

# TIPPING HIS TABLES:

RAMBLINGS AFTER A RAMBLER;

EXPOSURES OF AN EXPOSER.

ELICITED BY

"AN EXPOSE OF SPIRITUALISM BY REV. JOHN GREGORY,  
NORTHFIELD, VT., 1872."

BY

ALLEN PUTNAM.

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Dear Sir,  
The Rev. Sullivan,  
of Providence,  
(Nov. 1823.)

# TIPPING HIS TABLES.

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## INTRODUCTION.

A STRAY copy of Mr. Gregory's pamphlet of about an hundred pages has reached Boston and fallen into our hands. One copy will suffice for this vicinity. We find it composed mainly of extracts—some from the writings of Spiritualists, others from eccentrics and renegades, and still others from philosophers, pseudo or genuine—collected, commented upon and published by one who confesses that he is "somewhat prejudiced against Spiritualism by what he has seen and heard of it," and also "to a pet aversion to the whole system"—a pet which it obviously pleases him to nurture well, and allow very full indulgence in acting out all its impulses.

Our only knowledge of this compiler and commentator is derived from the pages before us. In them he manifests considerable smartness, a keen scent for rubbish, and some force in dealing random blows. His knowledge of genuine Spiritualism, however, is so faulty that he aims at little else than such excrescences and appendages as have but slight, if any, connection with its vital and abiding parts. He has been a pains-taking collector of ultraisms and abnormalities, and exhibits a plentiful mass of them.

Mr. Gregory owns a more versatile brain, is moved at times by a more genial spirit, gets glimpses of broader views of man and Nature, and has a more sympathetic heart, than most writers who attempt to expose Spiritualism. He says, "If it should appear to the reader that I am lacking in *patience*

while discussing this subject, I can plead that I have more of that article than the majority of mankind, who call Spiritualism a 'humbug.' No one will question the *quantity* of his patience who notices the extent of his scavengings. But scavenger work may be performed by men intrinsically very clean and good. Notwithstanding the foulness of much of the contents of the *Exposé*, its author may be quite a genial, good fellow, and such we imagine him to be.

The current of his remarks bears along on its surface many straws indicating the directions in which a portion of popular thought is running. We notice and use the work mainly as a suggester of prevalent misconceptions and lack of information. It omits to grapple with fundamental facts and principles, and of course provokes no attempt at refutation in the mass. It partly surprises and partly grieves us by presenting Spiritualism with only about the same fairness with which one would exhibit Christianity by collecting and putting forth prevailingly the worst sayings of the eccentric, fanatical and deluded members embraced in all the sects of Christendom (including the Mormons) as the main legitimate results of Christian faith and teachings. It surprises from its implied assumption by a sagacious man that such stuff can be either helpful to any cause worthy the efforts of one who prefixes Rev. to his name, or crippling to those whom he assails. It grieves us, because it shows *induced* perversion and contraction of vision, unsuspected by himself, leading a well-intentioned man along the ways of great unfairness by misconceptions and omissions, and thus to *injustices*.

As said before, the work consists mostly of extracts from other writers. These are accompanied by the compiler's expressions of dissatisfaction and reprobation in some cases, and of approval and commendation in others. He makes little attempt at presentation of the basic facts of Spiritualism, at analysis of them, or argument from either them or from anything else. Purblind zeal seems to be his guide much more than clear-sighted reason.

## COMMENDATIONS AND CRITICISMS.

We begin by quoting several commendable statements. Mr. Gregory says : "The sincere Spiritualist can no more help believing in Spiritualism than can the Shaker in Shakerism or the Mormon in Mormonism. . . . All these people are *constituted* for their different shades of belief. . . . We can account for people's believing or not believing in Spiritualism, in a great measure, by the development of their organs. . . . I have charity for the ordinary men and women who honestly believe 'Spiritualism;' who are so constituted that it is almost a reality to them." "I do it" (his work of compiling his *exposé*) "with no feelings of hatred or ill-will against its votaries, many of whom I respect and believe to be honest and conscientious." Such statements have so much the ring of sincerity, that we take it as fair *prima facie* evidence that they come from a kindly heart.

We might query whether one's belief is not quite as efficient in developing particular phrenological organs, as the developed condition of the organs is in determining the belief; but we care not to discuss that point. Settle it either way, or leave it unsettled, still the author permits us to conclude that a man's existing physical and mental constitution determines what appears to *him* as true and what false; in other words, that genuine *belief* is not the result of choice, but is determined by the preponderance of evidence as weighed on each one's own mental scales. This position is ours as well as his; and it is ground on which charity can flourish and expand. From it we can see that the peculiar *constitution* of this author, including his phrenological development, so shapes his view of facts and principles that he honestly assails something which he believes to be Spiritualism, while those of different *constitution*, occasioned by more knowledge of the subject, perceive that he leaves Spiritualism *proper* without attack.

We take pleasure in quoting other statements that indicate his kindness. He says: "I do not propose to make an attack upon the idea that spirits have power to revisit their friends on earth—a pleasing thought, comforting to mourners, and in no way connected with rappings and table-tippings." The "power," and, by implication, the act of spirit return is not assailed. Whether the "rappings and table-tippings" are assailed is not expressly *stated*; yet, since we find them ascribed to magnetism in one part of the work, and nowhere specifically censured, the conclusion seems fair that these also are not among the things attacked. This conclusion may or may not be strengthened by his distinct statement that it is the "system . . . we condemn." These two facts, then—the one that spirits return, and the other that there occur mysterious physical phenomena produced by some occult forces—are exempted from exposure. Thank you, sir, for leaving the soul and body of Spiritualism intact of your own accord, and attacking only its incidental adjuncts.

Pardon us if we probe your logic when you say that the comforting thought of spirit return is "in no way connected with rappings and table-tippings." "In no way connected?" Pray tell us what else than the legitimate sequences and evolvments of spirit-manifestations and utterances, are the vast and rapid increase and spread of not only the idea but the faith and even knowledge that spirits do return and do comfort thousands and thousands of mourning hearts? The Rochester Knockings, and their numerous kindred successors, have been and are opening inlets for innumerable assuagements of grief and despair. "In *no way* connected?" What? Is the child in no way connected with its parents? Owing to them nothing less than its own existence, that debt constitutes a necessary and indissoluble connection. All over the land there exist thoughts comforting to mourners, which are the offspring of spirit-rappings, table-tippings and other cognate acts, and, when not restrained by unwise counsels and erroneous faiths, the comforted hearts gladly acknowledge

and "honor the father and mother" of such welcome thoughts. However *humble* the parents of such children may be, they are the world's benefactors; so that any benevolent tongue or pen that reproaches them knows not what it is doing—its work is neither wise nor beneficent. Mr. Gregory does not reproach them, but denies their connection with comforting thoughts which are their children.

The sagacity must be drowsy which fails to perceive any connection between cause and its effects; between parent and child; between a tree and its fruit. Comforting thoughts grow on the boughs of spirit-rappings, and the good quality of that fruit vindicates the tree.

The comforting thought that spirits return, together with the phenomena which produce that thought, are most important parts—are essential elements, are necessary constituents of prevalent Spiritualism, so that an *exposé* of what remains after these have been dropped, is as meagre and pointless as "the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out."

"The system" is the great offence. What is the *system*? The author does not explain it, but leaves the reader, if he wishes to know, the labor of inferring it from the things attacked or exposed. And what are these? Little else than a few Spiritualists—yes, a few *ists*, with little of the *ism*, are seemingly "the system" which the author attacks and condemns.

Scattered all over Christendom, spirits during the last twenty years have been manifesting their presence among men, and proving it by "wonders and signs." The forms and modes of these manifestations and the diverse qualities and purport of world-wide spirit-teachings and influence have never been systematized; they still preserve their native distribution and diversities. Certain Spiritualists may have their limited individual systems, but Spiritualists as a body have none that we are aware of, and Spiritualism, as we view it, is not, in any proper sense, a "*system*." When we exclude from it the "comforting thought" of spirit return, together

with the works which generate that thought, we thereby exclude any proper *ism*, for we exclude the most essential elements for a system of Spiritualism, when time shall have prepared the materials for its construction.

#### A. J. DAVIS.

An oversight of the critic in making Spiritualism a "system," while thinking and speaking of a few *ists*, led him, as it does many others, to make an inappropriate application of sectarian usages. He says, "As we look to the founders of the various systems of philosophy that have illuminated the world for explanation of their favorite theories, so do we look to A. J. Davis for light on the subject of Spiritualism."

Had the exposé been fairly familiar with the general literature of Spiritualism, or even with A. J. Davis's own writings alone, he would have known that it is not only a principle, but a practice, with Spiritualists to call no man master—to have no needful faith *in common*, beyond belief that spirits do return and communicate. Each writer is understood to speak for himself alone, and any attempt or appearance of attempt to set up leadership, or to exercise strict authority over the faith or habits of others, is offensive.

Though the vastly profound and comprehensive philosophy put forth and expounded through the lips of the youthful and untaught Davis, in 1846-7, embodied in manuscript more than a full year before the Rochester Knockings commenced, and published to the world in 1851, under the title of "Nature's Divine Revelations," can be properly referred to as a manifestation of what an interior human mind may see and comprehend, when eliminated from its body by a powerful magnetizer, yet that work is hardly a sample of modern *Spiritualism*. It is a product of simple seership.

Our author himself ascribes the *origin* of Spiritualism to the Fox girls, whose first recognition of the presence of unseen intelligent rappers was at the close of March, 1848. And

yet the first and greatest work through Davis—specially noticed by quoting what Prof. Dods says of it—had all been written more than an entire year previous to that date. In what way, good sir, do you make *that work* explanatory of what did not come into existence till near fourteen months after its own completion? How?

That marvelous work, "Nature's Divine Revelations," does not claim to be the utterances of any departed spirit. It is simply the perceptions of Davis when freed from the blinding and hampering powers of the grosser body, and thus enabled to see or sense causes and effects in their more immediate connection—a condition primarily induced by a human magnetizer but subsequently coming without such aid.

Both the Northfield minister and the world at large have misunderstood the peculiarities of the Poughkeepsie Seer. He is and has been a seer, and not a medium used by spirits. His own faculties are at times so opened that he becomes a beholder and describer of truths and scenes in the spiritual realms, so that his teachings may be regarded as his own with nearly as much propriety as a preacher's sermon is called *his* own. Davis may be and no doubt is a Spiritualist—that is, a believer that spirits do control and speak and act through some other human organisms. His teachings are in general harmony with many from the spirit-spheres, and well may be, for he drinks in thought from fountains there. Taught at that higher school, he distrusts the supernal origin of much that claims to come from spirits, and has avowed and published years ago his belief, if not knowledge, that a large percentage of what passes under the head of Spiritualism originates below, and is of the earth earthy. Therefore if he, instead of his traducers, had been looked to "for light on his favorite theories," our reviewer would have seen that very much of what he himself has called Spiritualism is ignored by Davis as being such.

We by no means intend to deny that we personally, or to doubt that many other Spiritualists, as well as hosts who are

not Spiritualists, have received much beneficent illumination through the Davis window, or to disparage him in any respect. We are but expressing our inability to see how any man, well informed upon Spiritualism, can be loyal to truth and fact if he presents Davis, even by implication, as either founder or authoritative expounder of it—taken as one general system—or as we prefer to speak of it, as one unsystematized and still increasing mass, waiting the future action of science and philosophy before the fullness of time for its befitting systematization can arrive.

Can the reader now credit us when we state that the author of the *Exposé*, after putting Davis forth as the great expounder of Spiritualism, makes not a single quotation directly from his voluminous works, nor gives any summary or extended specimen of what they contain? After such an heralding of this seer, the reader naturally expects to be told somewhat fully what the seer has revealed to the world, and receive some comments upon the teachings, accompanied by reasons for approval or condemnation of them. Any such expectation is not gratified by our author.

