

THE TWO WORLDS

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO

SPIRITUALISM, OCCULT SCIENCE, ETHICS, RELIGION AND REFORM.

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THE ROSTRUM.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

[A warning against religious idolatry, an incentive to live the life of religion, and a greeting to the real spirit of Christmas.]

BY EMMA H. BRITTEN.

SOME twelve years ago, the Editor being then lecturing to vast audiences in the Prince's Opera House, Melbourne, permitted committees of the audience, nearly every Sunday evening, to select the subjects of her addresses. The selections thus made were almost invariably on the questions of the origins of all religious faiths, the real authenticity of the Jewish scriptures and the originality of a "Divine Messiahship," as claimed by Christians for Jesus of Nazareth.

These, and other kindred subjects were treated with such startling statements—statements so entirely opposed to the stereotyped beliefs of modern Christians—that several of the gentlemen who had been most prominent in selecting subjects of the above named character for the lecturer's discourses, entreated her to write a book which should not only reiterate all her assertions of direct plagiarism for the Christian faith, but give indisputable authority for every statement, and such references to authentic sources as would vouch for the reliability of the various propositions advanced. It was in obedience to these requests that Mrs. Britten's "Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religious History" was written and published, in which references (chapter and verse) were given to many of the most learned and authoritative writers of ancient and modern history.

After passing through ten editions and being distributed through many countries, that little book and its tremendous accusation of the *frauds* that have been practised upon the *facts* of religious history in the name of *faiths*, still remains unanswered, and not one of its iconoclastic revelations are disproved. The main idea of the writing is to show that the claim for divine incarnations, and the appearance of Messiahs, or God-men, with all the accessories of a specially unnatural birth, life, and death were derived from ancient solar worship, the impersonation of sun, moon, and stars in the earliest and oldest prehistoric period of man's appearance on earth, and that the legends, fictions, and subsequent worship of no less than thirty-four "Incarnate God-men" prior to the time of Jesus of Nazareth, were all drawn from the same source, all woven around any great religious teachers or reformers that appeared from time to time in different ancient countries, and all had very much the same histories attributed to them. All were called "Christs," or the anointed ones; were born on Midwinter, or Christmas day, from which period of the year the physical sun of winter is annually reborn. Then, after a special history corresponding to the sun's passage through the constellations, these God-men were said to have died a violent death, to rise from the grave, ascend to heaven and be worshipped as the saviours and redeemers of mankind.*

If asked where we place the Christian Messiah we answer, with the rest of the God-men, either as a myth or

else believing him like most, if not all, of his predecessors, to have been a good, devoted, and inspired man; one who was imbued by the universal faith of the time with the belief of his own Messiahship; of a spiritualized nature, and thus enabled to work signs and wonders: one who taught pure simple morality, and a living faith in God, good, and immortality, just as the scriptures of all other nations had taught; and one who was ultimately put to death for the treason of allowing his fanatical followers to hail him as a king, contrary to the powers that then ruled the nation.

That the scriptures of all the ancient faiths must be fulfilled in Jesus, his disciples and worshippers wove around his life, death, and teachings the histories of all the former sun gods; re-established all the old solar fasts and feasts, and especially celebrated their Messiah's birth on mid-winter day, subsequently called, in honour of the Christ character attributed to Jesus, "Christmas Day."

In the midst of all the stupendous superstitions, horrible sacrifices of life, wars, and persecutions, that have marked the history and rival sects of Christianity, one sweet, gracious, and redeeming feature has ever shone, like a star of heaven looking down in matchless light and purity upon the darkness and iniquity of earth. This one glorious and redemptive point in the Christian faith is the life, teaching, and gracious doctrine of the founder himself, and though we now insist sternly, emphatically, and historically, that Jesus is *not* in the Christian Church, nor in its creeds or articles of faith; that he never has been, and not a single dogma of that faith is in the least harmony with his life or merciful words, we still find him, and we thank our Father and His ministering spirits that we do so, on every Christmas Day. On that day, long custom, and we now firmly believe high and holy inspiration from heaven, has taught us to celebrate the time, not with the memory of the Athanasian Creed, St. Bartholomew, or the horrors of the wars of the Reformation, but in deeds of mercy and kindness such as the dear Jesus would have done if he really ever lived and were still among us. To the rich and poor alike Christmas has become, by long prescriptive custom, the season when, if never at any other time, the hardest heart is opened, and the harshest spirit must relax into something like kindness. Who can sit down to the well-spread table on that joyous day without putting aside some little share of good cheer for the poor and comfortless? Who can be the recipient of kindly mementoes, large or small, without gathering up some spare bit of finery for the young, a warm overcoat, blanket, or even a pair of warm socks or shoes for the old, or some one, any one, who needs; some fellow mortal a little worse off than ourselves?

