

SPIRITUALISM:

In Inspirational Discourse,

BY

MRS. CORA L. V. TAPPAN.

SUBJECT:—

“WHAT PRACTICAL USE OR BENEFIT WILL IT BE TO US TO
HOLD COMMUNION WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORLD?”

Delivered under Spirit-Influence

AT THE COURT ROOM, BELPER, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1875.

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P R E F A C E.

The accompanying inspirational Address is one of two delivered by Mrs. Tappan in Belper on the evenings of Tuesday and Thursday, September 7th and 9th.

Being the one the subject of which was chosen by the audience, it best illustrates the theory of inspirational speaking. Had either of the other subjects given in—"The Tripartite Nature of Man" and "Two or three verses from one of the Prophets"—been selected, the result, as far as a lucid exposition and an unbroken flow of the choicest language are concerned, would have been the same; of this there can be no question. Anything which the guides or intelligences who control Mrs. Tappan would have done on the evening in question, viewed as a test of the inspiration theory, would faintly compare with the severity of the work which on hundreds of occasions they have been asked to perform, and have successfully accomplished. During her career as a medium, Mrs. Tappan has delivered about 3,000 discourses on scientific, philosophical, and theological subjects, no two of which are alike. Remembering the character of the discourses, by this fact, taken in connection with another, viz., that from childhood upwards Mrs. Tappan has not read any works having relation to the subjects treated, are we not brought into the presence of a phenomenon which compels us to say, with the reverend Doctor who presided on the occasion of her delivering an address recently in Edinburgh, "If Mrs. Tappan has not been controlled by a disembodied intelligence, she is a profound genius?"

"Not necessarily so," say some very wise people. "There is nothing very wonderful in what she does; it is simply a smart exhibition of mind-reading." When these objectors are able to take money out of an empty purse they may hope to find acceptance for their unconscious cerebration theory. It certainly will not cover the ground of Mrs. Tappan's mediumship; for it is a well-established fact, that communications have been given through her, while in the trance state, which were abso-

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lutely beyond the knowledge of any of the persons who heard them given, and for the verification of some of which reference had to be made to outside authorities.

Being convinced, by proofs which need not be here stated, that the spirits of their departed friends, when they found an instrument suited to their purpose, had the desire and power to hold communion with them, the investigators of Spiritualism in Belper have sought on every fitting opportunity correctly to acquaint themselves with the character of the messages and counsels brought to them from the higher life. Having found these (given to them chiefly in private circles) to be of an exceptionally elevating and purifying kind, they deemed it desirable to furnish that portion of the public who felt any interest in the matter with the opportunity of learning from the lips of the most eloquent exponent of this science and philosophy what Spiritualism really is, its uses, and advantages to the present and future life. The addresses were delivered to large, intelligent, and appreciative audiences. Work has been done which, without question, will produce excellent results; and it may here be stated that (although the usual methods adopted for gaining adherents to a cause forms no part of their work) the friends of Spiritualism in Belper will be glad to furnish all sincere and truth-loving investigators with all available help in the prosecution of their inquiries. It may also be suggested that much may be gained by a perusal of the literature of Spiritualism; for while a narrative of the phenomenal marvels which are ever and anon occurring at seances may startle and even defy belief, the beautiful teachings of the harmonial and progressive philosophy will silently but certainly liberate the spirit from the cruel creedal bonds which have too long bound it, and present the Infinite Father in his true character as a God of love, fixing in the soul the grandest conception which ever entered the human mind, "the eternal progression of man."

The literature of Spiritualism may be obtained from Mr. H. Wigley, Bridge Street, Belper.

THE

PRACTICAL BENEFITS OF SPIRIT-COMMUNION.

An Oration by Mrs. CORA L. V. TAPPAN, delivered at the Court-room,
Belper, September, 9, 1875.

Mr. W. P. ADSEHEAD in the Chair.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—We had hoped that a gentleman from Derby, who was present with us on the previous evening, would have taken the chair to-night. I have just been informed that he could not very well arrange to leave home. Under the circumstances, if you will kindly accept my services, I will, to the best of my ability, do what I can to fill the situation, and I can only hope that the duties connected therewith will be as easy and pleasant to discharge as were those of my friend, who presided over us on Tuesday night.

