

LEAVES FROM MY LIFE:

A Narrative of Personal Experiences

IN THE CAREER OF

A SERVANT OF THE SPIRITS;

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM,

AS SEEN DURING A TWELVEMONTH'S VISIT TO THE
UNITED STATES.

By J. J. MORSE.

ILLUSTRATED WITH TWO PHOTOGRAPHS.

LONDON:

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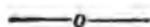


Dedication.



THESE
"LEAVES FROM MY LIFE,"
MARKING THE PAST AND PRESENT,
ARE DEDICATED TO
ONE WHO CHEERED THE STRUGGLES OF THE DAWN,
AND WHO
STILL PROVES LIFE'S BEST FRIEND,
M. A. E. M. :
MY WIFE.

PREFACE.



It has been the aim of the writer of the ensuing pages, to present, in as clear a manner as possible, the leading incidents recorded on the Leaves of his book of Life, for the consideration of those friends and followers of the movement designated Modern Spiritualism. For the past seven years the writer's name has been intimately associated with the work of Spiritualism in England, in which he has striven to bear his part—as a servant of the angel-world—as well and wisely as he could.

Believing that the answers that this work may afford to the questions, “Who is he?” “Where did he come from?” “What has he done?” will not prove unacceptable to his many friends in England, America—and other lands wherein he is known, the author sends these pages forth with that end in view.

As a contribution to the literature of English Spiritualism this little volume may not be without its value, since it is a record of facts and experiences which hereafter may prove historical. The outlines of the first four chapters have already appeared in print, in the columns of the *Medium and Daybreak*; the material then supplied has been re-written, and largely added to,

in the present work. The foundation of the remaining chapters was originally contributed, in a series of letters, to the Editor of the *Spiritualist*, and printed in that journal. The subject matter is here re-arranged, amplified, and for the first time presented in a compact form. The entire matter has—in brief—been revised, re-written, and extended, as here produced.

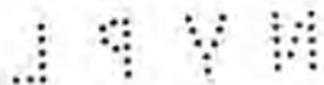
The addresses forming the Appendix are the words of one whom the writer has long since learned to love and honour. It would be out of place to speak further of them here; the readers are requested to form their own opinions. The portraits accompanying the work in one case is self explained, and in the other a description is given in the proper place.

As this is the writer's first appearance as an Author he trusts sincerity of purpose may atone for all, or any faults discoverable.

That his little venture on the sea of letters may find favouring breezes that shall waft it into pleasant harbours—in the hearts of friends—is the hope of

THE AUTHOR.

FOR HUMANITY AND THE TRUTH.



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SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

Friends of truth, you're welcome here,
Join with us in tuneful praise ;
Truth has vanquished every fear,
Love shall light our passing days.

Spirits from on high attend,
Holy inspirations bring ;
To the world your beauty lend
Freeing life from passion's sting.

Love is our religion's aim,
Wisdom's light the soul's best guide ;
Truthful life our noblest fame,
Kindly deeds our heart's best pride.

God is the Eternal Cause
Nature bright His oriel fane ;
Our salvation through her laws—
They supreme around us reign.

Thus we need no priest nor book
That we may His precepts know,
On every hand, on all we look,
They light our path where'er we go.

June, 1877.

LEAVES FROM MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.

I WAS born on the 1st of October, 1849. My parents—Thomas and Mary Morse—were publicans, and at that time resided next door to the old Olympic Theatre, Strand. Subsequent to the destruction of that building, they removed to the “Black Horse and Swan,” in the Borough, which house, however, has been pulled down, and has given place to the South-Eastern District Post Office. My earlier experiences of home life and parental influence are of but a vague and indistinct character, since, by reason of constitutional weakness, I was placed out to nurse with some relatives in Surrey, in the vicinity of Kingston-on-Thames. My parents being rather wealthy folk, little, if anything, was wanting to make my early years pleasant and comfortable. When I was about four years of age, I had the misfortune to lose my mother, who at the time of her death was living with my father at Clapham, he having retired from business only a few months previously. Her loss materially unsettled my father’s arrangements, and he re-entered business-life shortly after—this time, however, as a pastry-cook and confectioner, within a few doors of the public-house above mentioned. Matters not prospering in his new venture, he turned to his former profession, and leased the “Chester Arms,” Bunhill Row, St. Luke’s, London, where he became involved in a law-

suit, which he unfortunately lost. Suffering at the time from carbuncles in the throat, that disease, aggravated by mental depression, terminated his career in the month of March, 1858. As was subsequently proved, his pecuniary liabilities absorbed the remainder of his fortune, which left myself and an elder brother and sister dependent upon the kindness of our relatives—not the best means of making one's way in the world. At this time I was about nine years of age. My scholastic education had been, up to this period, of a limited character—had been, in fact, what I might term infantine education, by reason of my constitutional weakness not allowing any continuous application. The departure of my father, and the involvement of his affairs, by no means tended to place me in a position where I could much improve myself in this respect. Just prior to my father's departure I was placed under the tuition of a Mrs. Garrard, at Edmonton; but as her chief source of inspiration was the spirit-bottle, and her mode of education chiefly the end of a cane, I neither thrived nor profited under her care. Some little time after I had been with her she removed to Greenwich, where I was at the time of my father's death, which fact was not announced to me until some weeks after the occurrence. Being too young to feel my loss fully, it was some years before I realised my position. My school-mistress having become worse, I confess I did what many a better lad had done before me—I ran away! and presented myself to some friends in London, whither I had walked, who, to my intense disgust, conveyed me to my step-mother, and she, being in nowise inclined to render me any assistance, very kindly consigned me to the tender mercies of my paternal uncle, who shortly after placed me under the charge of a very excellent and amiable lady at Greenwich, to whose kindly care and tutorship and judicious watchfulness I owe the foundation of much permanent good. The events just recorded would bring me to my tenth year, and for about six months I was at school at Deptford. My past education (?) did not fit me to take a very high rank in this school, and I



have a very vivid recollection of several pretty severe floggings for my imputed dulness.

An alteration in the fortunes of what I might call my foster-mother, and a squabble with my uncle, which ended in a breach of our friendship, and which has not yet been healed, brought about another change in affairs, and ultimately I was thrown upon my own resources. Thus it will be seen that my education, imperfect as it was, ended before I had fairly turned ten years of age, and from that time up to the present I have not had any scholastic training whatever. Then commenced a very trying period of my life. I had to work, and that unceasingly and unsparingly.

My first experience in this direction was as a messenger in the Greenwich office of the London District Telegraph Company; after that I entered a locksmith's service; then, in consequence of the difficulty with my uncle, already mentioned, I went to sea. It was in the winter of 1862, and on board the *Fanny*, collier brig, of Whitby, that I made my *début* as a sailor. Young, inexperienced, sensitive, my entrance into a collier's fore-castle did not at all tend to elevate my new profession in my estimation; but I resolved to endure as best I could. My friends had coolly disposed of me for an act that I was guiltless of. I was to be bound apprentice until twenty-one. Somehow the Fates did not incline to it, and several trips passed off, and still the indentures remained unsigned. At length, in the spring of 1863, about May, an accident befel me. Our cargo, coals, had been almost discharged; I was at work in the hold, astern, when suddenly a huge piece of timber fell heavily on the back of my skull; I was knocked down senseless.

I recovered consciousness, and did my work as well as I was able, but by midnight sickness had claimed me as her own. We were bound for Felling, on the Tyne; I gradually grew worse, and on reaching our port was too ill for duty. My captain advised me to return to my friends. I was discharged my ship, paid the immense sum of ten shillings, eight of which I paid for a passage to London by a

steam-boat, and, after paying the steward's fee, I landed at Irongate Wharf with sixpence in my pocket. My foster-mother was my first thought. To reach her I had to dispose of some clothing. I found her. Alas! trouble had visited her, and all the aid she could give me was but scant. I was hot, ill, feverish. Friends were advised, but thinking they had rid themselves of me—by sending me to sea—they would hear nothing, and roundly asserted I had run away from my ship! I scorned aid then, since insult was added to injury, and betook me to that home the humanity of the law provides, and for six months lay in the infirmary of the Union-house. I could then, and do now exclaim, with Hood,—

“ Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun.”

I ultimately recovered, and found employment in London, as a waiter in a City dining-rooms; after which I held a situation at the public-house known as the “Fox and Grapes;” and it was while in this employ I first encountered Spiritualism in a practical manner, concerning which I will speak in its proper place. The last situation I held was under the proprietor of a public-house in Clerkenwell, the “Two Brewers.” I had the misfortune to spend a Christmas in this last place, and often have I looked back upon that time with an unconquerable disgust. I had been used to seeing life under various circumstances, I had a practical knowledge of the poor, I had seen something of the dark side of men; but it was left for me then to first discover to what depths intemperance could reduce people. Send missionaries to the Fiji Islands, India, and Africa if you will, but for dear humanity's sake keep some at home to rescue young men, youths, matrons, and maidens, from the curse of intemperance. What I have seen, and the memory of that happy (?) Christmas time, will be a living protest in my mind against the abuse of temperance in all things.

Through devious paths the world's workers are often led

from their present to their real position. The writer of these pages was no exception to what may be almost considered as the rule in such cases. Induced by the bright promises held out by a speculative adventurer—of whom more presently—I left my situation. How glad I was to be freed from such surroundings! Alas, my hopes were doomed to die; I was not to make my way in my fresh attempt to earn my bread. I was duped, and at the end of eight months had lost money, clothes, all; was almost starving, and my friend (?) unable to do anything for either of us. My lines had hitherto been in hard places. I am glad of it, for I was educated in my adversity, trained by hard necessity; I had no one to extend a helping hand to me; for a long time I had been friendless and alone. Life is not too pleasant under such conditions, and I often wonder that I did not grow sour in temper, and embittered in spirit. I did not; and to-day I look back upon the past as a most useful epoch in my history.

I often mourned the want of friends, but more especially the absence of brother and sister. My brother left England, for Canada, soon after my father passed away, and beyond two or three communications I have heard nothing certain of him since, until recently, when I heard he was on a visit to this country, and had made an unavailing search for me. Failing to find me, he concluded I must be dead.

My sister left London in 1862, and from that time to this vanished from my sight. I have utterly failed to discover her whereabouts. Strange indeed is the fate that separates us in this world! Had I given promise in my childhood of the gifts developed in me now, it is quite likely I should have been discovered ere this; but neither sister nor brother would expect to see in me the "trance-medium" of spiritualistic fame. Still I live in hopes that our life lines may be united once again. I should then feel content, and repaid for all my waiting.

Concerning my religious opinions, which may perhaps interest some of my readers, I may say they were not very distinct, but occasionally I was more or less impressed by

what are called Christian doctrines. My experiences, as before narrated, were not calculated to increase my spiritual ideas, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that I found myself growing sceptical as to the merits of the orthodox dogmas. Finally, when almost an atheist, the gentle dew descended, my soul was watered with a purer truth, and I arose to a consciousness of the existence of the soul, immortality, and God.

Such, in brief, is the account of my early life. My changes of fortune had been various, but the variation in the amount of labour was simply from a less to a greater always, the whole of my time being occupied in the interest of my employers. It will thus be seen that my experiences, from first to last, rendered it impossible for me to acquire a scholastic or collegiate education. I must admit that I did not experience any great inclination in those directions either.

There remains but one more matter to speak of. I had been conscious, since I was left alone and friendless, of a peculiar guiding influence about me. Something appeared to intervene just at the right time, whenever I encountered any crisis in my career; it always preserved me from the snares many in my position were liable to fall into. I used to call it Providence; *now I know it was my mother's influence and direction.* Blessed are they who receive the love of a mother; it is beyond price, it cannot be bought. Depraved indeed are they who trample it in the dust.

By honest industry I had managed to tide my way along. It is sweet to think you have earned the bread you eat. And though my life's preface was filled with stern, hard lessons, I am not ashamed of the entries on the first leaves of my life's record.

CHAPTER II.

MY INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUALISM.

THIS occurred in the autumn of 1868, my attention being first attracted by the reports of the celebrated trial of "*Lyon versus Home*," which at that time excited a deal of discussion. Like many other folks, with more wisdom than I possessed, that trial did not inspire me with a very lofty conception of Spiritualism; in fact, I had almost settled it in my mind that Spiritualism was all humbug, and its mediums impostors!

At this time, being somewhat exercised in my mind in reference to orthodox religion and the existence of a future state, I was very surely and rapidly discarding a belief in both the one and the other, and was in a fair way of becoming an atheist. The avocation I pursued was not calculated to remedy this tendency on my part. My reason revolted against the dogmas of eternal torment hereafter, and also against the doctrines of original sin and total depravity. Heaven was impossible to me, it seemed; and Hell was too awful to think of. Was there another life? I knew not, but I hoped so. Failing evidence for it, I resolved to do my best, and, like Thomas Paine, be content to feel "that the power that gave me existence is able to continue it, in any form and manner He pleases, either with or without this body." Poor consolation, some might think. True; but it was better than none.

Trifles often decide the fate of men and nations. A trifle turned the whole course of my life, and influenced my character unalterably. The determining agent was a very prosaic one though:—simply the bursting of a button, which necessitated my calling at a haberdasher's shop, kept by

Mrs. Hopps, in Union Street (now Brushfield Street), Bishopsgate Street. At the time of my calling in for the thread to re-sew my button, Mrs. Hopps was holding a conversation with a lady over the counter in reference to the matter of Spiritualism. She being an elderly lady, I being a very young man, I confess I had the impudence to say, "You are not such a fool as to believe in that stuff, are you?" and with the most goodly humour possible she replied, "Yes, I do." A further conversation ensued, the result of which was she lent me a couple of books, one entitled "Cooper's Experiences of the Davenport Brothers," and the other "Six Months' Experience at Home of Spirit-Communion," written by the Rev. John Page Hopps, who is the son of Mrs. Hopps now referred to. The evidences contained in these books were very extraordinary to me, and the subject matter opened up a new field of thought. But it seemed too good to be true. The evidence of names, and of persons of ability greater than my own, made the matter very mysterious indeed. I returned the lady her books, and put the usual question, "Can you tell me where I can see anything?" She gave me the address of Mr. Cogman, who was then living in the New Road, Whitechapel. The following Sunday being my "Sunday out," I found my way to Mr. Cogman's, presented myself to that gentleman's notice, and in due course behold me for the first time at a spiritual seance! Mr. Cogman was an elderly gentleman, sufficiently venerable to be my grandfather at least. His flowing gray hair, piercing eyes, and general mien, all contributed to strike the beholder with respect.*

* Since writing the foregoing, this able worker—and my father in Spiritualism—has departed for the higher life. Circumstances precluded me even the melancholy pleasure of attending at the last offices paid to his mortal form. But I do not remember the departure of any friend that has touched a deeper chord in my nature than the removal of brother Cogman. He now reaps the sowing of his earth-life; and I am sure the loving greetings of the angels, and the deep respect of all who knew him is no small harvest to hold and have in either world.

The chamber in which the seance was held was an ordinary room, on a level with the street; it communicated with a back-parlour by means of folding doors, which were open. A settee, side-board, chairs, and a long table comprised the furniture, and all seemed neat and tidy. The seance commenced. I expected that tables and chairs would be moved, and that the raps would occur, and was totally unprepared for the subsequent proceedings. The mediums present were all of the psychical order, consequently we had no physical phenomena. The first medium to "go off" was a gentleman now in the United States, Mr. Woolnough, who was entranced, as he said, by the spirit of Dr. Young. However, I could not see it, in a double sense! Afterwards a lady was influenced; she lectured for some time, and culminated in a tremendous outburst of either noise or eloquence. The effect was to disgust my mind with the whole proceedings. I had almost imagined that I had got into a ranters' meeting.

While these somewhat ungenerous thoughts were passing through my mind, I was conscious of a very peculiar experience, before relating which I must mention, that at the time I am writing of I was a disbeliever in mesmerism, so I was wondering whether these trance mediums, as I heard them called, were rogues or fools.

However, to return, my sensations were of a peculiar and indescribable character. I felt as if a large hand had suddenly struck me a heavy blow with extended palm upon the top of the head. I instantly turned round to see who had taken this liberty with my crown, the room being lighted with an ordinary paraffin lamp in full light. Observing everyone in their seats, and no one behind me, I was considerably astonished. My strange sensations continued until my brain felt as if split in two halves, and into the cavity thus created a shovelful of burning sand seemed to be poured, which trickled through me from my split head right down to the tips of my fingers and to the tips of my toes. These sensations were succeeded by an intense desire to give a tremendous shout. The muscles of my throat, lungs, and

mouth all seemed intent upon giving out this uncontrollable ejaculation. While this internal struggle was going on, I tried to rise up and shake the feeling off, but, to my horror, I was a fixture. My eyes had closed and were proof against my most powerful efforts to open them. The internal desire to shout at last prevailed, and a goodly "whoop" was the result. I then seemed endowed with another personality, which for a period of three-quarters of an hour raised the most un-Sunday-like din that ever afflicted mortal ears. I shouted, I rolled round the room, I swore, and, as if to render my position more uncomfortable, I was perfectly conscious of all my gentlemanly actions! The more I tried not to do these things, the more perfectly were they accomplished! At the end of three-quarters of an hour the fit, or whatever it might be called, passed off, and I sank exhausted upon a settee. Upon regaining possession of myself, I, with the most profuse apologies, tendered my excuses to the proprietor of the house, vowing that I could not help doing what I had done, for I had in the course of the proceedings spoken to the old gentleman in a most unceremonious manner, and used the most opprobrious epithets. Mr. Cogman very good-naturedly replied that it did not matter; he was not offended, and implied that he was rather used to that kind of thing, and concluded by suggesting my coming again on the following Sunday evening. I did not seem to see it, and went away thoroughly determined that I would not go again. Mr. J. S. Steel, of Great Sutton Street, Clerkenwell, accompanied me upon my homeward progress. Upon my return home, my master accosted me with the remark, "Why, James, you look very ill!" and I laconically replied, "Yes, sir, I feel so." My feelings may perhaps be better imagined than described. I was in a perfect quandary. Disbelieving Spiritualism and mesmerism, not understanding trance-mediumship, I was utterly at a loss to account for the phenomenon in my own person, until at last I went to sleep with the mortifying conclusion that I should soon become, or was becoming, a fit subject for Colney Hatch.

My sanity was to be still further tested, in my own estimation, on the morrow, and altogether I seemed as if I was in for quite a lively time of it, as will be inferred from what follows :—

On the following morning (Monday) I resumed my duties, considerably shaken by the preceding evening's experience, as full of wonder as ever. A portion of my duties was the cleaning of pewter pots, moist sand being used for that purpose. Whilst busy in this pursuit, I suddenly felt a peculiar warm sensation strike me on the left side of the back of the head. It seemed to pass down the nape of the neck into my right arm, passing downwards to the index finger of the hand, which it made perfectly rigid. Here was a problem. Was I going mad, or was I awake? Should my employer come in now and catch me in this plight, what should I say? Altogether I was fairly fixed again. Suddenly remembering (which I suppose now was an impression) that spirits could communicate by the aid of writing mediumship, I bethought me that I might be a writing medium. Immediately this suggestion entered my mind, the index finger of my hand scrolled a tremendous "Yes" in the sand contained in the tub I was using. The most unfortunate part of the proceedings was that this effort at writing gave me most horrible pain, something similar to red-hot wires passing down my arm.

The humour being upon me, I thought it would not be bad fun to question the supposed spirit, to see if I could gain any information,—not believing for a moment that it was a spirit, but simply that I was at a loss to account for the phenomenon. I then said, "Is this a spirit?" The same unpleasant feeling culminated in the answer, "Yes." I then asked, "Is it anyone I know?" and the answer was scrolled out on the sand, "Your mother." Matters began to look serious. Not being desirous of being interrupted in this manner in following my work, I then asked, "If I get a pencil and paper after I have done my morning's work, can you write through me in the afternoon?" and the answer

was "Yes." With a final and by no means comfortable twinge the influence left me, my arm dropping useless by my side, and it was six or seven minutes before I recovered its use. At that time I was very glad to get rid of my invisible tormentor. The effect of all this was to still further unsettle my mind, and also render me unfit for my duties.

My ordinary work in this situation terminated about half-past one or two p.m. I was then free till six o'clock in the evening. Accordingly I went out and purchased an exercise-book and a pencil, and after cleaning myself I retired to my bed-room, seated myself at a table, pencil in hand and book before me, when the same uncomfortable feelings came over me, and, with many an effort, gasp, and groan, the following communication was written:—

"Yes, my dear son, we are ever watching over you. Fear not, but trust in the Lord, for He is a shield wherein all may trust; He is a bulwark in whom all can rest their hopes; He is a terror to evil-doers, and will in time make all nations of the earth believe in Him. Those that disbelieve now shall believe by-and-by, and shall welcome spiritual communion as a thing to be sought after, and by encouraging it you will get a foresight of the joy to be had hereafter, *Oh, my son! follow it, for you will become a great medium: you will yet do great good in the world.* I am glad to see you so earnest in your desire for spirit-communion, for rest assured great good will be the result of it, not only to you, but to all; and when you leave earth you will be conscious of having employed the gift that is within you profitably. Be not afraid of mockers and scoffers, for those that now mock will soon believe. Your dear father is with you as well as I. He is smiling at your efforts and tries to help you, but finds it very hard. He was with you on Sunday. We tried to speak through you, but could not; we soon shall. You must wait patiently. We will try next Sunday night to do so. You must not be afraid. You will not be tormented so again. Be sure you go to a circle every Sunday, oftener if you can. We are ever near you. You must

read this next Sunday evening, and then we will come to you again. Your affectionate parents, Mary and Thomas Morse. God bless you! we are always with you."

My position with reference to the above communication was this:—I did not believe in Spiritualism; I could not believe that this was my mother or my father communicating, yet I could not explain the matter at all. I was in a good situation, and could not see the force of giving it up, and becoming a medium in a cause of which I had no conviction. Hence I am sorry to say, though nevertheless it is true, that when the excitement cooled down and I began to reason the matter, I attributed the whole thing to an excited imagination, and consequently consigned it to doubt and distrust. I could not dismiss it entirely. The subject would occasionally crop up, and not a few were the mental battles it gave rise to. I tried to dismiss it as a superstition; made up my mind I had done so; but, strange to say, when the next opportunity of attending a circle approached, I could not divest my mind of an intense desire to be present. The nearer the time approached the more anxious to be present did I become, until the attraction at last proved irresistible. I went, was admitted, and vowed within myself to behave like a reasonable being. My good resolutions were, however, of short duration, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour being the extent of their life. Up I started again, experiencing somewhat similar feelings to those I have described, the muscular contortions being considerably modified. My eyes were closed, and I seemed to be two persons instead of one. I rushed across the room with my eyes closed, clutched a Bible, opened it at the 14th chapter of Romans, and declaimed the first verse, upon which I delivered a lecture or sermon of some forty minutes' duration, and I am free to confess that it was more to my astonishment than to any of those present. I had never before to my knowledge spoken consecutively for ten minutes together on one subject, and certainly I never had any inclination to the preaching of sermons or the deliver-

ing of addresses. At the conclusion of this novel sermon, another power or something seemed to take possession of me, and from a very respectable parson I seemed transformed into a complete blackguard. My words and actions in this character were, in an exhibition sense, quite as startling as was the excellence of the former. I was still in doubt. The thing seemed too ridiculous to believe as the work of spirits, and yet it was far too real for me to know I was not doing it myself. I again returned home, dissatisfied with the whole proceedings, and with a slight supposition that the people present might be laughing in their sleeves at me for making a fool of myself. However, I attended this circle for four or five Sundays in succession, always getting under this influence for a greater or less period, and never was able to make very much of it.

As I look back upon that period I am not at all inclined to envy those who pass through the stages of development. I can only liken it to a ship hard stressed in a fearful storm, every timber creaking, every cord straining, until one wild tremor is felt from truck to keelson.

The following incident will serve to show how utterly incapable I was of understanding psychological matters in general, let alone exposing Spiritualism in particular. At this time I met a gentleman, who has since become a very dear friend, who was a practical mesmerist, and in my innocence I asked him in a confidential manner to impart to me the secret of his operations, *thinking the entire subject to be a sham!* He burst into a hearty laugh. We had several long conversations on the subject, and at last I became a convert to a belief in the science of mesmerism. Here was the key to all my former experiences. The one thing needful was now forthcoming, and Spiritualism resolved itself into mesmerism. Up to this period I had seen very little of the physical phenomena as they are called, and I must confess they never had much attraction for me. I do not think they would have succeeded in converting me into a believer in Spiritualism. I was rejoiced to find a way out of my diffi-

culties : but two thoughts troubled me : Was I consciously mesmerised by Mr. Cogman, the president of the circle, or by any of the members therein, or was I unconsciously to them a subject suitable to their mesmeric natures ? If the former was true, it robbed them of my respect directly ; if the latter, well, they were the dupes of their own ignorance. Some food for reflection ; seemingly another step deeper in the mire ! But the following experience quite disposed of the mesmeric theory, so far as I was concerned. One Wednesday evening I attended the ordinary seance at Mr. Cogman's house. Mr. Frank Herne was present, and he was describing the spirit-relatives of a number of persons present. I being wise in my own conceit, thought I would lay a capital pitfall for him. He had only met me once before, and I was scarcely known by name either to our host or the remainder of the circle. I said, "Mr. Herne, can you see any spirit here for me?" Possibly my tone betrayed the sarcasm of the question. He said, "Yes, there are two"—one more than I bargained for. He then proceeded with a minute description of them both. After the first few words of his remarks I gradually felt their importance, until at last they sunk so deep in my mind that I was in a greater quandary than ever. His final remark quite knocked out my self-conceit, for he said they are your father and mother, and their names—Thomas and Mary ! Here was mesmerism with a vengeance. I had quite enough. I merely replied, "The descriptions are correct, so are the names." I went home, and the more I thought the matter over, the more impossible seemed the mesmeric solution to my mind. I had hitherto resisted the influence I used to pass under ; I resolved for the future to allow it to have its own way. I did so, and the result was that the disagreeable circumstances attending my control began gradually to subside. Further tests that I received through this medium and others very soon settled the question of spirit-communion to my mind, and I rejoiced at the discovery thus brought to me. All the love and affection for my parents,

which had for so many years been buried or bound up, now burst forth. My father and my mother seemed to live anew before me, and from the depth of my soul aspirations of thankfulness rose up to the Cause of all being for the joy and the happiness thus conferred upon one so humble.

CHAPTER III.

MY PUBLIC MEDIUMSHIP AND POSITION.

Affairs went on in a more or less satisfactory manner for some weeks during this time—the end of the year 1868—but the communication in the previous chapter appeared about as far off fulfilment as ever. In that, I thought, the spirit must certainly have made a mistake. Such was, however, not the case. All unknown to me, events had been culminating, and I quite unexpectedly discovered that the employ that I was in at this time was soon about to terminate. The establishment belonged to two brothers named Hardinge, the name of the house being the “Fox and Grapes,” Primrose Street, Bishopsgate Street, already mentioned in a former chapter, and since pulled down to make way for the Great Eastern Railway. The elder brother of the two, when his presence was most desired, proved least inclined to respond, in fact, his disinclination culminated in his precipitate departure for parts unknown. The result was that the concern was wound up, and misfortune, which had never fairly let me alone hitherto, had another knock at me, and I was sent adrift. I got another situation at the “Two Brewers,” Aylesbury Street, Clerkenwell, then the property of a Mr. Russ, who has since gone the way of all flesh. While in this establishment I was a frequent visitor at the house of Mr. J. S. Steel, already noticed, and on these occasions I had several rather strange experiences.

Mr. Steel has since passed away, and I claim the privilege to utter a word of thanks in memory of one who was a kind friend of mine. It was at his house I met Mr. Davis—who, too, was gone over the river—a medium well known to the St. John's Spiritualists' Society and the Spiritualists of East London. It was through the assistance of Mr. Steel and Mr. R. Pearce—whom also I met and formed a friendship with at Mr. Steel's—that the St. John's Society was formed, doing most useful service while it lived. My good and dear friend Mr. J. M. Peebles delivered his first lecture in England in the St. John's Hall, the place where first I saw his genial face and clasped his honest hand. In many ways I have much to remember that is associated with our departed brother J. Steel, and not the least among those many incidents may be recorded the following:—

One Sunday evening I was present at the ordinary circle held at his house. The room in which the meeting was held would be about twenty-six feet square, and the sitters were arranged around the four sides, I being about five or six feet from the fireplace. It was in the winter, and although the fire in the room seemed to be doing its work very well, I was seized with an intense desire to turn my right hand into a poker. I mentioned this desire to my neighbour—Mr. Towns, I believe—and all the consolation I got was, "Let the influence have its own way." It is needless to say that I didn't relish the advice. However, the physical control over me completely succeeded in overcoming my personal fear. I got up—much against my will, I can testify—and proceeded with great reluctance, but entirely unable to prevent myself walking to the fireplace, and deliberately inserted my hand into the blazing mass, stirring it up much in the same fashion as a poker would have done under the circumstances, and, strange to say, I could feel nothing save that I was touching something that was neither cold, hot, nor anything else. I then picked up a burning mass of coal, about the size of a double fist, put it on the palm of my right hand, and was then positively forced to make the entire

circuit of the room with this blazing accompaniment, which I returned and deposited in the grate. Immediately I did so the control left me, and I felt like one rising from the dead; my hand, however, being unsinged and unhurt by the entire proceeding. Mr. Steel had a written statement, I believe, of the above event, and, if I mistake not, it was recorded in one of the spiritual periodicals of that time. I nearly succeeded in obtaining the fire-test upon a subsequent occasion at the house of Mr. Aslop, but the opening of the room door disturbed the conditions, thus rendering the attempt unsuccessful.