We have here a sample of shunning the *ism* and berating the *ist*. But even the *ist* is handled by proxy, for when A. J. Davis himself is encountered, the bookmaker, monkey-like, uses the paws of another to poke him out to view and handle him. Such roguery was wise, for had the exposé used his own hands, the emanations from the bright, genial, smiling, happy Davis, might have become a soap that would soon render his hands too delicate for the work he was prosecuting. Contact with the paws he did use, belonging to Dr. Ellis, author of "Free Love and its Votaries," involved no danger of increasing delicacy.

A notable point in that quoted account of Davis, and the only one there indicative of his intellectual achievements, is that the shoemaker of Poughkeepsie beat the "Prof. of Hebrew and Oriental Literature in New York," viz., Prof. Bush. Such a result of conflict between such contestants reminds one

of an unlearned boy who, "in the midst of Doctors," so argued that all who heard him "were astonished at his understanding and answers." Prof. Bush in his specialities ranked among the first scholars in the country—so that if a youthful, uneducated shoemaker beat him in literary argument, one is much inclined to suspect that the shoemaker had help from invisible sources. If Prof. Bush charged Davis with plagiarism from Swedenborg, in composing his Great Harmonia, and Davis successfully refuted the charge, then the first and most expanded allegation against him is that he was too smart for the acute and learned Professor. Davis can survive such an *exposé* as that, and it won't much lessen his influence or the public confidence in him as an eminent *illuminé*.

From the book we learn that, "Prof. Dods says: Davis has not done justice to the Bible; . . . he calls it 'Excellent Soft Bark,' . . . and ranks it on a par with heathen bibles!" Can it be that Dods has here done injustice to Davis? We quote directly from Davis as follows: "The word Bible signifies merely a *book*"—a fact known to all students of Greek, but not generally by young, illiterate shoemakers, such as Davis was when he uttered it. He however perceived its derivation and original meaning, for he goes on to say—"it is derived from the Greek *biblos*, which signifies the soft bark of a tree upon which the ancients wrote their thoughts. To this was subsequently prefixed the word 'holy,' which term was employed by the Jews to express 'excellence.' Thus the term 'Holy Bible' might be rendered 'Excellent Soft Bark,' and then the world would understand their original signification." Now is it doing *injustice to the Bible* to give the world a succinct philological exposition of the original signification of the terms by which it is described? We fail to see it, but we do fancy that there is some injustice in opening a door for inference that Davis used the terms *Excellent Soft Bark* in derision, when he was giving only sober and instructive *history*. And how does Davis rank "the Bible on a par with *heathen bibles*?" It is thus: "The Hindoo has a Bible which he

venerates as much as you do yours. So also has the Moham-  
medan and the Persian." Not an intimation is here given of  
the relative *rank* of these several bibles, but only that they  
are equally *venerated* by those who possess them—a fact  
which we think any one will readily admit. Fairness and  
justice sometimes slip their hold upon Christian-taught minds,  
and leave them to the sway of their opposites.

Under the view which Mr. Gregory takes of Davis and of  
Spiritualism, it was *natural* for *him* to look to Davis for *light*  
on that subject. But since all that he exhibits of the light  
which Davis's teachings furnish is taken second-hand, and  
consists principally of Dr. Ellis's allegation that Davis refuted  
the charges of Prof. Bush, and secondly of the misleading  
presentation of Davis's purely historical statements about the  
Bible copied from Dods, who can be surprised, should the  
fact be that Mr. Gregory never looked into Davis's own works  
at all, never turned *his own* eyes toward that light—never  
scanned its revealments—never felt its warmth—*knew* nothing  
of it, and yet conveys innuendoes that it is misleading and  
baneful? What results follow when the blind leads the blind,  
the whole world knows.

#### LIMITED RESEARCH.

A great fault apparent throughout the *Exposé* is, that the  
author's search and cullings, while collecting materials for  
his work, were confined almost exclusively to the scum that  
has been brought up to the surface on the waters of Christen-  
dom, whilst the contents in the Christian cauldron have been  
fermenting under the action of clarifying substances which  
Spiritualism has been dropping into it. He mistook the elim-  
inated impurities of prevalent faiths and modes of life for  
their clarifying agent. The froth and scum that come to the  
surface are often very unlike either the mass of the liquid  
from which they are evolved, or the injections which bring  
latent impurities to the surface. They are no fair sample of

what the clarifying agent is, or what the clarified product will be.

How far this writer has made himself acquainted with what spirits generally say amid the quiet and harmony of orderly and religious home circles, which are numerous all through the country, or with what the more religious Spiritualists write and teach, is not apparent. We think, however, that he was gleaning from a Nazareth in which he had no conception that any good could be found, and therefore sought for none, and was careful to neither see nor pick up any. The fact that he quotes most copiously the *outré* opinions and doctrines of a few who have diverged the most widely of any from popular theological opinions and popular religiousness, gives rise to the suspicion that either his acquaintance with the writings of the more calm, moderate and explanatory Spiritualists is very limited, or that his being, as he says, "somewhat prejudiced against Spiritualism by what he has seen and heard of it," caused him to be quite *unconstituted* for a perception of its less startling though more genuinely characteristic and elevating teachings and operations.

Instead of looking where the system, if there were any, would be found—that is, among its fundamental facts and the general deductions from them—he made a few *persons*, whose range of thought is wide enough to embrace not only the fact of spirit return, but many other and some strange and extravagant things besides—he made such men and women, together with a few other persons who have practiced exceptional ways of action, speech and life, "*a system*," set those persons forth as the prominent part—yes, nearly the whole of an imaginary "*system*," and then stretched this anomalous *system*, composed of peculiar personalities, so as to embrace in it the beliefs of millions of other persons, very few of whom hold any such views or follow any such courses as this exposé specially reprobates. More accurate and comprehensive knowledge might so change his mental *constitution* and develop in him such phrenological organs, that he could see some good existing in and destined to come out of our Nazareth.

## BIGOTRY.

He makes a distinct and pointed allegation that Spiritualists are *bigoted*. This is true, too true. But think you that these men "are sinners above all that dwell in" America? "I tell you nay." Bigotry is so common and subtle in all sects, parties, cliques, denominations, and, cuttle-fish like, so hides itself in its own ink, that he is a more bold than prudent man who will deny that bigotry may sometimes tinge his own perceptions and bias his own judgments. Spiritualists have full enough of it; and, pleading guilty to the charge, ask for the production of a thoroughly qualified, a truly *unbigoted* man, to cast the first stone at them.

We put in a plea for some leniency of condemnation in their behalf. Is all the bigotry they possess an outgrowth from their peculiar spiritual faith? The larger part of them necessarily contracted habits of thought, feeling, and expression, prior to the days of modern Spiritualism, and did this under prevalent Christian teaching, training, and example. Other influences than spiritualistic bent them to their first leanings, and generally as the twig is bent the tree remains inclined.

Most of us were early pressed over from an upright position—disqualified for the exercise of uncramped liberality of judgment. Old habits cling to man with great and unperceived tenacity. We hope the day is dawning in which any bending of juvenile mental, moral or social twigs—out of their most kindly and liberal attitudes, will be deemed a positive wrong; a day in which all children will be not only permitted but encouraged to grow heavenward as naturally and uprightly as possible. Bigotry is a most distorting and dwarfing trainer of spiritual and social shoots. Its baneful workings go on and are fostered within folds and gardens reputed evangelical as well as in other places.

Mr. Gregory gathers and appropriates considerable knowledge from outside the boundaries of a sectarian creed or the

covers of a single book. He manifests very fair ability and acumen ; yet he fails, as has been shown, to see any connection between the facts which give existence to spiritualistic faith, and the comforting thoughts which spring spontaneously from that faith. How can any ordinary, unclouded mental vision fall of such perception? We fear that our reprover himself is subject to chronic mental *glamour*, which means "witchery or charm on the eyes, making them see things differently from what they really are." What is the cause of such an ailment if he is subject to it? Can it be *bigotry*? We do not know.

Growing knowledge perpetually modifies the mental conditions and the perceptions of truth ; or, as our author entices us to say, the mental *constitution*. Saul of Tarsus verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of one who, in his day, was believed by illiterate and obscure fishermen, and by a few women in humble condition, to have walked upon a lake without sinking ; to have changed water into wine ; to have multiplied loaves and fishes by occult processes ; to have appeared mysteriously, after his death, in the midst of his old associates, who, *in the night*, had assembled in a room and closed its doors ; to have come among them where no available aperture existed for flesh and bones to enter ; yes, Saul labored to expose that ancient worker of spiritual manifestations—worker of miracles, signs and wonders ! yes, labored to give him, together with his beliefs and associates, an *exposé*. But, ere long, new light, new perceptions, change of "constitution," convinced him that the reputed marvels were positive occurrences ; that the manifestations were genuine ; that fishermen had precedence of rulers and Pharisees in the reception of momentous facts and truths. Thus it was of old. History may repeat itself, and the Sauls—*destroyers, expositors* of to-day—may yet become Pauls—*builders-up*—for glamour is a curable disease, and such results will be harmonious with the world's experiences.

## MODESTY OF SPIRITUALISTS.

"Spiritualists," says the book, "do not like to have their system held up to public gaze." If this means that they do not like to have their facts and beliefs publicly garbled, misrepresented, and slurred, it is true. But if it means that they desire to shun public observation and knowledge of their facts, beliefs, and lives, when fairly presented, (and this is the construction which seems to have been intended,) then it puzzles us to characterize with the exact fairness we desire, a writer who ought to have made himself quite familiar with the principal contents of spiritualistic literature, and the labors and lives of the *mass* of Spiritualists, before he could be justified in denouncing them all *con amore* and with vim, and who, without having done that, or, at least, without furnishing fair evidence that he has done it, asserts that "Spiritualists do not like to have their system held up to public gaze."

For twenty years and more, Spiritualists have been laboring with no small energy, zeal, perseverance and success to put their "system" (if it is insisted upon that they have a system)—to put the basic facts of spirit return, the teachings of spirits, and inferences drawn from those facts and teachings, before the public. From the days of the Buffalo toe-joint doctors until now, their standing request has been for careful, most searching and thorough investigation of the facts on which their faith in spirit agency rests, and to have that scrutiny made by the ablest scientists the world contains.

If we are told that it is not the facts but the "system" that they do not like to have held up to public gaze, we ask, How can a spiritualistic system be held up to view separate from the very facts which must constitute the most essential part of any proper system of Spiritualism? Had the writer said only what his exposition indicates he perceived, viz.: that *some* Spiritualists do not like to be held up to public gaze, we should have given full credence to the statement, for we be-

lieve that there are good reasons why some of them should dislike public scrutiny. This would be credible in relation to some members of any sect or party whatsoever. That, however, cannot well be deemed his meaning. He is too well-informed to use over and over again the term "Spiritualists" without limitations, if he meant mainly the erratic ones, a part of whom are but parasites—thorns in the flesh of whatever body they sap. These were the author's favorites—these he best loved to exhibit.

The public—at least, much of it—has for more than twenty years been demanding a surrender of our positions, and we have uniformly given the Spartan challenge—"Come and take them." Prof. Robert Hare, of Philadelphia, who had but few, very few equals in fitness and ability to apply to our facts the tests of exact science, accepted the challenge; and what followed? Just this, viz.: a positive, *scientific demonstration* of physical action by disembodied, unseen intelligences. Incredible! said his brother scientists. What? The eminent Dr. Hare make science prove spirit return a fact? That must not be conceded. The Doctor is a master among us—is truth itself as a scientist—is bold, and not dependent on popular favor. It may do for him to avow any proved facts whatsoever; but it will not do for us—dependent scientists—to avow anything that will shake the public confidence in our sanity and in our tender regard for prevalent notions. We must keep our eyes away from the point where the Doctor has discovered such light, and must even turn our backs to the man himself; otherwise we jeopardize our bread and butter, together with all chances for professorships and popular confidence and fame. Dread of the world's sneer and the church's frown causes many scientists to play "hands off" from the facts of Spiritualism. Position—present or prospective—constrains very many men of ability and erudition from willing contact with the unpopular; yet there always are a few to whom truth is dearer than popularity or position.