The subject, which, in one or other of its many phases, we expect will be submitted for consideration this evening, is a deeply interesting one; indeed, we are ever and anon discovering, that of all others it is the one which possesses surpassing interest even for minds in which we should least expect to find the problem of a future life awaiting solution.

A short time ago a gentleman of large culture and strict religious training told me he would give all he possessed on earth if he could answer one question in the affirmative—viz., “If a man die, shall he live again?”

It is just possible there are minds in this assembly who are burdened with the same doubt and with the same difficulty. If, therefore, anything shall be said to-night, or if the manner of saying what shall be said shall in any degree have the effect of helping

those troubled and burdened minds to answer to their own satisfaction the all-important question, the object of our coming together will be accomplished.

I shall say no more, except to ask, on behalf of Mrs. Tappan, that the kindness, courtesy, and attention which were manifested on Tuesday night may be extended to her this evening.

The hymn beginning "There is a land of pure delight" having been sung, the Chairman asked for a committee of five gentlemen to choose the subject for the lecture. The following gentlemen were appointed:—Messrs. George Brown Summerside, Anthony, Lee, Grocock, and Rogers (from India).

Mr. Ward then sang a song entitled "The Message."

Mrs. Tappan—Join with us in an

INVOCATION.

O Thou infinite Father, Thou divine and perfect soul, Thou life of all life, whom we must ever turn to with thankfulness and praise! Thou who art the source of life and being! O mighty and eternal spirit, pervading and permeating all life, who givest with Thy laws the life to the atom and the worm, kindling light in the soul of man with Thy quickening power! O Thou divine spirit! we remember that wherever we may be, there Thou art; whether in silence or in doubt, whether in sorrow or in hope, whether in gladness or in deep despair, Thy presence still is near; so, whatever be our thoughts, Thou, O God, wilt hear; whatever be our weakness, Thou art the strength. If Thy children falter and fall, Thou dost guide and sustain them, and Thou, O living soul, dost abide in every heart that seeketh earnestly for Thee. We seek to-night Thy truth; be Thou its revealer and interpreter to us. We seek to fathom Thy wondrous nature; let it be revealed to us in Thy love and in Thy wondrous ministrations. We know Thou hast reared up prophets and seers and a Saviour in time past. We beseech Thee to rear up into the heart of man a living Shekinah of light and blessing, that, though still journeying through the wilderness of time, he may behold its pillar of cloud by day, and its pillar of fire by night, and know that Thou art there. We have known that Thou hast guided Thy children and teachers to speak the words of truth to man by Thy guidance within our hearts. If there be those who know Thee not, who have not seen Thee revealed in the starry firmament or the glory of the earth, who have not heard Thy voice through the ministrations of past ages, O, by Thy presence, make manifest to them in word, or sign, or token, that they may know that Thou art here. If there be those who see not that the soul of man liveth by Thy breath and endureth for ever by Thy love, O turn their thoughts within, that they may find there the record of Thy love,—that Thy truth hath been revealed in immortal life. If there be those whom death has taken dearly beloved ones

from their sight—the beloved voice is gone—and who look with longing eyes and doubting minds whither they have flown, O be Thy promise fulfilled, that Thou mayst rend in twain the shadow of darkness that binds them, showing where, beyond the grave and above the darkened pall, the beloved ones live for ever. Let us speak Thy word of truth; and let us understand Thine inspiration; let us gather strength from our communions together and with Thee; let Thy children join their voices with the songs of the angels who sing Thy praises for ever in deeds and words of loving life; and to Thy name shall be all praise, now and evermore.

The Chairman then read the subjects handed to him, when the following one was selected, viz. :—"What Practical Use or Benefit will it be to us in this life to hold Communion with the Spiritual World?"

Mr. Ward sang a song entitled "The Angel at the Window."

Mrs. Tappan—We are now prepared to receive the subject of the address.

The Chairman then read the above subject chosen.