The continual influence of Spiritualism upon my mind began now to manifest itself. I was dissatisfied with my course of life and its surroundings. I began to feel the necessity of getting into something better adapted to my new modes of thought. Accordingly, I availed myself of the opportunity to become clerk to a gentleman who was about to enter the wholesale newspaper trade; and on the strength of his representations I left my employer to await the precious moment that was to usher me into a new career. This would be in the early spring of 1869. But Fortune—at whose hands I seemed destined to receive a considerable amount of hard usage—made more sport of my laudable efforts. The hoped-for opportunity was deferred week after week, until eight months had nearly elapsed, in the course of which I had come to an extremely low condition, financially and otherwise. Dietetically considered, my experience during these months amply served as an introduction to abstemiousness; in fact, riotous living was conspicuous by its absence—very much so; but the amount of health I enjoyed during these months was equal to any I have experienced at any time. But as no prospect is a very bad prospect, I began to feel that something must be done, and that speedily.

Before relating the turn that took place in my affairs ultimately I must introduce sundry particulars of what transpired during the above period. While remaining with the

friend (?) above mentioned, who is the same individual as mentioned in Chapter I., I made the acquaintance of my friend Mr. J. J. Selwood, then a lad, a few years younger than myself. A friendship sprang up between us that has ripened and grown stronger with years. In days of trial we have stood firm by each other, and we are better brothers than many who hold that title by right of blood.

Having learnt something of mesmerism from my friend mentioned in a previous page, I amused myself by experimenting on my new companion. He proved remarkably susceptible, and we had much amusement out of him. I soon discovered that he was mediumistic. I suggested that he should sit. He agreed to do so, and many an interesting seance we had. I found he obtained either physical or mental phenomena. I have seen heavy tables move with ease when his hands were placed upon them, have heard loud raps, and seen him partially levitated; I have also received communications from spirit-relatives through him; and in many ways enjoyed the pleasures of his mediumship. I once succeeded in developing him clairvoyantly. Subsequent events separated us, his mediumship was neglected, and now I think the old road would have to be retraversed before the original results could be duplicated. For some time he shared with me the duties of Mr. Burns's publishing business, and as he is well known to many Spiritualists, and is my friend, I make no apology for introducing him in these pages.

I have often been informed that I possessed the "healing power," and the following incident, I think, supports the statement.

My friend's father had the misfortune to stumble and fall whilst alighting from an omnibus, and in so doing he severely sprained his ankle and the back of his foot. This occurred several years before I knew him. Doctors' lotions and medicines failed to do him any good. I suggested magnetising; he assented, and in three days I cured him! He has never had a relapse since: that will be a little over seven

years ago. I have used the same power at other times with similar benefit.

During these eight months I had been attending a circle held on Sunday and Tuesday evenings at the house of Mrs. Main, 321, Bethnal Green Road, London, and I am pleased to bear testimony to her kindness, generosity, and sympathy towards, not only myself, but all with whom she came in contact. For years she opened her house free of cost to all truth-seekers. Many persons have been brought to a knowledge of Spiritualism under her guidance and the mediumship of her daughter, Mrs. Fielder. Mrs. Main was one of those sturdy, independent souls who, thinking and acting for herself, was enabled to throw off the bonds of popular theology, and stand firm in her trust to nature and the spirit-world. Her earthly race is now over, and she has gone to those friends on the other shore whom she so faithfully loved and served while here.

As time wore on the unfolding of my future labours was drawing near. I pause to look back upon myself then, contrasting my humble and unknown state with my present one, and it seems very often almost like a dream. At the time I am now writing of my mediumship had begun to be somewhat celebrated, and I was soon to be lifted from my local celebrity to one more extensive. I was at this time on friendly terms with Mr. Peebles, and occasionally called on him at the Spiritual Institution, where he was staying. On one of these visits I met Mr. C. W. Pearce, a gentleman who came, like myself, to see our American visitor, who was then our guest for the first time. Mr. Pearce and I had a conversation together concerning my mediumship and worldly prospects. The latter were very bad: I was almost penniless, and my apparel was not such as princes wear. Owing to the generosity of the above gentleman I was enabled to obtain a new outfit, and I subsequently became his guest for about two months. I arrived at Mr. Pearce's, and at this time I was in possession of a species of impressional clairvoyance, through which I often obtained some most

excellent tests of personal identity. Some time intervened between my arrival and the dinner-hour, and during its passing the influence came over me, and I sat and described some half-dozen or more of my host's departed relatives—names, ages, professions, &c., all of folks the very existence of whom I was ignorant. Subsequently I picked out of an album the portraits of such as they possessed likenesses of. I also personated under control at this period as well.

A few evenings after my arrival we visited our next-door neighbour for a seance; and it was on that occasion that the first sustained address was delivered by my chief control. The address and questions lasted over three hours, and the short-hand notes filled about six sheets of foolscap.

Many interesting communications were received by my host, and it was at his house I first met Mr. W. H. Harrison, the editor of the *Spiritualist*; Mr. A. C. Swinton, Mr. T. Atkins—"Resurrectionist," as he sometimes signs himself; and several other earnest folk who occasionally met under my host's roof. Mr. Pearce at this time was an outspoken advocate of free opinions and liberal views concerning theological matters—once, I believe, inditing a letter to the House of Commons in advocacy of secular training only in all public education. Since then, however, his views have changed, and I believe they are now orthodox, inclining to Swedenborgianism. I am much indebted to this gentleman for his kindness to me, and I trust I shall never forget it.

Soon after I accepted Mr. Pearce's invitation I met Mr. James Burns, of the Spiritual Institution, London, and we had a long conversation over my mediumship, the result of it being his offering to establish a seance at the Institution every Friday evening, at which I was to be the medium. The first seance was held on the third Friday in October, 1869. These seances were reported in the *Medium and Daybreak* every week, and the *Spiritualist* from time to time; they soon became quite a feature in metropolitan Spiritualism. The *Daily Telegraph* devoted an entire

column to describe one, the *Christian World* followed suit, and one or two other journals imitated their example. Our visitors at first were at times crude in their conception of Spiritualism, and noisy in their conduct. In time the tone of the public improved and much good was done and information afforded through the means of these seances. They were the first regular seances for trance-mediumship ever instituted in London, and the then novel experiment proved a complete success. Thus I insensibly, and without effort upon my part, took my place in the capacity of a public character in the grand drama of Modern Spiritualism in England.

These seances were continued with but few intermissions until the year 1872, these few intermissions arising from my services being required in one or two provincial towns.

I must here revert to one instance that was the ultimate means of assisting me to a very great extent. It was this. In addition to Mr. Burns establishing the seances above mentioned, he engaged my services to assist in his publishing business; and as there was no other institution or central depot in the metropolis, I had the opportunity of meeting and making the acquaintance of most of the prominent Spiritualists and workers in England, while serving in the above capacity. I was with Mr. Burns when he issued the first number of the *Medium and Daybreak*, and I remember well the feelings of pleasurable pride all experienced at the successful birth of the organ in question, which has now grown to large proportions, with an ever-increasing circulation.

My association with Mr. Burns in the capacity of assistant extended over a period of nearly three years, and I have good reason to recollect with pleasure the many acts of kindness I received at the hands of himself and Mrs. Burns. I trust she will excuse the introduction of her name, as she dislikes notoriety, and that she will feel that gratitude and justice constitute the necessity. In the Spiritualism of Mr. Burns I found much that was in strict accordance with my

own sentiments, while I am deeply indebted to him for much useful physiological knowledge. As a practical phrenologist he has but few equals; in some departments of that science none.

CHAPTER IV.

MY FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE PROVINCES.

After the institution of the seances at the Spiritual Institution, my labours were occasionally varied by appearing on the public platform, when my controls delivered regular addresses through me. The first event of this kind took place on the evening of Thursday, 21st April, 1870, in St. John's Hall, Clerkenwell, under the presidency of Mr. C. W. Pearce; the next occasion was at the Cavendish Rooms on Sunday, July 24th, in the same year as above noted; while my first appearance in the provinces was in company with Mr. Burns and Dr. J. R. Newton, the American healer, at Northampton, on Sunday, September 9th, 1870. The event was a complete success, and my advent as a trance-speaker was welcomed with pleasure by all.

My public career was inaugurated and, so far as its earlier circumstances are concerned, was established by Mr. Burns. During my stay with this gentleman many interesting and valuable communications were given by my spirit-friends, for whom Mr. Burns entertains a very sincere respect.

The old proverb hath it that the best of friends must part. The increasing calls upon my time proving incompatible with the due fulfilment of my duties at the Institution, I was obliged to resign my position therein; and consequently in the month of August, 1872, I entered the list of professional speakers in this country. I was enabled to do this through the munificence of a gentleman whose name I am not permitted to mention, but whose friendship and interest I can

never be sufficiently grateful for. This gentleman consulted my guides upon the matter, and the result was a cheque for twenty pounds, to enable me to tide over the difficulties incident on my taking up trance-lecturing as a profession. My unnamed friend has ever had my most grateful thanks for his generous kindness, and it will ever remain as one of the green spots in my life's history.

Thus the link uniting me to Mr. Burns was severed, and the time had arrived for our union to be sundered. In simple justice, let alone as a matter of gratitude—let me say of each combined—I must sincerely thank my friend Mr. Burns for all his past acts of kindness, and let me add the hope that he neither has regretted nor ever will regret their bestowal.

At the period mentioned, the time seemingly had arrived for my taking upon myself the burden of missionary labour, which labour has since grown so great that its fulfilment occupies the whole of my time. My spirit-guides, through my organism, have addressed large and influential audiences in all the large towns in three out of the four divisions of the United Kingdom; and many provincial papers have spoken highly of the ability and eloquence of the addresses, as also have the spiritual papers of this country and America. In this connection, I would mention Mr. W. H. Harrison, editor of the *Spiritualist*, whose reports of many of my seances and lectures have been the means of bringing me before a large section of the public, and introducing me to the notice of many friends. I have already alluded to the reports given by Mr. Burns, editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*, and in particular I would thank him for the public service rendered me by the *verbatim* reports of lectures delivered through me that he has printed in his paper from time to time,—a service equally valuable on public grounds.

My task approaches its termination, so far as this chronicle of my life is concerned, and if the reader peruses it with half the interest I feel in writing it I shall be repaid for the labour it involved.

As a matter of personal experience, and to show the value of spirit-counsel, I will just refer to one event which will no doubt be acceptable to lady readers.

My marriage was in great part a spiritual matter, though at the time I was not acquainted with the fact. The lady who is my wife had been in the habit of attending a circle held at Mrs. Main's, and a communication received by her from her father upon one occasion was to the effect that she would meet with a gentleman at this circle who would be her husband; this being some twelve months prior to my advent as a medium. We met, and on one side it was a case of love at first sight; but I was unconscious of the attractions of the lady fair. We were subsequently, though accidentally, thrown into one another's society, and a visit to a public entertainment brought fruition to the spirit-prophecy. My spirit-friends counselled my marriage; I accepted their advice, and in due course made the lady my wife, after which she told me of the event above narrated, which certainly was a peculiar fulfilment of a peculiar prophecy. My career as a public medium and speaker is also a complete verification of the message from my parents contained in the early part of this narrative, and is a striking evidence of the power of spirit-prophecy.

Whenever I have followed the impressions or advice I have received from my spirit-friends, all has gone well. When I have departed therefrom I have generally had to accept it in the end. Yet I am not servilely obedient to or solicitous of their intervention. Spirits are not to do what we are capable of doing for ourselves; they can aid us often; but my motto has been, "My guides help me if I help myself;" though in all spiritual matters I admit their superiority without question, and always seek their advice.

My little daughter, Florence, has been repeatedly restored to health under the advice of the "Strolling Player," and has learnt to obey his authority on diet and curative processes without a question. To her "Tien" and the "Strolling Player" are unquestionable realities.

As I have long since learnt to love the two spirits I am most familiar with, and who are called my guides, I will now offer a few particulars concerning them. First, then, "Tien-Sien-Tie," representing himself as a Chinese spirit, informs me that while on earth he was a mandarin of the second class. He is my lecturing control, and first announced his presence at Mrs. Main's seance, remarking that he had come to answer questions, a phase of mediumship for which at that time I was celebrated. He made no announcement as to what was to come, or how I was to further my progress, but continued to develop my mediumship steadfastly. The "Actor," or the "Strolling Player," as he is called, first controlled at one of my Friday evening seances. He continued to manifest occasionally, and at last he stated that he had joined with "Tien" and his band, and would henceforth go in conjunction with them. The wisdom, philosophy, and eloquence, combined with high and lofty feelings, of the first-named spirit have drawn the attention of all thoughtful minds far and wide. He bears a reputation that he might justly be proud of—a reputation that has been built up by his own solid ability, and, if I may be allowed the term, by sheer hard work; while the witty sayings and intellectual acumen of the "Strolling Player" must be heard to be appreciated or to be understood, as I have been told by those who have heard him that a written statement of his style or character can convey only a feeble notion of their force. They are both of them favourites wherever they are met, while their logical ability and practical common sense in enunciating the spiritual philosophy are attended with the most satisfactory results upon all occasions.

Personally, I may say all that I have in the way of education, mentally, morally, and spiritually, is attributable to spiritual inspiration and the kindness of my spirit-guides; and I am deeply sensible of the very different and distinct mental powers that exist in myself as the medium of to-day and myself as a little boy between ten and eleven, who had to commence the fight for life; and I am morally certain,

and intellectually convinced, that my position as an individual to-day could not have been obtained unless I had been subjected to the spiritual education referred to. Hence it is that I have nothing but gratitude for my guides and love for the philosophy they inculcate. I make no secret of the source to which I am indebted for my personal abilities, but those personal abilities are eclipsed and outdone by the efforts of my guides through my organisation when I am under their influence.

My position as a Spiritualist may be briefly defined thus, as expressed in the eloquent and gifted utterances of that inspired teacher Emma Hardinge-Britten, as detailed in her able lecture, "The Creed of the Spirits," delivered at Cleveland Hall, London, on Sunday, April 30, 1871, and reported in the *Medium and Daybreak* for May 5 of the same year.

I believe in God, for I know that spirit, matter, and motion are eternal existences, co-equal, co-eternal co-existent, ever. As I believe in matter, then so do I believe in spirit; and the totality of that spirit, that master mind, that was ever before form—that moved upon the chaos and void, and evolved therefrom order, harmony, and form—is God. Finite as I am, I can never comprehend His infinity; temporal pilgrim as I am now, . . . I cannot master His eternity. It is enough for me to know that He is all-wise, for the majesty, order, and beauty of nature prove it; He is all-good, for the beneficence disclosed in that creation proves it; He is all-powerful, for its stupendous strength, its glorious and majestic permanence prove it.

I believe in the immortality of the human soul, for I have been taught to analyse and search until I discover that that which is must have existed for ever; and, though on this earth I am only possessed of such memory as carries me back to the beginning of my own temporal existence, and such prophecy as proves to me that I shall live beyond the grave, I still recognise that lives infinite one way cannot be finite another, and that if there is infinity around me I am a part of it—I am infinite also. And since I question, and since I doubt, even the chemist that scoffs at me proves my position, and shows me that nothing can be annihilated. My soul is something, the functions of my soul are something, my self-consciousness is something, my sense of individuality is something that cannot be annihilated. The strong psychology of another

mind mightier than mine would impose upon me the dark fatal belief of annihilation for my soul, and eternal existence for everything else. My spirit-friend comes to my side, grasps my hand, and whispers in my ear, in the voice of the loved and those I have deemed the lost—"I live for ever, and thou shalt live for ever."

I believe in right and wrong, for I do find the penalties of the wrong and the compensation of the right impressed on all things, on all forms of life. When I doubt this, the sophist would come and preach to me of circumstances, of surroundings, of impulses and forces; and when he would try in the tones of sophistry to mask me from the light which the penalty is perpetually bringing me, my spirit-friend appeals to me, and with the glory of the immortal spheres on his glittering brow, or the darkness of the dweller on the threshold hanging around him, gives me to understand that the second stage of existence is absolute judgment for the deeds done in the body.

I believe in the communion of spirits as ministering angels. I not only realise this from the truths that are demonstrated around me, but from the reason which assures me that the love which animated the form that I loved so well, as it still subsists must still find an exercise; that to live, to love, and yet be unable to manifest that love to the objects that need it, must be a condition of existence far worse than that in which we daily live, and love, and minister to each other.

I do not want the reader to imagine that the foregoing is introduced as a definition of Spiritualism, with a view to creedalise it. It is simply a statement of general principles that to me, and to their authors, seem worthy of our acceptance. Spiritualism is no creed, but a constellation of starry truths, and in short exemplifies Paine's immortal aphorism—"The world is my country; to do good is my religion." Satisfied as I am that Spiritualism, as interpreted by our highest and purest natures, is a sublime and elevating philosophy, I am resolved to stand by it until the end. I have nailed the ensign to the mast-head, and fearlessly I pursue my way. Having placed my hand to the plough, while sense and understanding endure in this life I shall be true to the Cause that it has been my mission to be an instrument in. Of myself I am of little use, but, aided by the wise ones who are my constant friends and companions, my

presence may be of service to humanity, and though doubt and distress may dog my footsteps, and suffering and trial encircle me while here, I have the consciousness of being true to the truth that is within me, and shall know that in that other and better life I shall be known and understood even as I have known and understood myself.

The career of my childhood was not marked by any extraordinary event or circumstance save once, shortly after my mother's departure: having a very vivid and striking dream, in which she was the central figure, which dream I have never forgotten, and I suppose never shall. I had perhaps one peculiarity—great sensitiveness in regard to persons I met: some, for no accountable reason, seeming most despicable, while others, with an equally unaccountable reason, seemed to be peculiarly pleasant and agreeable.

In the following section of this narration the reader will find an account of my twelve months' visit to the United States. About the first intimation I had of the event was in October, 1871, when I had a seance with Miss Lottie Fowler, the celebrated American clairvoyante, who placed me in possession of a prophecy to the effect that I should cross the Atlantic within a period of three years from that time. The fulfilment of that prophecy unexpectedly came about, and within the time mentioned I commenced my journey to the United States on a lecturing tour, counselled to do so by my spirit-guides. My trip was a complete success. At the time that Miss Lottie Fowler announced the prophecy I deemed nothing more unlikely. I have seen a proverb somewhere that stated "Nothing is sure except the unexpected," and so it proved with me.

My purely personal narrative here closes, and I cannot do better than quote the closing paragraph of the autobiographical sketch that I issued in the *Medium and Daybreak* of January 8, 1875. What I wrote then is true now:—

"To all whose kindly assistance has smoothed my path—and they are not a few who have done this—I would return my sincere thanks, and would have them feel that their kind-

ness and their sympathy have not been forgotten or overlooked ; and if my career in the future should be as successful as it has been in the past, I trust I may never forget my friends who stood by me in the day of small things, and that they may say—what I hope will be the case—that prosperity will not spoil me nor success make me less a man, a brother, and a worker for humanity.”

THE SHADOWY ARMY.

On a summer evening balmy,
 When the sun had sunk to rest,
 Then I saw the shadowy army
 Marching up from out the west.
 Vision tranced, and senses slumb'ring,
 Earthly scenes were lost to view,
 But all my efforts failed in numb'ring
 That strange army as it grew.
 For the gloom of night was o'er them,
 Faintly, indistinct, they stood,
 More like shades, and less like men
 Who had once been brave or good.
 Soon the gloomy grey departed
 And the rosy lands were seen ;
 Forms from shades, that outward started,
 Stood revealed in glory's sheen.
 Again, I met the loved and mourned,
 Loving hearts for me beat high ;
 Every hope was then returned
 In the hope beyond the sky.
 Balmy air and verdant grasses,
 Rippling streams and palace homes,
 Perfumed valleys, mountain passes,
 Stately hills, with noble domes,
 Waving trees and flowers sweet-scented,
 Sky of bright cerulean hue,
 Angel-hearts with love contented,
 All were there before my view.
 Such the vision that entranced me
 When the sun had sunk to rest,
 When I saw the shadowy army
 Marching up from out the west.
 Dim no longer are its legions,
 Less like shades, and more like men,
 I have seen their golden regions,
 And life's tides I now can stem.

March 12, 1875.

duced to the prominent Spiritualists of the city, among whom were Messrs. Clements, Weaver, Fickey, and quite a number of others, whose names escape me now. I was the guest of Mr. Clements during my month's stay, and I was fortunate, in my opening labours, in finding so kind a friend and genial host. The Spiritualists met in a nice little hall, capable of seating upwards of three hundred persons, but on the occasion of my first appearance barely a sixth of that number appeared. Some twelve lectures in all were delivered there, and at the close of the engagement a capital attendance had been created. A successful Children's Progressive Lyceum was in operation; but, from all I could learn, Spiritualism is not anything like so prosperous in Baltimore as it once was.

I next visited the city of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania. It is one of the best laid out cities in the Union, and is fast attaining proportions that are simply gigantic. It is laid out as a square, lying nearly N. and S., E. and W., the streets crossing each other at right angles. Those streets running N. and S. are numbered, commencing Front Street, then Second Street, and going on up to Hundredth Street, I believe; while the streets going E. and W. are named, the centre street called Market Street, acting as the dividing line between "up town" and "down town," in regard to which the part wanted is either N. or S. of the central line. In this city—as in nearly all large cities in America—the "Patent Fire Alarm Telegraph" is in operation. The city is divided into wards. Each ward has its fire depot; signal instruments are attached to the telegraph posts, which are fixed into the side-walks, in America; each instrument has a number, which, on turning a handle inside the apparatus, is repeated on the bell hung in the fire depot. Thus, for instance, suppose a fire in Ninth Street, close to the corner of Arch Street. The signal box is No. 54, the handle inside is turned, and in the fire depot for that district is rung on the bell | | | | — | | | |, a list of signal boxes with their numbers and locations is con-

sulted, and thus almost instantaneous warning of a fire is given without noise or fuss of any kind. I believe one alarm calls out one depot; two alarms the depots of the ward or district, and three alarms call out the entire fire department. In a well-ordered fire depot, seven to ten minutes suffice to bring engines and hook and ladder trucks to the scene of action.

Philadelphia is the city where the Declaration of American Independence was signed and declared. It cost us a province, but gave the world a brilliant Republic.

The city boasts a magnificent park; it is immense in area, rich in natural beauties, and kept in a high state of preservation: Fair Mount Park is a great institution.

Spiritualism in Philadelphia is in a very good condition. The society is an old one, and keeps well together. The meetings are held in Lincoln Hall, a spacious and elegant building, large enough to hold some six hundred persons. Some of the ablest and most respected of the American speakers occupy the platform, and audiences are constant and large. At the time of my visit, Mr. H. T. Child, M.D., was the president of the board. I was most kindly received, alike in public and in private, and my stay was so great a success that I was invited to a return engagement, which I filled in the following June. With the organic machinery of the movement so strong and so well supported, it was but natural that matters should show a large allowance of prosperity, and such, indeed, was the case. The advertisements of mediums, and others who were not, appeared in the daily papers—the *Ledger* and the *Press*, setting forth the claims of various individuals who claimed to be mediums for almost everything. American mediums are never lost for want of advertising; their light is not hid under a bushel. I mightily enjoyed my two visits to the "Quaker City," and I look back upon it with no mean amount of pleasure. I met there, among others, the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, whose earnest labours on behalf of Spiritualism commend him to the world at large. It was in this city I

met for the first time the veteran Spiritualist and lecturer John Murray Spear, who is settled permanently in Philadelphia. He seemed hale and hearty, and often referred to his friends in England with affection and respect. His experiences of mediumship and mission work are wonderful to a degree.

I arrived in Boston, the capital city of the State of Massachusetts, in the early part of the second week in January, 1875. Boston is considered the literary centre of America, and, according to its inhabitants, it is also called the "Hub" of the universe. Boston is really the centre of American Spiritualism. Winter, I must here insert, had begun in dead earnest. I found about two inches and a half of solid ice on all the side-walks; the roads were about six or eight inches deep in snow; wheels had disappeared from the vehicles, and sleds or runners had taken their places. Unaccustomed to pedestrianism on ice, it was quite natural to expect to fall. Five minutes realised the expectation. I fell! I didn't pray! The weather continued terribly cold all the time I remained in the city, and the condition of roads and side-walks was a variation from bad to worse. At home we grumble at half an inch of snow and ice; out there that is not noticed. In this city is located the publishing office of the *Banner of Light*, from which house is also issued all the leading spiritualistic literature published in America; and the first thing I did was to pay my respects to that celebrated establishment. Accordingly I presented myself thereat, and was most cordially received by the editor-in-chief, Mr. Luther Colby. The business department is presided over by Mr. L. B. Rich, who, to use a Yankee phrase, is a thorough "smart man," and the department that he is connected with fully evidences the business proclivities of its director. The editorial department is under the superintendence of Mr. Luther Colby, whose smiling face, gray hairs, and genial manner, inspire confidence, command respect, and denote the accomplished gentleman. Mr. Colby has held the position of editor of the *Banner of Light*

for many years, and his labours on behalf of that journal will never be fully appreciated until he ceases to wield the pen in the mortal form. The *Banner of Light* has passed through many vicissitudes and encountered much opposition, but it has survived all, and maintains its place and position as the best American spiritual paper to-day. I found in Mr. Colby a warm personal friend, to whose kindly assistance and advice I am deeply indebted, and whose deep interest in the progress and welfare of mediums commends him to the respect and esteem of every Spiritualist throughout the world. On a subsequent occasion I had the pleasure of attending the world-renowned *Banner of Light* free circles. Mrs. J. H. Conant was the medium. Spirits of all classes came to these circles, sent messages to their friends, and thus gave unmistakable proofs of the after-life. Also questions were discussed, and answers given by such spirits as Theodore Parker, Ellery Channing, Thomas Paine, and other minds of equal power. The circles were largely attended, and gave much pleasure and instruction to those present. Mrs. Conant was a pale, delicate, fragile-looking lady, herself almost a spirit. Those who were best acquainted with her say she merits the title of the "world's medium," and her biography, which is well worth reading, seems to bear out the claim.

In the early part of February of the above-noted year Mrs. Conant was invalided through a cancerous tumour on the breast, and from that time she was compelled to discontinue her regular circles at the *Banner of Light* office. She gradually grew worse in health, until finally, on the early morning of Thursday, August the 5th of the same year, she passed from the mortal form into the land of immortality. The utmost attention had been paid her, and all that could be done to lessen her sufferings was done, alike by friends in and out of the form; and the kindness of the proprietors of the *Banner of Light* showed their full appreciation of Mrs. Conant's labours on their behalf in times gone by. Mrs. J. H. Conant, née Frances Ann Crowell, was born in Ports-

mouth, State of New Hampshire, April 28th, 1831; and at the age of twenty-one years was united in marriage to John H. Conant, a grandson of Prof. John Hubbard, of Dartmouth College; thus at the time of her departure she was a little over forty-four years of age. Her biography, a goodly volume, extending over 300 pages, is one of the most interesting contributions to the literature of personal experiences of mediumship our movement has received. I have no hesitation in saying (after having read it) that Mrs. Conant was one of the—if not *the*—most remarkable medium of whom Spiritualism has any record. Bearing the cross of mediumship from early childhood, as did Mrs. Conant, and facing the brunt of the early strife, she bore her part well and bravely in the heat and burden of the days gone by, and now, on the shores of the bright beyond, she reaps the reward of her labours and the realisation of her philosophy. Our loss was her gain.

I must not omit to mention here that my valued friend Mr. Robert Cooper, of Eastbourne, Sussex, was, and had been for some time past, my travelling companion; and most acceptable indeed was his company to me. The first time we visited the "*Banner Free Circles*" we were hardly impressed so favourably with Mrs. Conant's mediumship as we expected to be; but subsequent inquiry elicited the fact that the lady was then suffering from the disease that terminated her mortal career; and as we then saw Mrs. Conant under the most unfavourable circumstances, it was a positive injustice to the lady, and the influences controlling her, to form an opinion of her, or them, upon the conditions then presented to our notice. A public record extending over twenty-three years is of itself ample testimony of Mrs. Conant's ability as a medium; and, added to that her worth as a woman, we feel that all we can say is, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

At the time of my visit the "Music Hall Society of Spiritualists" were holding their meetings. It was in their course that I was engaged, and on the second Sunday in

January, 1875, the first address was given through me in the Beethoven Hall, Boston. Every one was surprised and delighted. I must confess my success was a great relief to my own mind, as I knew in Boston I should meet the most critical audience I should find in the States. Unfortunately, the day following I was taken ill with a violent cold. For five days I was in bed, and was worse in health than I had been since a serious illness fourteen years ago. I rallied, and on the three remaining Sundays the verdict of the first Sunday was more than confirmed. I was the success of the course during the season.