To smother demonstrated fact was incompatible with Dr.

Hare's reverence for the positive teachings of exact science. She demonstrated to him and enabled him to believe what no previous revelation ever had done: that there is life for man beyond the grave; and when she, with her ever-truthful voice, announced these glad tidings of great joy, his fearless soul bravely proclaimed the fact. Science, by proving the facts of Spiritualism, drew him out from the ranks of bald materialists and annihilationists, made him an avowed receiver and zealous promulgator of Spiritualism, and cheered his descent to the grave by giving him distinct anticipations of a glorious life beyond.

Harvard professors challenged Spiritualists to exhibit spirit operations in their presence, and were gladly met. A few smooth stones from the brook, slung by modern Davids—that is, a few simple *raps* upon ceilings and furniture—hit these Goliaths in the forehead. Agassiz promised to explain, before the trial should be over, how those raps were made; but he omitted to attempt a fulfillment of his promise. He and his associates, through the public press, promised to give the public an explanation; but fifteen years have since passed, and the promise has not yet been fulfilled.

A striking specimen of the hasty and obstinate resolve of some exceedingly eminent men to ignore Spiritualism *in toto*, is specially commended by our reviewer, who says, "Read Prof. Huxley's opinion of Spiritualism, who is an English scientist, and who, for learning and deep research, stands in the Old World where Agassiz does in the New—at the head of his profession. Huxley had been invited to assist at the investigation of the performances of *a medium*, and responded sharply."

We *have* read that response and noticed the circumstances of its production and its spirit and implications. Our author does not explain, and his statement can hardly fail to mislead as to the circumstances. He leaves the way open for an inference that the invitation was nothing more than a casual one from a Mr. Anybody to investigate the performance of

any common medium—while the case was this: Several most worthy members of that bright representative of science, learning, literature, refinement and respectability—the London Dialectical Society—invite that able board, as a board, to arrange for and make a thorough investigation of the facts of Spiritualism by rigidly scientific processes. And when *The Council* of that Society comply with that request, and invite their leading man in Physical Science to *coöperate with the appointed investigating committee*, how does he reply to an invitation from that very high and respectable source? “Sharply!” says our exposé. Yes, *sharply!* But why sharply? The invitation was from a source which could not have been irritating, for it was from the Council of as respectable a Society as the world contains. What, then, did call forth his sharpness? Not *knowledge* of Spiritualism, for he says, in his reply, that he had attempted to look at it only once, and that in a case of imposition. He says also that, “If the phenomena are genuine, they do not interest me. If anybody could endow me with the faculty of listening to the chatter of old women and curates in the nearest cathedral town I should decline the privilege, having better things to do.” Obviously he deems material things much more worthy of his attention than *any* spiritual ones.

What was it that made Huxley *sharp* in his reply, and obviously discourteous to his eminent associates? Our Yankee proclivities make us query whether he, too, is not “somewhat prejudiced against” both Spiritualism and Christianity “by what he has seen and heard of” both. For what is, or rather what should be the subject most commonly chattered about between “old women and curates”? We should subject ourselves to a charge of injustice if we assumed it to be any other than Christianity. And if we do assume that—as we do—then the “sharp” response of Huxley puts the chatter of Christian curates and Christian women on a par with Spiritualism—yes, tumbles curates and all their clerical and church relatives into the same bed with us. But don’t be alarmed,

good friends, for our bed is capacious, and you will find some of us more gentle and hospitable than you may have imagined. If you and we are all equally under the "sharp" Huxley ban, it becomes us to help bear one another's burthens.

Huxleyism seemingly teaches the very near kinship, if not the fundamental identity, of Spiritualism and Christianity, whether the devotee to protoplasms intended such doctrine or not. We mean no disparagement of him or his pursuits, but commend both. Let matter be made to disclose all its secrets, for it has in its deep recesses nothing harmful. If Huxley shall demonstrate that he finds in its protoplasms a physical basis of life, there will still remain the questions whether life originates there, or whether it is there that life from outside of matter first exhibits its infusion into and power over it. He says he is not a materialist; and possibly he may be anticipating a discovery of life and spirit on the other side of opaque matter when he shall have opened an avenue through.

We said we were puzzled to satisfactorily characterize the course of our apparently intelligent and well-intentioned author. We are so indeed. His eyes when unclouded are, we think, competent to very clear discernment, and yet he obviously failed to notice the very sharp thorn on the stem of his Huxley rose—failed to see that Huxley's sharpness was aimed at and pierces Spiritualists and Christians alike.

The facts we have been giving eliminate nearly all truth from the declaration that "Spiritualists do not like to have their system held up to public gaze," and at the same time disclose states of mind in some very eminent men, which debar the world from the results which a scrutinizing gaze by them would procure. These remarks, we know, dim the brightness of the compliment to the modesty of Spiritualists, involved in the assertion that they "do not like to have their system held up to public gaze."

## SPIRITUALISM'S LOWLINESS.

We quote as follows : " Now it would seem, if Spiritualism were *true*, that some men of talent in the scientific world would embrace it." Why should it seem thus? An apostle of old said, " Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." We add to this an ancient question, " Have *any* of the *rulers* or of the Pharisees believed on him?" The Christian faith, when quite as old as Spiritualism is now, was not embraced by many "*wise men after the flesh.*" Infinite Wisdom does not always select the recipients of great truths according to some men's notions of fitness. " I thank thee, oh, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes," was the utterance of an ancient medium for unfamiliar truths, whose perceptions of fitness were both searching and far reaching. If non-reception of revelations by eminent men, while such things are yet novel, argues against their *truth* and importance, how stands Christianity affected by the argument? Sadly—most sadly. Some of the lessons of history are worth remembering.

*One* American man of eminent talents and scientific attainments and skill did first investigate and then embrace Spiritualism.

Prof. Robert Hare, the familiar correspondent with and the scientific peer of Silliman, Faraday and other *leaders* of the world in science, was eminent for inventive skill at the early age of twenty years; and throughout the following fifty years he devoted his immense and untiring energies to the study, application, and illustration of physical science, and to the invention and use of most efficient instruments for reaching knowledge stored in Nature's recesses. Rich in the fitting experiences, knowledge, and skill to make him as competent an investigator of the basic facts of Spiritualism as this country contained, he, with vigor unabated and brain clear, went into a prolonged and truly scientific investiga-

tion, and positively *demonstrated*, on the bases and by the authentic processes and instrumentalities of physical science, that intelligent, unseen forces lifted and lowered the arms of his scale beams, *at his request*. Yes, one man "of talent in the scientific world" did embrace Spiritualism while it was yet very young.

We adduce the names of Prof. Mapes, Senator Tallmadge, and Judge Edmonds, and might add many other *very competent* weighers of evidence, who embraced Spiritualism after careful investigation. Judge Edmonds, and Judge Ladd of Cambridge, are seemingly regarded by the exposé as either untruthful or hallucinated. But so far as we know or believe, their reputations for truth and veracity, for skill in sifting and weighing evidence, for clear heads, sound judgments and well-regulated lives, are high—yes, are above the reach of partisan sneer or disparaging innuendo. The State of New York employs one of these gentlemen on its Commission for codifying its laws; while the intelligent city of Cambridge has long kept the other as a judge in its Police Court. Please have some confidence in men whom wise and good men trust, and let both natural and Christian charity have fair play!

When a matured, honorable man—Judge Ladd—trained to weigh evidence by many years' practice at the bar and on the bench, deliberately states that he has witnessed events and received information that satisfy him that all the elements of either a chest or a loaf of cake exist in the atmosphere around and above us, and that there are invisible agents who can combine those elements, and produce from them both cake and chest palpable to sight, touch and taste, and that he has witnessed such productions, and carefully satisfied himself that they are, in fact, such as they are reputed to be, he presents the world with matters worthy the candid and patient attention of the clearest heads and most reverent hearts in the community. He may suggest the inquiry, *How* came the marvelous production of loaves and fishes, on which vast mul-

titudes fed and were filled in olden times? and the further question, whether their production was in subserviency to some unknown universal laws; and then, again, the question whether spirits and men have jointly made such advances in knowledge of and power over such latent forces and elements as that the existence of laws for such manifestations may be clearly indicated to us, so that we may rationally look upon and regard such works as orderly productions, whose repetition we may reverently solicit, and whose lessons we may freely learn and helpfully apply.

The possible teachings of statements which our expositor ridicules or sneers at, surely seem to us worthy of most careful study by any one who reverences the God of Nature, and is ready to accept light through whatever channels the overruling Wisdom may permit finite intelligences to open for influxes to us from out our imponderable surroundings. Any voice or presentation of any kind, both implying an intelligent actor and coming from out the veiled recesses of Nature, is put forth by those of keener perceptions and higher powers than man's, and deserves his respectful and reverent attention. Unless one can place some trust in testimony—especially in testimony carefully given by gentlemen selected to preside in courts of justice and law, and who are confided in as truthful and sagacious by all who know them well—how woefully he shuts up important avenues of knowledge. Sneers and disparaging innuendoes hounded on to the careful statements of the intelligent and truthful will surely come home to kennel.

#### RELIGION.

Again we quote as follows: "They call Spiritualism *religion*, but there is no more religion in it, supposing it to be true, than there is in Mormonism, phrenology, or the telegraph. Religion is something to be practiced, something to be carried out into every-day life, loving God with the whole heart, and our neighbor as we do ourselves." This is not a

bad definition. It makes no jar with that given by James, viz., "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In connection with this we quote the prophet's question, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with *thy* God?" Let us add, "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and we then have in brief space a definition of religion by the Northfield minister—by an apostle, and essentially by the prophet Micah, all consistent with each other and all accordant with common sense—while the quotation from Paul affixes the rewards and penalties of life's actions in harmony with the pervading conceptions of justice in most human minds and hearts. Such a platform is broad enough to accommodate and strong enough to sustain both Christians and Spiritualists, and a very large part of the rest of mankind.

We find it plainly intimated above that there is no *religion* in Mormonism. Are Mormons without "something to practice, something to be carried out into every-day life"? Ample testimony shows that they do practice and carry out much that is to us very offensive. Also, for aught valid that we can see, they love *their* God—who seems to be mostly some Jewish God—quite as heartily, and love their neighbors quite as well, as do most other people. Some views and some conceptions of truth, duty and right, are very different with them from what they are with most other sects, yet in devotion to what are to them *divine teachings*, they are not far behind the average of Christians. They have *religion*, but its quality is objectionable.

When told that there is no more religion in Spiritualism than there is in the telegraph, we enter no protest. For long years we have been unable to see any *religion*, as the word should be applied, in causing a sunken ax to float up to the river's surface; nor in making an ass both see an angel and talk to his rider; nor in smiting a dry rock, and thus bringing

out water ; nor in replenishing oil in the widow's cruse by invisible means ; nor in influencing ravens to feed a destitute prophet ; nor in causing an extemporized hand to write upon the walls of a banquet room ; nor in keeping a man alive for three days in the abdomen of a fish ; nor in shielding three Hebrew youths from the intense action of furnace flames ; nor in curbing a lion's power ; nor in walking upon the water ; nor in gathering from any unseen source bread and fish to feed a hungering multitude ; nor in killing with harsh words a fruitless fig-tree ; nor in changing water into wine ; nor in making a salve of spittle and clay and curing blindness with it ; nor in spirits rolling a stone from the mouth of a sepulchre ; nor in their unlocking prison doors ; nor in unlearned men speaking in all the languages and dialects of surrounding nations—no, in none of these things is there any more religion that we can perceive than there is in the telegraph. But those who do such things, or those in either whose behalf or through whose properties they are done, may or may not have *religion* proper ; may be or may not be either possessors or manifestors or revealers of important *religious* truths.

Few nations in any remembered age have been long destitute of some persons in whose presence and through whose properties works essentially like the above have been performed. Such works bespeak personal qualities or properties probably mostly physical, which disembodied intelligences use as tongues, pens or hands, and, like tongues, pens or hands, the visible organs of such persons, when fully controlled, are made to act out the purposes of those spirits who use them ; and the mediums themselves, for the time being, are simply vacators of implements for another's use. It is no *religion* of theirs which makes their bodies fitting instruments for the work wrought through them by other minds.