DISCOURSE.

The late Thomas Buckle said that every portion of knowledge added to humanity constitutes just so much mental wealth to the human race, every perfected fact in science is an addition to the common fund of mental power, and every new thought is just so much more in man's conquest over the material world. We believe that on this basis alone the knowledge of any truth concerning man's spiritual nature here, or hereafter, is valuable. We believe that on this basis alone the communion with any other class of beings would constitute an era or epoch in the world of mind. You are all aware how rapidly geographical discoveries have extended during the past century. You are all aware that the intercommunion of races of man has added to the knowledge, and power, and science of mankind—nay more, has added to their goodness. When the knowledge of a human being is limited to that locality in which the individual was born or reared, then the powers of that mind to comprehend the vastness of the world and the wonderful goodness of the Infinite Creator must be limited to that narrow compass. We know of an individual living even in these enlightened days who has never seen a railway, and never sent a message by the telegraph wire, who boasts that he has not been twenty-five miles away from his native place, and judges of mankind by those he sees around him. He knows nothing of the wonderful regions that lie beyond the seas, of the vast numbers of people that are there, each under a form of government of their own. He knows nothing of the multitudes of appliances for uplifting human toil and alleviating the hardships of human labour. The amount of his happiness is limited to the knowledge which he

possesses. He may be a good man, and perform his duty well, but if he refuses to take knowledge and benefit by those things that are given to man for his use and advancement, then he must be a loser.

The great problems of human thought that for ages have gained the attention of thinking minds are those connected with spiritual existence, and whatever may be the position of those who are satisfied on that subject—who believe in immortality, and have faith in the future state—they may or they may not require the message which Spiritualism brings, like those who have no knowledge or belief in a future state. Yet even these do not deny themselves intercommunion with their friends on earth, because they believe in the future state, but admit the advantages to be derived from intercourse with those of their kind; and if communion between man and man is essential to human progress, so also must that which can bring you into contact with a class of beings in the world to which you are all tending, be of itself a benefit. The amount of benefit to be derived from any spiritual or natural source must depend entirely upon the manner in which you yourselves employ it. The sunlight, so essential, might prove a detriment if you received its too ardent rays throughout the entire day. The air which you breathe you may wish not in such violent currents as to carry you away; and fire, which is the prime power of the magnetic system of the world, becomes dangerous when not governed by skilful hands. And so, whatever open communion there is between mind and mind, it depends upon yourselves whether you are benefited thereby; whether you are benefited by your conversations with one another; whether you are benefited by your social, and religious, and other forms of intercourse with humanity; whether you are benefited by the knowledge of religion, or arts and sciences; whether you are benefited by any of the manifold blessings which are bestowed upon you. The Infinite Being has spread out before you a table of knowledge, revelation, and wisdom, and it is for you to decide in what manner you will employ these blessings—whether they shall benefit you or otherwise. The condition of mind in which a human being receives this knowledge is therefore the test of its value to him or her. The state of being in a condition to receive benefit from all the blessings of God is a state devoutly to be wished for. He who thinks because he has a knowledge of astronomy therefore he does not need a knowledge of geology, chemistry, and geography, would be a limited man indeed in his definition of knowledge; and he who says that, because he believes in immortal life he therefore requires no replenishing from the Infinite fountain, denies his daily prayer when he asks for the blessings and presence of God. The truth is, that man's spiritual nature must be constantly fed from the spiritual fountain, just as his bodily nature is fed by the atmosphere he breathes and food which he eats. That which he had yesterday

will not supply his hunger to-day; the water which you drank from the fountain last spring will not quench your thirst to-day; the prayer once uttered to strengthen your spirit in the hour of adversity may not suffice when another strain of sorrow and grief comes over you. You must needs pray to God continually for strength; and so the loving conversation with friends which you have had in early years does not prevent you desiring that conversation to be repeated again and again; and if you should have to-day a mother, or sister, or friend by your side, whose counsel and wisdom you value, and to-morrow that friend be removed by the hand of death to a distant sphere, there is nothing in human nature to prevent your desire for the same loving message, the same kind admonition, from them that you received before. You have been taught that it is impossible to remove the burden of humanity concerning death; it is for ever passed away.