The Music Hall Society numbers among its supporters and adherents the wealth and position of Boston Spiritualism. The financial burden has been mainly borne by a few, and Mr. Lewis B. Wilson, chairman of the Association, and also sub-editor of the *Banner of Light*, has been indefatigable in his exertions to further the interests of the said society. The meetings held in Beethoven Hall, Washington Street, were well attended, fully reported in the *Banner of Light*, commented upon by the secular press, and afforded general satisfaction to the audiences assembled. At that time there was another society in existence under the title of the "Boston Spiritualist Union," meeting in Rochester Hall, Washington Street, holding its sessions in the evening. In the morning, at the same hall, the Boston Children's Progressive Lyceum assembled. I had the pleasure of attending the sessions during my stay in the city, and found a very completely appointed Lyceum in operation. The scholars exhibited a degree of intelligence and ability far in excess of what might be expected from their years. The general public was admitted, and quite a large number availed themselves of the opportunity presented. Spiritualism is decidedly a recognised fact in Boston. The press give it respectful notice, while the pulpit contents itself with an occasional grumble. On the houses in many of the streets—notably the most prominent ones, Washington Street, Tremont Street, and Shawmut Avenue—the signs of test-mediums,

clairvoyants, and magnetic healers are quite numerous; while their advertisements are to be found in several daily papers. There were several other societies in Boston—one meeting at John A. Andrew Hall, where Mrs. Floyd was the speaker in the trance, since discontinued; another society calling itself the “Free Platform Spiritualists” met in the Lurline Hall; whilst still another, calling itself the “People’s Spiritual Meetings Association,” held its sessions in the Paine Memorial Hall. An attempt was made during the spring to create an association under the title of the “Boston Spiritual Temple.” It was a signal failure, and, considering the elements the attempt involved, such an end was but to be expected. To build a 300,000 dollar temple upon dollar subscriptions is rather a hazardous experiment.

CHAPTER VI.

SAMPLES OF AMERICAN MEDIUMSHIP.

While in Boston I was present at and took part in the opening and dedicatory services of the Paine Memorial Hall. On several occasions Mr. Cooper and myself had sittings with some of the prominent Boston mediums, once with Mrs. Maud E. Lord, a very excellent physical and test medium. We formed part of a party of about sixteen. It was a dark circle. Mrs. Lord was seated in the centre, with a guitar and tambourine. She is a clairvoyant as well as a physical medium, and sees and describes spirits, often giving names, and in nearly all cases affording tests. We all held hands, Mrs. Lord striking the palms of her hands together at regular intervals. Ingress to or egress from the room had been previously prevented. The light was extinguished, and almost directly the instruments were floated

Samuel

above our heads round the circle, laid on the lap of each person and there played. Hands would grasp us, and play very curious freaks. Mr. Cooper's spectacles were removed from his face and very gently and deftly placed properly upon my own. A gentleman present whose nose itched, and who had not expressed the fact, was suddenly told by the spirit voice to "Sit still and I will wipe it for you," which was accordingly done, with another person's handkerchief. A fan was taken from one visitor and carried round the circle, finally coming to rest on the top of my head; I said nothing, but quietly disengaged my hand from my neighbour's, removed the fan from my head, and after asking the spirits to take it from me placed it between my teeth and joined my neighbour's hand, and ere I had hardly done so the fan was taken away from my mouth, without any fumbling or bother, and I was fanned therewith. Like experiments, demonstrating the ability of the operating agent to see objects, and intelligently obey requests, either mentally or audibly expressed, were continually transpiring during the entire evening. Frank and open, affording every facility for investigation, thereby disarming the most sceptical, Mrs. Lord is a medium that it is a pleasure to sit with, and her manifestations are such as to carry the conviction of their genuineness upon their faces.

On another occasion Mr. Cooper and I were favoured with a seance with Mrs. Mary B. Thayer, who is what is styled a flower medium. Upon that occasion, after adopting precautions to prevent trickery, and on extinguishing the light, the table was very soon covered with a variety of rare flowers and ferns, seventeen different sorts being brought. A peculiar incident appertaining to the seance was the presentation to myself, by the spirits, of a beautiful live white pigeon, which was the admiration of the circle upon being viewed in the light. A second seance was afforded us for the purpose of placing these extraordinary phenomena upon a still more satisfactory basis. Mrs. Thayer, upon her arrival, was searched by two ladies, who mounted guard

over her until the commencement of the seance. The people present were all personally acquainted with each other, and no inducement was presented for playing tricks. Quite a quantity of flowers and ferns, with some fruit, was brought, and Mr. Cooper, this time, also received a white pigeon. I regret to say that a gentleman of the canine persuasion subsequently made a breakfast of them both.

The editor of the *Banner of Light*, deeming the phenomena very extraordinary, and thinking it wise to subject the matter to a thorough scrutiny before submitting it to the public, thought it best to have the matter carefully tested, in furtherance of which object Mrs. Thayer gave a seance in the *Banner of Light* building, in the room of Dr. H. B. Storer, to nine persons, none of whom were invited by herself, or whom she knew would be present. On her arrival she was handed over to three ladies of the party, who took her into an anteroom, and completely stripped her, bringing her apparel into the circle room to be inspected by the members; this can scarcely be considered as one of the pleasures of physical mediumship. After having inspected and duly certified that they had nothing concealed about them, Mrs. Thayer was re-dressed, brought into the seance room, and introduced into a muslin sack, which was brought up round her neck, tightly tied, and securely sealed. I here quote from the report in the *Banner of Light* of May 1st, 1875:—"She was wholly in the bag, except her head; she was then seated with the rest around the table. The light was turned off, and we were in darkness. In about a minute a noise was heard, and one of the party, Mr. Cooper, said: 'Here's something! I guess it's a pigeon.' The gas was lighted, and a white fantail was found added to the party, flapping around, dazed with the light and frightened. In addition to the foregoing a canary was brought in answer to the mental request of one of the party, and the table was covered with flowers and plants. The light was finally turned up, the medium found in exactly the same condition as at the commencement of the seance, and the test condi-

tions intact. Besides the pigeon and the canary there was a fresh branch of an orange tree, with a large ripe orange adhering; another branch of orange tree, a foot in length, with fragrant blossoms; a white lily with four buds; two tea-rose buds; three varieties of ferns; a sprig of cassia; a blossom of bougainvillea; a leaf of calla lily; a cactus leaf; two or three varieties of green ferns; and a handful of moss." The pigeon mentioned is now at Eastbourne alive and well.

Greenfield, Mass., was my next engagement. It is something over one hundred miles from Boston. I had excellent times there. In fact, we scared the clergy, who set about preaching us down. They failed. While in the above town the cold was intense; it averaged about 14 degrees below zero every morning before 7.30, and seldom rose much above zero during the day. The snow was from two feet to four feet deep. It moderated for a few days towards the end of the month, but it soon stopped and went as cold as ever. I had occasion to take a railroad ride, and got into the tail of a snowstorm, the result being it took four hours and fifty minutes to get eighteen miles.

It was in this town that I had my first lesson in the hospitality of rural life in America. Massachusetts is one of the New England states, and my host, Dr. Joseph Beals, was a genuine New Englander; tall in stature; spare in form; quick in speech and action; warm of heart; and generous of hand. I enjoyed his hospitality amazingly, and my month glided away most pleasantly. Seated in his "sled," *anglicè* sledge, drawn by his fast-trotting pony, we glided over the smooth snow-crust, the crisp, cold air "stinging our blood to life," and making one wish for such glorious exercise nearer home. Doctor, I shake your hand in memory of old times.

I next filled engagements, of a month each, in Bangor, Maine, and Lynn, Massachusetts; meeting with kind friends, doing service for our Cause, and seeing more of the wonderful land I was a sojourner in. If I were to detail all I

saw, heard, and did, my little book would grow to immense proportions. It cannot be, at least in this volume. Of Bangor, then, let me say, it has a population of 60,000; its chief trade is what is called "lumbering," but known to folks in this country as the "timber trade." Many of the most intellectual people in the town are avowed Spiritualists, and a deal of interest is manifested in the subject by the towns round about. Maine is the State where the "Maine Liquor Laws" operate. So far as completely getting rid of "drink" is concerned, prohibition is certainly a failure. It has done good though, but men will have drink as long as it is made.

And of Lynn, these few items must atone for lack of details. The boot and shoe manufacturing is the staple industry of this city; indeed, it is the seat of that business for that section of the country. It has a population of some 30,000; stands close to the sea-shore; is pleasantly surrounded upon its inland side; and its streets, avenues, and walks are well laid out. It is eleven miles from Boston. The Spiritualists are fairly numerous, but there, as at other places, it is a little difficult to get them out to lectures. I was the guest of Mr. Asa Bushby; I found him a most entertaining host, and an amiable friend. Mr. Bushby served three years in the Northern army during the late war. His reminiscences of that period are intensely interesting, though anything but in favour of military glory.

My next "location" was New Haven, Connecticut, known to many as the "wooden nutmeg State." The city of New Haven is one of the prettiest little places I was ever in. It is quite an important port for the coasting trade, doing a general commercial business. Population nearly 60,000. It is called the "City of Elms," from the fact that the streets are lined with those stately trees on either side. A large and handsome square occupies the centre of the city; its bright green turf and intersecting avenues of stately elms make a picture that, to appreciate fully, needs personal observation. I found an energetic society operating in New Haven, though it, too, like all other things,

felt commercially the effect of the hard times. Excellent audiences assembled on the five Sundays of my month's engagement, and at the close of the final meeting the president spoke in the highest terms of the labours of my spirit-friends, and of the great appreciation thereof by the audience and the board of managers. I was the guest of Mr. E. R. Whiting, and I am under many obligations to him and his estimable lady for a very pleasant home during my stay. The above gentleman and Mr. Frank Hermance have hitherto borne much—nearly all—of the financial burden of this society, a fact which redounds greatly to their credit, considering there are many Spiritualists in the city far better able to sustain it than those good workers.

While in this city, I paid a couple of visits to New York—the first time, to accompany Mr. Hermance to the rooms of Dr. Slade, the celebrated slate-writing medium. Our object was to have a sitting with him. We found him disengaged, and after a little time spent in social chat we repaired to the seance-room; time, eleven a.m. Persons present: Dr. Slade, Mr. Hermance, and myself. Events: After seating ourselves at the table, in the centre of the room, Mr. Hermance and myself placed our feet upon the feet of Dr. Slade; a chip of slate pencil was then bitten off a stick of that article, and placed upon the slate, which we had previously assured ourselves was perfectly clean. With his right hand he held the slate under the table, his left being in full sight upon the top. Result: A brief salutation, written upon the slate, from Dr. Slade's departed wife. At the same time hands—those of "Owosso," an Indian chief—tapped our knees. The next event was of this character: An ordinary accordion was produced and examined, the keyboard sliding in grooves, like the lid of a box. Dr. Slade with one hand put this under the table, and directly exclaimed that it was being violently pulled; presently the key-board, by an invisible agency, was pulled out, and hurled across the room. After it was replaced several airs were played, and "Home, sweet home," was rendered exquisitely

as a *finale*. The slate was again used, and this time quite a noticeable feature was introduced. Upon passing the slate under the table it was taken from Dr. Slade's hand and held up above the edge of the table at the opposite end to where he was sitting; our feet were still upon his, and at that time, his right hand being free, he brought it up to our view; *his two hands were thus in sight*. After that the slate was held up on the head of Mr. Hermance, and while in that position the scrap of pencil upon it wrote as follows: "God bless all noble souls who work for this glorious Gospel." This concluded the sitting. I failed to find either confederate or mechanism, and if not 'spirits, what is it? Let the wise make answer. As the "power" responded to our desires, intelligence must have been behind it. In the light of the facts, I can more readily admit that the said facts were produced by the Indian "Owosso" and Dr. Slade's late wife than that they were either the result of trick and confederacy or some occult physical force.

Leaving New Haven, I ran up to Boston. While there it was my good fortune, through the kindness of Mr. Colby, editor of the *Banner of Light*, to form one of a party for a seance with Mr. C. H. Foster, the renowned medium. I here incorporate, from the report of the seance, those portions concerning myself which appeared in the *Banner of Light* for June 12, 1875:—

On the morning of Friday, June 4th, Mr. Epes Sargent, Mr. J. J. Morse, the English trance-speaker, Mr. Isaac B. Rich, our partner, and ourself, waited upon Mr. Foster at his rooms in the Parker House, Boston. The sitting was evidently attended by those unseen intelligences who enter so largely—though not so universally recognised in this capacity by the world in general—into the arrangement of life's details, to widen the scope of knowledge on the part of Mr. Morse concerning the capabilities of the denizens of the next sphere of being when the proper conditions are given them. Indeed, such was the information presented through Mr. Foster when the party took seats around the table. Mr. Morse was highly pleased with the success of the seance which followed, especially as during its continuance a wish which he had

long entertained was accomplished, viz., the giving of words to him by his own particular spirit-guides (outside of his own organism, and through the instrumentality of Mr. Foster), an experience which he had not met with before since his arrival in America.

The pellets so often described being prepared in the usual fashion, and to a considerable number, and mingled beyond recognition, Mr. Foster drew forth one upon which it was subsequently found was written the name of Mr. Morse's Chinese control, but at the time no person who saw it on the table, closely rolled up, could distinguish it from the rest; and as an additional test of his powers, before unfolding the paper slip, said he would write the name contained therein upon it. He then caught up the pencil, and clearly traced out the name, "Tien-Sien-Tio;" the pellet being then unrolled, proved his double test to be correct. The medium was also impressed to state to Mr. Morse that his spirit-guides, who were then present, were happy to meet him under these peculiar circumstances.

When this message had been concluded, Mr. Foster suddenly spoke to Mr. Morse, saying, "Your mother is here," and proceeded to deliver a message of a personal character in her behalf to her son, giving the name "Mary Morse" at the end, which Mr. Morse said was correct. Mr. Morse was also privileged to converse with several of his spirit-friends through the instrumentality of the raps; the matters stated, however, being of a personal character, we refrain from reproducing them.

The medium then remarked that "Lizzie Goodchild," who said she had recently passed to spirit-life, announced her presence, as having come in company with the mother of Mr. Morse. Mr. Morse inquired of what disease she died. The names of a certain number of the varied sicknesses to which humanity is heir having been written upon slips of paper by Mr. Morse, among them the true one, Mr. Foster at once selected the correct slip, and said heart-disease was the principal cause of her demise, although she was subject to pains in her left side. Mr. Morse said he had heard by letter from home of the decease of the lady named since he came to America. . . . The medium turned to Mr. Morse and said, "'William Lewis' comes to you. Did you know in earth-life any person bearing that name?" Mr. Morse replied in the affirmative, and seemed about to add more to his statement to that effect, when Mr. Foster said, "Stop; I will tell you myself: that person was your wife's father, so he tells me. Is that true?" Mr. Morse acknowledged that it was.

From the nature of the private information communicated, also from the character of the manifestations, and the utter inability of Mr. Foster, or any one else, to distinguish the pellets from each other, I look upon that seance as giving the most conclusive evidence of spirit identity that I have ever witnessed. And when the warm words of cheer and encouragement from my beloved guide fell upon my ears I felt indeed that with such a friendship I might brave the world. Words failed me, but from my heart's deeps rose a silent aspiration of thankfulness for my mediumship.

I was the speaker for the New York Spiritualists' Society for the first three Sundays in July, and although we were well on in the "heated term," as it is called, large audiences assembled, and my presence was most enthusiastically received. My concluding engagement was a return one, in the city of Bangor. I was "farewelled" in Boston, and it is no exaggeration to say that the best of Boston's Spiritualists turned out to say, "Good-bye, and God speed," to me. I sailed from New York on the 9th Oct. 1875, and in due course arrived home again, with the feelings of the poet in my heart—intensified by a twelvemonth's absence—that,

"Be it ever so humble,
There is no place like home."

CHAPTER VII.

A SPIRITUALISTS' CAMP MEETING.

Truly the ways of the Americans are different to the ways of other peoples; and some of their institutions are unlike anything known to Englishmen, who are unacquainted with the peculiarities of Transatlantic life. Of my opinion concerning the *status* and *cultus* of American Spiritualism I shall write in another chapter, but one peculiarity of that sub-

ject, and which is essentially an American institution, I shall now present to the reader for his or her consideration. I refer to the "camp meetings" held by Spiritualists in America. Without further preface, I will detail the "Lake Pleasant Camp Meeting," selecting it as the largest, best conducted, and most successful of them all, and in which I participated, both as speaker and special correspondent of the *Banner of Light*. I wonder when English Spiritualists will introduce the matter here—if ever?

The camp was pitched on the 4th of August, and was not raised until the 29th of the same month. The formal opening did not take place until Sunday, August 8th, though it was not until about the 11th that the camp could be fairly considered as being fully under weigh. The grounds where-in the camp was located are owned by the Fitchburgh Railroad Company, and are situated within the limits of the township of Montague, Mass., and just 100 miles from Boston. The grounds are of considerable extent, and nearly oblong in shape, thickly wooded with pine, fir, oak, and other trees. At the northern end there is a handsome sheet of water some mile or so in length, and, at its widest, three-quarters of a mile broad. Rising from its southern shore is a gentle ascending slope, which, at the head of the lake, forms itself into a natural ampitheatre. Facing this rising ground, on your left, are seen the steps leading to the railroad track and platform, and also the dancing pavilion, an open structure built of wood, and prettily ornamented *à la Suisse*. Immediately facing you is the rear of the speaker's stand, and rising from its front are tiers of seats, ranged in a semicircle, having the stand as the centre of the arc, while on the brow of the hill, running almost the full compass of the view thus presented, are seen the canvas homes of the campers. Skiffs dot the lake for the lovers of aquatics, bath-houses for ladies and gentlemen are on its margin, and a pleasant and shady walk runs round its western shore, a retreat for meditative students and—lovers!

Ascending to the top of the hill just described, one looks

down upon the railroad, which at this spot runs through a sandy cutting, thus giving us what is called the Bluffs. Facing round to the west we find a long street, named Lyman Street, of canvas houses, the first of which, upon the right, is labelled "Head-quarters" and "Post-office," wherein the committee of management holds its meetings, and where stamps are sold, letters mailed and delivered, and money orders issued and paid. Lending out of Lyman Street on the left was Second Avenue, upon which Mr. Cooper and myself were located, and a few paces further on, same side, was Third Avenue, while, so, as not to be considered entirely plebeian, aristocratic Fifth Avenue must also be there. The first opening on the left, facing Third Avenue, was Broadway, without which no American city, whether of canvas, wood, or brick, is considered complete. On the north-west corner of Broadway stood a restaurant, under the management of Mr. Austin. It was a moderate-sized tent, well supplied with tables, chairs, and all the appliances of a regular restaurant; while next door there was another establishment of a similar character, under the management of Mr. Dunklee, considerably larger than its neighbour, and in many respects the superior place of the two. Board—three meals per day—was supplied at the rate of six dollars for seven days, about £1 1s. 6d. our money. Both hotels were well patronised, and doubtless they proved remunerative to their proprietors. Next to Dunklee's hotel was a tinware "store," whereat all kinds of domestic utensils—pails, brooms, candlesticks, lamps, cutlery, and tinware of all kinds—could be purchased; and standing as neighbour to the tin store was a "grocery," where provisions of all kinds—bread, flour, fish, and butter—could be had, a flourishing trade being done at both establishments. Right and left the tents ranged, forming quite a lengthy street, which terminated in Owosso Street, so named, I presume, from Dr. Slade's Indian control. This street terminated in one side of Charter Square, named so from a Boston medium who lived therein. Going out at

right angles with Owosso Street was Montague Street, which, meeting the foot of Lyman Street, made almost a square, or block, of that section of the camp. Still keeping right on, we finally come to the boundary of the grounds, and making a sharp turn we find ourselves at the foot of First Avenue, or, as it was called, the Bluffs. Here, facing southwards, we observe Mount Toby; it is some seven miles distant, and frequent excursions were made to its summit, from which a splendid view of the surrounding country is obtained. The scenery is quite mountainous; in fact, picturesque and charming.

At this, the lower, end of the grounds was established a collection of animals, alive and stuffed, a large tent wherein mesmeric entertainments were given, and a variety of sports for the delectation of the juveniles.

In many instances the campers owned their own tents, and when such was the case the tents were almost invariably superior in construction and external and internal arrangement and ornamentation; but the great majority of the campers rented their tents from the Association. The terms for so doing were from six dollars to twelve dollars for the camp time, according to the size of the tent. Your Yankee, as a rule, is an ingrained speculator, and therefore it was not wondered at that many an enterprising genius should rent two or three tents at those terms, and then sublet them to transient visitors, making a good profit out of the transaction. A new feature was introduced at this year's camp, in the form of portable wooden huts, or cottages, as they were called, costing, to buy right out, from eighty to one hundred dollars; some five or six of them were erected, and the builder received quite a number of orders for similar structures for the next year. A plentiful supply of water was obtained from wells sunk throughout the grounds, and large casks were placed at various points, which were kept filled for the use of the tenters thereabout. On ordinary days—or nights, rather,—there could not have been much less than one thousand souls sleeping in our canvas city, while pro-

bably on Saturdays the number was doubled. A detachment of police watched over us day and night, though their office was comparatively a sinecure. So much, then, for a description of this city of tents; now as to how its inhabitants spent their time.

On week-days the mornings from 10.30 till noon were devoted to open conferences, in which all who had any desire to speak upon the subjects discussed were at liberty to do so, ten-minute speeches being the rule. Dinner was served at 12.15 p.m., and at 1 o'clock the band, which was retained for the whole meeting, and was a capital one, commenced an instrumental concert of half an hour's duration, at the close of which the president introduced the regular speaker of the day. Dr. J. Beals, of the neighbouring town of Greenfield was and is the president. The speakers at the week-day lectures embraced male and female talent, some indifferent, but mostly good. At the close of the lecture, at about 3 o'clock, the band commenced operations in the pavilion, which was then open to dancers only. Two hours' dancing was kept up. At 6 p.m. supper was served, and at 8 dancing recommenced. Concerts, circles, mesmeric entertainments, social visits, moonlight strolls, euchre, and other methods of passing time were also practised, and at 10.30 p.m. "lights out" brought the labours and pleasures of the day to a close.

I must here describe one or two events of a unique nature that contributed to the amusement of the campers. The first was what is known as a "sheet and pillow-case" or "phantom party." The participants were draped in sheets, turbaned with pillowcases, and adorned with natural flowers, while some appeared in dresses similar to those worn by the *Follies* during carnival times. For the first hour and a half all are masked, and the complete change the dress makes in one's appearance, and the fact that many gentlemen robe as ladies, lead to some comical and grotesque *rencontres*.

Another event was what is styled an "Old Folks' Concert," in which all the performers were attired in the costumes of

a century ago, and all the airs and words were dated back to the same period. This was held in the open, air at the speakers' stand, one Sunday evening. On the Tuesday evening following, an "Old Folks' Dance" was held at the Pavilion, whereat the dancers were all attired in the costumes of the days gone by. The dances on that occasion were of a century ago also. Three character (or, as they call them, "variety") concerts were given during the season, Dunklee's boarding tent being used for the purpose; they were capitally conducted and quite liberally patronised. The reader can thus judge that there was plenty of all kinds to meet the demands of the various tastes congregated together. That days passed pleasantly indeed under such circumstances is but to be expected.

On Sundays two lectures were given by different speakers, and on such occasions from three to five thousand were present at the stand,—Messrs. Brunton, Denton, Eccles, Storer, Abbott, and myself being the speakers selected upon the different Sundays. The railroad owning the grounds issued excursion tickets from Boston to the grounds for less than the single fare, for the journey out and home; while other lines of road that make connection with the Fitchburgh railroad acted in like manner, and, as a result, on Sunday from 10,000 to 15,000 people spent the day upon the grounds.

Camp meetings are not confined to Spiritualists in America, but are held by various religious bodies as well; and it is no uncommon matter for 15,000 to 20,000 people to take part in them. As affording a glimpse of the nature of the materials that constitute the "make up" of American Spiritualism, a camp meeting is exceedingly instructive, as thereat you come in contact with all kinds of people, each expressing some peculiar opinion usually at variance with that expressed by all the rest!—the topics treated on ranging from the origin of life and the existence of God to politics, finance, and the social millennium.

CHAPTER VIII.

IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM.

To convey an adequate idea of the progress and status of Spiritualism throughout the United States is simply impossible upon my part, for the bare reason that having only come into contact with it in the Eastern States, along the Atlantic seaboard, it would be presumption for me to attempt to give an authoritative opinion of the Movement through the entire country; but such little as I have seen, and the conclusions drawn therefrom, and such experiences as I have encountered; I here submit for the reader's consideration. Whatever may have been the past condition of American Spiritualism, its present one, so far as the world is concerned, can scarcely be considered satisfactory; but in my opinion its position is not due to any radical defect in the Movement, but is rather traceable to the fact that it is passing through a transitional stage, which must of necessity be a period of discord and confusion.

The Spiritualism of America presents very many points of difference in comparison with that of England; its style and character, genius and thought, are more radical and speculative than our own. It is conceived by many of its advocates that no question is outside of its limits; politics, religion, sociology, finance, commerce, and every imaginable philosophy, are broached from its platforms with a grace of oratory and power of eloquence which, if lacking in logical acuteness and rational sequence, lend an undeniable charm to those whose reasonings are not of the factarian and practical method.

Concerning the organisation question, our American brethren have hitherto failed in effecting any national union

of a permanent character, and all attempts in that direction have proved failures up to now. The large cities have their local societies, and carry on the work in their own city more or less successfully.

The phenomenal department is surrounded with conditions that happily do not exist in England. Mediums for physical manifestations abound, and they advertise public seances in such a hall on Sunday night, at an admission-fee of from fifty cents to a dollar. Doubtless many of these are mediums, but it is somewhat disagreeable to see the function of mediumship reduced to the level of the show business. To see a woman dressed in fleshings, clothed in Indian costume—beads, waumpum, bow and arrow, all complete—go through an Indian war-dance may be highly amusing to some; to my mind it is simply a disgusting degradation of a noble office. The foregoing is a fact, and was exhibited at a private circle in Boston at which I was present; and where we were all, at first, deceived by the reputed medium and her companion. Both, however, were ultimately exposed. On the other hand, there are some of the finest mediums, and noblest men and women connected with phenomenal Spiritualism, in America, that one need wish to meet; and their refinement and truthfulness amply atone for all the folly that one meets in other places. The greater—and respectable—portion of American Spiritualists discountenance the questionable actions of these spiritual sharks, who steal the livery of the angels to serve their own sordid aims, but they have inflicted much injury on the Cause nevertheless.

I met many mediums; I always found them kindly, generous folk, ready to aid the distressed or sick among their number, and as a class reputable and well-conducted. But the thing that strikes the stranger most is the multiplicity of matters and uses phenomenal Spiritualism is put to in the States. Mediums abound whose gifts are available for the building of a railway bridge, the curing of a baby, the finding of a lost purse, advising on intended matrimony, curing all diseases incidental to physical life, and the pro-

pounding of theories for the spiritual happiness and welfare of all mankind; but candour compels me to admit that a vast quantity of American mediumship is genuinely useful, and many of the lectures delivered through the inspirational and trance speakers are well worthy of attention and consideration.

The literature of American Spiritualism is amazingly luxuriant, but only a portion can really be considered of standard value. Among those authors most respected may be mentioned A. J. Davis, Hudson Tuttle, J. M. Peebles, P. B. Randolph, Epes Sargent, Lizzie Doten, and Dr. E. Crowell, names that have won an enduring fame in Modern American Spiritualism.

The weekly spiritual press is represented by three papers. First—the oldest and greatest in favour—stands the *Banner of Light*, published in Boston, and edited by Mr. Luther Colby. As an exponent of the spiritual philosophy, and the consistent champion of mediums, it is universally beloved. Next in influence is the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, edited by Mr. S. S. Jones, and published in Chicago, in the State of Illinois. As a racy, pungent sheet, of liberal and radical tone, on spiritual and theological subjects, it is well deserving of its ever-increasing circulation. Lastly, there is the *Spiritual Scientist*, published in Boston, and edited by Mr. E. Gerry Brown; it deals largely in the occult sciences, is filled with crisp little items of news; and presents an uncompromising front against fraud and looseness everywhere. It is well supported.

So far as I know, there are but two monthly periodicals, the *Little Bouquet*, a magazine for the Children's Lyceum, published in Chicago, by Mr. S. S. Jones; and the *Spiritual Magazine*, published in Memphis, Tennessee, edited by the Rev. S. Watson. This last one is the only vehicle for conveying the ideas of the Christian Spiritualists of America.

The philosophy of American Spiritualism is liberal and broad in character and reach. The mass of American Spiritualists are free-thinkers over all theological matters,

and decline to be bound by or fettered with the musty creeds of old orthodoxy. As a body they have done good service in the cause of mental and spiritual freedom, and by the conservative public are as cordially hated, in consequence, as the followers of Paine and others of that ilk. At present the Movement is not so prosperous as it was, and on nearly all sides I heard laments over what is, compared with what was. On the whole, I was well pleased with Spiritualism as a Movement in the United States, and am in the full and complete hope of its recovering from its present torpor, and bursting into lusty health and activity. The future of American Spiritualism will, in my opinion, evidence more of a conservative tendency than has hitherto been the case. The peculiar breadth and freedom characterising its past and present utterances, as well as the collective experiences of the whole, are being subjected to a slow and careful sifting, which, when completed, will weed out much that is undesirable, leaving the soil freer for the growth and development of those ideas of greatness and goodness with which America so peculiarly abounds, and without the presence of which American Spiritualism would have long since disintegrated. That my opinion may be realised every lover of our Cause will most heartily wish, I am sure. Such in brief were the impressions I received of Spiritualism in America during my year's experience of it.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCERNING PEOPLE I MET, PLACES I VISITED, AND THE PORTRAIT OF MY CHIEF CONTROL.