The distinguishing phenomena of Spiritualism—its basic facts—its signs and wonders—have no religion in them. Yet these may be heralds and indices of religion to be evolved

by their use. We doubt whether Baalam's ass had any religion in him, though he saw an angel and rebuked his master in seemingly self-uttered words. Simple belief in the phenomena of Spiritualism is not religion. Yet such phenomena, furnishing proof that our fellow-beings, who have passed through the portals of death, return to us, speak with us, give us the results of their experiences and observations in their clearer lights or deeper darknesses, as the case may be—teach us what qualities and what outworkings of religion or its opposite in earth-life conduce to their happiness or their misery in spirit-abodes; doing this, the phenomena help us to discipleship, under more experienced and enlightened teachers, of what God regards as good preparation for the life to come, than any who unfold his requisitions in Christian pulpits. They have passed the oft-dreaded stream, and *know* the requisites for peace and joy on its other shore. Their utterances may be as genuinely religious as any that earth's children can have access to, and may be as conducive to the healthful growth and operations of saving religion as the pulpit can utter. Such teachers may evoke religion in hearts where it has never manifested itself, and may modify, purify and intensify it where it exists and has had expansion.

Such teachers are coming thick. Both the good and the less good, the enlightened and the benighted, come, some from one motive and some from another; some for their own pleasure or good, and some for ours; some to confer and some to receive help; some serious and earnest, some mirthful, some frivolous. The highway is free to all who can meet the established conditions of travel over it. No one can deduce broad, comprehensive and fair conclusions as to their religious influences and leadings, who does not listen to every class, and compare the varied utterances, counsels and wants.

No lesson is, perhaps, more touching and instructive than one frequently taught, that "spirits in prison" find both *access to earth and help from mortals* essential to their deliverance and upward progress. They seek us for the help we can

give to them, and open to us new fields of beneficence in which religion may put forth its highest powers, and find them expand amid such philanthropic labors.

Spirits are very harmonious in statement that creed faiths, vicarious atonement, church-membership and the like, have in them no special beneficence, and as generally used and applied, are rather hindrances than helps to man's fitness for satisfaction, progress and welfare in spirit-life. They re-preach the doctrine that "God is not mocked," but that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" also, that the seed which yields the best fruit is acts of beneficence and charitable estimates of the motives, characters and goodness of our fellow-men. Sectarianism is presented as making earth dark by a thick atmosphere of sin, which dispels the spirit-world.

Nearly twenty years ago, a pencil in the hand of an illiterate miss in her teens wrote for us the following :

"DEAR CHILDREN OF EARTH—I, the spirit of your old ancestor, come to hold sweet communion with you. I have watched the world—its progress in knowledge. . . . Onward has man advanced, but gradually has mist enveloped the once pure soul of mankind. He has strayed from the paths of truth, and left the road that would lead him to join the celestial heavens. Ay, I have seen oppression and sin cloud the Christian's mind. Ay, I have beheld the name of God, the divine giver of all good, borne on the wings of *sectarianism*; thus has the world been made dark and the spirit-land dispelled by the thick atmosphere of gross sin. And now the redemption of the children of earth is proclaimed by angels from the bosom of the Lamb, and the morn of Judgment is near. God, arrayed in sandals of holiness and the crown of brightness, is gently lifting the weak children of earth up, by sending his messengers to fathom the cloudy places of earth—to impart the dazzling truth of his mansions into the world. The prayers of angels have ascended to the Father; their voices have echoed

“through the perfect halls above. And now, my child, I want you to know the happiness to feel the angels impressing your fevered brow, to hear the melodious strains of exquisite harmony thrilling into your mind, to tread the paths of truth with the righteous, and think of the God that is ever shedding his love and mercy. This is from your old grandfather, an inhabitant of the celestial heavens, given through the medium of — — to my earthly child.”

Both the Christian and surname of an ancestor six generations back were annexed to this. Such statements over the exact name of the common ancestor of all who bear my name in America, coming through the hand of a Methodist girl, all unacquainted with our colonial history and my ancestry, may not be strictly religion; and yet their tone and purport were and are, according to my apprehension, decidedly and beautifully religious, especially when viewed in connection with the conditions of their advent. They are but a fair sample of scores that have come to me. To me such are religious teachings and incentives. The points that sectarianism has made the world dark, that *now* the redemption of the children of the earth is proclaimed, that God is gently lifting the children of earth up, *by sending his messengers to fathom the cloudy places of earth, and to impart the dazzling truth of his mansions into the world*—these, coming as they did over the name of the good old Puritan who at a good old age in 1661 passed in faith from this to a higher life, indicate to me his perception that the purpose and effect of the present coming of God's messengers, of whom he—a returning spirit—was one, indicate that the purpose and effect of this new advent from out the unseen, were and would be to overthrow sectarianism and gently lift the children of men up.

These messengers from God have been coming—hundreds and thousands of them, seemingly, thus far—giving to the world quite as much disturbance as peace. Such primary effects may be needful in the breaking up of prejudices and toppling over idols, which numerous Christians must be

freed or weaned from before the better things can enter into and dwell with them. The presence and action of these messengers are being widely and deeply felt. Startling phenomena and significant revelations are multiplying fast throughout the civilized world, are challenging the world's attention, are agitating Christendom, are putting its religious systems and doctrines, and their civil, social and religious fruits, to the test, are seemingly deposing its idols and turning it upside down. Dr. James Edmunds, M. D., and M. R. C. S., &c., Chairman of the London Committee which investigated Spiritualism, and a non-receiver of it, yet reports to the Society that "It is becoming a great disintegrator of religious dogma." Such are its influences already, and they indicate power and efficiency.

Relatively, Spiritualism is but "an infant of days," is less than one seventy-fifth part the age of Christianity, and yet, while so young, "it is becoming a great disintegrator of religious dogma." Such action may well be presumed to be one of the most essential labors for fitting the general mind for the reception of more vitalizing and purifying religion than has prevailed or does prevail in Christendom. Its first work perhaps, and probably, needs be mostly iconoclastic, the breaking of images. But fear not. If God be "sending his messengers to fathom the cloudy places of earth," the future effects of this may be—and who can rationally doubt that they will be—the banishment of much error, sectarianism, dogmatism and hypocrisy, and the opening of ways for the oncoming of more simple, intelligible, rational, liberal and genuinely *Christian* views of *Him*, and his requirements of man; also as to his nature, relations, duties and destiny. They may inaugurate a nearer approach to "peace on earth and good will to man," than the teachings and practices of the past have produced in our land.

We apprehend, however, that such good cannot be properly established, unless the foundations for it be prepared by setting "a man at variance against his father, and the daughter

against her mother," and turning the members of an household into reciprocal foes. The good may need to make its approach and primal establishment not in the garb of peace, but in panoply of spiritual, social and domestic war. Storms and tempests, fierce gales and roughened seas may be generated as the needed clarifications, and revolutions proceed, but the Father—the universal Father, Lord of heaven and earth—a skillful navigator, familiar with every rock and shoal and wind—is at the helm, and will pilot the vast ship of humanity to the port of her high destination. She will land man on shores where he and the angel world will hold communion, instructive and elevating to him, and probably to both. No religion!

#### GULLIBILITY.

The author heads one of his chapters "GULLIBILITY," and says that "in order to be a Spiritualist of the first type one must believe in the marvelous stories of Judge Edmonds and Judge Ladd." He then narrates some statements made by Judge Ladd which *are* truly and genuinely marvelous. These were made by the Judge in the hearing of some twenty people, who, as this author says, he does not doubt, "*all* swallowed the stories *without hesitation.*" His narration implies that he was himself one of the listeners, for he introduces the account by the words, "He told *me.*" But whether he counted himself in to make up that crowd of about twenty, and was himself one of the begulled, he does not state. His presentation of the matter would let us count him in—fairly construed, it does count him in—but he meant to be left out in the count of the gulls. We will leave him out, stand him by himself, and look at him in his solitary elevation above *gullibility.*

We have often heard of juries consisting of *twelve* men each, eleven of whom were very obtuse and obstinate. But to find a company of twenty-one, in which *twenty* should be so obtuse

and obstinate as not to see and decide that an upright and honorable and honored judge, when detailing his personal observation and experiences, and that, too, in the presence of a clergyman, when he might naturally be supposed to feel special call to be accurate and truthful, was yet only beguiling the crowd, while the twenty-first one, from beginning to end, perceived nothing but the ebullitions of delusions from the judicial brain, clearly shows that that twenty-first man possessed very peculiar mental perceptives—not quite one chance in twenty to find their like. The penetrations and findings of such perceptives who can forecast?

A firm, predetermined conviction that one is wiser in a certain direction than his neighbors, often proves a mental bar to his reception of new light which may come through unusual channels. The twenty-first man would seem to be wearing badly discolored glasses, if things appear to him to be the essential opposites to what they are perceived to be by each one of his twenty fellow observers.

To be "a Spiritualist of the first type," then, one must trust in the words of a trustworthy man when he is seriously telling what his own eyes have seen, his own touch felt, his own palate tasted, even if he relates experiences such as might have been given by one of that Judean multitude who were refreshed by feeding upon loaves and fishes mysteriously brought from out the unseen. The existing *phrenological developments and constitution* of Mr. Gregory may deprive him of *such gullibility*, and therefore call forth his sneer at its manifestation in each one of his twenty fellow listeners.

Such gullibility has manifested itself in high circles of society. Notwithstanding Huxley's *sharp* letter, the London Dialectical Society grappled with Spiritualism and examined it extensively and skillfully. Their report of their doings and findings is very full, details many interesting facts, and, in some parts, wears the charms of candor, while from some of the contributors to it there flows forth a spirit not unlike that pervading the *Exposé*.

A committee consisting of thirty-four members of that Society, in which membership itself is testimony to high attainments and worth, was appointed for the special purpose of investigating and reporting upon "The Phenomena called Spiritual." After having had no less than forty extended sésances, scattered over a period of eighteen months, held in their private residences, "without the aid or presence of any professional medium," or any mediums other than those found in their own families above the kitchen and below the attic—none but those on a social par with themselves—and after having taken the *testimony* of many prominent Spiritualists—such a committee, thus qualified, reported that "they deem it incumbent on them to state the conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received." The Northfield divine, furnishing no evidence of careful scrutiny of its "phenomena," says: "Let us pray God to . . . keep us from the meshes of Spiritualism, that contaminates everything that comes within its reach!" A majority *gulls* in the English flock of thirty-four—a solitary "bird of the night" and twenty gulls make up the American flock of twenty-one.

From beneath the optics fitted for night vision comes forth this generous offer: "When Spiritualists can show me that persons thrown into a somnambule or cataleptic state—that clairvoyant seeing and involuntary speaking *are not* the results of that subtle agent of which we can comprehend so little (called magnetism) in some of its various forms, I shall willingly become a disciple, and make no more opposition to 'spirit manifestation.'" There, note that. When we will show that they *are not* the results of magnetism—that is, when we will *prove a negative*—which is an impossibility—he will become a disciple! That which would transcend the powers of God—viz., the proving of a negative—we shall not attempt.

We, however, make to him this courteous declaration: When you will show us that magnetism or any other of the ubiquitous forces in Nature *does* produce the spirit manifesta-

tions—not as an instrumentality used by intelligent beings, but as an intelligent actor—when you will show us that magnetism itself, and of itself, speaks right out—that it understands man's questions and gives intelligent answers; when you will show it to us speaking out in words, or rapping out in answer to words over and over again, always and everywhere where reputed spirit-speaking, rapping and table-tipping are processes of communication, saying that it is *I*, myself, magnetism—that of myself, and not as the tool of another—make the noises, movements, responses and communications—when you will do that, then we will become your disciple most willingly, for we shall see at once that you will be able to enlighten not only ourselves, but the world, in reference to that *subtile agent* of which we can comprehend so little, called magnetism." Just show us what we ask for, and Spiritualism vanishes from earth forthwith.