We do not make this knowledge to supersede any other. Because you speak with spirits, it does not therefore follow that you shall not commune with each other; and because you have this added life and communion, it does not follow that you shall not at all times, and whenever you require, hold converse with the Infinite Spirit. There have been those who have said, "But does not this communion cut you off and alienate you from the Infinite Father?" On the contrary, every tie of affection that is holy binds you to Him with tenfold power. On the contrary, like a wise mother and loving friend on earth, the admonition of the guardian spirit and the angel friend is one of the methods whereby you are conscious of God's overruling power.

Here is a convict, perhaps in the dungeon cell, and there is no earthly mother whose love does not follow that son through all his wanderings, even to the penitentiary walls and to the prison cells, where she prays that he may be released from his sinfulness and wrongs. The spiritual mother prays none the less, and is it not as great a benefit to the wandering child of earth to believe that the angel mother is as loving as the earthly mother? Is it not a greater benefit also to believe that if the love be cut off here it is of benefit there, and the child is not left to wander without a voice uplifted on his behalf? There is no heaven so high but a mother's heart has wrung with pity and love when she sees her child upon earth, and she, with swiftest prayer and swiftest message, would endeavour to find some means to alleviate the suffering, or uplift the fallen one. Spirits are not more hardened than mortals; spirits have not less of human kindness than human beings in earth-life. Released from the selfishness of earthly existence, the ministering spirit has a loftier theme of contemplation than the usual methods of worldly device, which generally originate in policy, or counsels of honesty, which are commended from the fact that they are the best policy. The spiritual adviser ceases to be true for truth's sake when he gives utterance to such counsel. His

teaching is, follow right and truth, not because it will exalt you among your fellow men, but love goodness for goodness sake, and be honest because it is best to be so, not because it will in the end prove most politic. This higher view of human conduct comes of the spiritual life, and such spirits as are capable of advising when on earth will certainly not be less capable of doing so when they have the added light of the next stage of existence.

To ask what benefit spirit-communion can be to mankind, is to ask what benefit any knowledge can be, especially that knowledge which is connected with the most important element of man's nature, his future immortal existence; and therefore we state that it presents three points which we shall dwell upon to-night, of absolute benefit to the human family.

First, it proves to the world of science that there is another power or outside force not connected with matter, but which can influence matter.

Secondly, it establishes to the inquiring philosophical mind an intelligent method of conversation with the world of spiritual beings, which knowledge heretofore has been denied by the world of science.

Thirdly, it prepares humanity, by constant spiritual communion with their own friends, for that stage of life which follows death, and accustoms them to think of that future state in all their transactions of daily life; to be mindful that every step which they take upon earth is itself a portion of the pathway to the spirit-land, and that every thought they have on earth is one of the things recorded in that land, which will meet them there when they pass through death's portals. This advantage makes all material life the stepping-stone to spiritual existence. It points out by a natural and simple method that the laws connected with the change called death are not dreadful nor fearful, excepting as man makes them so; that there is no such thing as death, but life, a change of life, and that the change becomes dreadful or otherwise just as your lives have been dreadful or otherwise; that he who leads an upright, industrious, honest life prepares himself every hour of his existence for that future state; and that by constant communion and entreaty the spirit that has gone before says, I warn you to avoid too much earthliness, since it cumbers the spirit in the world of souls; I warn you to avoid ambition, since it becomes a cold tent around your spirit; avoid hatred, malice, and revenge, since these are things that clothe the spirit in darkness instead of light. The mother that has passed on before warns her child not to think too much of worldly fame. Instead of striving for fame or power, she begs of him to seek for integrity and goodness.