WE MUST, WE WILL, even at any personal sacrifice, go out of our poor solitary selfhood to bless some needy one, to make some poor soul a little happier or better off on Christmas Day than they were before, and this done our all is done, but there is something in human nature which will not let us rest until THIS ALL IS DONE. The devout Christian goes to hear his pastor's exhortation, to do all this "for Christ's sake." The friend of humanity, and the worshipper of the Great Spirit, through his only true and divine word, the Gospel of nature, feels impressed to do this for humanity's sake, because the midwinter, whilst it pleads in snow and storm for the hungry and naked, also fills the heart with hope and promise of the ever recurring spring, when the icy chains of wintry frost melting beneath the ascending glory of equinoctial skies will exchange leafless branches and bare earth for flowers and bloom, and the bitter hardships of winter for the plenty and warmth of summer. All these are the revelations of God in nature, and every good man

* See "The Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religious History." John Heywood, publisher, Manchester.

in every age and every clime has taught this, written of and preached this. Not Jesus of Nazareth alone, but Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Confucius, Osiris, Krishna, and all the so-called God-men, Boudhas, saints, prophets, and seers that ever lived, loved, and proved that love in their deeds of mercy and kindness.

If all these live still, as Spiritualism proves they do, it is *their* spirits that still inspire us; rally round us on mid-winter day; plead for the poor and helpless in that bitter season, and fill us with joy and hope that the worst of the year is over. It is they, too, that stimulate us by their invisible presence to drift off into the realms of the Spiritual, and though in our deplorable ignorance concerning spirits and spiritual gifts, we mistake our heavenly surroundings for "ghosts and spectres," we *must* talk of these things—even if, as we gather round the Christmas fire, we—in our darkness and blindness—must needs robe our angel visitors with the pall and the winding sheet.

During the present writer's long thirty years of ceaseless toil, travel, and world-wide wandering—always coming and going in the houses of strangers, and with few and scant measure of life's external means of comfort—how often has she blessed the Christmas tides, when the very poor and friendless whom her own narrow means forbade her to help, received from the kind and munificent ones of earth the welcome treasures of fire, food, and warm clothing! From the homes of her many good entertainers the wandering medium has never realized a higher joy, or more heartfelt gladness, than when she has been the privileged assistant in dispensing Christmas bounties to the poor and needy, who might never enjoy such a full meal or happy time again for a whole year.

But we commenced by writing of Christmas-tide—the origin and source of its time-honoured celebrity, and we must not drift any further into the *past* of its history, but give one closing illustration of THE SPIRIT which rules its sweet festivities:—

The Editor's engagements took her to Troy, New York, a long time ago. There she was engaged, according to custom, to speak four Sundays in succession, including the Christmas season. The family who kindly entertained the speaker, on a certain occasion, was that of a Mr. Attwood, of Troy, a noble gentleman, a large manufacturer, and one of the first and most earnest Spiritualists of that city. The family, however, in matters of religious belief, was unfortunately divided. One of the little children was a medium of marvellous power; the wife, husband, and other children were earnest believers, but there was one exception to the general faith. Mr. Attwood's mother had been, and still remained, an old school Presbyterian of the *strictest* type. She was a stern, resolved, and aged lady—one who had long aimed to govern the family; and their secession from her Presbyterian faith, and their lapse into Spiritualism through the splendid mediumship of the youngest child, had created a bitter feud in the household. How this was deepened, when a *minister* of the abhorred Spiritual faith entered the house may be imagined. The stern old lady was silent, and the well-convinced Spiritualists were fain to talk with bated breath with their friend and speaker.

