot forward it to you.

We have received from the "Banner of Light" some photographs of Mr. Luther Colby, one of its Editors, and of Mrs. Conant, the medium for Sealed Letters, for which our thanks are due. A photograph of a Spirit-portrait of the late American President, by the medium of the Chicago Artesian Well, is likewise received with thanks.

**W. WALTERS,** Will shah.—We cannot assist you. Spiritualism is not likely to come to you in your own way.

**JOHN MURRAY SPEAR** has returned to his old address—146, Albany-street, Regent's-park, where he will be glad to receive visitors, as usual.

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