We have said that electricity, fire, and the various elements of earth unguided are dangerous. No power is so subtle as that connected with man's spiritual nature, and if it be not understood it is equally dangerous. You do not trust your son or daughter

in those places that are to be found in your centres of so-called civilisation. You do not let your young boys go out into the street at midnight, for there would be influences which you would not wish them to encounter. Forewarned is to be fore-armed. If you know that the spiritual world is near you, and there be a lurking power of evil in the darkened atmosphere, you, by that knowledge, may cast it from you. If you do not know it, it may enter at an unguarded moment, controlling you by its very presence through elements that are intended for the benefit of man, the knowledge of which brings power and adds happiness, if properly employed. It rests, as we stated, with yourselves to apply this knowledge to your own individual wishes, requirements, and elevation.

The great burden to many persons is the bugbear that all this must be the work of evil spirits. We know of no law whereby evil spirits may come that does not equally apply to communion with good spirits. We know of no doorway entering the world of evil spirits, that an opposite doorway does not enter the abode of the good spirits. It rests with yourselves which kind of spirits you invite to your companionship. It rests with your own minds which kind you attract to your presence. There is a law in science that like attracts like—that the substances that are similar will naturally amalgamate. This, of course, can apply to the world of mind as well as the world of matter, and whoever is afraid of evil spirits must be aware that there is something within himself to attract such spirits. Whoever is afraid of a preponderance of evil must be aware that his or her mind is not safe when trusting in itself. The communion with good spirits is the result of aspiration and prayer. You do not seek your mother or sister in the street; but if someone forces herself upon you—one who is not your mother or sister—you perceive the fact. You do not go to the house of a friend, expecting to meet your friend, and meet strangers instead; they understand you are coming, know you are their friend, and they gather around to meet you. If you seek for a friend, there is no possibility of the answer being given by a foe. The laws of mind govern so correctly and distinctly that if you ask you certainly shall receive that which is highest and first in spiritual communion.

But of what practical value is Spiritualism? That depends upon what you call practical. It may not be practical to listen to music, but the tendency of such sounds is elevating, and whatever elevates humanity is practical, whether it be in gold coin or in the currency of fine spiritual thought. Whatever has a tendency to lift mankind from the low and barren uses of a bloated life becomes in itself a sublime utility. The steam-engine, with its many horses of power, is practical in more senses than one, and not simply because it manufactures and gives the motive power to the world of industry. Through its use mankind has more leisure,

for thereby the labourer in a few hours can supply the needs of the family, and the remainder of his time he can devote to mental improvement. You should see to it in this age of advancement, that there are opportunities offered for the improvement of the mind instead of the degradation of it. You should see to it, that there are methods offered for those who toil through the greater portion of the day, to have recreation and such elevated thought as will give improvement at other times.

We now come to other practical bearings and uses of this subject. Fear is the great burden of human life. 'It is fear that, through ignorance, causes many a person to lose his life. It is fear that haunts the child from the cradle to the grave, lest in some dark corner there should be an enemy that would lead him astray. Darkness is to the child an infinite source of terror, and death has been the great fear of the world. Remove this fear—take away this appalling presence—tear aside the hidden closet that contains the skeleton, death, within every mind—and you make them fit for the uses of life. He who dreads death is not capable of living. He who fears that at every turn he will be met with this monster, cannot properly perform the duties of his existence. That which removes the fear of death by supplying an intermediate chain between this life and the next, presents the most useful knowledge, the most valuable of all earthly acquisitions, that can come to man. We may point out other methods of usefulness, such as inventions, which have been the work of inspiration. As one of frequent instances, we may name that of an inventor who wearily fell asleep despairing of the success of his invention, when some messenger in a dream revealed to him that which he required to perfect his work. We say no invention has ever been given to the world that has not been the result of inspirational intuition on the part of those who received it, and by which they further those improvements and instruments which are for the benefit of mankind. Another and a wider use which this exalted philosophy has afforded is the recognition of guardian angels and the power of ministering spirits to uplift the weary soul who aspires to heaven for help, and guide the footsteps of those who can thus be aided. Let the human mind be aware that the all-pervading presence of the very dear ones of your own household are seeing your thoughts, watching your actions, striving to guide your footsteps, and the tendency must be in the direction of Godly motives, righteous ways, and the integrity of thought and deed. Among your fellow-men, that is useful which forms the solvent between the two extremes of human thought—bridges over the dark chasm that has divided you from the world of souls. If there had been no doubt upon the question of man's immortality—if there had been none who disbelieved that—there would be, of course, no need of this discovery; but such is not the case. Vast numbers of people do not believe in the existence after death; vast numbers more have been indifferent upon

