

SPIRITUAL TRACTS, No. 6.

SPEAKING

IN

M A N Y T O N G U E S.

By JUDGE EDMONDS.

New York:

1858.

SPEAKING IN MANY TONGUES.

———— INSTITUTE, ———— October 22, 1857.

HON. J. W. EDMONDS, NEW YORK :

Dear Sir—It is the custom of this Institution to have most of the leading religious periodicals and journals in its reading-room, for the use of its students.

A committee was appointed a short time since for the purpose of writing for such as were deemed proper. My request that some spiritual works should be written for, was unfavorably received. The curator, however, gave his consent to have such journals in the reading-room as I might select. I wrote for the *Spiritual Telegraph*, and Mr. Partridge has kindly consented to send it to me. The custom is to send it to the Institution free of charge. I do not know how well this may suit your financial views, but permit me to request you to send me the *Sacred Circle* for this purpose. I feel a delicacy in asking this, but the assurance that you feel an interest in promoting the important truths you so ably and fearlessly advocate, leads me to hope you will send me a regular copy for the above-mentioned purpose.

This is an ——— Institution, and quite liberal in sentiment. The professors, however, object to the *name* of Spiritualism, although they teach the communion of the Great Spirit ; and I think if they fully understood the truths of the new philosophy, they would unhesitatingly indorse it.

It has been but a few mornings since that a question arose in discussing the passage of Scripture, 1 Cor. 12 ch., where Paul speaks of the diversity of spiritual gifts. I explained it accord-

ing to spiritual phenomena, and mentioned some cases of persons speaking in foreign tongues in our day. The Professor objected, explaining my examples by the mediums having (as he supposed) previously heard those languages read or spoken; but promised me that he would indorse the doctrine when I would bring him a case well authenticated (by three or more reliable witnesses) of any person or medium speaking in a language of which they were entirely ignorant, never having read, heard read, or heard spoken such language, during their previous life.

I feel assured there are such cases, although I have none at command; and I hope you will not feel that I am taking too great liberty by requesting you to send me such a case. If you have such a one (or a similar one equally strong) in any convenient form for sending, as I feel an interest not only as a matter of pride, but as a matter of principle, in convincing him; and if you will be instrumental in assisting me, you may rest assured that you will receive the warmest thanks of

Respectfully, A. D. BYLES.

NEW YORK, *October 27, 1857.*

Dear Sir—It is one of the strange things of the day, that persons of education and standing, whose lives are devoted to the pursuit of science, and who are engaged in the education of our youth, should be so profoundly ignorant of what is taking place all around them.

There are, perhaps, good reasons why it is so, as regards Spiritualism. Both the secular and religious newspapers of the day have refused to publish anything on the subject, except it be an attack upon it, and, therefore, the opportunities of the world at large to learn anything about it, are necessarily contracted; and then, again, when this general practice is so far departed from as to publish anything, there is a class of people who, for conscience' sake, refuse to read.

In which of these positions your Professor is, of course I can not say; but he must be in one or the other, because the fact

which he doubts has been published to the world, in such manner that if it were false, that could easily have been shown.

My second volume on "Spiritualism" was published in 1855, and several thousand copies have been sold. In the introduction to that volume, written by myself, and having to it my own signature, and of course my voucher for its truth, and on page 45, is a statement of my daughter's having spoken several different languages, and particularly of her conversation with a Greek gentleman.

As you may not have the volume, I annex a copy of the passage.

But it contains *my* evidence alone, for I have not appended the certificates of its verity from those who were present, nor do I mean to do so; for it is to me a matter of entire indifference whether any one believes it or not. I discharge my duty by publishing the truth, as I know it to be, and leave the matter to its fate.

I published it, however, here, where I am known—where my character for veracity is well known—where I am surrounded by the very persons in whose presence the thing occurred, and where, if my statement is untrue, its falsity can easily be established.

Your Professor is wrong, however, in one respect. He says he would indorse the doctrine, if the fact should be authenticated by three or more reliable witnesses. He would not do so, you may rely upon it. He can have it authenticated by fifty reliable witnesses, if he will. But he would not indorse the doctrine, if such authentication even was before him.

He surely does not mean to say he would "indorse" unless he believed, and he surely knows that belief is not matter of volition. He can not believe at pleasure. He may profess to, but actual belief does not flow from his volition. Let him try to persuade himself that the sun does not shine at mid-day, and see what a piece of work he will make of it.