Mr. Cooper and I, during our stay in New York, made several agreeable acquaintances, among them Mr. Mansfield, the test-medium; Andrew Jackson Davis, the prophet-seer of Modern Spiritualism; Madame H. P. Blavatsky, the cele-

brated Russian occultist; Mr. A. E. Newton, president of the American Photographic Union, also president of the society in New York that I spoke for; Judge A. W. G. Carter; Wella Anderson, the spirit-artist; Mrs. M. A. Halstead, a lady of such kindness to all mediums that she is looked to as one of the mothers in Israel; and many others. While in New York I received a very kind note from our old friend Elder F. W. Evans, of the Mount Lebanon Shaker community, asking us to pay them a visit. We did so, and on arriving there on the evening of July 20, the elder very cordially greeted us both, and inquired right kindly of his many friends in England. He evidently retains the most pleasant reminiscences of his trip to our land. We found them—the Shakers—a very swarm of bees, without a drone among them, every one having a place to fill, and there being something for each one to do. They rise at about 4.30 a.m., work until 6, then breakfast; work again until noon, then dine, labour being resumed until 6 in the evening, at which time they take supper. Social converse then takes place between the brethren and sisters until about 7.30, after which they retire to their rooms, the brethren in one part of the house, the sisters in another. Celibacy is the life rule of a full degree Shaker. After about 9 p.m. all is quiet, and sleep broods over all. A cheerful seriousness, if you can conceive the idea, is the prevailing characteristic of all the members; but there is an entire absence of fanaticism or bigotry, either on the part of members or officials. A vacant laugh or an unmeaning phrase was not heard during our three days' stay. Everything was scrupulously clean and strictly utilitarian, the beautiful being at all times subordinated to the useful. Pictures, flowers, and decorations are conspicuous by their absence. This society has a barn, which is truly, in its principles of construction, admitted by all agriculturists to be superior to anything in the United States, if not in the world. Elder Evans designed it, and he evidently took considerable pride in showing us over it and explaining to us its peculiar merits. Save the ordinary cattle of a farm-

stead, a solitary cat was the only creature about the premises. He was a fine, sleek, well fed and cared-for mouse-coloured Tom. I shall long remember him as the first specimen of the species *Shaker felis*. It evidently agreed with him.

Our meals were served at a separate table in a separate apartment, since the family (as it is called) never eat with those of the "world" when they call as visitors. Everything was simply delicious. Bread—three kinds—butter, meat fowls, milk (the real article, gotten from an honestly fed and kept cow), and fruits were splendid. In fact, all—food, clothing, and appurtenances—are of the highest character; and whatever one may think of their peculiar doctrines in regard to the relation of the sexes, there can be no question that they are a happy, honest, and contented people. On one evening we were invited to a meeting, at which Mr. Cooper related his experiences at the Eddy homestead, and at which "Tien" also made a brief and *apropos* address. We left Mount Lebanon well pleased with our hospitable friends, and if not able to agree with them on all points, we found much to admire and respect.

It was while I was in New York that I obtained the original picture of my chief control, "Tien-Sien-Tie," a photographic copy of which now adorns these pages. The manner of my obtaining it was as follows. It arose out of an *impromptu* visit to Mr. Wella Anderson, the spirit-artist, a name quite familiar to every American Spiritualist, and almost equally familiar to European Spiritualists. My friend Mr. Cooper was with me, and we arrived at Mr. Anderson's rooms a few minutes past four p.m. Mr. Anderson is certainly one of the wonders amongst the curiosities of Transatlantic mediumship. He may be truly called a spirit-photographer in pencil. For a long series of years Mr. Anderson has—entranced—drawn faces, busts, and full-length figures of deceased friends, and with such success that in innumerable cases the complete identification is readily made, as in the case of the spirit-photographers,



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Mumler, Hudson, and Parkes, even when no portrait of the person previously existed. Mr. Anderson was a wood-turner prior to becoming a drawing medium, and he was often disturbed by drawing figures against his will upon his work. Occasionally he would, while asleep, spend the entire night in drawing faces, figures, &c., until, finally, he commenced his career as a drawing-medium. Such, in substance, is his account of his development. We had quite a pleasant chat together, and Mr. Anderson afforded us a slight specimen of his powers. He requested us to bandage his eyes. We did so, in a manner that completely blindfolded him; further, he then became entranced. While in the above condition he took a piece of cartridge paper, about 3in. by 2½in., and drew a face on each side, the drawings being executed upside down; no hitch or faltering, but done as naturally as though he was in full possession of his normal sight. I have the pictures in my possession now. Released from control, Mr. Anderson's guides requested me to favour them with half an hour's quiet on a certain day: the 26th of that month—it was July. I replied, "I should be at the Silver Lake Camp Meeting, 270 miles distant." Mr. Anderson's controls wrote that did not matter; all that was required was my passivity. I assented, and on the morning in question brother Cooper and I were quietly enjoying ourselves in a yacht upon the bright bosom of Silver Lake, quiet and passive enough in all conscience, for it was too hot even to think. With regard to the picture produced through Mr. Anderson, the following correspondence transpired.

303, West 11th Street, New York City,
July 31st, 1875.

DEAR BROTHER MORSE,—The last touches are on the picture of the bright and beautiful "Chinese." Completed this p.m. The picture awaits your order. Please accept it with the kindest regards and best wishes of most truly and fraternally thine,

WELLA ANDERSON.

P.S.—Please remember me kindly to Mr. Cooper.—W. A.

303, West 11th Street, New York,
September 4th, 1875.

DEAR BROTHER MORSE,—Your kind and welcome letter is before me—came while I was ill in the country. I feel very *much gratified* to learn the picture of your bright and noble guide was admired by your many friends. In regard to the time occupied in its execution, it was 8½ days, of one sitting per day of 12 to 13 minutes each—100 minutes—taken by Raphael Sanzio, through the fingers of your humble servant with a No. 2 Faber's pencil, except the hair, which was of No. 1 Faber, done while I was lost to this cold discordant world, which I hope soon to leave. Please allow me to tender my most heartfelt thanks for the picture I found enclosed in your last of my much esteemed friend and genial brother, J. J. Morse. My love to Mr. Cooper and yourself, hoping you are both well and prospering.—I am most truly and fraternally thine,

WELLA ANDERSON.

The picture is pronounced by competent judges to be a splendid specimen of pencil drawing. It now adorns my sitting-room, and so vivid is the likeness to my guide, as I have often seen him, that I could almost say he lived in his picture. Its commercial value is £25, but I would not sell it for any consideration.

While in Boston I visited our old friend and sister-worker, Emma Hardinge-Britten, and found her actively engaged in curative electrical practice and literary duties: her time is fully occupied. She most cordially received me, and I had the pleasure of having a real English tea at her house, 3,000 miles from home.

CHAPTER X.

TRAVELLING IN AMERICA.—THE NATURE OF AMERICAN SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS.—A FEW AMERICANISMS.—CONCLUSION.

Travelling in America is quite a different matter to travelling in England. American arrangements are in many respects superior to English. and especially so in regard

to the transit of passengers' baggage, as the following account of a journey from Boston to New Haven will show. New Haven is 170 miles from Boston, on the main line between that place and New York. Fare from Boston, 4 dols. 50 cents currency (about 16s. 2d. of our money); Pullman drawing-room car, 1 dol. 25 cents extra (equal to 4s. 5d. our coin). Our first-class carriages are comfortable, especially those on the London and North-Western and Great Western main lines, but after a Pullman they are anything but desirable. In summer, hot, close, and dusty; in winter, stuffy, draughty, and badly warmed; always cramping and confining; seldom, if ever, too well lighted; and for long rides cramping the limbs and vexing the souls of the unfortunate travellers. How different is a "Pullman"! For all the world, more like an elegant boudoir than a railway car. Polished walnut-wood panelling, adorned with appropriate gildings and plate-glass mirrors, take the place of the walls and papers of a drawing-room; Brussels carpet on the floor; crimson velvet upholstered arm-chairs—one to each passenger—with cushions for the feet; iced water to drink; a lavatory supplied with every requisite; an attendant to wait upon you; a conductor to take care of you; and a special compartment for ladies or private parties; all these things combined tend to reduce the inevitable discomfort of travelling to the lowest minimum. Plenty of room to walk about in the car, and if a longer stroll is desired, you can walk through the entire length of the train. Is it expensive? No; it averages about a cent per mile, which is a halfpenny, over the regular fare.

During my visit to America I endeavoured to attentively observe and note its social peculiarities. It is true America has no aristocracy, but a plutocracy takes its place. Though disclaiming the aristocratic *régime* of the European countries, I find America has its societary divisions, just as clearly defined and rigidly enforced as is ever the case in Europe. But, withal, there is yet a greater freedom and geniality underlying the same class of people on the other

side of the Atlantic than we find in England, and I am inclined to believe it arises from the fact that the highest place in society or the government is open to the possession of any who may strive to win it. A barefooted boy to-day, a help on a Western farm to-morrow, and President of the Republic the week after, then back again to private life, is a fair illustration of my idea. Your real American, if he has "true grit," is ever admired and respected. And here, above all countries, boldness, energy, and decision have every chance to lead their possessor to the grandest heights. Among what—for the want of a better term—I will style the "middle classes" the method of living adopted in many instances seems quite peculiar to an Englishman; it is this: instead of keeping house, furnished rooms are rented, and meals are taken either at a boarding-house or a restaurant near by; at times board is served in the same house. Rooms cost from six dollars to fifty dollars per week, while board runs from five dollars up to any price you are inclined to pay. One reason assigned for this mode of living is that as "helps" (servants) are so very dear, and withal dreadfully troublesome—for very often the help wants, to use a Yankeeism, "to boss the concern," *anglicè*, to be mistress—the family saves by this way of living the cost and trouble of housekeeping. But to an Englishman the absence of the family circle around the table seems at first a loss too great to be borne.

A badly-dressed Parisian is almost a phenomenon; such also is the fact in regard to American women. The newest, best, and most stylish apparel is the rule. Much taste and judgment are displayed too; in fact, men and women all strive to make everything, themselves included, as bright, nice, and tasty as possible. Many of the American women are fine specimens of female beauty, but they do not retain their freshness so long as their English sisters; still, while it lasts, it is a matter they may well be proud of. But there is one thing to admire in our fair American cousins—that is, their self-reliance and independence. Self-poised

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and able to sustain herself under almost any circumstances, an American woman is a wonder to behold.

The American people have no State Church or national religion, to suffer under or esteem a blessing, whichever way, my readers choose, but such religion as they have is too often characterised by sonorousness and display; a fifteen-hundred-dollar parson and a five-thousand-dollar choir being oftener than not the facts presented. According to the theory of American institutions, the people are all equal. This is true at the polling-booth, the cemetery, and the police-court; but practically the level of democracy is about as much a fact in England as in America. In all the large cities and towns caste is as plainly manifest and as rigidly defined as with us. It is curious to notice the almost perfect personal similarity between the upper grades of society in both countries, alike in the face, manner, and dress of the men and women, as it is in social life "society," where the level of democracy proves itself to be theoretical. The consideration of position is as much respected; place and its power are eagerly sought after; and handles to names—as "Professor," "Judge," "Honourable," and "Excellency"—are as eagerly coveted as though "republican simplicity" had never been heard of.

Among many of the customs which might be enumerated, and which are more or less singular and amusing, it may be mentioned that weddings often take place in the evening and nearly always at home. The fifth, tenth, twenty-fifth, and fiftieth anniversaries of wedded life are duly celebrated under the titles of "wooden," "tin," "silver," and "golden" weddings; and it is customary for the friends of the parties to present them with articles of use and value, of materials designated by the titles of the different anniversaries. Funerals are costly in the extreme. The body is clothed in a full suit of clothes, often new, and laid in a casket, as coffins are termed in America. The said caskets are very expensive. Large sums are spent for flowers, carriages, and music, while the lot and tomb form no incon-

siderable item in the affair; and in many families a funeral is not only to be deplored for the fact itself, but for the impoverishment it too often causes to follow.

Divorces are in many States easily obtained; among other reasons, "for incompatibility of temper, or such other causes as the Court deems sufficient." This is enough in all conscience for the afflicted marital victims. American social life presents three different aspects—first, housekeeping; second, board, and third, hotel living. In the first, the manner is as with us; in the second, you hire a room or set of rooms, furnished or unfurnished, in a house which is devoted to what in English parlance is known as letting lodgings, and you take your meals at any table in the house, or at a *restaurant* hard by, or at a boarding-table in another house, generally next door. This method of living will average in cost from seven to fifteen dollars a week, the servants of the houses doing all the chamber-work. There is a parlour for general use. In the last case, you select your hotel according to your means, and can board either on the American or European plan: if the first, you take your meals at the general table at so much per day; if the second, you pay so much per meal. The two last are the popular and general modes of living, and, though they suit the American disposition, an Englishman misses the quietness of the family circle, with its sacred and softening influences.

In private life a very small quantity of intoxicating liquors is used, though in the cities *lager bier* saloons, whisky bars, and rum holes abound. Politeness to ladies is quite the rule, and a lady travelling alone may be quite sure of safety, courteous attention, and assistance; our American cousins of all classes recognising women as mothers, sisters, or wives. Conversation is curt, as a rule, and abounds with peculiarities, such as "You bet," "I guess," "No, siree," equivalent to our "You be sure," "I think," "Get out," and "Certainly not;" and, among other oddities, it is always "on the street," not "in," and "up town," or "down town," instead of "over," or "across." There are no "servants,"

they are all "helps;" no shopmen, they are all "clerks;" no shopwomen, they are all "young ladies." Working men are "operatives." The driver of a locomotive is an "engineer." A hairdresser, a "tonorial artist." Corn-cutters are "chiropric professors." Chemists are "pharmaceuticals." A baker's is "a bakery;" a grocer's "a grocery;" a railway station, "a depot." A cab is "a hack;" your luggage is "baggage;" goods are "freight." "Limbs" take the place of "legs." Christmas is ignored, and New Year's Day is almost a carnival. Silver coins are but nickel. Paper money takes the place of specie. Ice is left at your front door, like milk, in the summer. Money is spent freely, and made quickly. The poor keep poor, and the rich grow richer. The President has to pay a railway fare, like an ordinary citizen, and theoretical equality is loudly proclaimed; in practice it is only found in death.

But there is another side to the picture, the contemplation of which fills us with astonishment and admiration. Only one hundred years have passed since the minute gun at Lexington sounded the key-note of American independence,—since the royal troops fall back before the continental army, and the ringing of the bell in the Independence Hall in the city of Philadelphia proclaimed the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, announcing at the same time the advent of a new Republic. Look at her now. Contrast 1776 with 1876.* The progress is astonishing. Indomitable energy has gone forth, and where once was a howling waste, or rolling prairie, or hostile Indian country, are now flourishing States and populous cities; and civilisation, with her beneficent presence, watches over all. England lost a fair province, but the world has had, in consequence, a brilliant example of Republicanism. That example has its defects, as its best friends readily admit; but that it is destined to ultimately achieve the results its founders foresaw cannot be denied, and however various individual

* At the time these pages were passing through the press America was engaged in celebrating the Centennial of her Independence.

opinion in America is upon questions of commercial, political, or national morality, let but their rights, their liberties, be called into question, and North and South, East and West, realise the spirit of their national motto, "*E pluribus unum*"—the many in one—a motto which the predatory couriers of that enemy of liberty and progression, the Church of Rome, had better heed the meaning of in time, for Romanism is putting forth all its power to make conquests in America.

My labours are now concluded. My little book has grown to larger proportions than I first intended, and even now much remains unsaid. And, in conclusion, as embodying the opinion I have formed alike of America, its people, customs, and Spiritualism, I am sure we must all recognise the grandeur of the country and appreciate the energy of its people, while, if we cannot assimilate many of its customs, we may at least rejoice and be grateful to them for the knowledge of that glorious philosophy of Spiritualism which we have received at their hands, feeling that therein they have amply compensated us for the political troubles consequent upon the severing of their connection with us; and, as the proclamation of American Independence was the keystone in the arch of modern Republicanism, so also was the advent of spirit-communion at Hydesville a declaration of Spiritual independence, which has for ever overthrown the limitations of ignorance and superstition.

I now lay down my pen, for my pleasant task is accomplished, and all that remains for me to do is to bid the reader a courteous

FAREWELL.

SPIRITUALISM AS AN AID AND METHOD OF HUMAN PROGRESS.

An Oration delivered in the Trance, at Manchester, June 15th, 1873

BY MR. J. J. MORSE.

[Mr. Morse took his seat on the platform in his normal state, but in due course his spirit-guides entranced him, when he stood up, and, under their influence, delivered the following oration in an eloquent and impassioned manner. Mr. Morse is quite unconscious of what he says, even of his own existence, while in the trance.]

To the superficial observer the world presents a problem exceedingly difficult of solution. Wherever the gaze be turned, wherever the vision be directed, there are to be found contradictions innumerable—all phases of character manifesting themselves in such a vast variety and diversity of relationships, and selfishness (that great curse, we might almost say, of human life) underlying every act and purpose of individual action, that alas! it is felt sometimes that humanity is indeed past all hope; that the days of darkness are coming on apace, the night of misery draws near, and sorrow, ruin, and desolation will be the ultimate condition of all people.

The contradictions manifested by human nature, especially as expressed in individual character, have ever been a fruitful source of discussion among those who have had the moral and spiritual advance of the race at heart. These contradictions have given birth to the necessity of the various religious and moral methods of training which the world possesses at the present time. Alas! for the well-being of the world these self-same moral and religious methods have hitherto failed in the one grand object for which they have been designed. The world to-day is just as full of contradictions as it was in the days gone by; and crime and craft and misery rule as triumphantly now as they did in the earliest inceptions of the human race. How is this? Has the fair face of human

nature only an outward seeming of beauty, and beneath its surface is there nought but corruption and decay? Is it impossible for humanity to be brighter and nobler than it is? or is it the lot of humanity to ever go forward in the same heartless, cruel manner that to-day characterises its career? Powers of evil have been accredited with the working of this confusion in human life; and against those powers of evil the moral and religious teachers have directed their efforts; and thus, looking at evil as an abstract entity, seeking to subvert its machinations by certain methods and means directed against a power or principality *outside* of human life, they have missed the mark; for evil does not exist as an abstraction. There is no absolute concentrated power of evil continuously directing its energies and efforts to the subversion of God's highest and holiest work.

But the sources of all man's contradictions—where are they? Where are the mainsprings? Who can drag them forth to light, hold them up to humanity, and say, "Gaze here; we have found the secret; and giving you the truth we have discovered, you may, in possession of that truth, avoid all failures in the future"? Evidently we cannot say that either the religious or moral instruction of the people has been able to effect this very desirable end, because of the evidence we have just cited—that crime and vice and misery, and all the incongruities of human character, are still rife in their manifestation this very hour. We must look, then, farther afield; graze in "fresh fields and pastures new;" endeavour to cull fairer flowers, riper fruits, and, giving these to hungry humanity, say, "Eat, and be made strong and holy; come forth with all the native purity of thine inner divinity, and walk even as thou art in very truth—sons and daughters of the Living God!"

But where is the teacher, where is the general, where is the philosopher who can effect this most desirable result? Who shall come and bid humanity drink at the fountain of Eternal Truth? Where is the Deliverer? And echo answers, "Where?"—a long despairing, wailing "Where?" There is no help near. All human effort at redemption ends in confusion, ends in hatred, ends in the creation of feud and discord. Why? For the simplest of all simple reasons—that all efforts at redemption that humanity has ever been blest or plagued with have ever been specially directed to certain classes, created and maintained for certain ends and issues, localised instead of universalised. What the world needs is a plan of salvation that shall contain within itself the means of ministering to the necessities of every human being. And where is there a universal religion that will meet the requirements of every man; allow for the circumstances and conditions of every man; suit the needs and nature of every man? It is not to be found. We challenge its production. It cannot be produced. It may be said that there exists such a religion. The proof would lie in the practical realisation of its aims and objects. The proof that there is not this religion existent is in the evidence we have cited previously—discord and confusion prevailing in the world to-day.

This morning it is our purpose to stand outside of all the religious and moral instruction that the world possesses; for the time being to discard all authorities, to tread in a new track, to ascend the mountains of truth, stand upon their summits, gaze upon the glorious view presented to our vision, drink in the inspiration of its grandeur, and reverentially and in all humility draw near to us and assimilate to our constitution such portions of that truth which in the providence of the Eternal Mind we are prepared to receive and digest. Standing thus, though thy teacher for the present, yet a seeker and a learner of the eternal ways of God, we ask you to put yourselves in precisely the same position. Whatsoever seemeth good to thee, that thou receive. He who receives more than that exhibits a sad want of common sense. It is by blind credulity that the world has forged its own chains, bound itself to a dead and buried Past, while the ever-living and inspiring Present stands weeping by to think that humanity is fettered and cannot draw near to the bright Future that it indicates. Let us, then, search the New; let us turn the page of history; turn it, and we find a blank entry. What can we do with a blank page? Though the page be blank, the hand of the scribe is ready; the pen is dipped in the ink, and in letters of bright burning gold the immortal truths of man's nature are rapidly being inscribed upon that page in all their divine legibility. But what of this new page in the history of the world? What is the title of the chapter that we are about to commence?

SPIRITUALISM AS AN AID AND METHOD OF HUMAN PROGRESS.

This is the title of the chapter, and the context that follows may and possibly will be in many of its parts entirely strange to numbers of our friends. We appeal to no man's authority; bow down to no man's conceptions of truth, save in so far as they appeal to our own reason and intuition. So far they are the truths of God to us. But whatsoever we cannot appreciate, or comprehend, or reduce to our own practice, we must of necessity pass by for the time being; not reject it, not throw it on one side, remember; far, far from that, for it may be that our own ignorance and incapacity prevent us comprehending the advanced conceptions of our neighbours. To reject is ever a sign of foolishness, but to lay by for future inspection and reference is perhaps the truest sign of calm, reflective wisdom.

Spiritualism is, as we have oftentimes asserted, no new phase of man's experience, so far as his spiritual nature is concerned. It is as old as humanity; and it is as universally expressed as any or all of the laws of existence. Now, we speak of the contradictions in man's nature; we find craft, and crime, and grief, and all the discordant elements that enter into the incongruous constitution called "Society." What is society? A combination of infinite discordances. What should be society? A combination of infinite unifications; a combination in which all the integral parts

are bound together by one common bond of brotherhood, union, and love. As it is, the reverse of the picture holds true. Now, how can we understand this problem? for it is only by understanding it that we can reduce it; it is only by reducing it to its parts and relationships that we hope to reconstruct society upon a sound basis, and bring in the dawn of that brighter day for which all humanity hope and pray.

We can only understand humanity in its entirety—for society is but the finite expression of the infinite human family—we can only understand humanity in its grand aggregate, by comprehending the nature of the individual atoms entering into the constitution of that aggregate bulk. Now, who can dispute the statement that in the individual man we find an accurate representation of the concrete men? Man individually represents the world collectively; and in comprehending and understanding the nature of the man, we shall be able to frame conditions, laws, and usages, to govern the life and control the actions of the concrete whole.

A very simple task is this at first sight. The wise and learned of the earth will say, "Oh, we fully understand the nature of man. He is a sinful, depraved, demoralised character; he cannot do anything good. It is utterly impossible for him to do a bright and noble action; he is the most helpless creature upon the face of the earth." Now, doubtless many of our friends have heard this statement falling from the lips of men and women who esteem themselves wise, good, and intelligent; and if we were to repay the compliment, and say that *they* were bright examples of the words they uttered, how terribly out of place they would feel! and how extremely probable would it be that they would get all angular and corner-wise in a moment and say, "Do you mean to insult me?" And thus, when the very professions of religion are applied to their legitimate and practical issues, those who hold them deepest and cherish them most are the very first to rebel against the application. Now this is a simple statement of fact, and in itself teaching a great and wondrous lesson, that humanity in its essential nature repudiates entirely the conception of demoralisation attached to it. Here we have, then, an evidence of the fact we have already stated, that the religious systems of the world are inadequate to the redemption of humanity, because they are not related to the needs and nature of man. Here, then, we have the ground somewhat clear before us; the gate is open; we can enter and view the land; but, alas! how choked with weeds and stones. Let us gather them up, place them on one side, and prepare the ground, that the seed of truth and love may grow, and that humanity may browse thereon, and grow strong and healthy and wise.

It is commonly said that man possesses a soul. The evidence of the fact is of two kinds; first—inferential, or by the aid of faith. One man believes, by inference or by faith, that he has a soul; another class of men believe, by evidence, by demonstration, by

fact conclusive proved before their very eyes, that not only they may be souls, that they may be immortal, that they shall be immortal, but that they absolutely are immortal. The voices of the Morning Land, sweet and lute-like in their angelic tones, come and whisper to sighing and despairing humanity the glad gospel of immortality, saying unto them, "Arise, ye men of earth, for a brighter destiny is dawning before you." Each and all humanity possess a human soul. That soul lives, breathes, and moves to-day; and when the vesture of the earth-life is removed from it, when it is divested of its material surroundings, it will enter that bright world a radiant and glorified being. This is the belief of the world, but faith is changed to knowledge by the magic touch of Spiritualism. The magic wand of the angel-world transforms a thing of faith into the bright reality of knowledge; and so those who stand within the enclosure, we might say, of Modern Spiritualism, realise in all its bright magnificence the grand central truth that man is an immortal soul. This is the foundation, this is the basis whereon we must rear our superstructure, for it is essential that we comprehend this great fact.

But let us turn our attention for a few moments to the proofs that shall lead us to rightly conclude that the fact we have stated is true, for at present our presentation of the matter is simply an assumption, simply an inference founded upon the facts of Modern Spiritualism. We grant that those facts may not be in accordance with the experience of all our friends; thus to them our statement will simply be an assumption, or at best, and in the most charitable sense, a mere inference of a great truth.

Man we look upon and know as a bodily structure; but the deeper man, the inner man that moves and animates that structure, is known by the name of the mind, the mental man. Thus we have the body and the mental man. But behind that man—so say those who have faith as their guide—there exists the immortal soul. The soul manifests mentality, and that mentality is dependent for its expression upon the bodily structure; and thus, physically speaking, during the earthly life of the individual, there are three modes of existence. The interior or celestial, we might almost say—the "essential" man perhaps would be a better term; the next expression of that essential man is found in the mental nature of the individual; and the ultimate manifestation of the man is the bodily organisation.

The mental nature springs from the essential nature; owes its origin to the existence of that nature, which is its seat, centre, and source. Therefore, we might say that there is a strict correlation between the essential and the mental natures. Now this essential nature, manifesting itself in the form of mentality, is dependent for its expression upon the bodily organisation. Then how can we account for the contradictions of human nature in the light where we at present stand? But before we attempt to account for them, let us ask our friends to think for a moment

if the presentation of the argument we have made is not accurate. No one who possesses a grain of intelligence and calm, true reflection will dare to assert that man is simply a material structure, and that the mentality of his nature simply springs from the chemical association of the various elements entering into the constitution of his body. No one will assume that. And those whose faith is their guide and rule through life will at once repudiate such a bare materialistic notion; they will at once joyfully admit that there is behind the natural man an everlasting and eternal spiritual man. Here, then, we stand upon tolerably firm ground; and we can say that, aided by the angels, man may be able to thoroughly and practically realise that he is an immortal being. So stands the argument, then; for the present we leave it.

Now let us deal with the contradictions of human nature for a moment. We asserted that it was only by knowing all the nature of man that we could comprehend the whole of man. Only by comprehending man also in his nature, is it possible for us to be able to comprehend the manifestation of that nature. Admittedly the manifestations are incongruous, various, diverse, sometimes grand and noble; that grandness and nobility succeeded by what? by all that is base and ignoble. Swift as the circling winds passing round the mountain tops, sometimes does man exhibit one phase, then another. How shall we account for this? Now we must entirely deny here, most explicitly remember, most confidently deny the theory that man by nature is a fallen and demoralised being—most explicitly deny it, remember. We have no need to go round and round in our denial; we make the simple affirmation of, not our belief, but of our most certain, positive knowledge, which knowledge we shall endeavour to impart to you. You very well know that if by accident or disease a human body suffers deterioration, if its normal energies and powers become unstrung, that the action, the activity of the mind is consequently impaired, you cannot think with the ordinary clearness, your mind cannot work with its usual vigour, and in all your mental operations there is a sad falling off from the normal and original standard of activity. Now the materialist, very naturally from his position, says that this is a striking evidence that the mind is simply developed from the body; and that as the body suffers from disease and sickness, so of necessity do the vitalic forces diminish; and that as the vitalic forces diminish, down goes the mind. Now if this is not "reasoning by analogy" with a vengeance, I scarcely know what words mean. It is wholesale assumption; so wholesale that it is straining out a gnat and swallowing not one, but half a dozen camels. And it only needs a little more reflection, a little more reverence for the eternal truths of nature and existence, to detect the absurdity of the conclusion. Thinkest thou that God, in His Infinite Providence, in His Divine Wisdom, could so direct all the forces and energies of nature that they should ultimate in such a

grand and noble existence as man undoubtedly is, and that when so ultimated, and man with all his powers and attributes stood before you a divine reality, that death should sweep it all away—that there should be nothing left—that man should go down into the grave and be known no more, save by the memories treasured in the minds of his friends? Oh, away with such a cold, cruel notion, so at variance with man's better feelings, so directly contradicting all the evidence of man's existence, and so deeply opposed to God's most cherished purpose! If any entertain this feeling, let us conjure them, in the name of Eternal Wisdom, to think well, to probe deeply; and their thinking and their probing will ultimately cause them to throw it on one side, to come out of the shadow into the sunlight of eternal truth, and, grasping hands across the bridge of death with the inhabitants of the other life, realise the existence of their own immortal nature. Think of it. Cast the notion on one side, and be ye made free by the truth.