It gives us pleasure to introduce one of England's very eminent natural scientists, and assign him a place among the *gullibles*. Mr. Cromwell F. Varley, chief electrician connected with the Atlantic Telegraph, gave to the Investigating Committee of the Dialectical Society a very instructive account of his observations, experiences and conclusions in relation to Spiritualism. He and his wife being mediums, and his training and daily avocations fitting him admirably to be a teacher of what the world knows of electricity and magnetism, give to his statements special interest. What he said fills about fifteen pages in the report. We quote only a small portion of it. While under examination, (for he and others were used like witnesses on the stand,) the following question was put to him:

"Does Mr. Varley accept the spiritual theory?"

Ans.—"I firmly believe, from the facts I have alluded to, that *we* are not our *bodies*; that when we die, we exist just as much as before, and that, under certain conditions, we are able to hold communication with those on earth; but I also believe that many of the phenomena are often caused by

“the spirits of those whose bodies are present. The phenomena can neither be accounted for by *magnetism* nor electricity. These forces have nothing to do with the phenomena I have alluded to. It is unfortunate that the terms ‘electricity’ and ‘magnetism’ should have been applied to these unknown forces. As to our future existence, I do not think that any of us know much about its details after death. Nearly all Spiritualists concur in believing that the *thinking part* of man forms, in the next life, the body; that we are *thought-beings*, and that those ideas which we originate in this life are permanent realities in the next. With regard to electricity—I believe that electricity is one of the components of matter, and that there is an actual transmission through the wire. It has no appreciable weight, no gravitation. Light is the vibration of cosmical ether. As to the nature of magnetism, I do not know what it is; I have n’t the ghost of an idea.”

“I remember a case, a short time since, at my own house, when a large ottoman pushed us all up in a corner, without any visible means of locomotion.” . . .

QUES.—“While the most interesting part of your experience took place, were you in an abnormal state?”

ANS.—“No; calm and clear. I believe the mesmeric trance and the spiritual trance are produced by similar means, and I believe the mesmeric and the spiritual force to be the same. They are both the action of a spirit, and the difference between the spiritual trance and the mesmeric trance is, I believe, this: in the mesmeric trance, the will that overpowers or entrances the patient is in a human body; in the spiritual trance, that will which overpowers the patient is not in a human body.” . . .

QUES.—“I think you have seen the color of the clothes of a spirit as distinctly as the features?”

ANS.—“Yes, I think I see the drift of that question. I was very much astonished when I saw a spirit in a dress. I explain it in this way: all known powers have to be

"treated as solids in regard to something. A man finds air  
 "not solid at all. He can move through it as though it did not  
 "exist; but when he comes to an iron-clad ship, he is stopped;  
 "he cannot pass through the iron. Well, electricity finds air  
 "the most solid substance possible; it cannot pass through it,  
 "but it passes through the iron-clad ship as though it were  
 "not in existence. An iron wire is, to an electrician, simply  
 "a hole bored through a solid rock of air, so that the electric-  
 "ity may pass freely. Glass is opaque to electricity, but  
 "transparent to magnetism. Thence we may infer that  
 "everything is solid in respect to something, and that nothing  
 "is solid in respect to all things, and therefore thought, which  
 "is power, may be in some sort solid; so that, if you take an  
 "old English farmer, for instance, he would be ashamed to  
 "be seen without his top-boots, his coat with buttons, and his  
 "hat. They are part of his identity; he cannot think of him-  
 "self without them. They form part of his nature; and, the  
 "moment he leaves his body and becomes a thought-man, the  
 "thought-boots, the thought-coat and the thought-hat form  
 "part of his individuality."

It appears from the above extracts that England's foremost  
 electrician, a careful student of spiritual phenomena, differs  
 widely in opinion from the Northfield exposé of Spiritualists  
 as to the competency of magnetism to produce the spiritual  
 phenomena. We quote again: "Now, it would seem, if Spir-  
 itualism was true, that some men of talent in the scientific  
 world would embrace it." What is the significance of Var-  
 ley's faith as to its *truth*? He was a witness on the stand be-  
 fore investigators, the majority of whom were non-receivers  
 of this faith at the commencement of their investigation, and  
 several such were converted to it before the investigation  
 closed. "Some men of talent in the scientific world" have  
 been *begulled* by their own critical and prolonged researches.

## WILLIAM DENTON.

William Denton, a man of vigorous intellect, a clear and forcible writer and lecturer upon both Geology and Spiritualism, and who is a graduated Methodist, by his studies of God's "elder Scriptures" written on the rocks and strata of earth, and his free philosophizings, or in some other way, has reached many conclusions widely different from those of his youth, and announces them with great distinctness. His opinions of God and Jehovah, also his views of Christ as a Saviour, and the Bible as the Word of God, are quoted in his own words, and therefore fairly, by his commentator.

We, personally, fail to accept many of Denton's conclusions, and oftentimes his style and tone intensely jar our perceptions of what charity, kindness and wise choice of the paths for most successful promulgation require. But we respect his clearness of perception, his sincerity, his frankness and his power. His warfare upon what he deems error, is so open and honest, and in that respect manly, that he is entitled to a fair field and fair play. His critic has said, "Let truth and error grapple," and that is our motto.

Obviously "from what" Denton "has seen and heard" of the Bible and of the misconceptions and perversions of it by its reputed friends, he is "somewhat prejudiced against both it" and many of its imputed doctrines. In our own view he is too extensively so. Probably in his comprehension of it it gives more support to the reputed Orthodox doctrines and dogmas which are assumed to be found in it than it does in ours, and therefore he is moved to speak of the whole book in terms which we cannot apply to it. We prize it highly, and believe it to be all that in and of itself it claims—but its own claims are very different from those advanced for it by many bibliocists.

Very much of it claims to be nothing else than simple history, written by men under no higher inspiration than is common with most persons when writing. Paul lived and died

before our Bible was brought into compact form, and while the word rendered Scripture meant *writing, any writing*. And if he is correctly translated in his letter to Timothy, he told us that all Scripture, *i. e., all writing*, is given by inspiration of God.

In that volume we are furnished with the visions and utterances of many highly developed mediums who saw and heard and communed with disembodied intelligences. John the Revelator in his trances—"being in the spirit"—beheld most gorgeous scenes, most striking personages and beasts, and received from a returning Prophet mystical communications which have ever since puzzled critics and divines to comprehend and explain. Two points there, however, are very clear: one, that a personage who spoke to John had been a prophet in some former age; and the other, that the substances composing the New Jerusalem and other spiritual scenes were seemingly *very dense matter*.

Read what Daniel says, chap. ix: 21-22, "While I was speaking in prayer, even the *man* Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation, and he informed me and talked with me, and said, Oh Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." And this "man" Gabriel proceeds to give to Daniel an explanation of a vision. Seemingly another invisible man on that or another occasion was heard by Daniel. Turn back to chap. viii: 9-10, and you will find the words, "There stood before me as the appearance of a man. I heard a *man's* voice . . . which called and said, 'Gabriel, make this man' (Daniel) 'to understand the vision.' So he came near where I stood." Perhaps we are not here absolutely informed that the "man" who called to the man Gabriel to come and quicken Daniel's power of comprehension was disembodied; but since he is described "as the appearance of a man," we think that is the true interpretation. Reading it thus we get a very distinct intimation that one spirit attendant upon and observant

of Daniel had less power to aid him in a certain direction than the emergency demanded, and therefore he called upon the *man* Gabriel, more powerful than himself as an illuminator of another's understanding, to make Daniel understand a vision. Were omnipotence and omniscience there?

We do not go with friend Denton when his course tends to a disparagement of a whole book containing such distinct and instructive instances in which departed men of old returned and manifested strong yearnings to illuminate the understanding of earth's darkling minds. We find many very distinct and cheering spiritual manifestations described and preserved in those valued and valuable records of ages long gone by, and we cherish the Bible as a depository sheltering and preserving very much that gives quite efficient aid in procuring extension of belief in the genuineness and legitimacy of the spirit works both of old and of to-day. We are not disposed to forego the assistance which may be thence derived, nor the help there afforded to trace in the remote past the manifestation of *laws* permitting and governing spirit return and communication.

We cannot bring ourselves to a willing relinquishment of the explanation our views permit of the many seeming barbarities, inconsistencies and repentances of the Lord therein presented. Witnessing, as we do now, the propensity of mediumistic persons to repose much confidence in the truth, wisdom and power of their several guardian or chief controlling spirits, and observing that control of Bible prophets and seers was put forth by different departed spirits, each of whom was to his medium, for the time being, his Lord; and remembering that the two words, Lord and God, were very interchangeably used in these ancient records, and noting that there came to Saul "an evil spirit, *from the Lord*"—mark that—an *evil spirit from the Lord*—noting these things, we infer that whatever intelligence or personage was manifested from out the unseen realms, was spoken of as coming from the *Lord*. Also we deduce the conclusion that many of the varied sayings and doings ascribed to the Lord were but the acts of

finite, fallible and changeable spiritual beings. Any controlling spirit seems to have been called the Lord, or regarded as from the Lord, in the speech and apprehension of the mediums and people of those remote days. Coming from the Lord meant, with them, simply coming from out invisible realms. Any intelligence operating from beyond the veil of outward sense, their usage allowed them to call either Lord or God, or Gabriel or an angel. Like other compilations, the Bible is the production of many minds putting forth diverse and sometimes conflicting opinions, and manifests to us diverse characters among its authors.

The revelations of Spiritualism have changed our standpoint for viewing the Bible; and, by the changes, we obtained new perceptions of its immediate and mediate sources, and of its genuine character. In consequence of this we come to set a different, yet, intrinsically, higher value upon it, now that we use the lights of Spiritualism to illumine its pages, than we ever did before. We have been cleansed from idolatry of it, if we ever were unconsciously guilty of worshipping it, and we probably were. To-day, in all good conscience, we let reason and common sense apply their most rigid scrutiny to determine its authorships and the truth and value of its contents piecemeal, and also what are the leading doctrines and revelations it contains and commends. Thus tested, we find it favorable to both piety and philanthropy; a good book, transmitting from remote ages, and commending to us much spiritual and heavenly wisdom. This we say of the book as an whole—not excluding the Apocrypha, and especially not the marvelous experiences of Tobit and his son Tobias with a returned spirit who became guide and benefactor.

The narratives which set forth the sayings, doings and life of Jesus of Nazareth possess peculiar value, for they exhibit succinctly the views, sentiments and beneficence of one whose God was a *Father*—Our Father, one who walked the earth attended by hosts of benevolent spirits; one who lived a life which makes him an eminent exemplar of love to God and

love to man, and a safe and helpful guide to our race. He has our confidence and reverence to a greater extent than any other communicator between God and man.

Mr. Denton's character and life are left, as they should be, unassailed. But it is said of him that "His God is Abner Kneeland's God of Nature;" and that, *if* he prays, it is to "senseless matter, the principle of life that is manifested in the flowing river, in the transparent air, and in vegetation." Is the "*principle of life*" in Nature around us but "senseless matter"? We make no affirmation in reply, for we have no definite knowledge of what the principle of life is. We, however, suppose it to be different from senseless matter, and therefore, Kneeland's God of Nature being represented as both senseless matter and the principle of life, the definition confuses us. How far the above definition describes either Kneeland's or Denton's God, we do not know; and yet we doubt its applicability in either case. Denton's *Great Over-Soul*, in which he is said to believe, can hardly be identical with *senseless matter*, though it may be with the *principle of life*.

We cannot speak for him affirmatively, and yet we presume Denton does not regard that "Over-Soul" as a personality. Personality, in any intelligible sense, necessarily involves *limitations*; and limitations are inconsistent with either infinity or omnipresence absolute. The thinkers of the age—the leading minds in philosophy and science both in this country and Europe—are strongly tending to the conclusion that all there is in the universe is matter and its evolutions.