I do not mean to impute to him any intentional misstatement in the matter, but I understand his remark as a mere expression of his opinion, as to what he now honestly thinks would be the

effect of the evidence on his mind. But in that respect he is deceived, or, at least, I hope he is ; for I would not give a copper for that belief in our beautiful faith, that is founded only on a knowledge of its marvels. It would be a house built on the sand, and could not stand the storms that would assail it. And then, such is not the office of those marvels. They do not come for such purpose. Their legitimate province is simply to awaken attention to the subject, and to induce the intelligent mind to investigate it. Blot from memory or from existence all these external manifestations, and then come the philosophy and the religion of spiritual intercourse, which *will* work conviction for themselves, in any candid mind that will give itself a fair chance. That is the important aspect in which we are to view the matter, and the manifestations are to be regarded of moment only as they call attention to the subject.

I should pity any mind that should believe on the manifestations alone, for it would be eternally in a sea of doubt ; but resting on the rock of reason and philosophy, it would attain firm faith, and with it, calm repose.

Beside, I have heard this assertion made so often, and seen its results, that I feel authorized to anticipate what would be the result in your Professor's case. I said the same thing myself several times in the early stages of my inquiries, and when the fact came on which I had promised or hoped to found a belief, I was surprised to find myself still a doubter.

I had an illustration of it in the case of Governor —— (now of ——). He was told at my house of the manifestation there of the loss of the steamer *Artic*. That was strange, he acknowledged ; but there might be some explanation of it in that single instance. If, however, it had come through three or four different persons unconnected with each other, then he would believe. I told him he would not, but he insisted he would. It was not long before he had the evidence that it had come just as he had suggested, and through four different channels, unconnected with, and unknown to each other. Did he believe then ? Not a whit ! and for the reason, as I suppose, that belief is not a matter of volition, nor is it the province of a marvel to produce a conviction.

Pray, how many converts to Christianity were made by the marvels of the days of Jesus? Of the thousands whom he fed, do we read that any were made believers thereby? And what, on the feast of the Pentecost, added three thousand souls to the believers? Was it the apostles speaking in many tongues, or the beautiful doctrine which Peter unfolded?

No, my friend; we deceive ourselves when we say or think that we should indorse the doctrine of Spiritualism as soon as we become convinced of the reality of the manifestations. Something more is demanded to work conviction in the rational mind; and we who believe will be likely to mislead our hearers when we make of those manifestations an end, and not a means. Confine them to their legitimate purpose of awakening investigation, and they become useful ministers to the truth. Let them be all in all, and they become its masters without the power of due government, but with the power of working much mischief.

Let me not, however, lose sight of your request, in my fear that too much consequence may be attached to its subject. I will annex hereto, not merely an extract from the book I referred to, but also some extracts from my records of other instances, with explanations, etc.

I give you these extracts as my own personal experience alone. But there are other instances which have been published, as known to others, of which I will not venture to speak.

Of what happened under my observation, I can freely speak, for *I* know whether I speak the truth or not. Yours truly,

MR. A. D. BYLES.

J. W. EDMONDS.

EXTRACT FROM VOL. 2, SPIRITUALISM, P. 45.

"She was next developed to speak different languages. She knows no language but her own, and a little smattering of boarding-school French; yet she has spoken in nine or ten different tongues, sometimes for an hour at a time, with the ease and fluency of a native. It is not unfrequent that foreigners converse with their Spirit-friends through her, in their own language. A recent instance occurred, where a Greek gentleman had several interviews, and for several hours at a time carried on the conversation on his part in Greek, and received his answers sometimes in that language, and sometimes in English. Yet until then she had never heard a word of modern Greek spoken."

The foregoing is my account, in very general terms, of my

daughter's mediumship. Let me here specify some of the instances more particularly :

One evening there came to my house a young girl from one of the Eastern States. She had come to New York to seek her fortune. Her education was that which can be obtained at a common country school. She was a medium, and was accompanied by the Spirit of a Frenchman, who was very troublesome to her. He could speak through her, but only in French. For more than an hour a conversation went on between my daughter and the Spirit, speaking through Miss Dowd. They both conducted the conversation entirely in French, and both spoke with the rapidity and fluency of native Frenchmen. Miss Dowd's French was a *wretched patois* of some of the Southern provinces of France, while Laura's was pure Parisian.