The true inference of the proposition we have stated, so far as the materialist is concerned, is this—that the mental nature being dependent upon the bodily organisation for its expression, just as the means deteriorate, just as the harp of life is unstrung, so the tone is lowered, so is the expression marred; and as the bodily powers decrease, the means of expression also decrease. But that means no loss of inherent intelligence; that means no passing away of man's regal powers; means no stultification of the interior nature that lives, shines, and grows just as bright, just as true as ever. And if disease ultimates in death, and the cloud of dissolution veils from the sight of the friend the one that he has loved, and that friend be translated to the after life, there is no loss of the intellectual power and vigour of the man; there is no diminution of any of his attributes: they are just as powerful, and, in accordance with the eternal laws of life, they will not only live, but grow, unfold and immeasurably exceed the grandest and noblest conceptions of the possibilities resident in man to-day.

So much, then, for the actual truth concerning the continued existence of intelligence. But cannot our friends perceive the mighty possibilities contained within the statements we have just made? If it is possible—nay, as it really is the case—that the deterioration of the body as a whole means the gradual loss of intellectual vigour, resulting in abnormal developments and peculiarities of constitution, let us inquire what methods of education, social and religious surroundings, modes of training and association, will produce. And here in these multifarious causes do we find the origin of the contradictions characterising human nature. No need of a Personal Power of Evil; no need of a Principality of Devils to work damnation for humanity; for all the damnation that has afflicted humanity, all the devils that have preyed upon this constitution, came out of its own nature, have been raised by its own ignorance; and that ignorance, raising a Frankenstein of its own, can only lay it by the power of truth: as it comes out of the darkness, stands upon the rock, and gazes

upon the sunlight, then and then only can humanity lay the devils that its ignorance has created.

Now, false methods of reasoning and expression do far more to breed dissension and differences amongst humanity than perhaps any one thing that we can conceive. But you would not have false methods of reasoning if the bodily organisation was perfectly adapted to allow the intelligent principle clearly to express itself. You would not have false bodily conditions if you were not profoundly and densely ignorant of the true laws of physiological life. If the human body were perfect in its development—nay, if it were approximately perfect, normal, and healthful in its general characteristics, then man, wherever found, having a sound body, would manifest a sound mind. The axiom is true—a healthy body means a sound mind, and a sound mind of necessity means a healthy body. All those whose bodily constitutions are one-sided, to all intents and purposes exist in the dark plains of insanity; for you cannot say a man is sane unless every department of his nature is perfect in its reciprocity and action.

Who is perfect? None. And it may seem a vain, delusive idea for us to put forward to say that perfection is possible of attainment. In the absolute, yes; but relatively considered, perfection is within the grasp of everyone. Those who strive for truth, ever find it; and what is truth but perfect knowledge? And what is the possession of truth but the attainment of a relative state of perfection? Then let us search for truth. Truth maketh free.

Now, selfishness is said to be the greatest curse of humanity; and selfishness is the greatest devil born of human ignorance. Directly we can overcome selfishness, down falls the citadel of misery. But alas! that time is a long, long day distant yet. Remember that humanity in the aggregate has to be reformed, and not merely individual humanity as represented here this morning. Not only you have to be reformed, and made whole again, but the whole world outside of you, related and non-related to you, have to be cleansed from the great curse. Religion, perhaps, is the most selfish of all. Next to it Science comes in for a fair share of the universal selfishness; and Social Life is lurid with the hue of an inner and a deeper selfishness. These are grave charges to urge against the constitution of human society. But we ask you, Where is the condition of society that you can point to in which the interests of all are coincident? Where the interests of everyone mean the interests of all, and where the interests of all mean the interests of one? It is impossible to find it. The very constitution of society as it exists to-day forbids it. Your distinctions of classes and clans stand a palpable and visible evidence of the absence of this homogeneity among yourselves. The truth may be unpalatable to hear, but still it must be uttered. And you may say that so far as this selfishness is being manifested by the inner essential life itself, that would prove, you know, that this inner essential life was impure, that it was degraded, de-

moralised, and fallen. But we say this is not so—that the selfishness manifested is in reality but the surrounding conditions incident to the individual. Now, reform the individual's nature and surroundings, improve his methods and modes of education, surround him with healthy bodily conditions and exercises for the normal development of his powers and attributes, then that individual straightway becomes an honourable, honest, and conscientious man; but if you leave him as he is, the evils and miseries incident to his existence become in due course transmitted to other lives, and the evils are perpetuated. Thus it is the future will be the result of the present, and that future will hold you responsible for the several parts you have individually played, even as you hold your parents responsible for your several natures now. Think of the lesson, for by improving the present, by laying the foundations in the Now, you clear the way for rearing the Temple of Beauty and of Use in the Yet-to-Be.

We cannot charge the essential soul or principle with being impure. Why? For the simplest of all simple reasons—that which is absolutely pure can never by any possibility become absolutely impure. Nay, more than that, it can never become relatively impure. And we might say still further, that impurity is an existence unknown. That which seems impure and discordant is simply impure and discordant because the ignorance of humanity cannot detect its use and proper position in the economy of existence. Do you think for one moment that the Infinite Wisdom could permit, could allow, could create, we might say, anything that was useless or inimical? If so, then you have a far different conception of the Intelligent Mind, the great and eternal Soul of the Universe, than we have; and you have certainly a most unphilosophical and unspiritual conception; for the great and eternal Source, the central Power of all Goodness, can only evolve from its goodness that which is like unto its nature. The incongruities, discordances, and anomalies manifested in human life are due, not to similar attributes in the nature of Deity, not to imperfections in the constitution of the All-perfect, but are due simply to the condition of humanity—incidents in the methods of advancement of humanity. If there were no shadow, how would you appreciate the sunshine? If there were no sorrow, how would you appreciate the joys of life? If there were no ignorance in the world, how would you estimate aright the rich value of the treasures of knowledge? It is by opposition that we gain strength; it is by misery we attain to joy; and so by all the round of oppositional elements and seeming contradictions humanity ultimately attains to a condition of happiness.

Our position is that man in his inner and divine nature is an essentially imperishable, that is immortal, principle, and that that immortal principle is divine, pure. How could you be sons of God if you were not divine, or if you were impure? The very fact that you are sons of God, that humanity is a divine sonship, is at once an evidence of the fact that man in his inner nature

is pure and divine. You are dependent upon your bodies for the expression of your intelligence, for the exercise of the powers and qualities of your souls; and it is in these bodily conditions, in the social surroundings, and in the educational status of the people, that we turn to find and realise the source of all the discords at present afflicting humanity. We say, then, that here stands the case: Humanity is divine, and all they who say that humanity is demoralised, fallen from its high estate, nothing good, all impure, incapable of manifesting a bright and noble action—they lie, and attach a libel to the human race in the sight of God, men, and angels. They need to know more of humanity; they need to more reverentially study the divine volumes of existence; they need to more carefully and critically weigh the evidence of their senses; they need to be more considerate for the follies and errors of their neighbours. When they attain to these states they will realise the libel we have spoken of against the infinite love, wisdom, and justice of God. If humanity are the sons of God—finite we admit, and relative in their relationship to God, but still his sons—they must contain within themselves a representation of the divine modes and attributes.

“But what has all this to do with Spiritualism? Why, Spiritualism is only the tipping of tables, rapping upon their surface, and the doing of a hundred and one marvellous things in dark places for the gratification of an idle curiosity and an excited and morbid appetite. Why, Spiritualism has not got the elements of a rational thought in it.” So say all those folks who know nothing of the matter. But all those who have entered the portals, passed through the vestibule, and stand in the grand halls of its divine life realise differently; and they find that these outward phenomena are simply incidents in the first stages, necessary as methods to convert the materialistic minds, that there is a something beyond themselves. Now some people—if our friends will pardon the illustration—are so thick-headed that nothing but a hammer and chisel will get the truth into their brains. We find many of these people, and nothing but the hammer and chisel of the physical manifestation will convince their sublime unconsciousness that there exists a soul in themselves and an immortal world surrounding them. Thus to meet and convince such natures these external phenomena have to be produced. After a satisfactory conviction is attained, the hard, dense mind melts, becomes divinely sensitive; all its atheism is taken out of it, and it stands dressed in the garb of simplicity and purity, waiting and listening at the feet of Eternal Truth, and drinking in her inspirations. All that we have stated this morning is contained in the essence of Spiritualism. And thus we see that Spiritualism, as teaching these things, is a most substantial aid to human progress, is perhaps the best and grandest method whereby to effect the unfoldment of the race that man has ever yet received. Do we claim too much for Modern Spiritualism? Do we say that it contains all that is essential to the advancement of humanity?

Yes. "And is not this saying far more than the truth? If it contains all this," many would say, "why are not the Spiritualists characterised by the most immaculate lives we can possibly conceive? Why are not they perambulating saints, walking about in all the purity of the Divine Nature, and looking the very embodiment of infinite love and wisdom?" It is a very sure case that they are not always of that order. It is equally a sure case that certain other folks profess to have better claims to the possession of Divine Truth; you know who have got Divine Truth here embodied. Why are not they walking embodiments of saintly minds? The application is self-evident—that if we live in glass houses we must not throw stones. All those who are not so saintly themselves should be very careful about twitting others as to the absence of their saintly natures. But this much we will say, and saying it defy contradiction, that the Spiritualist who intelligently apprehends the problems of Spiritualism, who reasonably and intuitively perceives the existence of his own divine nature and the communion of souls, is a better, a nobler, a stronger man for that knowledge; no matter what his faith hitherto has been, no matter with what phase of thought he has been associated, once stamped with the genius of Spiritualism, once realising its grand truths, all the nobility of his nature is strengthened a thousandfold, and in every walk of life he is better fitted to cope successfully with all its dangers and discordances. We appeal to the evidence of all Spiritualists. Ask them if they cannot face that greatest of all human fears with calmness and equanimity; ask them if they cannot see Death with unblanched faces, and, with strong and steady confidence in the Eternal God, if they cannot see it come nearer and nearer year by year, month by month, week by week, day by day, until the final moment comes when he claims their bodies for his own; and they will tell you yes. The sting has been extracted; the veil has been rent in twain; the cloud has been dispersed; and death, instead of seeming a frightful spectre, stands before them a bright and shining presence, an angel of God's infinite love and mercy. Death ceases to be frightful and repulsive in itself, and stands forth simply as an incident in the career of the soul; a necessary sequence of the bodily career; a thing that must be passed through, and an experience redolent with love and wisdom—no fear of the cold, cold grave holding all those we love.

Is faith, outside of Spiritualism, existent in the world? Who has it? Those who possess the grandest religion, those who treasure within themselves divine precepts divinely revealed, use every effort to prolong their lives; and when death draws near to them it is a thing so terrible, so cold and chilling—the life they love is fading from them; and though their faith tells there is a life beyond, they would far rather remain in the life that is than trust to the dark future and go they know not where. The Spiritualist stands differently. He knows, by the testimony of the loved and gone before, that his destiny is the immortal realms, and,

aided by the information that we have afforded you this morning, and guided by the truths deducible from our statements, he has prepared himself, by a life of honesty, morality, and truthfulness, to pass over the shining river, to stand in the grassy meads, to drink in the inspiration of that higher life, and feel that then he first begins to live.

Spiritualism as an aid to human progress! Why, its benefit and value are incalculable; and amongst its methods it teaches this: "Love thy neighbour as thyself,"—a very old precept that—old and revered, beloved by every fraternal unfolded mind, and carried into execution by every soul that feels the Divine Harmony pulsating through its nature. But, alas! these souls are "few and far between," compared to the great bulk of humanity.

Spiritualism also teaches the necessity of Forbearance, Forgiveness, Charity; "Love thy neighbour as thyself;" Faith in the divinity of all men; Charity, Forbearance, Forgiveness; and that grand truth—that grand and noble lesson—Hope, that leads the soul onwards and upwards to brighter and to better things in view—founded upon Faith, strengthened by Charity, leads Humanity upwards and onwards. These are the teachings of Spiritualism; these are the enunciations of Modern Spiritualism; and thus, instead of Modern Spiritualism and true Religion being at issue one with the other, they each unite, clasp hands across the sea, and bid Humanity come onwards and upwards.

Now let us look for one moment at the effect that the dissemination of these principles would have upon the general community, and in these remarks we come to the conclusion of our present address. Humanity realising all that we have stated, thoroughly and completely realising that it is an immortal existence, that it is dependent upon its outward nature during its natural life for the expression of that immortal nature, would it not (how can we reasonably suppose otherwise?) direct all its energies to the perfecting of that nature, to its development, to its growth, to the maintenance of its normal vigour? Certainly, most decidedly it would; and the effect flowing from this would be a better manhood, nobler thought, and fairer spiritual existence. And thus tracing that out to its simple issues, to its ultimate relationships, peace, harmony, and accord would reign among humanity; love, justice, and wisdom would be its distinguishing features; discordancy would be lost, and all the incongruities and anomalies incident to ignorance and selfishness would be known no more. In the light of positive knowledge ignorance would be dissipated, and in proportion as ignorance is dissipated from the minds of mankind, so will all the evils and miseries that at present curse it vanish also. Let us, then, pray for the light; let us search for the truth; let us apply that truth to the solution of all the problems of existence; and by so searching and applying it we shall build up a fairer and nobler life, draw nearer to our Father and our friends, and call down high and noble aspirations from the higher and the nobler life; and those friends of thine who once walked with thee

in the ways of mortal life, who once shared all thy trials and troubles, who were once men and women even as you are to-day, they from their happy homes will draw near, join in the glad chorus of awakened humanity, and the divine song of universal love, flowing upwards and onwards, shall be borne through the infinite space to the glad heart of the great Eternal Cause; and that Eternal Cause, in its inner joy realising the destiny of its children, shall send forward the mighty roll of inspiration that shall lift humanity onwards and upwards, bringing in the greatest and grandest day the world has ever seen, linking humanity in the bonds of fraternal love, calling forth every aspiration of the soul, developing every noble attribute, and then a resurrected humanity shall take the place of this one, and perfect order, brotherly love, and holy influences shall hallow every relationship; and crime, and all the incongruities of human life, all the luxuries and diseases that afflict society, shall be known no more; every noxious thing shall be removed, and humanity, glowing in the divine inspiration, bound together by mutual bonds, shall live and grow in truth, justice, and love for ever and for ever. That this may be so, O Eternal Source of every good and perfect gift, we, Thy servant in all true humility, most humbly pray; and may the inspiration of Thy Divine Love fall upon the hearts of these Thy children here to-day, and may truth, wisdom, and love be with them now, henceforth, and for ever!

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

Respectfully dedicated to Mrs. Georgina Weldon.)

A lily in a garden grew
All uncared for and alone,
Its leaves were torn, its blossoms few
Death had nearly claimed its own.
A mavis, caught one summer day,
In cage hung, now forgotten ;
Its notes no longer light and gay,—
Alas, its heart was broken.
A child with smeared and dirty face,
With mind and soul uncared for,
Struggl'd in life's toilsome race
With nought in life to hope for.

Came a florist to the flower
Loosed the soil, and pruned its leaf,
Numbers praised it hour by hour
Said its beauty's past belief.
Came a maiden to the mavis
Ope'd its cage's prison-door ;
Bird in flying sang its praises
To the God we all adore.
Came a mother to the friendless,
Clasped it close in loving arms,
Taught it that ' life's glooms ' not endless,
For all wounds are healing balms.

Thus by florist, maiden, mother,
Were unfolded latent traits,
And the light vice could not smother
Flamed again with sparkling rays.
Every heart can find some purpose,
Which, if joined to willing hands,
May transform the seeming worthless
Fit for life in brighter lands.
For the homeless and forsaken
Human hearts must ever feel,
Blessed souls are those who waken
In life's waifs their future weal.

July 24, 1877.

CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL WORLD, AND WHAT MEN KNOW THEREOF.

AN INSPIRATIONAL ORATION DELIVERED IN THE TRANCE STATE
AT THE BROAD STREET ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BRIGHTON, ON
FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 18TH, 1874.

We have to speak this evening on a subject that must appeal to the sensibilities of all hearts present. We might go almost so far as to say that in all ages of the world's history, in the distant and remote past downwards to the immediate present, the great question has ever been before humanity, "If a man die, shall he live again; and if he live again, what will be his state and circumstances?" It does not matter what religion we turn to, or what people we chose to select as an example, the patent fact is ever before us; and in every land, and with every tongue, the question is propounded and an answer sought for, "Concerning the spiritual world, and what men know thereof."

Away in the distant past many strange and peculiar notions have been entertained and promulgated in reference to this question. Nothing definite, perhaps, nothing very substantial or real, has been handed down to the present as the remains of those notions; but still, floating mistily through the thought of the present day, are to be found the ragged images of the days gone by. The fields of Elysium, peopled with the hosts of the good and great; the plains of Tartarus, flocked with the souls of those who have disobeyed the commands of God, and placed themselves in opposition to the great principles of purity and goodness; that fabled state to which the Hindoo fondly aspires, and which is wrongly supposed to be absolute absorption into the Deity; the future state of the Mohammedan, a heaven of sensual delights; the home of the future as portrayed by the principal religion of Christianity—on the one hand all happiness and beauty, on the other all misery and darkness: all these and many other conceptions have floated before the world's mind, and have been mixed up with its thought in all times.

The present day, with all its boasted advancement, fails to really give a rational answer to the problem as to what the spiritual world is like, and where it is located. Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that we were to appeal to one of the popular leaders of the orthodox religious sentiment of the day, and to ask him a question something like this: "You believe in the existence of a

future state. If that state exist, it must be a reality. Being a reality, it must occupy a locality somewhere; it must be something that is real, a condition of life that bears positive relationship to the present. Please to tell us where it is." This is a simple question that is asked on every hand to-day, to which we say the entire religious community utterly and completely fails to give any satisfactory answer. Think of it. You are all immortal souls destined to pass from this world into another. Where is that world? Echo answers, Where? Think over this matter, and then return to the sad and miserable fact that you are profoundly ignorant as to where that land is, and ask yourself what you really know in relation thereto. If a spirit-world exist, knowledge thereof should be possessed by every living individual. Minus this knowledge, the world lacks something that should make it bright and beautiful; man lacks something that would be a foundation to his life—invisible, we own, but nevertheless enabling him to stand erect in all the glory of his immortality.

Alas! what shall we say? Let us look for a moment at the popular conception of immortality; and do not think that in handling this popular conception of the future state as entertained by the vast majority of religious professors that we have the least desire to cast ridicule thereon. Far from it; we only intend to calmly and dispassionately analyse what is believed now in reference to the future state, and then, if we should be so successful, to substitute in the place of that which we think inefficient and groundless, other matters that shall be substantial and true—matters that shall survive the onslaught of scepticism, triumph over all oppression, and soar heavenwards bathed in the light of eternal truth. If we can do this for you, root out all errors and substitute new truths, so much the better for the human family, for it must tend to their enrichment.

The popular conception of the future state divides itself into two heads. And what are they? Heaven for the virtuous, hell for the wicked. We will take the more glorious item first. What does that item involve? A condition of existence where the souls of just men are made perfect and happy. No one here, perhaps, will quarrel with such a proposition or such a definition. But when we come to analyse that definition, we find it means something very different. We must then take exception to it, for we do not find that this heaven is so adapted to those who have lived on earth as some suppose. Heaven has been stated to be a place composed of jewels, with streets of gold, and gates of pearl; but the whole paraphernalia of the Christian heaven is so well known to all, that there is scarcely any necessity for us to dwell intimately upon this portion of the argument. And so with the occupation of those who are supposed to inhabit this city; the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem are supposed to be always singing hosannahs, wearing white robes, waving palm-branches, and bearing crowns of gold. To this we offer no objection, if man's

supremest pleasure and highest happiness consist in being thus employed. But is this the only end of human life? Is this the only use immortality may be put to? Are the conditions named possible, and if they be, are they likely to conduce to the wished-for happiness?

Now let us come to the other side. Here we have a picture full of gloom and terror—hell with its cavernous recesses resounding with shrieks and groans, its sulphurous smoke curling snake-like through its vaulted chamber. At times a lurid light blazing up from the burning deeps below; and amid the shrieks of the tortured, and the laughter of the torturers, hell, with all its horrors, is brought before you. And this, we are told, is the punishment inflicted upon his children by our Father God! Yet St. John says, "God is love." Is there not something very terrible in all this? If these things exist as realities they must have a locality; they must be situated somewhere. We ask, as hundreds have asked before us, Where is this heaven or this hell? Again we find echo answers, Where? The old conception was that hell was down there—below the earth; that heaven was up there—beyond the stars. Science, lynx-eyed and keen, hath soared up into the infinity of circling blue which extends on indefinitely; her powerful gaze hath found space on space, until at last she is lost in the dense black darkness beyond, impenetrable in its profundity. The science of geology hath unravelled the tangled skein of the earth's history; hath torn the secret from the pages of rugged stone and granite. This science reveals the past history and progress of the earth whereon you now live. Beneath the earth's crust she hath gone down to the primeval granite; beneath this she hath tapped the ocean of fire that still rolls and writhes within the globe's centre; and she hath computed, sacrilegious as she is, that if all the human beings that were said to have gone to the infernal regions were mustered together it would be impossible to place them within the regions of hell, as they are supposed to exist within this earth! Science hath sounded the depths of life, and scaled the vast heights beyond, and returning hath said, We have explored the face of the earth, and sounded the depths of the globe, and we find no place where a hell could exist, we find no locality suited for a heaven! But Spiritualists, who have given some attention to the question we are discussing to-night, have come to very different results; they have found out that some more rational answer to the question, "What is the spiritual world?" must be given than that which is furnished by the material scientists or the orthodox theologians.

We return, then, to consider the weakness of the orthodox picture in relation to heaven. Before doing so, we have to ask you whether it be possible for man to know anything of the future state, whether it be an order of existence? We certainly think it is within possibility, and that it is one of the necessities of life that man should know something of the future to which he tends; and

by the phrase "know something," we don't mean that which he is easily content to receive as evidence and argument in faith, but some practical knowledge, some solid fact that shall reveal to him unmistakably the nature of the world to which he is tending. We would ask, if you were to make a journey into a far-off country, a land that you had never visited before, would you be esteemed sensible and sane if, without the slightest inquiry as to the nature of that country, without the slightest preparation for the journey, without the least effort to become conversant with its manners and customs, you were to start off upon your expedition and visit that far-off land? Your friends would smile and perhaps significantly tap their foreheads and think that you were very soft indeed. How much more so, then, with regard to that greater home, that brighter land whose denizens are the ascended spirits of relatives that once dwelt here with you; is it not necessary that you should have accurate knowledge that you may be able to prepare for that journey while in this life?

If there be any sense in the argument that we are using, it must certainly appeal to the sentiments of all. The weakness of the theological heaven consists in this fact: it is utterly at variance with the nature of man. But we may be met with the counter argument: We know that such a condition of purity and goodness and worship and praise is utterly at variance with the nature of man; but before the good and the pious enter into that condition, there is a marvellous transformation effected in their natures. They are changed in the twinkling of an eye, and made fit to enjoy that high estate of purity and peace! Suppose we admit the validity of this argument. We will do so, and then analyse the deductions that it necessarily leads to, which are these: If man be changed when he enters into the world of spirits, it is someone else that enters that world, and not the man that you know here in this life. If any of our friends were to be translated from this life into the one beyond, and in the act of translation were to be changed entirely and thoroughly from what he is now into something else, *who* would be immortal? Not our friend; because that which is our friend now would not be *him* then. You see the inference. If man be immortal it must involve the retention of his identity or the annihilation thereof. You can, of course, accept which theory you like; but so far as truth is concerned, the balance of opinion must ever be in favour of the retention of the personality and identity that the great Creator has endowed you with. What are the pleasures of life? Are they not summed up in the one word—the identity of your own existence? How is it that the great and noble minds have stamped their impress on the age wherein they have lived, and which has been felt from their times down to the present? Without that bright and shining personality, without that strong identity, what would have been known of them by their fellow-creatures? What would you have known of Demosthenes or Galileo, of

Shakespeare or Milton, of the bright and shining lights of modern days, if it had not been that these men exhibited in the fullest degree that striking power of individuality and identity that is the central fact of every human being's career.

How fraught with good and usefulness have been the names mentioned! Shall we accept the idea, then, that when you are translated, the very essence of your power for goodness, the very central and integral fact of your consciousness and being, shall be swept away from you, dragged out of you? Shall you live the ghost of your former self, with nothing left of that power for good which in the community of life was so incalculable? If immortality involved the loss of identity, of personality, of individuality, then immortality could not be appreciated by the mind in the sense of being known and understood, for the conditions of immortality being totally dissimilar and distinct from those of your being at the present time, with faculties dissimilar to those now exercised by you, you could not understand or intellectually appreciate that which is distinct and foreign to your ordinary existence.

But if, on the other hand, the identity and personality of the individual are to be retained, why then it follows as a necessary sequence that the condition of life to which the individual enters must bear some relationship to the personalities that enjoy it. That being so, there will be some similarity between the conditions of the first experience in the next world and the experience of humanity in this; there must be some relationship, or how would the faculties be enabled intellectually to know or understand the administration of existence in the spirit-world?

We now come face to face with the important and startling fact that there must be, according to our reasoning, some relationship and sympathy between man in this and in the next world. On the other hand, if the personality of man be destroyed, there can be no relationship and sympathy; it does not matter what the man is or what the conditions of the world which he inhabits. But we accept this theory, distinctly and emphatically—that after death there is a retention of consciousness, that there is a perpetuation of identity and personality; and a recognition of this fact will help us to know something of the nature of the spirit-world. Standing, then, as we do now, with a rational immortality before us, we shall perhaps be accused of overthrowing the conception of Christianity, and trampling the beliefs of ages beneath our feet. We accept the situation, not because we desire it, but because the inevitable consequence forces itself upon us. Now, you know well that intelligence is always dependent upon organization for its expression; therefore, if all the powers that constitute the man in this life, all the intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers that make the man here are retained and perpetuated in the life beyond, the intelligence animating and directing those powers must be retained as well, as an inseparable part of the

self-conscious principle itself. If, on the other hand, intelligence exist in the world beyond, you can very readily see that organisation must be necessary and essential to the expression of that faculty of man's soul.

Our friends will think perhaps that we are getting into a horribly materialistic state, dispersing into thin air as we are doing those sublime transcendental conceptions of spirituality and of the spirit-world that humanity have so long revelled in. Well, we had far better clear the sky of its cobwebs—mentally speaking—we had far better efface from your minds all superstition and ignorance, so that you may have your mental horizon clear and free, and that the light of truth may shine upon the darkened walks of human life. We had far better do this than bow down to hoary superstition or to errors long treasured by the people. All this must come; the sore must be removed, and then when the wound is healed the patient will thank the physician—ay, thank him even for inflicting the necessary pain incident to the operation. There is perhaps one name we might refer to, one who has done more for modern times than any other, and who has cast much light upon this particular subject—Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg was a writer of much voluminousness and wonderful depth, and was most intimately acquainted with the problem of the spiritual conditions of humanity. This author revealed in his writings many things respecting the *post mortem* existence of men that are of incalculable value to the world. The great body of civilised humanity who have perused his works have come to the conclusion that they are the mere vagaries of a dreamer, that they are the outpourings of a diseased imagination, that they have no foundation in fact or reality. But, strange to say, when modern Spiritualism came, which was looked upon as a new delusion, a fresh departure from the truth, and another imposture—when revelations were made by the spirit-people who were said to communicate from the other world, it was found that in many respects Spiritualism substantially bore out the testimonies of the Swedish seer. It was very strange that Swedenborg should precede the actual development of modern Spiritualism—should, as it were, have laid down the lines and placed the foundations whereby Spiritualism should travel and whereon it should build. Yet nevertheless such is the fact, and if our friends will only take the trouble to peruse certain of his writings, they will find that the details are substantially the same as those we are about to bring before you. But do not think that we are uttering this simply because Emanuel Swedenborg or any other writer has put these opinions on record; we are simply uttering them to you as our perception of the facts, as our knowledge of the truths involved in the existence of these facts.

The existence of man, then, involves in the next world the presence of an organisation and the possession of the rational powers. Now, who is there among you at the present moment, even

were he so good and pure as no other man or woman was before, who, if he were to be transported into the next world with all his powers—mental, moral, and spiritual—still intact, that would care for the theological heaven that we have described to you? Who would care for the particular happiness and enjoyment which is said to be the lot of all who enter that place? Who is there that would care to be always singing and praising the Lord, always waving palm-branches, always wearing white robes and golden crowns? Echo answers, Who? There is not one who can lay his hand sincerely upon his heart and say that he would always wish to be so engaged; not one is there who can say: "I am fit to praise the Lord for ever in the land of endless day." He who would say so would be instantly branded as a braggart and a boaster; the vaunted profession would be viewed with suspicion, and the religious fervour and zeal that would be said to prompt the expression would be valued at its just estimate. We ask, then, if you were to be transported into the next world with all your powers intact, what would be the most rational conception you would entertain of your condition? Substantially this: Those higher pleasures of life, those actions and expressions of intuition and reason that constitute the pure and true mind's greatest pleasure, would so engage your attention and consideration. You would seek to solve the mighty problems of Deity, unravelling the threads of life and tracing them to their ends and issues, thereby gathering a fund of wisdom and information, storing up your minds with a wealth of such knowledge, continually seeking after the supreme Cause that controls existence; and the more you knew, the more you discovered of the works of God, the better would you be able to praise and worship that Being.