On Christmas day and after two grand services had been held in the Spiritualists' hall, the whole family gathered round the Christmas fire of the large parlour, the old lady occupying the seat of honour in the warmest corner.

As the theme of ghost stories was tabooed in respect to the aged mother's prejudices, Mr. Attwood, the good host of the occasion, began, as if involuntarily, recalling the brothers, sisters, children, and friends he had lost since the early Christmas nights he could remember as a young man. Having gone over a long list he concluded, in a half dreamy way, with the remark, "And now they are all gone, and there's only us few left."

"All gone!" cried the old Presbyterian mother, erecting herself upright in her chair. "Why look! Look! They are all here. There's Richard my eldest born in that new flowered waistcoat I gave him forty years ago. And there's Abby in my wedding brocade gown which I gave her for her wedding dress; and her husband too with the great wound and streak of blood on his head from which he died; and oh! look, children, look!" And now rising from her chair and pointing with her thin white trembling hand hither and thither around the room she continued, "Yes, they are all here." And then she began to describe their forms and to greet and welcome them by name, concluding in a faint voice as she sank back in her chair, "All here, all here, not

one missing but me, and thank heaven! I shall soon join them!" Then beckoning to the once abhorred Spiritual speaker to approach her, she said in tender tones, placing her withered hands on the young girl's head, "Thank you, child, for singing for me to-day my parting hymn, 'Where the roses ne'er shall wither.'" No one had told her this lovely hymn was sung, and she had never heard even its title. Then extending her hands over the party as if in blessing, she murmured—"God bless you all. Farewell till we meet in Heaven."

Supported by one of her grandchildren she passed to her bed, where she was found the next morning, her hands crossed on her breast, her soul fled, the casket of earth left empty, and the smile of peace on her dead lips. "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL.

Christmas Story.

MARY MACDONALD; OR, THE TRUE HISTORY OF A MINISTERING ANGEL.

BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

'Twas Christmas Eve. A deep and continuous snowstorm had almost blocked up the narrow streets of the busy Scottish town of G—. The rolling of carriages and the hum of eager holiday-making foot passengers began to die away out of the darkening streets. A dim twilight was fast deepening into a murky night, piercing with its icy chill every shivering pedestrian, whilst it added a tenfold charm to the glowing hearths and holly-decked rooms that sent out many a stream of shimmering light through half-drawn curtains and busy shops to the white frozen streets below. Then it was that amid the drifting sweep of the snow king's wings, a thin bent form might be seen slowly patrolling a now nearly-deserted street, and whilst gazing up wistfully at the cheery, yet unshuttered windows of the houses, he crept by, as if to pick out a favourable spot for his future operations. He at length paused before one of the most brilliantly-lighted dwellings, and drawing a carefully-shrouded violin from beneath his tattered coat he commenced playing a merry tune—yes, actually a merry tune—before the house he had selected to stop at. Someone might have said, "Heaven help the ears that could pronounce the mournful wail of that old instrument a *merry one*"—yet it was intended to be so, and to impress the listeners, if there were any, with the belief that the tunes it scraped out, such as "Drops of Brandy," "Come, haste to the wedding," and other jovial relics of song-antiquity, were highly appropriate to the festive time. Perhaps the violin might have been a very dismal one—certain it was that the old tunes were far more suggestive of *requiem* strains, mourning for the pleasant times of long ago, than for any intimation of the joy and merriment once associated with their jolly names. So seemed to think, too, the dissatisfied performer, for after shifting from one cold foot to the other, blowing on his frozen fingers, as if to inspire them with fresh life, and straining his bow again and again to his task, a change seemed to come over the spirit of his dream—his trembling arm moved slowly over the mournful exponent of his breaking heart, and "Home, home, sweet home" maned through the howling of the blast like the cry of a despairing soul on the shores of eternity. Crack! crack! A creaking, frozen window is heard slowly yielding to the strong arm and testy will that lifts it. Then a rough voice cries, "Here, fellow! take yourself off with that cursed fiddle; it's enough to freeze one to death to hear such music on such a night. Be off with you, I say." Slam goes the window down again, and a penny falls on a heap of snow. The old violinist picks it up, replaces his torn hat, which he had humbly doffed when the window was opened carefully, tucks his instrument under his arm, and turns and leaves the street. 'Tis evident he will play no more to-night. He limps away painfully, and is often driven by the icy blast against the walls, but he fares on with determined effort and steps, now quickening, and now failing as if they must be his last; at length he sinks worn out and seemingly incapable of advancing further against a handsome sheltered doorway. Here he makes as if he would take some repose, for he ascends two steps, sits on the third, and leans as if composing himself for a long sleep against the side of the porch. But no! he cannot stay there. The door opens behind him, he starts up, and descending the steps in haste, stands aside whilst a