This occurred in my library, where some five or six persons were present ; and Miss Dowd is still living in this city.

On another occasion, some Polish gentlemen, entire strangers to her, sought an interview with Laura, and during it, she several times spoke in their language words and sentences which she did not understand, but they did, and a good deal of the conversation on their part was in Polish, and they received answers, sometimes in English, and sometimes in Polish. The English she understood, but the other she did not, though they seemed to understand it perfectly.

This can be verified only by Laura's statement, for no one was present but her and the two gentlemen, and they did not give their names.

The incident with the Greek gentleman was this : One evening, when some twelve or fifteen persons were in my parlor, Mr. E. D. Green, an artist of this city, was shown in, accompanied by a gentleman whom he introduced as Mr. Evangelides, of Greece. He spoke broken English, but Greek fluently. Ere long, a Spirit spoke to him through Laura, in English, and said so many things to him, that he identified him as a friend who had died at his house a few years before, but of whom none of us had ever heard.

Occasionally, through Laura, the Spirit would speak a word

or a sentence in Greek, until Mr. E. inquired if he could be understood if he spoke in Greek? The residue of the conversation for more than an hour, was, on his part, entirely in Greek, and on hers, sometimes in Greek, and sometimes in English. At times, Laura would not understand what was the idea conveyed either by her or him. At other times she would understand him, though he spoke in Greek, and herself when uttering Greek words.

He was sometimes very much affected, so much so as to attract the attention of the company, some of whom begged to know what it was that caused so much emotion. He declined to tell, but after the conversation ended, he told us that he had never before witnessed any Spirit-manifestations, and that he had, during the conversation, tried experiments to test that which was so novel to him. Those experiments were in speaking of subjects which he knew Laura must be ignorant of, and in frequently and suddenly changing the topic from domestic to political affairs, from philosophy to theology, and so on. In answer to our inquiries—for none of us knew Greek—he assured us that his Greek must have been understood, and her Greek was correct.

He afterward had many other interviews, in which Greek conversations occurred.

At this interview, which I have described, there were present Mr. Green, Mr. Evangelides, Mr. Allen, President of a Boston bank, and two gentlemen whose names I forget, but can easily ascertain, who were large railroad contractors in one of the Western States, my daughter Laura, my niece Jennie Keyes, myself, and several others whom I do not remember.

My niece, of whom I have spoken, has often sung Italian, improvising both words and tune, yet she is entirely unacquainted with the language. Of this, I suppose, there are a hundred instances.

One day, my daughter and niece came into my library and began a conversation with me in Spanish, one speaking a part of a sentence and the other the residue. They were influenced, as I found, by the Spirit of a person whom I had known when

in Central America, and reference was made to many things which had occurred to me there, of which I knew they were as ignorant as they were of Spanish.

To this only we three can testify.

Laura has spoken to me in Indian, in the Chippewa and Monomonic tongues. I knew the language, because I had been two years in the Indian country.

I have thus enumerated Indian, Spanish, French, Greek and English, that she has spoken. I have also heard her in Italian, Portuguese, Latin and Hungarian, and in some that I did not know.

The instances are too numerous for me to recall the names of the persons present.

I will now mention instances through others than her.

A man by the name of Finney, a carpenter, of very limited education, living near Cleveland, Ohio, was once giving me a communication, for he was a speaking medium. The subject was self-knowledge, and while I was writing it down, I spoke (*sotto voce*) *Gnothi scauton*. He paused, repeated the Greek, and added, "Yes, know thyself."

Mrs. Helen Leeds, of 45 Carver-street, Boston, a medium of some note in those parts, has very often spoken Chinese. She is of very limited education, and never heard a word of that language spoken.

This occurred so often with her in a former stage of her mediumship, that I suppose I may say that there are thousands who have witnessed it. I have myself witnessed it at least a hundred times.

In the early stages of my investigations I kept very full minutes of all that occurred. From my records I make this extract :

" ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH INTERVIEW.

" Nov. 3, 1852.

" There was a special meeting of the Circle of Hope last evening, to meet some of our friends from Albany. Beside the members of the circle [the circle consisted of Mr. Sweet and wife, Mr. Wood and wife, Mr. Ira Hutchinson, Mr. Comes and myself] there were present Mrs. Shepherd and Mrs. Haight of Albany ; Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Mettler, of Hartford, Conn. ; Mrs. J. B. Mettler, of New York, and Mrs. Heath, sister of Mrs. Ambler.