We feel that if humanity were to be transformed into a lot of psalm-singing automatons, waving palm-branches, and clothed in white robes—if we were to be droning away an eternity in such a miserable manner—that immortality would be the vilest end of life. But if there were to be a future state for you, where the bright and pure would be able to enjoy a high and elevated state of existence—where every faculty of the soul could expand and develop itself—where, looking up with trusting and confiding gaze to the great future still before you, seeking for the inspiration of the great God who rules all—where, under such a condition, man could put forth the flower and beauty of the faculties God has given him—in that condition man would find the only happiness his soul was made to comprehend and appreciate.

Immortality, then, means one of two things—the retention of the individuality and consciousness, or their annihilation. The one enfolds you in an eternity of activity and usefulness, the other in an eternity of nothingness. The activity and usefulness are matters familiar to the human soul, and fill the requirements of our common humanity. He who reads the lesson of the time feels the necessity of labouring for the advancement of

himself, that he may be the means thereby of effecting the development of his own mind and the improvement of his fellows. Self-improvement is, in short, a means of advancing civilisation.

We come, then, to the spiritual world as discovered from the nature and standpoint of those who inhabit it. Suppose yourself in the position we have arrived at, and suppose that this next world we have been speaking of, and which humanity seems to have such vague notions concerning, were to reveal itself to you as simply a condition of nothingness, of mist and vapour, no land, no object, no reality, but a something that you could not actually describe or make known to your senses, and while floating about in the air you were supposed to enjoy this for immortality, how very happy you would feel, how satisfied your soul would be with the grandeur, the sublimity, and the nobleness of that future state! Supposing it were to be the picture of heaven, as painted by orthodoxy and by theology: you have there little pleasure in gold and jewels and precious stones, things which are but the bubbles of earthly life, the mere dross floating upon the surface of the world's ambition and selfish desires, things sought after and prized, not for the good they do humanity, but for the distinctions they confer upon the possessor. If, then, the heaven you aspire to were to be built of these shams of earthly life, these glittering pieces of consolidated matter, varying in their forms, and in themselves so mean that a soul dead to worldly thoughts, and clothed in the bright purity of wisdom, scorns them as things only to be trampled beneath the feet; if these things were to fill the nature of the home you aspire to, we might say in all sincerity, "O heaven, save thy children from such a fate!" But, on the other hand, supposing the end of life were the presence of a seething, liquid fire running through hell's blackest depths; suppose the end of all existence, and the fulfilment of the wrath of God, were to mean the eternal damning and torturing of his children in such a condition; supposing that that were the one end and purpose of all existence, "Heaven save you from such a fate!" is again the prayer that arises from our lips—a fate that never did nor never could be made the manifestation of the wisdom of God our Father.

We must look, then, for a more rational interpretation of this future state than any that the world has yet received. Even the heaven of the Mohammedan cannot answer the requirements of cultivated life; it is one only of mere pleasure and sensual gratification. The spiritual principles involved in the existence of that heaven have been so covered over by the gross perversion which they are subject to, that they are lost sight of in modern times. Take any other conception you please, the real truth has not yet come upon the world. If we say that Spiritualism professes to reveal it, do not accuse us of egotism; we only say that Spiritualism gives you one of the most intelligent answers, and we leave it for you to decide whether it be the best the world has ever received. And the answer that it affords stands revealed in these words: It,

the spirit-world, must meet the requirements of the inhabitant that enters it. Hence, in the bright days of summer the sky is cloudless, and the sun beams down upon you in such a flood of glory that all Nature seems bathed in a shimmering sea of gold. In the distance the blue hills tower heavenward; near to you is the smiling sward of emerald green; running through the broad plateau is a stream, shining and sparkling like liquid diamonds; and all around you are bright and gorgeous flowers and waving feathery trees. The sound of birds makes the air musical; the lowing of the kine, the bleating of the sheep, all add to the charm and splendour of the scene; and o'er this picture walks man and woman, the noblest handiwork of the great Creator, breathing love and purity, and every action one of rhythm and music. How grand the picture! Change it! Barren hills and sterile rocks, the foaming cataract, and the hissing, boiling stream rushing from the depths below, the goat scaling the rugged cliffs, the sky overhung with clouds, the rain pouring down, it may be, in pitiless showers, the peal of thunder rolling down the mountain side. Man stands appalled at the mightier strength of Nature governed by our God. Go into the spirit-world! Stand there where the towering hills, the pleasant meads and the flowery pastures—where the shining streams and all these things and appurtenances of spiritual life that impart to it such beauty, and reveal in so bright and clear a light the divine skill of the Mighty Architect—are to be found, and observe that if these things were not there our presence in the absence of them would be absurd. Man, retaining all his faculties, feels the necessity for such a state. Put it to yourselves, put it to your own hearts, and you will come to the same conclusion. We, therefore, urge upon you now to answer the question: that if the spirit-world be not a real world, diversified by all the pathos and grandeur that belong to those of a nobler and higher order; if it have not all the things that make Nature beautiful, and reveal the presence of Nature's Author, why then what in the name of heaven can that spirit-world be? What is your condition of life when you pass from here, if it be not to enjoy a condition as real, as actual, and more glorious than the one you have just left? Spiritual we grant you, refined we admit, but still in itself a condition as real and true and substantial as the one you now enjoy. This is the answer put forward by Spiritualists; this is the hope entertained by the Spiritualists—the hope, mark you, that is founded upon practical acquaintance with the facts involved.

Let us then, having gone so far into the spiritual world, for a moment direct our attention to its conditions of life. But, before we do so, let us sum up the various portions of our discourse insofar as it has gone.

We first stated that there had been a vast number of answers to the question, as to what the spiritual world is. These answers, no matter whence received or by whom given, have up to the

present day proved unsatisfactory. Again, we found that it was the desire of all men who had a grain of sense—there are some deficient in the latter quality, yet priding themselves in the possession thereof—to learn something of the next world. He who professes not to care one jot or tittle for a future state, who laughs the idea to scorn, who thinks that immortality itself is only a dream entertained by the superstitious and ignorant—he who says he has sounded Nature's depths, and scaled her heights, and found no place for it in the scheme of nature, no room for it in the economy of the universe—who declares that immortality and a future state are exploded dogmas altogether, just watch such a one closely. See disease step along like a hideous phantom, and lay its hand upon the brow of one of his children; watch the blush of health depart from the face; see the eye grow dim, lacking its lustre; watch the limbs lose their strength; see the form wasting and decaying. At last, see the dead calm spread over the features; see the eyes for ever close; see the form stretched lifeless before the professor of materialism. Then watch the tears of agony course down his cheek; and if you have the power pour your words into his heart, and ask him if, in the very centre of his being, facing his dead child, he can disbelieve in immortality, when every faculty of his nature is quarrelling with existence, and asking an answer to the question, "Is my child dead, or does she live?" Interpret his answer by what your feelings would be then, and you will find that which is correct.

All men without exception, thus it seems, have a yearning desire to know what the future world is like. We appealed to the popular religious sentiments of the day. The answers they gave to our questions we returned, pronouncing them unsatisfactory. We then quoted the nature of man as he is here in this life, and the popularly-entertained conception of his nature in the next life; we threw over the miraculous change in that nature as being inconsistent with the description of immortality, and we stated that man's existence in the next world, as generally defined, is at variance with what we know to be the requirements of man in this.

We then analysed the nature of man, and showed that immortality must be a sensible, rational existence. From that we drew the picture of what the next world really is. Place it side by side with what you know of the nature of man, and you must find the two dove-tail completely, each meeting the conditions of each.

Here, then, we pause—pause before a picture of the condition of life in the next world into which you may enter as rational and sensible beings. Now we direct your attention to the conditions actually obtaining in that next world.

The popular conception of heaven and hell, we have said, and we repeat it, never did and never will express or evidence the justness of our Father, God. We ask you, where, in this world of spirits that we have now discovered, is there room

for either of these two conditions? There is no room for either the theological hell, or the theological heaven. Do not think, because we dispute the existence of these two states, that we deny the possibility of either punishment or reward. We do not; and it is precisely on this question we wish to speak to you now. If you took the rounds of human life, it would be absolutely impossible to discover a man the very embodiment of all that is grand and noble, warranted without the slightest crack or flaw; and, on the other hand, if you would look for one who is totally and absolutely depraved, within whose mind or heart there never was or could be the slightest germ of truth and purity, you would be as much disappointed in that search as in the other. If, then, we cannot find absolute purity and absolute evil, where is the use of such conditions in the world beyond? On the very showing of the argument, the foundations of heaven and hell are thus sapped to their very core. They are useless because there is nobody fit to live in the one, and no one whose sinfulness will justify his being cast into the other.

In the next world you will find, much the same as here, that like associates with like. Look into the realms of your own society, and ask yourselves whether the illiterate boor is ever to be found in association with the fine-strung intellect of the poet. The bright land that opens itself up to his gaze would be death and pestilence to the boor. Look at the virtuous and wise. Would they find pleasure and comfort if they associated with debased characters? Those who are immoral, who are tainted by what we are pleased to call vice and the crimes of life, would find no enjoyment and happiness in the same sphere of labour with the good and the virtuous. Come over, then, and view the inhabitants of the spirit-world as they in reality exist! Remember as you come the words of One whose utterances you are generally careful to attach some importance to, who said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." We should be inclined to say that the many mansions were for the habitation of the innumerable degrees of individual development continually passing to them. You will find here in this life degrees in virtue, degrees in vice, one fining down towards the other until you arrive at what you think is the line of demarcation, that you cannot grasp because it is so very fine, it is so difficult to say where virtue terminates and vice commences. In the next world—all go there—those who have been moderately good and moderately evil, and those who have been positively good and positively bad, but they are there not mixed up as here; for in the spiritual world the law governing the spiritual man is that like associates with like. This being so, you will find innumerable societies of individuals over in the world of spirits; you will find that those who follow certain pursuits will congregate together; those of different degrees of morality and virtue will all be found in their proper societies, and residing within their defined sections and localities.

A word here now as to what is the punishment of vice, and what is the reward of virtue. There is an old proverb, which we are generally inclined to quote, and it is to this effect: "Virtue is its own reward." How many of you can say that you are amply content and satisfied with the consciousness of having done a good action, and are utterly regardless of that action being made known? We are sadly afraid that there is a great deal of ostentation connected with the doing of good. It may gratify the vanity of the good-doer, but it would seem to us to be more in harmony with the principles of a good life if the good were done in quietude, and the good-doer "blushed to find it fame." What reward do you want for your goodness? Do you want to be lifted into "the chief seats in the synagogue," decked with a crown, vassals to obey you, thousands to worship you? Do you want to be the centre of a faction, because you lived a life here the best you could? If so, fie on your virtue, fie on your nobility and goodness! It is only the means for the acquisition of power, which, on the part of its possessors, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, generally ends in the oppression of those beneath them. If virtue be of the proper nature, it will be like that referred to by the philosopher when he said, "Virtue, when practised, must act on the life of the individual, and produce a virtue internal;"—and that internal action is in itself the best and greatest and only reward man has a right to expect for doing what good he was designed to accomplish. Compensation in this light is reaction.

Thus development and expansion constitute one of the rewards man is blessed with in this world. But suppose that in this life your efforts had been misunderstood, your purposes destroyed, and all your disinterestedness given to the wind, yet you still laboured on to accomplish the purpose before you and guided by Providence you have succeeded; when you pass to that world where the scales fall from men's eyes, where you see plainly, face to face with the good and true, they recognise to the full the disinterestedness of your past efforts, shower their love and sympathy upon you, and put you in the way of attaining to the higher life, and of reaching out to the things yet beyond you.

Compensation, then, is the great law of spiritual reward. If this be true, what shall we say of those who consciously and voluntarily pursue the paths of evil? If reaction be true in the case of virtue, so in that of evil; just in proportion to the depth and blackness of your iniquities, so will be the amount of reaction on your own souls when you pass into the next world. How many of you who perhaps have had it in your power to do a good action have rather chosen to do a bad one? Little by little increases, and much becomes more, and more becomes vast. So easy to do a little action, either good or bad, and if it be a good little action, that little can be increased, till at last the practice of virtue becomes easy and pleasant. It is also easy to begin evil actions, and that which was difficult at first becomes

customary and seems pleasant ; and, at last, retribution is waiting, like a sword hung over your head, to strike the fatal blow. Think, then, before you do an evil action, that the reaction of that action shall be as great in extent as was the act itself.

Again, more intimately to consider the point, what is the destiny of the good and bad in this world of spirits ? let us inquire if the evil are eternally doomed to a state of bondage, and the good for ever kept in that bright state of goodness they enter into at first. If that were so the whole scheme of existence would be a failure. We repeat that if the precise condition that the individual enters into at first in the spiritual world were for ever maintained, the mighty scheme of existence would be a failure. Progress, life, energy,—these are the characteristics of the world wherein you live, and of your own natures as well. You are always living in the future, not so much in the present ; you are now enjoying the past which was once to you the future. Progress, activity, life, energy,—these are the underlying vital characteristics of the future life of the spirit, and are as real and solid as the granite rock. They are not lost because the spirit has been disembodied ; it has not lost a single attribute ; not a single portion of its self-consciousness has been annihilated. Therefore progress must be the destiny of the disembodied. Then it may be when the reaction of vice has fulfilled its purpose, and the individual been purged and purified through sorrow and suffering, that it shall be free to come out of the darkness, away from the lands of trial and despair, into the pleasant highways of peace and purity. The action and reaction of virtue being existent facts in the next world, reaction of the virtuous dead shall cause an unveiling of the faculties, and lead the individual to aspire to greater heights, to grander flights of usefulness and activity. Then every day is enjoyed, every soul realises its own powers, and feels that the more it knows of the mechanism of life, the better it is able to worship and understand the fatherhood and presidency of God.

The destiny of all souls in the world of spirits is progression ; due punishment, and only due punishment, is administered, and that self-inflicted, by virtue of the fact that every law that you seek to violate brings down upon your own head the punishment due.

Evidently the world has hitherto been ignorant as to the nature of the spiritual world, and the condition of its inhabitants ; in the light of the argument used this evening, which is simply that of the Spiritualist, a definite and rational conception is produced. Put the two side by side, the indefinite and vague conception floating through the world, and the rational philosophical conception we have placed before you, and we ask you to accept or reject either as it seemeth best to you. It will be asked, What proof is there that what we have said is true ? There are several millions of human beings who profess that they have received communications from supermundane sources, that these spirits are

in reality the disembodied persons, the people who once inhabited human bodies; and from these intelligent communicants all, substantially, that we have stated to-night has been communicated to the world. The evidence of scientists and philosophers, writers and speakers, has been given to the world confirmatory of these facts. The millions of people commonly called Spiritualists have taken the matter in hand also; and in all ranks of society, from the very humblest to the most exalted, the bright thread of spiritual communion can be traced, and you can receive evidence that spiritual communication has been received by all classes of the civilised community; and if concurrent testimony be of any value, especially when fortified by great names and powerful intellects we should certainly say that a very fair case indeed, *prima facie*, has been made out in favour of all we have urged in relation to the existence, the nature, and the condition of the spirit-world.

We leave, then, the argument to the consideration of our friends; we have dealt with the question "Concerning the spiritual world, and what men know thereof" to the best of our ability. It may, of course, be possible that we have not satisfied the requirements of many, but we have done our best to cover the whole ground, and can only feel that the patient hearing you have given us is some evidence at least that we have not been without success.

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF SPIRITUALISM.

*An Oration delivered in the Trance, under Spirit-Influence, at
Doughty Hall, Bedford Row, London, October 8th, 1876,*

BY MR. J. J. MORSE.

It is always a difficult matter for any system, especially if it be a new one, to gain a correct hearing on the part of those to whom it is presented. This correct hearing so necessary for all new truth is denied it at the world's hands, mainly because of the world's ignorance, credulity, and bigotry. The truths that appeal to the consciousness of humanity in one age—when they are first presented, for instance,—only do so with a minor degree of the force with which they will appeal to the same humanity or its successors in coming times; and in the subsequent periods the truths that were beforetime considered as matters perhaps of amusement more than anything else, dawn with all the beauty and grandeur of an absolute reality, claiming the attention and consideration of all classes of the community, and are more or less obeyed by those to whom they are spoken. This, in short, is the history and career of nearly every system of philosophy or presentation of truth that the world has received at any period. In short, it is the history, as exemplified by its traditions, of the rise and growth of the popular faith of this land; and as regards the growth and progress of Modern Spiritualism, precisely similar experiences are transpiring. Spiritualism appeals to the ears of the world to-day, and receives decidedly, on the part of the great majority of mankind, an incorrect hearing. The consequence is, its truths, the vital principles that it should inculcate and bring before the notice of the people, are not thought of, not even grasped in their most fragmentary aspect, and Spiritualism, to the great majority of the world, seems but a mere collection of disconnected matters, strange and marvellous, but not meriting any very serious consideration, just a mere partial consideration, and then they are disposed of and passed on to that realm of wonders and myths popularly labelled superstition. The time will come when these same matters will be received with humble reverence. Mankind will look up to and cherish them, holding them as dear and precious things that it must guard and watch with all the care and energy of its nature, not watch from the

aggressions of opposing forces, not watch lest they should be run away with by those who would steal the truths, but watched lest humanity degenerate back to its old sensuous conditions and become in consequence unfit guardians of the celestial truths that have been handed down to it.

Modern Spiritualism, then, repeats the lesson of the ages. Will it be out of place if we ask you to follow us this evening while we consider the physiology of Spiritualism, to the end, perhaps, that we may be able, if not to draw, to point to, sundry useful lessons which we shall ask you to carefully consider for yourselves elsewhere. It is not always in the bustle and turmoil of a public meeting—it is not always in large assemblies, that the truth speaks deepest and keenest to the hearts or souls of men; but it is in the quiet, sweet, solemn hour of night, the mystic boundary line between the dead day and the coming morrow, when all nature is hushed in sleep, and silence wraps the activities of life around; then the soul, cutting itself free from the cares and bustle of life, soars away into its own inner nature and thinks of the truths that have tapped against its windows here perhaps; it opens the sash; the little bird enters and carols its sweet song of the celestial truth to the inner consciousness of the being, and the soul perceives the mighty majesty of that which was at first but a faint glimmering of what was to come: and then in that sweet mystic hour the soul is filled with a flood of light, and happy indeed is that man or woman, royal indeed is the nature, that, when the day dawns—when the coming morrow is here with all its lusty life and strength—can then go back in the chambers of its memory to the sweet intercourse its soul had with the truth, and rise superior to life and custom, and let the soul's inner voice express itself in action in the face of all the world. That courage is a heritage that one may be well proud of; it is a grandeur, a royalty belonging to the nature that outstrips all the petty considerations of the royalties and distinctions of human life.

The physiology of Spiritualism is after all a very simple question; for, in regard to most movements of this kind there are the same series of universal laws to operate, and all such movements more or less have similar characteristics in their general aspects. Of course in their details, times, and circumstances, the culture and disposition of the people always have to be considered; but in the broad and general features of the matter, history has paralleled the progress of Modern Spiritualism more times than once.

But first of all, perhaps, we shall be asked what we conceive Modern Spiritualism to be? The definition that we should give to it may best appear in the remarks that are about to follow.

Broadly speaking, Spiritualism starts from the simple fact that the so-called dead do communicate with the inhabitants of this world, thus proving they are neither dead nor sleeping, but are sentient beings in another order of existence. From that one single posi-

tion we start then, and follow on in orderly sequence the developments and experience that the Movement must present as its progress is unfolded.

We shall claim that the first aspect that would be presented in the physiology of Spiritualism would be the one that we should denominate *sensuous*. By that expression we do not mean *sensual*. We simply refer to the external phenomena appealing to the faculties of wonder and sublimity in human nature—the excitation of all those desires for the marvels and wonders which the ignorant and uncultured spiritually are so prone to exhibit. But why *sensuous*? For this simple reason, that when people forget the reality of spiritual truth, when the bright celestial presence is all bedimmed and beclouded by the increments of materiality, the soul is lost sight of, physical or *sensuous* images alone appeal to the judgment, and a sign or token is demanded on the part of the people, because, forsooth, they are not refined or spiritual enough to perceive the bright reality that is underneath or is prefigured and forshadowed either by the sign or token; hence, *sensuous* of necessity, because—and we are sorry to say it sounds more like condemnation than anything else—because people of the world have forgotten the value of spirituality and become immersed in those *sensuous* and physical proceedings which dull the senses of the soul and cloud up the avenues of man's intuitional nature. Hence it is that Modern Spiritualism must appeal to humanity through its physical phenomena. It hath been said, and said truly, that "the hammer and chisel of spiritualistic fact have done more to chip off the hard shell of man's materiality than any other tools that have been used in the history of the present century;" and perhaps many of those here before us to-night in their own experience may substantiate the justness alike of the illustrations and statements that we have made; but, alas! when we come to consider this matter a little deeper, the mere externalisation of the mind in its phenomenal aspect leads us to other considerations which, while we are sorry to find existent as facts in the world, we are at the same time obliged to consider, trusting that their lessons, being obvious, will be laid to heart by all who hear them.

The Spiritual philosophy appealing to a materialistically inclined age or people, must of necessity express itself in such signs or symbols as a materialistic age and people can appreciate; and hence the departed, so-called—for in reality they are often with you and hovering about you—take such methods as, in their own judgment, are best capable of effecting the result they desire to bring about. We often hear it remarked, and sometimes we are very conscious of the folly of the remark, that "If the spirits would only do thus and so, why, the world would be convinced in a moment, and I should be satisfied;" virtually saying, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I speak let every dog be dumb." But, we ask you confidently this simple question: If you were upon the spirit-side of

life as it is called, and if you had a certain result to obtain from that spiritual side to convince some person that you were in contact with upon the material side, you surveying the processes, you being acquainted with the *modus operandi* to be used,—would you not be the best judge of how to proceed in the matter? and how unwise, then, is it when, in egotism or assumption, or perhaps in sheer carelessness sometimes and want of thought, men say, “If spirits would do thus and so, the world would be convinced, and I should be satisfied.” We upon our side certainly must understand the conditions and circumstances that we are momentarily in contact with, better than those who have never entered that condition, nay, still worse, who deny the existence of the circumstances and conditions we speak of.

But there are those who accept this sensuous or external phase of Modern Spiritualism, and who claim that in this department it hath fulfilled its mission and accomplished its powers. Now, in dealing with this physiology of the matter, we take this portion that we are now speaking of—the sensuous portion—as being really the trunk of the Movement, containing the vital apparatus. We have no intention of stigmatising, in any remote or direct sense, this department of the Movement as being low or degrading. It is eminently necessary, and everything that is necessary is useful, and therefore noble in the eyes of the true thinker. We claim that the vital apparatus is found in this lower department, for in this trunk, as we will call it, there are all the circumstances, and all the facts, and all the realities, that are subsequently to be moulded and developed into the full and perfect form of the complete Modern Spiritualism. Without this vital apparatus, without its parts and portions, without its circles, without its mediums, without its inspirations, without its visions, without its trances, without its raps, without its tilts, without its all and many and varied wonders, the superstructure we shall try to build could have no existence, or at best, if reared, it would have a very unsubstantial foundation indeed. Thus, after all, this first department is eminently useful in the great work that is to be accomplished. The mistake that we are about to deal with, and into which so many have fallen, is to make this first storey the complete superstructure. You think that when we deal and have to do with the physical, the demonstrative signs of Modern Spiritualism, the white-robed angel of Truth has accomplished all that she had to do for humanity, and that you have only to believe that tables are tilted by spirits—you have only to receive as a fact that spirits do rap upon tables, carry ponderable bodies, and perform a variety of wonders, to become a full-blown Spiritualist, and to be undergoing the process of intellectual and spiritual advancement. It is a great mistake, and a grievous one too. And might we not point out here that the value of this first development of our subject has two separate and distinct branches? It has a third value, which, perhaps, we are not inclined to credit

it with, as many would; but the two great important values that we perceive connected with it are these: it opens up marvellously and most wonderfully those intricate and subtle problems of the material universe; for when Science has traced out the scale of life from an igneous mass through solid granite, up through all the forms of life, and away again into the ethers of interstellar space, what has she done? Only sounded one depth in the Divine harmonies of life; and when she loses life, where her fingers are so coarse and clumsy that she cannot catch hold of the wondrous ethers that she thinks, and knows, and argues to exist, there the eye of the soul follows—aye, and the grasp of the Spiritualist takes hold of the finer thread that rises from the ethers of life across the mystic boundary of imponderable forces, stands face to face with the greater realities beyond, and demonstrates the certainty of the so-called intangible order of life, the spiritual world.

Here, then, pause for one moment, and ask yourselves if the vista that is opened up by this connection, by the facts of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, is not something tremendous, and far exceeding in wonder and in beauty all the problems that physical science hath ever dealt with, whether it be in regard to the laws of light, or the subtler vibrations of electric and magnetic forces? Why, here you come face to face with conditions that can be modified and ruled, to a great extent, in their elementary order, by the mind of the individual almost direct, while in the case of science, you are daily and hourly in contact with conditions and forces that set you at defiance and defeat all the energies of your minds. Why? Because, perhaps, after all, you have not viewed the matter with the eye of the spirit, but have dealt rather with the material laws and facts produced by them than with the spiritual realities that underlie this visible universe of yours. This opens up a very stupendous problem—that is, that man is possessed of other powers and senses, and hath another part to him than is usually supposed to be the case. It shows as clearly as can be, if you take certain branches of the subject, that there are recondite powers in human nature which gain expression under certain exceptional circumstances. In other words, it shows that man has a spiritual nature, while here in this world as well as when he has left it. Two such important considerations as these, growing from the first development of Modern Spiritualism, would alone be sufficient to consecrate it with a use and beauty that none could deny; but when we add to these the happy hearts, the enlightened souls, the glowing prayers of thankfulness, the aspirations of constellated joy that have rolled forth from the myriad hearts that have had their loved ones brought from over the yawning abyss of death, whom they had thought to be lost and gone for ever; when we add these to those other two, surely there is a halo of humanity conferred upon the subject, which robs it of its cold, materialistic scientific aspect, elevates it into the warm

glow of spiritual use and beauty, and makes it, when rightly understood, a blessing and a beauty to the world.

Then the other matter to which we attach least importance, but which by some is estimated as being very great and glorious, is this:—It is said that these sensuous demonstrations of Modern Spiritualism convert mankind to a knowledge of immortality, and thus cheer the world, lift humanity, and inspire it for its life and conduct here. Shall we be wrong in calling that sophistry? We would almost be inclined to call it miserable sophistry; for, if man's pure purposes of his inner heart, if the divinest motives of his inner soul are not his own counsellors and consolators, if they are not sufficient to urge him through this life, and if he wants to look forward to a brighter one as a reward for his goodness in this, —that man's nature requires overhauling, that man's inner being requires a little re-construction, that man's mechanism requires a little oil applied to its bearings. You should trust in the Infinite Divinity and power mirrored in your own nature. At best life is but brief, and ere long the problem will be solved for you one and all. You will all stand upon the shores of that bright hereafter, and take heed, having had that bright hereafter brought to you consciously and objectively in this life, if you have made no better use of life since you received the knowledge, then the Infinite Justice will exact the full penalties which it demands from you, and the knowledge of immortality conferred upon you through the agency of Spiritualism will not be considered as a sufficient answer or extenuation of any remissness upon your part. Then shall we see that the value we place upon these sensuous demonstrations of Spiritualism is at once high and exalted, is at once ennobling to those who receive them. We are inclined to the opinion that they who look upon Spiritualism in that light, and appreciating it as we have placed it before you in its lowest aspect, must think better of the system of Spiritualism, and perhaps learn to curb their expressions when they are dealing with those who profess and call themselves Spiritualists; but still, there is a darker side to this picture. There is no light without its shade, it has been said; there is no joy without its alloy of sorrow; and perhaps this light that we have tried to shed upon the matter may not be without its darker shade or misuse on the part of those who would decree what the spirit-world should bring and would carve out the channels in life through which Spiritualism should run. If you who deal with Modern Spiritualism as a science in this department lift it out of vulgar grasp, if you take it away from the thoughtless, the ignorant, the credulous, the superstitious, and make it into a glorious science, what are you doing? You are benefiting the world; you are adding to the store of human knowledge, we quite grant you; but is there anything to be said about the method whereby the knowledge is obtained? You would agree with us that a rough-and-ready method of determining the dynamics of heat would not be so

efficient and instructive as a more subtle and refined method that could explain the subtler laws that the rougher method could never grasp. If, then, you take a rough-and-ready scientific method of dealing with this subject of Spiritualism, and refuse to give it any brighter light, any glorious blush of use and beauty, but deal with it coldly and intellectually, and cut it up as you would a dead body, and burn it as you would that body if you wanted to resolve it; then you are extracting the life of Spiritualism, and you have only the dead husk to experiment on; you are in a dissecting-room, and operating upon the unconscious clay. Make Spiritualism a science in that respect, give it no vital soul under its realities, and then the whole thing dies, and sensuous Spiritualism serves no other object than to minister to the gratification of egotistical experimentalists who want to know, like the little boy with the bellows, where the wind comes from; and when they have cut up the apparatus they find no wind there, and they will probably go back to the dead husks and old faiths, and be content with them because they have missed the method, and therefore lost the road whereby they would have gained the grand Temple of Truth to which the experiences of Spiritualism in its first aspect will lead every spiritually-minded investigator.