What means such language as the following, which we read in the Boston Journal to-day, Dec. 17th?

"At a meeting of the Methodist Preachers' Association in New York, on Monday, a paper was read taking the ground that the scientists, in turning their attention to spiritual affairs, were invading a province with which they had nothing to do."

We think it a fair presumption that, when one prepares

such a paper for the consideration of an association of preachers, it is feared among them, if not clearly perceived, that the labors of scientists, when directed to spiritual matters, tend to disturb, weaken or undermine prevalent dogmas. Whether the paper alluded to is specially aimed at such investigations as were made by the Dialectical Society, or whether it is more general in its application; implying that scientists leave their proper field when they scrutinize the claims, arguments and positions of the Christian church, we do not yet know. But the point is obvious that scientists are told that spiritual matters are aside from their proper province—which is equivalent to a confession of fear that the spiritual matters of the Methodists, at least, may receive harm from science; and if that sect does, how may others escape?

That the spiritual matters of all the churches would receive great modifications and clarifications if tested by genuine science, we do not doubt. That cause is weak which will not bear the tests of science, and weakness in it, however much disbelieved in, must be deemed possible by its friends and supporters, if they fear to have it tested by the utmost powers of common sense, reason and science. Though some Christian preachers may say to scientists, Let us alone—let our special matters alone, yet Spiritualists say to them, Come and try us and ours; we want your scrutiny and its results, but not so much for our special benefit as for that of Christianity and Christians. That faith must be redeemed from the appendages and perversions of its avowed friends, or the spirit of the age, the growing general intelligence of the masses, and the dissections and analyses of science, will shelve it.

The doctrine of innate total depravity in all the children of Paul's God, "whose offspring we are," argues too much depravity in our common Father to admit of such reverence, respect and love of him as any kindly and good heart embodies in the God it confidently worships. The damnation of infant souls, or the predetermined unending torture of any soul, is repugnant to the sense of justice in enlightened humanity;

and as fast as general intelligence increases, it will ever more and more be seeking for and finding a God too just for such iniquity. If such an one cannot be found in the Bible, he can be and will be in the larger, older and less perverted volumes of human nature and the natural world. Then the mathematical impossibility of making three personalities only one person, or making a tri-infinite personality into only one infinite, is repugnant to all enlightened logic—yes, to the clear and true logic of unprejudiced childhood. Then, also, the awful, not to say blasphemous injustice of meeting the demands of justice itself by making provision that one innocent person may be punished as the substitute for millions and billions of guilty ones, every sentiment of enlightened justice revolts from. We mention miracles, too, perceiving that, so long as theologians shall continue to define them as occurrences “contrary to the established constitution and course of things,” so long they will fare hard in the hands of science; though when science, in testing these, detects laws permitting and regulating such occurrences, and shows them to be in harmony with “the established constitution and course of things,” she will render them universally credible.

So long as Christian teachers feel an unwillingness to give up such doctrines as the above, and to regard the Bible's many spiritual manifestations and revelations as teaching summarily little more and nothing less than that “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” thus long may they naturally and impulsively shrink from any dealings of science with the Bible and the spiritual things of the prevalent church. But such dealings will be had. The spirit and intelligence of the times is demanding them with a voice which must be obeyed. The alternative will be presented, is being presented, to the mass of biblicists, whether to detach from connection with the Bible, and to sacrifice all man-constructed creeds, systems and dogmas of the church, and thereby save the Bible, or to preserve these modern attachments, perversions and excrescences, and let the whole be overturned together. Individu-

ally, we have made our election. We are ready to submit the book, divested of all appendages, to intelligence, common sense and science, and abide the test, feeling that thus, and thus only, can we save the book for acceptable transmission of spiritual light to coming ages.

A good story, which we repeatedly heard while it was fresh, is told in the *Exposé* relative to Beecher and Ballou, and to the parlor and kitchen of heaven. We shall not copy it, and allude to it only as a contagious thing from which we have caught an itching to tell a different story, as follows: An association of clergymen assembled in one of our large cities just before the time when a young man of some eminence, heterodox to them, was to commence preaching his peculiar doctrines there. Discussion was held as to the best methods of opposition to the intruder. The position that they should each and all preach against what was coming, and warn their hearers against going to listen to the innovator, was advanced and advocated by very many of them. But courteously, before a final decision, some one asked the father of the association, who had been silent, what his advice would be. He responded as follows: "Brethren, when quite a young man I went, a stranger, into a country town to preach. When about to enter the meeting-house, a man took me aside and told me that a horse-race was to come off in a neighboring town during the week, and requested me to caution people against attending it. I complied with the request, and at the close of services quite a crowd waited around the door-steps, and as soon as I came out, eagerly inquired, 'Sir, *where* is that horse-race to be? We had n't heard of it before.' My warning, brethren, was an advertisement of that race, and no doubt led many to attend it who, had I said nothing about it, would never have known of its occurrence."

Mr. Gregory quoted Denton literally to some extent, and probably made known his views to many who otherwise would never have met with them. We told the above story for whom it may concern, whether that be Mr. Gregory for quoting Denton, or ourself for noticing the *Exposé*, or both.

If we are correctly informed, Mr. Denton is the son of a Methodist preacher, and in early life was a member of the Methodist Church. His growing mind early burst the swathing bands of its creed, and acquired freedom to expand broadly, and to gather food anywhere from any natural storehouse. He seems to forget, more than we wish he did, that the food in his native fold may meet all the conscious wants—all the “phrenological developments”—of those who remain there yet, and may be well suited to their constitutions and adequate to their present needs. It may be that it is no kindness to them to violently break down their enclosure and try to get them hastily into new pastures. His temperament and spontaneous force make him gratingly harsh in his public attacks upon whatever cramped and galled him in his youthful days. Though seeming harsh upon the rostrum, he does not in the social circle; and as far as we ever heard or believe, lives an orderly and exemplary life, more true to purity, temperance, conjugal ties and the dictates of conscience than many who hold on to and extol as restraining and guiding faiths, beliefs which he has put away. We have read that

“His faith can't be wrong  
Whose life is in the right,”

and therefore we do not condemn any, though we omit to adopt many of Denton's sayings and methods.

#### PERSONALITY OF GOD.

Before parting with Denton let it be told that he is made the occasion or the subject of the following exclamations, because his God is the God of Nature: “No accountability to a Supreme Being, no kind and loving Father to whom we can go for assistance in time of need. All is chaos, doubt and uncertainty.” The logic of Northfield, Vt., confounds us. We have, through all the maturer years of our lengthened life, understood the enlightened nations as deeming the God of

Nature a Supreme Being—the Supreme Being to whom the whole creation is accountable, and who is the ultimate source of all assistance that ever did or ever can come to any one. Therefore we are *confounded* by the argument from a higher latitude that, because Mr. Denton's God is the God of Nature, therefore "no Supreme Being!" Now was or was not that God who was said to be a spirit—said to robe the lilies in more than regal splendor, to send rain on the just and unjust alike, and who was prayed to as "oh Father" and as "our Father"—was or was not *that* God the God of Nature? We make no response of our own, but wait the coming of an authentic one on Northern winds. When that has come we may get plausible grounds on which to conjecture *who* are making life's voyage over the unstable and shifting waves of "chaos, doubt and uncertainty."

Questions as to the personality of the Supreme Being, or Force, or Power, or Father, are very difficult to solve both logically and satisfactorily. Give to that Being *infinity* and omnipresence absolute, speak of it as extending out immeasurably beyond any possible bounds or terminations, and also as being present in and pervading each person, each sparrow, each hair, each atom of earth, each sun and moon, each planet and star throughout all the far reachings of unbounded space, and no finite mind can comprehend and give personality to so much of it in comparison to the whole, as the smallest sand grain on the sea-shore makes in comparison with our whole globe, combined with all the worlds above, below and around it. No finite mind, whether of man or angel, can ever get and stand outside of that infinitude, but must be forever enfolded in it and pervaded by it, and cannot, absolutely *cannot* enfold the whole of it in any comprehensible *personality*, for personality implies limitations. Webster defines *person* as "an individual human being consisting of body and soul," and *personality* as "that which constitutes an individual a distinct person, or that which constitutes individuality." The *individuality* of what is meant to be presented as definitely as

human powers and language can present it, by either of the terms God, Father, God of Nature, Over-Soul, Deity or the like—its *individuality*, that is, its “separate or distinct existence,” its “state of oneness,” is conceivable and admissible. But that it has any *personality* embracing and enfolding the *whole* of it, is plainly beyond the vastest mental powers of the most unfolded finite intelligence within the broad realms of creation to comprehend. Possibly it *may* exist, but, if it does, it is unknowable outside of itself.

The foregoing is the definite finding of our own best reasoning powers reverently and patiently applied at oft-recurring periods through many years. But, left as it stands above, it does not meet our heart's yearnings to love and commune with a personal Father all-loving and glorious, dwelling in the unseen above, and around both us and all whom we love, and all of whose existence we know. Untaught youthful imagination personified as much of God as it could, and the part thus personified met the full wants of the child's heart, because this filled its then existing capacities for reception. As years rolled on and knowledge increased and wants expanded and changed, the personification was gradually made to embrace more and more of the infinite, to assume more majestic and attractive form, to radiate the lights of higher intelligence and the warmth and glow of broader and deeper love. Reason not objecting, imagination, faithful to its duties, ever kept the heart supplied with the amplest personal God the heart's purest, holiest and most elevating loves could enfold, cleave to and draw strength and guidance from. By this, the only perceived way in which the heart's calls for a personal God could be met, has our own been supplied; and we can put no faith in the strict accuracy of any one who avows that his has been supplied in ways substantially different from the above. We may not doubt his intended truthfulness and accuracy, but a long life's experiences and observations will all combine in telling us to doubt the accuracy and sufficiency of his inward self-scrutiny. God never

calls upon us to persuade ourselves that we believe, or to avow that we do believe that which he has not given us powers to comprehend. We can and do pray to the highest and most excellent we can conceive of, feeling that we shall be heard by many of his ministering spirits, through whom his favors may be and are extended to us, through whom our thanks are sent to him, and by whom, legitimately, what are called special providences and helps may be afforded us. We believe the poet who told us that myriads of spiritual beings walk the earth unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep. Also the other one who teaches that a cloud of witnesses around hold us in full survey, and we listen trustfully, likewise, to the declaration of one of them to us that—

“When the hour of prayer  
Comes on at close of even,  
'Midst the hallowed family band we 're there,  
And we bear those prayers to heaven.”

We believe also that our prayers excite the efforts of many unseen helpers to avail themselves of laws or forces unknown by man, and give him helps mysteriously.

Though reason may decide, as she does with us and is doing more and more extensively every year among the world's most influential thinkers, that personality is not possibly predicable of the *Infinite*, still that decision will not necessarily conflict with, and our judgment finds in it no tendency to conflict with any such personality of God as any Christian man whatsoever has at any time been able to comprehend. Prayer gains new stimulus and fervency from consciousness of being heard by listening angel-hosts ready and eager to speed it on its upward way, and to help bring and deliver or to work out its most beneficent response as soon as the reason becomes convinced that such are the circumstances amid which man may pray, and do it, too, with becoming reverence for and in submission to the absolutely and incomprehensible INFINITE.

## THE FOX FAMILY.

"Spiritualism had the Fox girls to originate it by means of raps and tippings!" So says the Northfield divine, implying that its lowly origin is against it. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Was He who of old withheld revelations "from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes" deficient in wisdom? If not—if he was wise formerly in making a boy born in a Judean stable his instrument for enlightening men, shall we question his wisdom if he arranges to make little girls, dwelling in a western farm house, the marked perceivers that disembodied intelligences can so control dumb matter as to hold through it intelligible communication with embodied men? Such might not be *man's* course, but it harmonizes well with his who of old chose "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; the base things of the world and things that are despised, to bring to naught things that are, that no *flesh* should glory in his presence." The humble origin of modern Spiritualism is strong evidence that it was not originated by human device, which would have selected very different promulgators.