the subject, saying this life is sufficient for the present, the future will take care of itself. You might as well say the child should always be a child, and never be a man. You might as well say that the bird bursts from its shell simply to flutter and fly around. You might as well say there is no object in preparing for any loftier attainment, because the present attainment suffices to-day. You must build either for time or eternity. If you build the edifice of your spiritual and mental structure for the time, you build it of such materials as worldly fame. If you build for eternity, you build of such substances as the spirit is made of—goodness of thought, power of righteous deeds, and loving conduct to your fellow-men—you make the fabrics for eternity instead of for time, and you reach up to those loftier attainments that have made the world sublime and great. Of such powers were the martyrs made who through fire and flame went out into the world of souls to meet with their reward, instead of denying on earth the truth of their convictions. Of such substance have been the philanthropists made who, even in criminals and outcasts, have recognised their fellow-beings, and who have won for themselves an eternal habitation by loving their fellow-men and caring for their welfare. He who says he loves God and hateth his brother must be a liar; but he who believes in the future loveth God by doing good towards his fellow-men; and this forms the basis of the structure which in time and eternity shall blossom out in the spiritual world. Spirits who hold converse with you tell you that the best preparation for the spiritual existence is a recognition of the spiritual nature of every human being; that this is not a figure of a lord or labourer, but a human soul; that this is not a king or a peasant, but that it is our fellow-being, and in the spiritual kingdom that person will stand highest whose deeds have been best, whose thoughts the noblest, whose lives have given to earth some lofty theme of meditation. Socrates in the dungeon cell, the slow poison circulating in his veins, taught the existence of the immortal soul, for which he was put to death. To-day you are fortunate in being able to express your belief freely, for what would you say of that nationality or law which could cause a human being to be put to death for believing in the immortality of the human soul? Thanks to the laws of this country, they are in advance of many whose actions they restrain, and who would gladly put a stop to the spread of spiritual truth even now, did not an over-prevailing sense of justice and right-mindedness prevent them.

Another use of communion with the world of spirits is that it teaches mankind the nature of all the spiritual gifts that Paul enjoins you to cultivate; that of healing, that of prophecy, that of tongues, that of interpretation of tongues, of wisdom and knowledge, and he asks that you shall cultivate earnestly the best gift, and of all gifts and graces charity is the greatest. Those who

are of different beliefs meet together in conventions, and forbear with one another. They even forbear with dark and ignorant spirits, who are in the form and take occasion to disturb their fellow beings, even in such an hour as this. These ignorant ones are so dark in their minds and spiritually blind as to consider it an evidence of wisdom to insult this assembly, who come here for the purpose of receiving knowledge. This charity covereth a multitude of sins, and behind the darkened spiritual form of every individual who seeks to do wrong or injure his fellow-beings, the mantle of charity discovers that even he has an immortal soul, and that the angels look with pitying eyes on his paltry and trivial abuses of life. Spiritualism teaches that even the criminal and the outcasts have immortal souls, and that the eyes of the angels are illumined with pity and sorrow as they strive to administer words of elevation and comfort. It teaches that persons of all varied beliefs and forms of opinion may still abide in the Father's house, they having a portion of truth, which is as a whole concentrated in him as the infinite Father. It teaches that whoever wrongs another commits the greatest injury upon himself; his own spiritual nature is the greatest sufferer.