Still this matter is, perhaps, loosely and poorly conceived in the minds of a great many people; for, limiting it solely to the phenomenal aspect, is there not rather a poor compliment paid to those intelligences that produce the phenomena? We ask you, in all consideration now, whether you would always agree to occupy the position of a hod-carrier in life, always carrying bricks up for someone else to use? And is not that verily what they do with us of the spirit-world? Are we not continually carrying fact and fact and fact to the great building that is growing on man's intellectual egotism? And we are of no moment, of no consideration; we are mere machines, perhaps only ciphers, in man's estimation, in producing these phenomena. There is no vital truth from that we have learned in our better life, no grand glimpse of spiritual principles that we may have obtained in consequence of our exaltation. Oh, no; we only move their chairs and tables, and produce raps and get strange phenomena under the most distressing of absolute test conditions, which are usually exceedingly unsatisfactory afterwards. We are only ciphers in the battle. Why, we tell you, friends, it is perhaps well for humanity's sake that the temper of the spirit-world is wiser, and calmer, and truer than is the temper of this lower world of yours, or perhaps more resentment might be manifested by those on our side of life whose mind is less developed and regulated. If you simply take Spiritualism in its phenomenal aspects, and fail to grip the principles that are behind these phenomena, then you miss the whole interest and purpose of Spiritualism. We cannot call you Spiritualists; we cannot claim you as advancing one step in the great order of life; for any person

may observe strange phenomena, and experience the results of those phenomena, but if he fail to grip the principle that lies behind the production, what benefit is the observation of the phenomena to him? We claim that one reason why Spiritualism does not make such wondrous strides among the great bodies of the people is, that too many are contented with the external presentation, too few require the principles that lie behind them. If there was the same energy or determination in the latter case that there is in the former, Spiritualism would be a very whirlwind that no system could stand against, but which would demolish error in every condition of life.

This leads us then to another consideration, for, as we have often averred, and still state frankly, if the inhabitants of our order of life, the spirit-world, only came back to tilt your tables, to knock your chairs about, they had perhaps better have stayed where they were; it would have been better, perhaps, if the veil had never been lifted in this generation; but being sentient beings, having rational existence, and quick with all the feelings of love, impulses of a truer, a better order of existence, do you suppose, good friends that we should content ourselves with just bumping your heads, so to speak with a few odd facts, having no other purpose in life behind them? Rather should we not strive to lift you up to a better life, to give you a clearer understanding of existence, and make you feel that life is something better than pounds, shillings, and pence,—that man has a soul, a glorious destiny before him, is an inheritor of eternity as a child of God? If we have not impulses of that kind behind our labours, then this thing will come to naught; it will be of man, and “of the earth earthy;” but if our impulse and purpose be quick with all the inspirations of a living and holy truth to lift your hearts upwards and unfold your life to a better order, then, indeed, Spiritualism from our point of view will bless you. It is true that in this department, certainly, we are dependent upon the conditions of the physical circle, upon the existence of mediums as appropriate instruments for the introduction of our ideas and thoughts into this human sphere of yours; hence in leaving this first section of our subject, let us impress upon you with all the earnestness and power we possess, always, under every circumstance, to take your mediums in hand and develop them in the light of the highest attainable psychological knowledge and in the best experience you may be acquainted with; then, surrounding them with all proper conditions, ordering their lives and careers as if they were responsible beings for themselves, but useful agents on your behalf, you shall have a better order of mediumship, you shall have a higher class of development, and the spirit-world may not find so many obstacles when it attempts to communicate with you in the higher orders and degrees of knowledge.

The next matter we dwell on is the intellectual aspect of Spiritualism: first sensuous, then intellectual; as the body's life is first

vegetative or nutritive, then thoughtful, intellectual perhaps. And hence we may ask ourselves a question:—Has Spiritualism fairly left the sensuous plane, and has it emerged upon the intellectual? We shall be inclined to say, No, not fully; for had Spiritualism fully emerged upon the intellectual plane—had its people fully grasped the logical character of its truths, and seen the wondrous connection and unity between every department that it deals with—so many wild, and fearful, and wonderful, and in many instances vicious theories would not have swept across its fair surface with the baleful breath of the simoom. Had Spiritualists intellectually grasped the vital truths of the Movement, much that the Movement regrets to-day would never have had an existence; but then that would be just about as idle as to expect that a child newly born would develop all the faculties of a Bacon. Years must intervene in the child's case ere the final result shall be attained, if ever; and in connection with this Movement, years must intervene before it lifts itself up above petty considerations of personal vanity, into the serener atmosphere of the contemplation of the truths and problems which the other orders of manifestations express and demonstrate.

In this department we shall be told that the spirit-world is perhaps a very poor judge. We have heard it asserted that if trance-mediums were only better educated, if they only had a little more acquaintance with philosophy, logic, and all the rest of the routine of the schools, the spiritual world would be able to give humanity a great deal better information. Now, we put it to you, friends: grant that your trance-mediums were educated according to the method of the schools of your earth, would we not be able in consequence to give you ideas and information in exactly the same way as that adopted by investigators among school-men, and in doing so should not we be ministering to the vanity of this world of yours and its professors, and bringing our world down to the circumstances and conditions of this life of yours?

Look at it from another point of view. Either our principles are of a higher development—that is, more extended than the truths you possess—or they are not. If they are no higher than yours, if they have no deeper reach or any wider compass than your truths have, then you could do very well without us; but if they are higher and wider in their compass and in their reach, then it seems to us that they will require some more expanded method than the method the world presents for our acceptance, and instead of coming down to the regulation pattern, with the professors of learning in this world have deemed the only legitimate method whereby man should receive its knowledge, they may, perhaps, come even to teach these self-same professors. It would be very lamentable, no doubt, so far as their own approbation is concerned; but still if it is true—lamentable or not—the world will have to put up with it, for the truth will triumph over every obstacle.

To proceed: Intellectually speaking, Spiritualism presents, we think, appearances that are the highest and grandest evolutions of philosophic thought that the world is acquainted with to-day; and when we bear in mind that those grand and glorious sentiments or problems have been enunciated, in repeated instances, through persons whose intellectual development or calibre, whose powers of mind and breadth of philosophy, have been of most meagre character,—why, then we fail to see the objection urged against the movement, that these mediums should be better educated in the methods of the world, and we should prefer to say that you might confidently let the methods of the world take care of themselves. But if you wish mediums to be better instruments for us from the psychological point of view, strive to educate them in the things that are spiritual, and in every sentiment and attribute that constitutes the divinity of human nature. That development is of far greater value to us, and of infinitely more use to the individual, than the dull and too often stultifying influences that come from the methods of education (save the mark!) of this world of yours. But, intellectually, Spiritualism will, of necessity, develop a philosophy. And what is a philosophy? A great many people attach a deal of importance to this word. Philosophy is neither more nor less than the placing in orderly relationship the sum of experiences gained through previous observation, and in the endeavour to reduce it to a certain system we might almost call it a creed, for the acceptance and better understanding of those who desire to receive it. Placing it, then, on this ground, we say Spiritualism of necessity presents the very circumstances that we have dealt with, and has, of itself, a certain philosophy. It is not so much our purpose to deal with that philosophy just now as it is to criticise it in some very important particulars. But why is it that Spiritualism is intellectual next in its development? For a certain reason we shall have to point out ere we close.

Suppose a thoughtful and intelligent man, after investigating the facts of Spiritualism, becomes convinced of their reality, and accepts the most important fact that they are produced by spiritual beings, he necessarily inquires—What for? where do they point to? and instinctively he rises beyond that which has satisfied his doubts, solved his perplexities, and cheered his heart, into the serener atmosphere, where he may look with the eye of intellect upon the strange conformation of this peculiar creature that has come across the path. But when we make this philosophy of Spiritualism hard and fast—when we draw certain definite lines around it, and enclose it on four sides, with top and bottom, and hermetically seal the cube, are we not falling into precisely the same error that other systems have fallen into? Are we not making the water to suit the vessel? Are we not corking it up, when, by our efforts, we have filled it, and setting our sign-manual on the top of it, and saying, "There is the word of God, and you must accept it; this

is the philosophy of Spiritualism, and if you do not believe it and accept it just as we interpret it, well, something like excommunication will probably take place." Bad—emphatically and undeniably bad; for Spiritualism—that is to say, its philosophy—can never be complete. Why? Spiritualism in its philosophy is the science of existence; existence is eternal. Man's life is co-equal with eternity, and when that is outrun, and man has learned everything, and mastered God as well, the philosophy of Spiritualism will be complete, not till then.

Still, it will be said that the soul hungers and thirsts for some sweet place where it may lie and rest. Indeed, there may be some souls—there are many, we are sorry to say—who are incapable of sustained effort, on their own account, and who lean upon the shoulders of others stronger than themselves. We can only hope they will grow stronger so that they may need no leaning-post in the future. We can only hope they will learn that the only resting place the soul can have (aye, there are two) is upon itself, and the great overlying presence and sustaining cushion—shall we call it—of God's eternal and immutable truth. He who is sustained buoyant upon the sea of God's truth or the vitality of his own soul, will never sink or succumb to any cross or difficulty he may meet. Why not, then (we may be asked again), have some definite idea or code laid down, that we can subscribe to, and accept, as being an interpretation of Spiritualism? We have no objection to your laying down a certain series of principles, to your taking up a certain creed, or to your wrapping yourself in the shirt of Nessus, if you are prepared to take all the consequences; we have not the least difficulty about this matter, or delicacy either. If you like to build up a creed, if you like to formulate a certain stated system or code, do so; only at the same time be prepared to take all the consequences that will grow out of it; and if in the coming time it should not flatter your present expectation, if it should fall to pieces by reason of its own cumbrousness, do not blame us but rather blame your own shortsightedness that could not see a simple fact, patent to every spiritually-minded man—that God's truth is homogeneous and you cannot organise it.

If you want to build a philosophy of Spiritualism, and crib, cabin, and confine it, do so: if you kill the Movement and rob yourself of the spiritual manna falling hourly and daily around you, that is your affair, not ours. It is our study—and we do it cheerfully—to point out to you the possible dangers that may arise, and to warn you against them; but if after our friendly warning you are headstrong and wilful, all we can say is that the headstrong and wilful profit better by experience than they do by precept.

Intellectually, though, is there nothing in Spiritualism to gratify your desires? Why, yes: there is not one single phenomenon in Spiritualism, there is not one single problem that it deals with, there is not one single statement made to you by the communicat-

ingspirits when they return, that is not sufficient food for a life-time's thought,—that you could not reason out, and work, and understand, and unravel, and probe into, for all the little life that you possess in this world; and even then you may be as far off complete consummation as when you started; for truth is so infinite in its extent, and it reaches up to such illimitable distances, that finite man is incapable of following the thread to its ultimate conclusion. Spiritualism has built up many beautiful theories; it has fine-spun the threads of philosophy into such a motley garment that it is difficult to find out what is really meant. You have re-incarnation on the one hand and non-re-incarnation on the other, and the folly is at once evident of attempting to make a cut-and-dried system of Spiritualism, which will simply result in disaster and failure. But Spiritualism intellectually can deal with that which is below the intellect; and that which is below the intellect is the sensuous department of the phenomena; the intellect can probe it, can analyse it and bring forth in orderly array the laws and conditions requisite for the production—shall we say the evolution—of spiritual phenomena.

Still again, intellect can master also that which is beneath it personally. The individual can understand that body through which the intellect works, and the intellect, taking up two problems side by side, realising always that there is the spiritual counterpart behind the man, can be made the means of exalting people here in this physical plane to such a height of health and grandeur as was never before conceived. For what says Spiritualism? Man is an immortal being; man here in this world demonstrates his immortality by his actions through the physical organism; it is essential, therefore, that he should know how to control, direct, and use the powers and attributes of the organisation he possesses, so that he may reap their benefits instead of suffering under the fearful curses they can entail when allowed to run riot or when they become misdirected. In this department, then, of Spiritualism, dealing with the life of man in this world in regard to its higher and lower branches, as an education intellectually, will be one of the best and greatest powers the world has ever received. To know that there are four sides to a square, or three to a triangle, or that so many figures bring a certain result, or that different countries occupy a certain space on the surface of the globe, is not education, it is a mere acquaintance with external facts and phenomena; but that deeper knowledge which Spiritualism points to, which teaches you how to master self and rise superior to every obstacle that you may meet, is the best and truest education that man in this world can ever receive.

The philosophy of Spiritualism, then, is the precursor of something else. As the sensuous department led on to the supposition of the existence of one beyond it, so does this intellectual department point to another and a third. The existence of a trunk with-

out the other portions or members of the body would be practically useless; the existence of those members without the thinking or brain portion of the being would also be useless; and the existence of this same brain with its powers of thought, unless there was something greater and grander beyond it than you could conceive of at the moment, would be itself a mere waste of power and force on nature's part. If, when the body passed away, our forces would be dissipated, there would be an end of our individual existence; though other forms might take up the tale, and sing the song anew, and perhaps better, that particular individuality would be lost for ever, and that sweet privilege of personal identity upon which you pride yourselves so much and set so high a value would be swept out of being, and you, the great *you*, that is so sweet and holy to your own thought, would be sunk in dark and never-ending night.

The third department, then, is the spirituality of Spiritualism. Has the Movement reached the spiritual plane? Let yourselves answer; it is not for us to do it. Let each one's heart answer whether he or she has reached the spiritual plane. That answer will be the best evidence that we could give you. But why is the spiritual last? Why, as well expect to have the full ear in the corn at the very instant of the bursting of the blade through the soil, as expect to find Spiritualism spiritual in the very first of its appearances. Has it not appeared to a material age, as we have pointed out? Does not the age demand a sign and symbol? Are not these mere external phenomenal matters that deal with the senses of humanity? And how can humanity, prizing only the mere external conditions of life, be expected to give expression in its life and conduct to spirituality, to the ideas of the spirit of existence? You cannot expect it. The proposition involves far more than can be sustained by the premise that we start with. Spiritual last. Aye! and when that era dawns, the Movement will, indeed, have become godly and noble. The sensuous demonstrations of Spiritualism, as you now understand them, will have been all labeled and docketed, and placed away in the pigeon-holes of the great archives of existence. There will be the indubitable facts that have transpired in the past, and which, if you like then to descend to the conditions in which those were necessary, can be reproduced; but for the then present purposes they would be useless, not required for men and women. Let them elevate themselves to a grander and nobler height of life, wherein the spirit will be the dominant factor in every individual's life, and spiritual truth will be the law that will govern the nations of the earth. You have heard it said this evening how hard it is for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven. The seer and prophet that spoke these words has been enfolded in the embrace of the spirit-life now for hundreds of years. The truth was old when he uttered it; the truth is young even to-day. Old it may be as humanity

itself, but young it is as God's eternal truth. Riches will not buy spiritual truth; human emoluments will not fit their possessor to enter into the holy of holies hereafter. Those riches and emoluments that will entitle man to that entrance must be loyalty to the principle of life under every circumstance and condition—must be obedience to God's eternal ministry, as expressed in nature and in truth. He may be poor in this world, beggared, trodden down in the dust and mire of the feet of those that pass him by continually; he may be scoffed at and frowned at, but there comes a time in the inevitable order of life when the economies of being are adjusted, when compensation shines all glorious around him, and he feels that in loyalty to his own conscience as king, he has been loyal to the greater king, God, and truth everywhere. Spirituality is of so fine a nature, so beautiful in its complexion, so ravishing to the true prophetic seer, that the vulgar multitudes cannot comprehend it, and turn away from it as something they cannot have to do with. Hence we must not be harsh upon the people of the world to-day because of their mis-education. The world you must take as you find it, even as we must work with it as it is. To start with it as we would have it be, to deal with it as you should like to see it, will be utterly false, and will involve us in failure and disaster. Take humanity as it is, with all its imperfections and virtues, prune down those imperfections by the introduction of better thoughts and higher lives, cultivate those beauties and perfections by all that is true, and pure, and spiritual; and thus, by good, cast out evil; by kindness, kill enmity; by virtue, kill vice; by truth and beauty, kill falsehood and error; and then humanity, going by slow degrees towards the spiritual and true, will take hold of the spirituality of life; and Spiritualists, tiding over the waves of the sensuous phase and the intellectual phase, will find themselves pressed on upon the wave of spirituality; they will find that they ride upon the crest of the glorious tidal wave in the very sight and under the sun of God's eternal truth, that shall shine upon their brows and inspire them with its life and beauty. Then shall Modern Spiritualism prove that it was not confined to the rapping of tables or turning of chairs in little back parlours. They were necessary objects in the first inception; they were experiences to be passed through before better and greater ones could come; but having served their day and object, nature and purpose—having been understood by all who had experienced them—they gave place to better and holier forms, which gradually led on and lifted Spiritualists from Spiritualists into human beings. And if Spiritualism succeeds in making humanity human, it will have accomplished more than any other system we are acquainted with.

Now let us make the application to this physiology that we have developed. Let us deal with it in a broader aspect still. Let us cast down the barrier called Spiritualism, let us throw aside the term Spiritualist, and let us look at humanity at large; for after

all, humanity must be lifted by spiritual truth; and therefore better say humanity than Spiritualist, better say the truth for all people than Spiritualism. To-day, we grant you, the distinction is necessary and requisite. We are speaking now of the coming time, when you will be able to throw aside names and titles and stand pledged disciples and soldiers under the flag of God's eternal truth.

Look back to the history of the world. The further you go back in recorded history, the deeper you dive into those oral traditions that have been handed down from father to son for generations; the further you go back from what is called civilisation, the more immediately you come in contact with man in his lower or first state of life. Then you find the order of force, the era of might obtains, and there, too, you find counterparts in your own experience to-day, in the reverence and hearty respect paid to sensuous impressions received from nature and her circumstances. Man lives overawed by the objective results that are produced,—dismayed or pleased, as the case may be, by the phenomenal presentations that are involved. He lives in the sensuous world, in the external life. He makes the best use of that life he can; he does as wisely as his development will allow him; and strange indeed must it be to the thinker when he hears that those forerunners of human races, those pioneers of present civilisation, were all heathen nations. They did their best according to their development, and if God wants more we do not want that God. They grow from their tribal and wandering states, they form a nation; that nation passes from its rude, rough state of might, and strength, and domination, and goes through intellectual developments, and gradually fines itself down—becomes civilised as the olden times would have it; it passes through its era of luxury and beauty, and gradually and surely declines. As it leaves the laws of nature and obeys the inclinations of humanity, its physical inclinations rest; but as it masters them, like the men of Sparta in olden time, and rises superior to them, it preserves itself, and keeps that juvenescence that is the heritage that every true man should possess through life.

The first dawn of the world's development always takes place upon the sensuous plan, and is characterised by the domination of force, while at a step further the intellect begins to unfold itself, laws are formed, arts and sciences cultivated, not always for the purpose of benefiting the great masses of the people, but for upholding the present systems of government—too often systems of oppression and tyranny. By-and-by there comes a dawning of the spirituality of life in the nation, and the two principles—that of the spirit and that of the intellect—are very often at war with each other; the consequence is that there is mutual clashing, and disintegration sets in: the nation dwindles and pines, as it is said in the old Book of all that forget God. The history of the world, then, is summed up thus: First, sensuous or physical; next, intellectual—it is enjoying that age now—it is making the best use

of it that it can. The time is to come when the world is to be truly spiritual in purpose and in motive; then the three golden ages of the earth will have been completed; the trinity will have been developed; the triangle will then begin to take upon itself the oval; the completed circle will engirdle the perfected humanity; and God's eternal truth, unfolded in this world, will shine as a blazing sun because of the perfect purity of every human being in the world. Thus the physiology of Spiritualism is paralleled by the physiology of the world's progress. Truths, then, are always at union one with each other, each with all. There is a sameness and unity underlying all truth that must not be lost sight of.

And now we have to draw a few practical conclusions ere we close. Spiritualism sums up its advantage in two directions: first, that direction which is completed in the demonstration of immortality to those who live in the world to-day and who doubt the fact; of course to all who do not doubt the fact of immortality, Spiritualism in that respect is valueless. But on the other hand it brings down to your knowledge the great cardinal fact that you are spiritual beings here in this world, and that you are making the foundation of a future destiny while here. It is, then, spiritually, intellectually, and physically, an educational movement, or it is nothing. Does not the world require education in those several departments? How much of spirituality does it exhibit in its conduct? What is the intellectual status of the people in every condition of society in all countries to-day? Is it great, and grand, and noble, or is not too often obscured with national and local prejudices? And what is the physical condition of humanity? So disreputable that we dare not mention it. Why, there are thousands and thousands labouring in the world to-day, disseminating physiological truth; one is here before you.* A greater mission, perhaps, could not be conceived. The unfoldment of physiological truth that is in the hands of those who understand its merits and principles, will bless the world when they grasp the glorious fact that in very truth a pure body and a sound mind ever means a healthy soul.

And then you remember that physiologically, intellectually, and spiritually, Spiritualism for the Spiritualist is an educational movement. After that we ask, and challenge without fear of contradiction, any unprejudiced and unbiassed mind, as Spiritualism lays claim to the great distinction of being an educational movement in these directions, whether it is not precisely the very thing the world requires, and whether it is not to be welcomed with open arms by every true philanthropist, and genuine reformer and earnestly aspiring spiritually-minded man and woman?

The angels bow to you often and often; they whisper their sweet words of welcome to your souls, and bring you many a token of

* Mr. Burns, the Chairman on this occasion.

their sweet presence; and they ask you as the only return you shall make to them that you shall feel that Spiritualism is to bless you, is to make you better and wiser than you were. They ask you to support every agency involved in the existence of Spiritualism, so that you may become better, and wiser, and happier. They ask you to remember that every phase of spiritual phenomena, no matter how trivial, is useful. They ask you to remember that every phase of mediumship, no matter how seemingly strange and informal, has a certain function, possibly to reveal misunderstood laws and circumstances of the psychological life and nervous life. They ask you to remember that every book and every pamphlet containing recorded experiences of investigators, or the thought of a thinker, is worthy of your consideration. They ask you to reject no agent, they ask you to throw aside no method, they ask you to ignore no thought that may be presented, because of its strangeness or its seeming inconsistency; but to give careful heed and attention to every man's utterance, to the presence of every thought, to every experience presented, for it may often prove the key that unlocks a hitherto insoluble problem. Therefore, we claim that every agent and every agency involved in the existence of Spiritualism as an educational movement—not as a mere drawing-room pastime, but as an educational movement for blessing humanity—should receive the cordial and hearty sympathy and support of every Spiritualist that has intelligence to understand the issues and their value involved in this great Movement.

If you will do this you will arise from the merely sensuous condition; you will intellectually perceive the value of that order and state, and still be searching with the eye of the mind for greater continents still. When the great sea of Spirituality opens before you, you will launch your barque upon the crystal wave, your sails filled with the glorious blasts of inspiration, and you will be wafted over the boundless waters. Capes, continents, islands, countries, will appear before you continuously, and you will gather experiences from them. God's sun will ever shine upon you; its golden light will tinge the rippling waters as you sail. Your thoughts will become realities, your minds become living temples of purity, and your souls glorious worlds of life and love wherein you may live and hold converse with your friends; you will revel in the glorious truths of the physiology of Spiritualism, and you will find that existence means something more than a conning over of what you have previously learned: that life is broad, that thoughts are grand and glorious, that a man who feels the divinity of God within himself has a kingdom of his own. May you all feel this, and may you in all things, in all motives, in all purposes, and in all conduct, prove yourselves worthy and noble students of the physiology of what we claim to be the grandest development of the intellectual and spiritual activities of humanity that the world up to the present time has ever received at the hands of God.

THE ORDER OF SPIRITUAL TEACHERS :

ITS NEED AND SCOPE.

An Inspirational Address delivered by Mr. J. J. MORSE,
at Doughty Hall, Bedford Row, London,
on Sunday Evening, June 10, 1877.

INVOCATION.

O Thou mighty Soul of Light, whose glory shines down the path of being, and inspires alike the humblest and the greatest of Thy creatures, grant that the power of Thy truth may find a lodgment in the hearts of these our brethren here to-night, working in their innermost natures unto deeds of purity and goodness which may henceforth crown their outward lives; wooing them from darkness into light, drawing them up to heights of being, to grander altitudes than they have attained, and imbuing their innermost souls with those divine principles of Love and Wisdom which shape the keystones for human happiness in all future times. Grant, we pray thee, Mighty One, that speaketh to all the peoples of the earth in the flaming suns of summer-time, in the cold chill winds of winter; that bringeth the message of brighter promise to the world when children are born unto men, and that speaketh of solemn mysteries unto human kind when life closes and humanity passeth across the channel of death; grant, O Thou Mighty One that doth speak to humanity in all forms and under all circumstances, that Thy loving presence may be manifest in the world around us, that the world may be wooed from its harshness and darkness, and brought into the smooth glory-light of universal happiness, and brought up to the grand orbit of peace and joy. Grant that Thy ministering angels, directed by Thy purpose, and inspired by Thy holiness, may find a welcome here to-night, that each heart may be as a sacred altar, the fires thereon glowing and burning with a holy glory, whose flames shall be fed by the divine inspiration that those spirit-ministrants may bring, and each life may be warmed and illumined for evermore. We, then, we pray Thee, the two worlds in one; let the mystic threads of inspiration bind the twain in one divine unity, and let the hearts of humanity on either side of the veil unite in one grand song of praise to Thee, the everlasting Father, and feel that

life is ever onwards, that progress reveals more of Thy grandeur as man attains to it, and that Thy will and purpose is that all humanity shall toil along the path of life, each helping the other, each extenuating the faults and follies of his neighbour, cultivating the virtues and blessings of a spiritual life, and so by one strong, united, generous effort lifting the world higher by its virtues and scorning its vices evermore. Then shall love and unity attend on the peoples of the world; and men shall in deed, in spirit, and in truth, worship Thee, our Father and our God.

ADDRESS.

In response to a request preferred to us, we have to address ourselves to the discussion of a topic this evening that has been stated to you in this form: "The Order of Spiritual Teachers; its Need and Scope." There may be perhaps a certain class of people in the world who will be inclined to argue that the institution of any order, or any organisation in connection with the esoteric teachings of Spiritualism, cannot be found otherwise than as a disadvantage to Spiritualism, and a dangerous precedent. They will probably very glibly quote instances from the religions of the world when, such esoteric organisations having been formed, they have rapidly become fossilised and conservative in their nature and teachings, and the administrators of these organisations have used the power placed in their hands for worldly purposes, have forgotten the divine and holy mission that was first entrusted to them, and gone astray on the world-sea, so to speak, losing lighthouse and headland, and failing to keep their course on the wide waters of life.

Now while we are quite prepared to admit the utility of such an argument, and that it is possible for such an organisation to be framed in connection with the esoteric teachings of Spiritualism, all these disadvantages will have to be discounted, and you will have to be prepared to meet them whenever they present themselves, if this organisation is to be a success. We are not at all conscious of the fact that such an organisation would of itself be radically injurious, and we are perhaps more inclined to consider from certain lines that we shall place before you, that a species of spiritual organisation of the kind is to a very great extent a real necessity of the present development of Modern Spiritualism.

Now we are not prepared, as you will perceive, to commit ourselves to the unhesitating advocacy of an organisation of this kind, while at the same time we are not prepared to unhesitatingly condemn such an organisation, but our desire is to consider first of all if such a thing is necessary in a true sense, or, at least, in such a sense as may be satisfactory to the majority of our hearers present. If we trace the history of religious movements, we will find there are three broad lines drawn between them all. There are, for instance, the worshippers, the neophytes, who are inquiring into the objects of the religion they are endeavouring to associate them-

selves with, and who in the process of time become the heads and administrators of the particular system, and you will agree with us, if we admit the basis of the argument, that all religions are essentially spiritual in their nature, and dependent upon the function of what in modern times has been called mediumship, but what in ancient times was termed the gift of the Spirit. If we admit this final postulate, we will be prepared to fancy it is only certain people, at present at least, and only certain people under exceptional conditions of development and unfoldment, that are fit and proper agencies for the expression of the function of spirituality. Tracing the history of all the ancient religions, we find a man had to go through a long course of training before he could become an adept and be accounted worthy to enter into the administration of the sacred mysteries. Take the temples of Egypt, and we find abundant evidence of this. It is asserted by sceptics that all the spiritual marvels which have been associated with the worship of Osiris were produced by certain mechanical methods applied by the priesthood. But there is one curious question that has never fairly been discussed, and that is—supposing that all these spiritual marvels were produced by purely mechanical methods, why was it that the priesthood took such marvellous pains to deceive those neophytes, to falsely impress their consciences with a whole series of pseudo marvels, when, in the natural order of things, that self-same priesthood would arise beyond them and give them up through sheer disgust? And yet we always find when they passed through their intermediate degrees and attained to the full service of the temple, they were as zealous to impress the grand truths of their religion as ever they were at any stage of their career. They held to their religion with all the tenacity of a long endearment, and felt that it was the life and the purpose of their soul to administer the functions of their office. If they had known the thing to be as hollow as modern sceptics think it was, we think one would expect they would rebel against the restrictions that had been imposed, and would have proclaimed to the world that the worship of the Egyptian temples was a gigantic delusion from beginning to end. We do not find such statements recorded, or have evidence handed down to us that such facts were incident to the progress of Egyptian religion, and we merely take that as an illustration, although it is by no means the only illustration that could be adduced in this direction.