Originated it "*by means of raps and tippings.*" Raps certainly were connected with modern Spiritualism's advent, raps not made *by* the "Fox girls," but by some hidden intelligence. They did not, in any proper sense, *originate* it, yet they and their mother were the first in America, so far as we know, to obtain proof that mysterious sounds, traceable to no palpable agency, were produced by an intelligence that could understand a question put by man, and give an answer which he could understand! The Wesley family, perhaps, did the same, though position kept the knowledge secret. In all seriousness, that was a *momentous discovery*, pregnant with the important fact that earth's benighted children can, under fitting conditions, legitimately get from the forefathers and loved ones who have passed into spirit-life instruction em-

bracing the results of their observations and experiences in their new abode; their existing relations to and interest in us; their present views in relation to the Bible, to creeds and church usages; what they judge to be conducive to happiness and peace in the sphere above, and the best rules for the regulation of life here. On points like these and many others, we can go for information to those who have greater experience, broader observation and keener insight than earth affords.

Say not hastily that mere chance found the witnesses and discoverers, and that the result might just as easily have occurred in any other family. We do not so view it. The innate elements and essences, both mental and physical, and the emanations therefrom and the susceptibilities thereof, differ in different individuals; also, spirits can operate upon matter only by using something essentially like emanations, which some living human organisms and some localities put forth much more abundantly than others do. The subsequent history of that Fox family shows them to have been the furnishers of such emanations and possessors of peculiar susceptibilities, to an extraordinary extent, and therefore indicates their peculiar fitness, both to supply, all unconsciously, instrumentality for the raps, and to cognize intuitively the presence of an unseen, intelligent actor producing them.

*Man* might have gone to colleges and scientific schools as the most probable abode of fitting discoverers of a latent fact which, upon its disclosure, would agitate vast communities, reveal many hidden things, put to the test man's civil and social laws, and "disintegrate the stratifications of his religious dogmas." But superior intelligences went to the little village of Hydesville, N. Y., and there found better agents for such a work; better, not as being more competent to see at once its extraordinary character and momentous involvements, but yet *better*, both because devoid of prejudices and fatal caution against its reception, and also, and especially, because of their greater power to put the momentous forces of that fact into prompt and vigorous action. How so? Henry Ward

Beecher—as reported in the Boston Daily Advertiser of this morning, Dec. 19th—says, “Reform in a profession begins from the outside, because a *spirit of pride* in its members prevents its being begun inside.” That is a truthful and instructive text, which, if fairly elaborated, would show ample reason why high wisdom calls “not many wise men, . . . not many noble,” to be either the first recipients of its fresh gifts, or the exhibitors of them to the world. Can you make a theologian receive new theology, or a scientist new science, or a divine new divinity, unless it comes through channels which his special brotherhood deems to be its legitimate and its only legitimate ones? It would take longer to remove from a Huxley and his class their acquired hindrances to a reception of new facts of such a nature or coming from such a source as not to be readily subjectable to their accustomed processes of verification, than it would to qualify a band of pliable boys and girls to receive, believe and promulgate them. Economy passes by the “wise and noble after the flesh,” and employs sometimes humble fishermen and sometimes little girls.

The great basic fact of Spiritualism, viz.: that many *seemingly* anomalous raps and tippings are produced legitimately by spirits, owes its distinct recognition and wide promulgation to the Fox family. They are entitled to that eminent distinction; and, because of that recognition, and of the patience with which they submitted to much gross rudeness in testing the truth of their statements, and the fidelity with which they have yielded their organisms and labored to give supernal beings access to man, they have won for themselves and for their Hydesville home a lasting lodgment in human history, so that a world reformed in many respects, and advanced in science, will long keep both them and that place in grateful remembrance.

## IN THE DARK.

"Spirits will operate only in the *dark*, and never unless conditions are right." Who or what, ever does or did *anything* unless "conditions were right," that is, were competent to admit of what was performed? When can the fire-fly show us its light? Only when it is dark. Why not when the sun is up? Because *conditions* then are not right. What makes the conditions faulty? Simply the *presence of light*. Why distrust the firefly's capability to appear luminous when conditions are right, because he fails to do it when the sun shines? Why distrust the power of angels to roll a stone from the mouth of a sepulchre, because they did it very early in the morning, *while it was yet dark?* or the power of other angels to unlock a prison door and loose chains for Paul and Silas, because they did it *in the night?* Or the power of Jesus to walk over the waters of the sea because it was in the fourth watch *of the night* when he did so? Or his power to change water into wine, because he did it at one of those feasts which are usually held *in the evening?* Or why distrust his power to so multiply food from five loaves and two fishes as to feed to the full a multitude, and have twelve baskets full of fragments remaining, because this was done, after a request from his disciples, "*in the evening?*" Obviously the laws of spirit action upon matter did of old, and therefore must now, admit of more efficiency in darkness than in light. Why does the photographer develop his negative in the dark? Because of conditions. If spirits are indicating conditions for the most effective application of natural laws or forces which man has not detected or overlooks, let him, and him alone, sneer at their stickling for conditions, who knows so much that his fellow citizens, taught by history in which he confides and words of spirits in which they confide, can neither refresh his memory nor give him new information.

## SPIRIT-HEALING.

One who has any confidence that healing virtue ever went out of a person because an invalid touched the hem of his garment, or that a paste of clay and spittle was a becoming application for the cure of blindness, or that handkerchiefs and aprons, charged with something from the body of Paul, whose nature was confessedly all human, cured diseases, or that another man first put all the by-standers forth from around the seemingly dead Dorcas, and then prayed and she opened her eyes, may frequently see the former use of most efficient healing processes essentially reëxhibited to-day through persons under spirit-control ; and may see, also, that in choosing, as they sometimes do, to alter or make conditions, they do no more than Peter did when he cleared the room of the curious and anxious before he operated by prayer. Our community now, by majorities in all ranks, from high to low, resort to spirit-healers for help in cases of a vast number of chronic and obscure diseases which baffle the science and appliances of our accredited practitioners, and in so many cases do sufferers get relief, or very decided betterment of conditions, or such ready and astonishing cure, that society, as a whole, would regret the suspension of this supplemental supply of healing aid. Laugh at it while you and yours are well, but in the hour of extreme need come to it—come to it for thorough diagnosis by clairvoyance, which meets with no opacity, and for prescription by analysts dealing with the essences and spirit of medicaments, and having vastly supplemented their medical knowledge and experience since leaving the body.

## INSANITY.

Like all other subjects important enough to gain engrossing or even careful attention, this of Spiritualism will be seized upon by some whose mental balance it will disturb. When-

ever we have looked at tables, in reports of lunatic hospitals, indicating the cause of the insanity of its several inmates, we have always found "religion," or its equivalent, annexed to several names. We do not charge religion with such cases of insanity to its disgrace, but assume that a weakened brain busied itself more exclusively with that subject than its strength could bear, and made that its seeming injurer which in days of better health might have been its tonic and its joy. Love, hate, joy, or grief, either may develop *insanity*. So, too, can Spiritualism. We should value it less than we do were it so tame and inoperative that it did not rouse the action of the brain to a greater extent than the nervous system of some individuals can bear.

He who charges Spiritualism with producing insanity, says, "I am told that much *insanity* and suicide have been caused by preaching Christ's Gospel. This I deny." (!) Well, there may be good ground for a pretty broad denial here, because total depravity, absolute self-helplessness heavenward, eternal damnation, pains of hell forever, and a frowning God, are no part of *Christ's* gospel. The preaching of *these* horrific doctrines does most of the mischief indicated in the hospital reports, and not—we agree—not *Christ's* gospel; yet that gospel, gentle and cheering, is not quite so inefficient as *never* to awaken either joy or sorrow enough to bring on insanity.

#### SPIRITUALISM FLOURISHING.

Our censor, in his arraignment of us for errors, says, "It is contended that Spiritualism is flourishing beyond Christianity." Is this so, or not? We have no purpose to *say* that it is. From Old England across the Atlantic comes a voice of philosophical authority unfriendly to Spiritualism, saying that "it is disintegrating the strata of religious dogma." This indicates the remote spread and efficient action of a dissolving force. A little leaven has spread far into a great lump. Who could have dreamed that the little matter which the Fox girls

"*originated*" (?) only the other day, had in it elements powerful enough to disintegrate so soon the strata of Old England's religious dogma? It is "*flourishing*" amid the foundations and the superstructures of Christianity, whether it be so "*beyond*" it or not, or whether it be outstripping it in new extensions or not. Its present *extent*, however, is not a matter that we care to present in numbers; it moves on and embraces more and more, day by day, and is doubtless growing as fast as the world's ultimate good permits.

But we feel a little surprise that a man who sees fit to suppose us to be not over six hundred thousand, all told, and to make half of that number to be no more than just willing to look at our facts, and a large proportion of the other half to consist of those who frankly confess that they know nothing about it—we must express a little surprise that such an one should have deemed it necessary to attempt to so alarm the world about us, as was his obvious purpose in getting up a book—and such a book! Some 200,000 of us in a population of 40,000,000 is a small percentage. One in two hundred cannot be deemed very formidable. Such estimate of our numbers, however, speaks out in trumpet tones, clear, round and penetrating, in favor of our energy and efficiency in the work we do! Where, where are our equals in power, if rated on our numbers as given above? If his inner eye were opened, the man up North might see that those who be for us are more than those that be against us; and unless he is already semi-conscious of such a fact, wherefore his zeal and effort to stay our "*flourishing*"?

#### THE PRESS.

We are charged with claiming that the press has helped us! Well, we admit partial truth in this allegation. Such a book as this very *Exposé* helps us. Any set of humans who are efficient enough to call forth such labors and exclamations as are there expended, must be an energetic and forceful band,

whom many a reader would long to know more about. In a similar, though generally in a less dogmatic way, the newspaper press has very extensively kept the world informed of very many of our lapses, eccentricities, foibles, gullibilities, etc., whereby we were kept in notice, and our progress onward has been helped. Our own publications very faithfully hold on to and preserve all the ground the others help us to gain, if they do nothing more; and that ground has become now so extensive that the prominent literary journals admit very many articles full to overflowing with our spirit and general sentiments, which lend most enticing charms to these publications. Willing or not willing, the press partially is yielding to public pressure from without, and beginning to give us help in other than the backhanded way it used in the past.

The reviewer's intended position, that the press has been against us, is correct. It has been so as far as intention went. We have made our headway against that mighty power, and are all the stronger for the hard struggle. We can, in calm serenity, ask the world to estimate the intrinsic power of the faith and unseen help which have given us the position we have reached in numbers and influence, against the buffetings of press and pulpit.

#### EXPURGATION.

Our pages have already multiplied far beyond our first anticipations, and yet we have left unnoticed very many persons and things contained in the *Exposé*. There are six chapters of it, entitled severally, "Life Marriages," "Free Love," "A Varietist," "Individual Sovereignty," "The World Moves," and "Hocus Pocus." These contain little that ought ever to have been allowed to soil paper, or to soil a second quantity by republication in quotation. We are nauseated by copious extracts from the writings of eccentrics whose opinions and example are as distinctly unacceptable to

the great body of Spiritualists as to the people of any other denomination whatsoever. Such ultraisms are no essential part of, or common result from, Spiritualism. They are born of the idiosyncrasies of the individual authors and practicers, and not of any particular faith or creed. If this be denied, what faith will have to father them?

Every fair mind will keep in remembrance the fact that modern Spiritualism is *quite young*—younger than any of the writers quoted from in the *Exposé*. Under what faith and teachings did they pass their early years, and take their start and bent in life? The great mass of American Spiritualists received their early education, discipline and biases from what is reputed to be Christian teaching and example. Now, if they, as an whole—and they number millions—if all these, or the majority of them, are following after or yielding to evil, and only or mainly evil, what—what is the reflex argument as to the sufficiency of accepted Christianity as a saving religious faith? Good sir, ascribe the stuff which fills many pages of the *Exposé* to individual eccentricities and abnormalities; for otherwise you admit most fatal weakness in both Christian promulgators and Christianity itself.