" Mr. Ambler was soon thrown into the magnetic state, etc. *

" After he came out of the trance-state, Mrs. Shepherd was affected, and spoke in several languages. She occasionally spoke English. * * * * *

And she continued for an hour or two thus to speak in some foreign languages. It seemed to us to be Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese.

"Mrs. Mettler was then thrown into a trance-state, and she was developed for the first time in her life to speak in diverse tongues. She spoke in German, and what seemed to be Indian.

"And they, two, *i. e.* Mrs. Shepherd and Mrs. Mettler, then for some time conversed together in these foreign languages.

"Occasionally they spoke in English, and sometimes in broken English."

I have looked in my records, but do not find it, though I very well remember the fact, that Mrs. Sweet, of this city, another of our mediums, of very little education, has often spoken French.

[Since writing the above, I learn that she has also spoken Italian and Hebrew.]

I have, a number of times, witnessed a cognate manifestation, when the communication was through the rappings, and was given in a foreign language, though the medium knew only the English.

And I have heard Gov. Tallmadge's daughter, at my house, speak in German, several persons being present.

I have thus gathered together my own experience on this topic. I have never done so before, and confess myself somewhat surprised to behold how large the sum total is. And yet my experience embraces a very small part of that which has been given, and less, if I remember right, than what has been actually published to the world.

I had hoped that in our country, where general information is so wide-spread, where this subject of spiritual intercourse has been a matter of investigation for at least ten years, and where the witnesses to its existence are numbered by hundreds of thousands, the time had gone by when it was necessary to pause in our progress to prove that existence. I had hoped that the time had arrived when the intelligent minds of our country were prepared to use the instrumentalities, whose existence can not be ignored by any well-informed mind, for the purpose of inquiring whether there is not something in its philosophy and its revelations worthy of the attention of the loftiest intellect.

It seems, however, that I am mistaken, and that we must yet awhile trudge along in our infant school. So be it. The time will come, however, when better things will be, and the Truth make its own way, even to the educated mind.

P. S. I now add to the foregoing : November 1.

To-day, at our Conference, I mentioned this subject, and asked if any of those present could give me any further information ?

The attendance was unusually small, there not being over a hundred present, but I received the following reply to my inquiry :

Dr. John F. Gray mentioned having had communications through the rappings and table tipplings in the Malay, Hebrew, and Spanish languages. The communications were spelled out, letter by letter, and written down. He obtained translations of all these from persons versed in the different languages. He has records of it all, specifying where it occurred, and who were present. He will probably give me an extract from them. If he does, I will send it to you.

He mentioned one instance, where Professor Bush, who is a Hebrew scholar, was present, and he called the Hebrew alphabet, and wrote the communication down at the time, and afterward translated it, no one present but himself being acquainted with that alphabet.

Dr. Abraham D. Wilson, another physician of high standing, stated that the late Mr. Henry Inman, the *artist*, told him that when his daughter was developed as a medium, she repeatedly spoke Spanish, of which she had no knowledge.

Mr. David Bryson stated that at a recent circle, where Mrs. Tucker was the medium, and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel G. Taylor and others were present, the medium spoke fluently an unknown tongue, and conversed with a Dane, who was present, in the Danish language.

Mr. Taylor was at the Conference, and confirmed Mr. Bryson's account.

Mrs. Richardson relates a recent incident of a woman named Greenleaf, who spoke French. And Mrs. French, the medium, well known here, and at Pittsburgh, stated that through her the Spirits had spoken nine different languages.

She relates a recent instance, where Mr. Henry C. Vail being present, she was addressed by an Italian female and led by her to a part of the town where some fourteen Italians were huddled together in one room, in a great state of destitution and sickness, and where Italian was spoken through her to them with entire ease. And she mentioned an occasion at Washington, where in the presence of Governor Tallmadge and Mr. Giddings, M. C., from Ohio, she spoke French fluently.

All these are cases where the parties speaking knew only one language—the English.

This is the gathering of one afternoon only. I can form no idea of the extent of the evidence that might be gathered by a more extended inquiry.

But is it not enough for all, except those who would not believe, though one arose from the dead ?