There is this conclusion, then: that a certain series of initiatory phases were passed through, and these were all for a certain purpose, to impress the mind of the neophyte with the spirituality of the whole question, and cause him to cultivate those recondite and occult powers within himself which he was supposed to possess and bring them into fruition for good and useful purposes thereafter. Therefore we think we are bound to admit that those early thinkers in the religious world were fully alive to the indications of what is

called mediumship to-day, were fully conscious of the fact of the possession of spiritual gifts, and would only permit those to engage in the services of their temples who were specially and peculiarly endowed in those directions, the result of which was that the hierarchy of spirituality was preserved from any contamination from the outer world. This esoteric element was kept within the inner *sanctum sanctorum*, and the worship of the temple was preserved in all its mysticism and purity.

But side by side with this fact is the important consideration that in course of time this high avocation was forgotten; this glorious office of spiritual ministry was allowed to recede from vision, and other objects not by any means so worthy were placed in its position; and the priesthood, instead of becoming the exponents of man's spiritual gifts and the interpreters of the spiritual philosophy of the time, became a species of organised tyranny over the ignorant and uncultivated masses beneath them, and used their high and sacred office for the purpose of self-aggrandisement, and for enlarging the boundaries and areas of their own particular administrations. Thus the esoteric truth was lost, the purity was lost, and superficiality was introduced in its place, and in process of time the purpose of the organisation was entirely forgotten. "Are we then," it will be asked, "to submit Spiritualism to the possibility of a recurrence of a priesthood and to a similar series of events?" We would answer, while humanity is what it is to-day; while the lust for power and the race for wealth are the topics that entail increasing consideration from the humblest to the highest in the world, organisation will be beset by those special dangers we have referred to. We cannot conceive of the possibility of an organic structure where narrow, petty jealousies, sectarian divisions and peculiar egotisms do not exist. Men assert their prominence and do an incalculable amount of mischief. The basis for organisation may be as wide and free as the heavens, the principles may be as universal as the principles of mathematics, yet the possibility of these little units entering in may disrupt the whole scheme, and reduce the purposes of its founders to chaos and ruin. With these dangers before us how can we take grace of heart to ask you to listen to us to-night while we speak of the nature of the Order of Spiritual Teachers which might peradventure reproduce the whole series of catastrophes we have referred to?

Spiritualism, so far as we understand it,—and we may be wrong, and if so we submit our definition with all due deference—means the science of the human spirit—deals with the conditions that affect incarnated spirituality in this world: that is to say, men living in the mortal body; it goes to the root of every question affecting man's life socially, politically, religiously, physiologically, and spiritually. Some one will say, "This is too broad a definition; if we make our Spiritualism so comprehensive it will fall to pieces by reason of its own magnitude." Well, life does not fall

to pieces by reason of its own magnitude, and all these questions are contained within the area of what we call life, and are certainly most essential matters so far as harmony and progress are concerned.

If we take, then, this broad and liberal definition of Spiritualism, we shall probably be assailed by a certain class of experimental Spiritualists, whom we would prefer to call spiritists, as not grasping the phenomena they have investigated, who assert that we are usurping fields of philosophy, and putting ourselves in opposition to the area of the Church's power, and that we are calling down upon our heads the anathema of the politicians of the country, who say we are invading their peculiar precincts. No doubt such an argument was used against Jesus of Nazareth, and something of the same kind was urged against every reformer the world has ever seen or heard of, and it is not the least use questioning the fact that the same kind of opposition has been urged against every free and liberal interpretation of life and its blessings that the world has ever experienced, and therefore Spiritualism is no exception to the bitter treatment accorded to all advanced forms of philosophy.

But mark you, though we say the science of Spiritualism comprehends those broad and general postulates we have referred to, we by no means argue that it is to be purely and radically iconoclastic. If you go helter-skelter through the world, like a mad courser let loose from its bridle, kicking at this and tearing up that, and destroying something else, you will draw down upon your heads a whole flood of execration that will prevent you from doing any further good.

We must not forget the fact that the wisdom of the past, from its very first inception down to the present moment, has always been engaged in solving the very questions that are comprehended within the breadth and scope of the genius of Spiritualism. We must not avoid the fact that this same wisdom cannot be engaged in the discussion of those questions without having drawn forth some good, without planting some pure seeds in the way of life; and if we pull up the wheat and fares indiscriminately, we shall only have the same ground to go over again, and prove ourselves to be destructives pure and simple without any qualification whatever; therefore while Spiritualism is so broad and comprehensive, at the same time it is catholic enough to take from all sources whatever of good there may be found therein. If we find good in the teachings of the Brahmin, let us have that good, and place it to the credit of the common stock; if we find good in the teachings of Confucius, let us take that good and place it there also; if we find a Persian has good in his system handed down to him from Zoroaster, let us take that good, and credit it to the common stock; if we find good in the ranks of orthodox Christianity, let us take that good: for good is good, no matter where it happens to be placed for the time being.

Taking, then, the ground before us, Spiritualism will have to be constructive as well as destructive; and we ask you, as intelligent men and women, how Spiritualism can combine these two functions unless it becomes an educational movement—not an educational movement for the cultivation of people who are not Spiritualists, not that you are to create schools and colleges and endow them for the education of those people who do not (and pardon a vulgarity) care a rap for Spiritualists or Spiritualism. It would be a waste of labour: it would be an idle use of the ammunition you possess. Spiritualism must be an educational movement within itself, within the hearts and lives of those who call themselves Spiritualists. But how is this result to be brought about? It seems to us there are three several methods we may enumerate that may assist us in this direction.

There is, first and foremost, the spiritual world. If you are brought in contact with that spiritual world, and that world can teach you nothing, we can hardly see the value of its relationship to you. Then there is the result of your own personal experiences; and if you do not cast up the ledger of your individual lives now and then, and see how the debtor and creditor account stands, then you must be unconscious of the use and value of the life you possess. These should certainly teach you what to be, what to avoid, what to cultivate, and what to repress within the actions of your natures. And then there is the common experience of the entire human family which the advanced agencies and the intelligence of the present day have brought to the understanding of almost the commonest in the world.

Now, these three several methods, each having a certain value attaching to it, will help you to make this same Spiritualism an educational movement within itself. It is always our fashion to consider objections that may be urged against us. Some one will say, with regard to this matter of education so far as the individual is concerned, "Any other system is quite as good. If I am a Christian"—and we wish all the world were Christians in reality and truth—"I could be educated in the way the speaker seems to indicate just as effectually as if I were a Spiritualist. Or if I were a votary of science, or following art in all her wanderings and all her labours, I could fit myself for life's duties and become an honourable citizen and a useful member of the human family." If a man is a good citizen it is considered that he is the pink and pattern of what he should be. We imagine that a good man is even a trifle better than a good citizen. Necessarily, if he is the former he will be the latter. Take the objection: what is it really worth? It is worth nothing, because it does not comprehend the gist and purpose of the argument it is brought to bear against. You may be a good Christian, but, at the same time, we respectfully urge that you can know nothing, being a good Christian, positively in regard to what are the conditions of the immortal

life, your relationships thereto, and the relationships of that life to this world wherein you live. Some one will say, "Christianity is based upon spirituality; it is a long record, handed down to the present generation of the spirituality of past ages, as exemplified, especially in the days of the Apostles and the early Church, and handed down for our contemplation in the sacred records of our religion." Now, we must avoid haste in such a matter as this. Such a liberal interpretation of Christianity would not be received in strictly orthodox, evangelical circles. A good Christian usually consists in an individual whose reason is comfortably stored away for future use, whose whole belief and whose whole life is centred in obedience to a certain series of creeds and dogmas, without any consideration to be bestowed upon the spiritual principles behind those dogmas, or the life that lies beyond the one they are living at present. It is true there is a liberal Christianity abroad, it is a most precious thing, and one that can be cultivated with profit; and the sooner the world rises beyond its narrow, conservative evangelicalism, and takes to the broad, universal principles of the life of Christ, the better will it be for humanity.

If you become the votary of Science, if you follow her labours and revel in the results she brings before you, alas, we have to look upon science as a cold, moody abstraction, walking through the world, though not of it—a species of nineteenth century Fata, that calmly, slowly, and sternly walks through life, speaks of law and principle, and the exact relationships of being, takes no consideration of human heart or human feeling, or of immortality; reduces all things to mathematical formula, makes the universe a cold, dead, skeleton, so to speak, whose bones are animated by certain wires called forces; shutting out the broad horizon of love, affection, trust, and immortality, and dooming the world to a cold mechanical existence, unenlivened by the slightest glint of glory from the Summer-land beyond. Therefore while Science may inform you of these things—and she succeeds most admirably—while Science may uplift the human mind—and it does so most powerfully—while Science may mean intellectual emancipation, and possible freedom of thought and opinion; though great and glorious have been her achievements, grand and powerful has been the teaching she has placed before you,—yet in spite of this and the nobility of the lives of her votaries, she narrows down the confines and induces a cold, dull, mechanical universe, and shuts you off from those great relationships which roll and surge around you on every side.

Any species of education that does not commence with, or include within its plan, at least, the recognition of the spiritual relationships that man sustains while he is living in this world; any education that does not include that in its curriculum is necessarily incomplete, incapable of fulfilling its office of developing the human race. Some one will say, "This is not the purpose of edu-

cation. Education is only to instruct mankind in certain branches, such as literature, science, art, philosophy, and so give him a general acquaintance with the ordinary rules and methods whereby man assists his individual life in this world. Education is not designed to make men better; to make men more civilised; it is not designed to supersede religion and philosophy; it is only designed to fill the mind with facts, and to keep it abreast of the common experiences of the present day." Yet in the very same breath, the advocates of education affirm that the more you educate the masses, the higher you lift them in the moral scale, the better men and women you make them in consequence. Which opinion are we to take? On the one hand education is not to supersede morals and religion; and on the other hand it will make better men and women, morally and religiously. So far as we are concerned we are prepared to endorse the latter opinion, and we are strongly impressed with the fact that if education, even poor and imperfect—letting alone the higher kind we are pleading for—education properly bestowed and properly directed in the early developments, will leave a legacy which other civilised countries in future ages will receive with gratitude and pride.

But what is the special purpose of the spiritualistic education we have hinted at? Why, truly speaking, it may be defined in the simple proposition to make men better, bodily, mentally, and spiritually. And who shall be the teachers? Let us look before we define that point, as to the particular species of education involved in this question we are dealing with. We will start with the lowest; and here, probably, we may be repeating to some of our friends what we have here asserted so often, that all education, to be successful, must start at the lowest point—must start, in fact, with the development of a sound and healthy body. Thus, a complete and perfect knowledge, combined with an absolute obedience to it, of the physiological laws and principles of human life is the essential matter to be considered. We must start from the base first. It is useless to improve the morals of a man whose brain is, so to speak, a perambulating cesspool of iniquity, because such a brain will contaminate every moral lesson that it receives, twist it into some lower purpose and nullify the effect of any morality which may strive to force its way outwardly. Do we speak the doctrine, then, of physical environment affecting the expression of mental and moral nature? Most certainly we do; and you see practical illustrations of it every day and week of your life. You see poor, wretched structures, broken down, diseased, and rickety, living in foul, loathsome, and reeking dens, and in a land of civilisation, too, who breathe a foul miasma in every pulsation of their lungs; poisoning the beautiful life-blood, and contaminating their minds, lowering their mental stamina, reducing them to a species of moral idiocy combined with physical degradation. Ask yourselves,

whence come your criminals, whence come your degraded men and women that you have to rear prisons and asylums for? Why, from these lower, undeveloped, diseased orders and states of life; and they will continue so to come until you remove the conditions that call them forth.

And, mark you, a sad solemn lesson is here enforced. The criminal population—God help them—are criminal because there are greater criminals beyond them. The criminal population perpetuates itself. Here is the secret of the whole history. If you could prevent the perpetuation of the criminal classes, the cure would be radical and manifest at once. You cannot do it, and thus you have a legacy of crime handed down by every generation. Now this is true; there is no escaping the logical fact, and we can only place this truth on this ground. It is true, because every sanitary and every physiological principle that should regulate human life and action is violated and remorselessly trampled beneath their feet. If it were otherwise there would be bright and living fruit on the tree of life, instead of these dead and blasted apples; we should have fair, rich, flowers, instead of these deadly blossoms emitting their foul miasma and poisoning the atmosphere wherever they congregate. If physiological truth and principle were revered and sanctified and brought into the lives of these people, the race would improve, and their physiology would grow steady and strong, and life would get back its vitalising powers; men would become vigorous and healthy; the moral nature would expand; the area of their soul's operations increase; the environment of their being and the expression of their character would be largely exalted.

Now take the lesson home, you comparatively well-to-do folk that clothe yourselves decently and live in houses with everything that is necessary for your sanitary comfort and health, whose minds are good, and whose heart's pulse beats love to all mankind. One difference of degree perhaps, after all, may be the only difference involved. Mark you, we can hardly draw the line as to the consequences in the case of the poor, hungry, starving wretch who steals a loaf, and gorges himself to repletion with it; who goes home to his miserable lair, suffering from all the horrible results of a dreadful fit of indigestion; we can hardly draw the line between that result and another result in the case of a person far higher in the social scale, who goes to a grand dinner, eats not to live, but, for the time being, most certainly lives to eat, and the next morning has to call in the assistance of his medical adviser, who doses him with a plenitude of nasty things to counteract the effects of the indulgence of the previous evening. Now the parallel is here: Had not the starving wretch over-eaten himself, he would not have had the fit of indigestion; and had our well-to-do person not done the same thing, he would not have been in the terrible condition on the following morning. Thus it matters not what your

position in life or society be; if you violate the principle of physiological health, you reduce yourself to the level of everyone else who does precisely the same thing. And mark you, the sin, if we call it such, in this latter case, is more reprehensible than in the former one, for we at least would have thought that cultivation, education, and intelligence might prove sufficient safeguards to prevent so sad a result.

Having taught this lesson, let us proceed still further to its application. If the criminal race perpetuates itself, remember, at the same time the race of virtue is also continued. Light from light does ever spring, whether it be low or high; and thus there is a continual counterpoise, so to speak, imposed on the balance of the life of the world, which inclines it more or less successfully towards the side of virtue, purity, and goodness. The carrying forward of human life should be so ordered that principles of the highest, and noblest, and purest character shall always be sanctifying the circumstances that surround it.

Now, go a step up into another and more serious contemplation. If physical health is so important, mental health is certainly not one whit behind it in importance. There are some people who consider themselves to be the most cultivated and intelligent minds that the world possesses at the present time. Why, we know one person who thinks he can so safely adjudicate upon every question of fact and experience that he can clearly define abstract principles, and so sharply determine between the true and the fallacious that he can safely write down, "I am right in this matter, and you, sir, I am sorry to say, suffer from a dominant idea." Now if that is not a species of intellectual insanity, we hardly know what to term it. Surely my experience—to use a formula—surely my practical acquaintance with a given fact is of far more worth to me than the abstract theorising of a philosopher who has never faced the fact. To place it in a rough and homely guise, if a table fell on a man's foot and bruise his toe and necessitate the amputation of that toe, that man has a whole series of evidences in his favour, of the reality of that particular table falling over and bringing that sorrowful result to his foot. And, no matter what the abstract philosopher may say, it may be a dominant idea to believe the table fell down, but fall it did, dominant idea notwithstanding. Mental insanity is not confined to such professors. There are theological professors also, and spiritualistic professors, who suffer from the same complaint, and there are humble individuals in daily life who are affected with the same disease. Grant this fact of mental insanity—or aberration shall we call it?—the great difficulty of the present day is, How is the world to arrive at the correct standard by which it can settle all disputes? It is a great difficulty.

Some one was once asked what truth was. The question was never authoritatively answered, and the only answer to it we could

give is, the truth is that which is. But the cultivation of mind does not mean so much the establishing of mind in that position where it can authoritatively decide upon any and every question, so much as it means the development of that mind, so that it can be prepared to accept truth from every quarter, and to reject errors when once they have been clearly developed as such. That is the highest kind of mental cultivation that we know. It is the purest, the noblest kind of intellectual activity we are acquainted with; and though it may be excessively inconvenient to some people to have to remodel their philosophies, they had far better remodel their philosophies fifty times in a life-time than have to confess in the end that they have been blindly stubborn to a truth, and have to do all at once what they could easily have done piece by piece.

From this higher status of mentality we rise upwards to the higher cultivation of man's spiritual gifts—where "me" is laid on the one side, and where the "I" is buried in measureless oblivion; where you, the human family, God's children, everywhere enter into our considerations, and where all are striving and labouring to assist in benefiting the human race; where all God's children claim our care and consideration; where the divine principles of justice, and truth, and goodness are actively manifested in our thoughts and in our actions. This higher altitude of spirituality constitutes a centre of living life and glory, which flows throughout the world in surging floods of happiness and progress for all mankind.

But, you will say, what has all this to do with an Order of Spiritual Teachers? We will show you. You have most heartily agreed with sundry rather radical propositions we have put before you, thereby attesting your desire and ability to receive and appropriate them when presented. You will therefore now agree with this statement we are going to make, that the necessity for this higher form of individual cultivation is painfully apparent in every direction in the world.

Man needs a better life, a nobler mind, and a purer spirituality. If not, why all these efforts to bring them about?

If the world did not want them, these efforts would not be made.

Taking that ground, then, we can certainly see that there is a strong necessity for some system that can educate the human race in these essential principles, and lift them higher, make them better men and women, bodily, mentally, and spiritually, and enable them to leave a legacy of greater goodness behind them than they received from those who have gone before. The need is self-apparent, we contest: the necessity is so manifest that it needs scarcely an argument to support it.

Now the scope of this purpose comprehends the three great divisions of individual life and character—body, mind, and soul.

we might say, its need and scope embrace the necessities of

the triune nature of mankind. But this is not all. If we educate men to live in this world purely, truly, and spiritually; if we assist the human race to a higher development intellectually, spiritually, and bodily, we are but fulfilling one half of the mission of our existence. The Spiritualist, above all people, stands in a most peculiar and favourable position. We are not at all unconscious that we are lording this same Spiritualism to the highest pinnacle. We do so intentionally, for this purpose above all others: We say that life is continuous; that death is not the end of being; that there is a world beyond, where we live an intelligent existence, where we shall know more of the wisdom of the Eternal Father, and from which world you can receive, while here, grander revelations of life, its purpose, and its mysteries, than you can attain by any other methods. Therefore the scope of spiritual education is mortal and immortal in its range. Its need impresses education upon the external and the internal plans also. It involves, as we have told you, the experiences of the world at large, your own personal experiences, and that assistance that you can draw down to your aid from the immortal shores of the ever green lands of light.

If, then, we take this exalted view of spiritual teaching, having confessed the need of this kind of teaching, and having shown you how Spiritualism can assist in the accomplishment of the form we are in search of, let us now inquire who are to be the administrators of this teaching. The very natural answer some of you will give is, "Why, our mediums of course." We shall be inclined to deny the postulate entirely, and say that if you depend altogether on your mediums, you will probably, ere long, find yourselves depending upon needs that are not so strong as you expect. Now, some ardent and enthusiastic Spiritualist will say, "Hark at the man; condemning the highest prerogative of Spiritualism right out." Now, enthusiasm is all very well in its proper place; but when we have to deal with questions affecting the destinies of mankind, judgment, should take the front rank. Why, then, do we say you should not depend entirely upon your mediums? It requires a cultured mediumship, and developed cerebral structure, and exceptionally favourable conditions in order that the spirit-world may bring down to you the highest, grandest, and fullest revelation of life's duties and destinies. Can you find these circumstances attached unquestionably to every and any medium that you choose to mention? We frankly confess that our experience runs in a contrary direction. We do not even find them associated in our own medium. Oftentimes conditions narrow down our own purposes, and circumscribe our own efforts and we can only give you a faint reflection of the great and glorious facts that are the common experiences of our consciousness. Therefore, it would be unwise, we suggest, to trust entirely to mediums. One calling himself a good Christian, turns his head with a half incredulous smile, whenever a pious Roman Catholic speaks of the

spiritual father, the Pope of Rome, but would you exchange that superstition for the other superstition that bows down before a disembodied Pope of Rome manifested through a human medium?

We have always asserted, and we have always requested, so far as we are concerned, that the labours of the spirit-world shall stand or fall upon their own merits. It may be that the experiences of to-morrow will remove a present difficulty, but do not accept anything as an absolute truth, merely because a disembodied spirit says it is. It is but exchanging one form of spiritual vassalage for another. But on the other hand, do not think that we would undermine your faith in the spirit-world. Do not think that we would have you forget the all-important fact that the sainted dead whose love has cheered your life in this world, whose warm hands have clasped yours, and whose eyes have been most eloquent in counsel and in strength in your past life—we would not have you for a moment think that these are not to be trusted; we would not have you suppose that they have lost their character for truthfulness and goodness; we would have you think of them as you have always thought of them—as the dearly loved and noble ones who out of the heart's great deeps—out of the very essence of the soul—come back from the great Beyond, and clasping your hand in spirit and in truth, are still mindful of your well-being, still desirous of furthering your interests, still zealous to lift you up and make you more spiritual and noble. Remember you will in due time join yourself to the great community of angelhood that you have loved so long, and that has been so powerful for good with you; that you will stand ranked side by side with the hosts of immortality, and then you shall know even as they know. We would not have you in matters of opinion subjugate your reason to the inhabitants of the spirit-world, but upon matters of fact on which they speak positively until you prove them false, you are bound to admit their truth. Let us then proceed to find out who are to be these teachers.

In matters affecting those subtle and interior relationships, sustained by humanity to the spirit-world, it is through the channel of mediumship that you can expect to find your greatest revelations. No matter the mistakes, or blunders, or contradictions, or blind follies that might be projected through those channels, still they are the only avenues between this world and the one beyond it, and you must discount all these anomalies, you must analyse all these contradictions, you must reduce chaos to order, you must extract the gold from the dross; and then you will find the startling proposition that the fault has been not so much on the part of the spirit-world or the medium, *per se*, but in regard to the subtle development of mediumship.

Now we claim it requires an instrument specially developed, harmoniously surrounded, and particularly endowed in certain

directions, if you wish certain relations in this other life to come down to the outer world. You do not expect, for instance, a great rough, brutal kind of man to be a poet or a politician; you cannot expect him to give forth glowing inspirations of poetry, or bring down to your consideration problems of spiritual life and truth, to reveal to you the mysteries of the spiritual universe. A proper organisation must be at hand for the revelation to flow through.

The whole thing, then, centres on another fact. Shall you trust to the ordinary teachers of the world to assist you in these directions? Well, you know where they have landed you now; you know what has been the result of their teaching: crime and vice, and universal ignorance, in regard to the very principles we are discussing, are the common characteristics of the present day society; therefore we should say certainly you must not trust to these leaders, for they have verily been leaders of the blind, and blind themselves. To whom then are we to turn? Where shall we go? Before we give a final answer to the question, let us speak as to the necessity of establishing this particular Order and outline it. When we have done that, we shall show you who shall be the teachers. If one person in a family be sweet of temper, sound of health, pure of morals, generous of soul, there is a centre in that family through which can flow elements of peace and goodness for all the rest. And if the whole household in turn became affected with the same goodness, then that particular household becomes at once consecrated, harmonious, happy. Therefore the Order should be established first of all within the family circle. Every family calling itself a Spiritualist family should strive to reduce the practice into life, and conduct the principles we have laboured to place before you to-night.

First, then, the family circle. Mankind—at large—delights to associate. Man is a gregarious animal, and delights to interchange his opinions and ideas with his fellows. Then let the aggregating families unite, and harmonious souls combine together in some general assembly. Either the whole of their members or a certain select few should have an inclination in that direction. Thus, then, they should form a School which would form a neutral platform, so to speak, wherein divers opinions might be canvassed, the opposite ideas discussed and debated, and the experience of other persons brought before those who had been similarly favoured. The school then would be constituted of the family, and he who was wisest and best fitted for the office would naturally gravitate to the position of director. Those found in the family school would not only become a possibility realised, but would become a perfectly practical possibility. You would do the rough work at home where you could each bear with your mutual failings, and where criticism on one another would not sound so harsh as when given in the company of strangers. You could thus prepare

yourselves for the broader theatre of the School and store your minds with personal experiences, with the result of reading and investigation, and deep mental thought on your own parts, and you would form good and useful scholars when you met together, we will say, for this form of worship.

Then, again, lifting it beyond this, there is the effect produced by this social and scholastic training, so to speak, on the community around you. You have tested the principles of these things within the world, though not of the world, forming a part of the worldly life of humanity, yet lifting yourselves ever beyond that worldly life, you would become a power in the state, of influence in your own spheres of society and friendship; you would be able to institute a higher moral atmosphere wherever you went; and, as weak goodness is always killed by powerful wickedness, so wickedness, be it ever so powerful, in due time always succumbs to positive goodness whenever that goodness is presented. You would then become a leaven that would eventually leaven the whole, and you could bear testimony before the world—which you should do—that your Spiritualism was something more than mere phenomenal sensationalism; that it had a purpose, and that that purpose was what you were prepared to testify to as an accomplished fact; that it would make mankind, as it made you, the wiser, the better, the happier, for its existence.

Now who are the Teachers of this movement? Why, they are yourselves. There is no need to train a race of men to do this progressive teaching for you. You should all be prepared to labour yourselves in these directions. Zealous of heart and sound of purpose, you should set about teaching yourselves to profit by your past errors and follies, and to rise superior to them in the future; to detect all the weak spots in your natures, to find out all the blots in your characters, to zealously guard against them, to remove them, to stir up strength to resist attacks from without, and to teach yourselves the gospel of a useful life, which, in the truest and fullest sense of the term, means a happy life. Being your own teachers, then, you could be your own helps, mentally helping one another; and, as some man's thoughts may flow quicker than those of his fellows, or another's inspirations may be deeper than those of a second one, and as some one's soul may be quickened with the pulse of purity more than some other souls, so these naturally prominent ones—not artificially prominent—would be able to be as councillors and advisers to their fellows and associates, and would be able to assist in the general purpose of mutual and individual education, and thus by a species of "natural selection," so to speak, they would attain to their proper office, become teachers and guides of those weaker than themselves or less developed, and, without any effort on your part, and without any external organisation, without any of the machinery of organisation by which those principles were radically effectuated, the Order of Spiritual Teachers

would embrace every Spiritualist, and its Teachers would be found in every person bearing the name of Spiritualist.

Now some have considered that in offering to speak on this subject we should necessarily proceed to uphold a species of organisation, that we should build up a skeleton system all aglow with titles and distinctions, and to divide the scholars into grades and degrees, and thus fall into precisely the same mistake that all kinds of external organisations have inevitably committed. We appeal to you to answer the question, Have we done so? There can be but one answer—We have repudiated and ignored such distinctions all through our remarks. We have brought the question down to the stern necessity of every Spiritualist becoming his own teacher, his own saviour, and his own elevator. This, we take it, is the great aim and purpose of your existence.

The Order of Spiritual Teachers may be effectuated by such methods as you choose; but if you happen to use a method of effectuation that is inherently bad, failure will certainly result. You cannot sanctify a bad cause or a vicious action by a pure and noble purpose. The thing is so self-evidently absurd, that we almost ask pardon for presenting it.

The Order of Spiritual Teachers, to which we look forward for such successful results, is of the kind and character to which we have referred. We ourselves, for a long time past, have perceived the necessity for these particular remarks being presented, and by a certain series of events, which it is not necessary to detail to you, we have had this opportunity of presenting them to you in strict obedience to a certain purpose which animates us. The poet has told us, and told us truly,

"Life is real; life is earnest;
And the grave is not its goal."

We would have you bear in mind these words. Have you realised the earnestness of life, the necessity of bequeathing a legacy of helpfulness to future generations—a helpfulness that takes in its comprehensive grasp, body, mind, and soul? Remember you are daily and hourly constituting that legacy. This essential entering into it, the world in future will bless your efforts; you will indicate your efforts of life and purpose, and you will find growing around you a purer, and truer, and nobler spiritual sentiment, and you will find the tone of spirituality around you rising to a higher level than it is to-day; and one thing will stand clear before all. Millions of people, instead of being politically and physically dominated over by one mind, will refuse to be led like sheep to the slaughter; they will refuse to do the bidding of their masters, to reap physical death and pain in this world, be ticketed as heroes, and have glory inscribed over their lives; they will learn that war is not a spiritual method of progress, and that they who lead their fellows to war are doing, after all, wholesale murder.

Vices will disappear, creedism will die, egotism will pass away; the principles of pure religion, truth, and science will stand forth in all their native dignity; and resurrected humanity—shall we say a purified humanity—draped in the robes of immortal liberty, having the glorious principles of truth encircling its noble brow, shall then stand forth;—the dark sable curtains of ignorance shall roll away for ever.

The glory clouds of Love and Truth shall then float in serener skies; Wisdom's sun shall shine over all; its glorious refulgent light entering into the heart of all mankind; and as you strive to constitute yourselves teachers in the school of life, so the Order of Spiritual Teachers, of which you will thus naturally form a part, will extend its area to the foundations of the earth, include all humanity in its scope and its need, vindicating itself in the good results to flow on every hand; and you will find that true essential progress hinges upon the development of man's triune nature in this world, laying the foundation of the knowledge of worlds that lie beyond it, preparing you in this world to gravitate from the mortal to the everlasting and ever-living Order of Spiritual Teachers in the world beyond, the need and scope of which will be the more fully unfolded before you as you march up the hills of being through the never-ceasing eternities of infinitudes beyond.