#### PYRAL'S PROPHECY.

We close our excerpts from Brother Gregory by presenting the following, thanking him for much pleasure its perusal furnished, and the opportunity to give it wider circulation:

“In Wesley’s Works, Vol. X., page 163, we find the following: A little before the conclusion of the late war in Flanders, one who came from there gave us a very strange relation. I knew not what judgment to form of this, but waited till John Haines should come over, of whose veracity I could no more doubt than of his understanding. The account he gave was this: Jonathan Pyral was a member of our Society in Flanders. I knew him some years, and knew him to be a man of unblamable character. One day he was

“summoned to appear before the board of general officers. “One of them said: ‘What is this which we hear of you? We “hear you are turned prophet, and that you foretell the down- “fall of the bloody house of Bourbon and the haughty house “of Austria. We should be glad if you were a real prophet, “and if your prophecies came true. But what sign do you “give to convince us you are so, and that your predictions “will come to pass?’ He readily answered: ‘Gentlemen, I “give you a sign. To-morrow, at 12 o’clock, you shall have “such a storm of thunder and lightning as you never had be- “fore since you came into Flanders. I give you a second “sign: As little as any of you expect any such thing—as lit- “tle appearance as there is now, you shall have a general en- “gagement with the French within three days. I give a third “sign: I shall be ordered to advance in the first line. If I “am a false prophet I shall be shot dead at the first discharge; “but if I am a true prophet, I shall only receive a musket-ball “in the calf of my left leg!’ At twelve the next day there “was such thunder and lightning as they never had before “in Flanders. On the third day, contrary to all expectation, “was the general battle of Fontenoy. He was ordered to ad- “vance in the first line, and at the very first discharge he re- “ceived a musket-ball in the calf of the left leg.”

An account like this from the sagacious and truthful Wesley, well acquainted as he was with phenomenal Spiritualism, which was for a long time and extensively manifested in the Wesley family, bears such endorsement as gives it value. Assuming that we have here a *full* account, and that Pyral had no consciousness of instruction from spirits, we regard him as a “seer” having “open vision,” and belonging to a class embracing A. J. Davis, through whom man may get knowledge from the spirit-spheres which has no disembodied spirit as its projector. The kinship of such prophecy and promulgation with spiritualistic prophecy and philosophy is, that of offspring from the same womb, one coming into the world with and the other without the aid of midwives.

## THE PRIMAL QUESTION.

Are any portions of such actions as we ascribe to spirits performed by genuine spirits, disembodied? A conclusive answer to that single question will settle much. Prove the production of such an action by such an actor in one solitary case, and a pregnant fact is established which must remain a fact forever. Ten thousand or ten million cases of failure to furnish conclusive evidence in other trials, will not disprove a fact once established. Many failures, however, may cause the mind to query whether the proof, conceded in the solitary case, was conclusive or not, but the fact will stand as fact, until it shall be shown wherein the proof is deficient. Establish one case, and the possibility of millions like it admits of no further question. The probability of their recurrence depends upon the peculiarities, niceties and rareness of "the right conditions," and man's ability and disposition to facilitate the production of such conditions.

No other question connected with Spiritualism than such as are designed to elicit light on the one propounded above has pertinence or propriety, till that primal one has been settled in the inquirer's mind. Once settled in the affirmative, a momentous fact is learned. There is an avenue by which a traveler has returned from beyond the bourne of mortal life. Can my loved ones come back? Can they help me, or I them? Is it wise to learn whether they can? Will their coming bless or curse me if they do come? Questions as to the expediency and usefulness of consulting spirits are quite distinct from the one whether they can come to earth and reply to us. The former are highly proper—should be put seriously and earnestly and answered carefully and understandingly. Experience with spirit communings is the only basis on which a proper answer can be founded. Such experience may show spirits to be often untrustworthy as advisers about many material matters which pertain exclusively to earth-life—which are under the cognizance of outward sense,

and manageable by our faculties trained by daily exercise, and with which we are more conversant than spirits now are ; and yet they may be very suggestive and instructive unfold-ers of spiritual topics, and most helpful inciters to purity, phil-anthropy and godliness. Chaff and wheat grow together—pure metal and dross are found interblended—and experience is the needful guide for determining what to treasure up and what to refuse.

That much seeming evil hangs about Spiritualism and is manifested in the lives of many who profess belief in it, is too obvious for denial, and too accordant with the history of all great mental revolutions to be regarded as anything more than the consequences of an incidental opportunity for mul-titudes of the shiftless and dissolute to change their nominal allegiance. If one will read the fourth and fifth chapters of I. Corinthians, he will find that some of Paul's nominal disci-ples were rather puffed up by than induced to mourn over the lapses of a brother guilty of indulgences not so much as named among the Gentiles. The meaning of his language cannot be less than that some persons, seizing occasion pre-sented by its breaking up some Judaical restraints and intro-duced new customs and greater freedom, Christianity be-came an attractor of those inclined to licentiousness. Read also the history of Luther's protest against his mother-church ; note its influences upon him and masses who sided with him ; note the indulgences attendant upon the changes he occasioned, for there the early outworkings of evil seem to be historically exhibited as the seeming effects of events that are designed to first revolutionize and then elevate society. Like young Christianity and young Protestantism, Spiritualism has its numerous zoölogical parasites. Such a fact is more significant of inherent vitality and strength than of intrinsic torpor and debility. As other causes have done, so Spiritual-ism may survive the carrying of unseemly waifs which pre-existing society hoists upon it, may cast such off, and stand before the world disencumbered of all illegitimate appendages.

## CONCLUSION.

Individually we sympathize deeply and sensitively with many who are alarmed and agitated by the progress and the disintegrating operations of Spiritualism. After and in the straight sect of Orthodox Congregationalism we lived our youth and young manhood. We know the firmness of the grip which a confiding, conscientious mind desiring and praying for truth and dreading error, may lay upon both the Bible and a creed as understood and expounded in the Westminster Assembly's Catechism. We have vivid remembrance of *intense* pains and dread, occasioned from time to time through seven long years, by reluctant surrenders of tenets which growing acquaintance with the Bible and perceptions of the general scope of its teachings could find no substantial foundations for in that book. Fidelity to the God of truth demanded the relinquishment of all articles of faith inharmonious with the drift of Scripture and reason, however painful it might be. Haunting dread of hell fires and eternal damnation often protested against the surrender, but, thank God, though they delayed, they could not permanently prevent the removal of scales from the mental eyes which long obstructed the glorious rays of his *paternal* character and the perfect naturalness and simple equity of his processes for human conciliation with himself.

Personal experiences no doubt qualify our views as to the conscientiousness, sincerity and honesty of the great mass of those who still cling to tenets which we long ago relinquished, and these experiences let us feel toward our frightened brethren and speak of them with more kindness because of our knowledge of their condition. If anything has slipped from our pen seemingly derogatory to the good character or good intentions of the author we have been noticing—a stranger to us—it is contrary to our intention. His misconceptions of us, his positions, the tendency and quality of his book, his shortcomings and sidegoings in that, we have felt at liberty to

handle sharply, playfully, seriously or ironically, according to the mood his words excited. But we have not—for there is not in us a single sentiment that would prompt to it—we have not consciously presented him as a man underserving of high esteem and respect. “Let truth and error grapple;” also let Mr. Gregory and ourself be amicable seconds at the duel, each insisting upon *fair play*.

Whatever vagaries of brain or irregularities of life may seem to characterize many Spiritualists, we cannot forget or overlook the vast significance of the fact proved to us and to many a keener analyzer of evidence, that spirits do visit us. Simply as a fact, there is no more morality or immorality about it than there is about the fact that Mt. Cenis is traversable through its base of rock. In its application and effects there may be moral action. No quality of moral results, however, justifies a question as to its having intrinsic capacity for good. It is manifested subserviently to laws as abiding and unchangeable as those under which man uses his organs of locomotion and of speech, and like these latter may be availed of to either bless or curse. They must be fitted to give forth beneficent evolvments somewhere, at some time. Whether this be the time and we the beings to find them beneficent, is a very proper one to propound and to answer carefully. What is needful to an adequately careful answer? Recollections of the past, candid observations of present surroundings and fair compliance with the revolutionizing spirit of the day, are obviously among the things needful.

We turn again to ancient records and read thus: “I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.” Shall we take these words of Jesus as literal statement of the special purpose and permanent effects of his mission? He meant to say, that the early and comparatively transient effects of his teachings, acts and modes of life

would be the production of discord, alienations and domestic strifes. And such, no doubt, he had already occasioned, and this made him say, as he does above by implication, that such results were to be expected from new and revolutionizing sentiments and procedures, and were preparatory helps to ultimate good. His successors, if not he, so clashed with and agitated existing society that they were designated as "those who have turned the world upside down," and were dreaded as harmful innovators and disturbers of the public peace.

Can we infer less from his own language and his history, than that Jesus himself was incidentally a great disturber of domestic peace? In fancy we hear many a pious Jew most devoutly praying that he and his family and friends may be preserved from all contamination by that low-born Nazarene, that untaught companion of Galilean fishermen and other men and women of humble occupation and low rank in life—from one who ate with publicans and sinners, accepted kindly offices from and spoke an encouraging word for even the harlot of Magdala, and withheld condemnation from an adulteress.

We devoutly respect and love the man Jesus and his teachings. His life is a winning and lofty example of trustful, humble piety and practical beneficence, while his views of God's character and God's dispositions toward men, and requirements of them, harmonize with our highest conceptions of both divine and human excellence, and of equity, truth, and right. We quote from him in deep respect, not deeming or admitting that the humility of his origin, the lowliness of his companions, his sympathy for the dissolute, the strifes, discords, or irregularities of life among his attendants and followers, are to his discredit. We note them here because the counsels, coming through the high seership and mediumship of one so gentle and pure as he was, became the evoking cause of seeming evils very like those which the Spiritualism of to-day is evolving from the hells about us.

Similarity of agencies, processes, circumstances, and primal effects between infant Christianity and the Spiritualism of

to-day give ground for both hope and fair expectation that the latter has come to take up and carry further onward the work of the former, especially by demonstrating scientifically a future life and a natural road for return from the spiritual abodes—the former of which, so far as Jesus taught it, rests mostly upon his dictum, while the latter he left us to regard, as his age may have regarded it, as an occasional abnormal avenue. We trust that it may also strip his teachings of their distorting appendages and give to the world such additional spiritual light from out the heavens as the progress of the world during the intervening centuries has fitted it to receive, or its concentered errors require for their demolition.

For very nearly twenty years we have looked upon the revelations of to-day as supplemental to and explanatory of those of all past ages and nations, and especially so of Christianity and its appendant Judaisms and apostolic adjuncts. Throughout the more enlightened world, common sense, reason, and science have, during the last half century, been rejecting, more and more, from year to year, the *claims* put forth in behalf of Christianity, especially as understood and expounded by those who are denominated evangelical.

Those views which robe the marvelous phenomena occurring in one small ancient nation with such special sanctity as makes them say, "Touch not, taste not, handle not" us, for we are "holier than" others of our kind, must cease to withhold *any* reputed credentials of supernal revelations in any age or nation, from the hands of intelligence, reason, and science, where they may pass the ordeal of most rigid scrutiny, by examiners, who will reject, as spurious and valueless, whatever is not perceptibly amenable in its advent and its operations to universal laws, and in harmony with "the established constitution and course of things," or else the Bible will be soon consigned to dark closets in the libraries of the most enlightened portion of Christendom, and gradually lose special respect and favor among the common people.

Spiritualism seems better fitted to energize and direct the

destined scrutiny, and, at the same time, arrest the strong setting of the world's leading minds toward such materialism as not only makes soul a result of the organization of matter, but implies the subsidence or annihilation of soul, when the body becomes disorganized, than any other *ism* we now perceive in operation, and claims our steady support for the good it may do in that direction as well as many others.

*426 Dudley street, Boston, Mass., Dec. 25th, 1872.*