A knowledge of the condition of life in the spiritual world teaches that those who, when on earth, have power and riches, and have their thoughts wholly intent in building up a physical structure, will in the future life be paupers in spirit. Those who have not adorned their minds with the graces of charity, kindness, and love to their fellow-beings—to those who are lowly and have toiled with hardened hands, or were born through misfortune, to sorrow, suffering, or despair—in the world of spirits appear in all their ungainly deformity and nakedness of soul. Spiritualism teaches that these neglected, down-trodden, and oppressed ones, with only the Infinite Father's love to sustain them, forbearing and full of good deeds, are in spirit clothed in light, and are brought face to face with their friends in the world of spirits, adorned with beauty and comeliness. It teaches that no artifice or outward ornament can suffice to conceal that dust and deformity within the human mind from the searching eye of the spirits. No form of concealment will avail them, but your spirits are arrayed in just such raiment as your daily lives on earth have made for you. What practical value, therefore, may be estimated from Spiritualism? Whatever adds to the power of man to vanquish human selfishness, to overcome human folly, is valuable; whatever adds to the power of man to find other sources of knowledge and wisdom is valuable; whatever adds to his fund of mental riches is valuable; whatever adds to his power of endurance when in earth-life; whatever adds to his power to do justice to his fellow-man, and to build up for himself in the eternal future, wherein his life shall be not of outward adornment, but of the riches of the spirit-world, is of practical value.

Several questions were put to Mrs. Tappan's guides, and answered, after which the following poem was given :—

THE PROGRESSION OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH,

DELIVERED AT BELPER, SEPT. 8, 1875.

(Subject chosen by the audience.)

"As the tree falleth, so it lies,"
Says the sacred Word inspired of old ;
But we know that when the tree thus dies,
And all its leaves have sunk in mould,
That by subtle alchemy, decay
Takes every leaf and branch away.

Nay, more ; when the trunk itself departs,
And mosses grow upon the bank,
And not one fibre there remains
Within the forest dense and dank—
Where the ancient tree once reared its form
Its ruins keep the young germs warm.

It means that whereso'er the tree
Must fall, there it must surely lie,
Until decay and change shall call
The atoms to their destiny.
As a man dies, so death he still
Sleep, change, and rise by Heaven's will.

His body, like the forest tree,
Sleeps till the subtle alchemy
Of law transmutes it to decay,
Changes the fibres from dark death,
Inviting him to a loftier way,
Ennobling to the grander breath.

There is no soul so dark and drear
But what some light of hope is there,—
Some angel messenger to cheer,
Releasing it from its despair.
No spirit in its prison vault
Has such despair but what Christ's word
Of love, and kindness, and sweet peace,
Brings messages to it like a bird's.

There is no soul but what aspires
From lowest to the highest state,
That does not find renewed desires.
There comes a time (never too late)
When the freed spirit mounts above,
Basking in God's suppremer love.

Throughout eternity's vast range
 One endless chain unites you all—
 An upward pathway of bright change,
 Responsive to the Father's call.
 The higher to the lower speak,
 Giving their message of sweet peace,
 The lower e'en the lowest seek,
 Promising succour and release.

So that from the lowest child of earth,
 Unto the angel's highest throne,
 There is no soul unloved by God,
 And none accursed—no, not one.
 Throughout eternity's vast height,
 From mountain unto mountain range,
 New truth to gather in your flight,
 You gain them by progression's change.

HOW TO FORM THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

A party of from three to ten persons, the sexes being as equally represented as possible, should sit round a table, placing their hands lightly on the top of it, and engage in pleasant conversation or singing, thereby ensuring mental harmony. When the company is mediumistic, the table moves in a few minutes, or it may be in an hour; but some circles have to meet repeatedly before any manifestations are obtained. A medium is a person having a peculiar temperament, which throws off an atmosphere, or "magnetic," through which the spirits can connect themselves with physical matter. If no such person be in the circle, manifestations cannot be elicited. But, in cases where an agreeable party sit repeatedly, the mediumistic power has a tendency to become developed. If the attempt result in failure, certain of the sitters should withdraw from the circle, and on the next evening allow others to take their places, that new combinations may give the desired conditions. A circle should not sit longer than two hours, nor oftener than twice a week. A true, loving, cheerful, and elevated state of mind leads to the control of spirits of a like character, whereas opposite qualities in the sitters have a tendency to attract spirits in sympathy therewith.

- RULES FOR THE SPIRIT CIRCLE. By Emma Hardinge. 1d.
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