tall, fat, portly gentleman, the owner of that splendid mansion, a great alderman of note in that town, passes out, and stands facing the daring itinerant who had ventured to seek shelter beneath the porch of his magnificent mansion.

Without pausing to wonder even in thought what could have brought that great rich man from his noble dwelling on that inclement night, the sight of the harsh, fierce, well-known face was in itself enough to speed the tottering wanderer on his way. Streets and courts he sped through, until pausing in the most dismal of all alley ways he yet had reached, he began slowly, painfully, and stumbling at every step, to ascend the many weary stairs which led at last to the very top of the building, and there, pausing on a bit of a landing before a crazy door, he murmurs faintly, "Home, sweet home," and then lifts the latch and enters the garret he thus apostrophises. Two objects within that desolate place at once redeem it from what else would have been bare boards and utter loneliness. In one corner of the room a closet door is open, almost framed by the black walls. Within is a straw pallet, on which is lying a young and beautiful girl, now confined to that poor shelter by a severe attack of rheumatism incurred in some of her desperate efforts to support her aged father.

But with eyes wandering from this spectacle he looks upon another still stranger. Behind the rusty bars of the old grate is a bright turf fire, and before it on the ground two heaping plates of warm oatmeal porridge.

"Dear father, how late you are to-night, and, ah me! how tired and worn you look."

Here the poor invalid made a feeble but ineffectual effort to rise.

"Be still, Mary," murmured the old man in a weak, hoarse voice. "I have come to wait on you, darling. See," he added, taking a roll of bread from his hat, and holding out the penny thrown to him, "here is all the fruit of my day's earnings, and as I suppose I may not patrol the streets on Christmas Day—oh, my Mary!—I have brought no other provision for thee to-morrow."

"None is wanted, dearest father," replied the girl cheerily. "I prayed—oh, how I prayed!—that the good Father in Heaven would send us help in this the hour of our most bitter need, and, lo! think of it, father!—see how my earnest prayers, now as ever, are answered. Just now, in comes old Betty, who lives down below us, and she says that a dear stranger lady, she knows not who, came in to see her, and bid her bring to me all this bright turf to make the fire, together with meal and bread and milk enough for all we want or shall want over to-morrow, but—father dear, you are not heeding me! speak to me, dearest father! what is it makes you so very, very sad, when such good fortune has come to us?"

"Mary," murmured the old man, who was sitting rocking himself to and fro on a wooden stool beside the pallet, "I played to-day all my prettiest tunes in vain. I played before the door of the great rich man, Alderman Driggs. The servants came and drove me away, saying their master was very ill and could not be disturbed. A fine carriage drove up, and I heard a footman telling the doctor as he got out to hasten, as the alderman was dying of apoplexy. By accident I stopped at his door again to-night, and would have rested there, but, Mary, *he opened that door himself*, came out, and stared at me so angrily that I rose and came away."

"He could not have been, as they said, dying then, father?"

"No, Mary, *not dying, but dead—dead*, my darling. Mary, as I now live, that was *his spirit*. I know it child, and know that soon, very soon, he and I shall meet where the rich man and the beggar will be on more equal terms than we have been here. Hark! Mary, hark! That is the passing bell. It sounds out for the soul of the rich man, not for the beggar. No matter, I shall soon join him, and then there will be no difference between us. I *have* nothing to take with me, he *can* take nothing with him."

"Oh! my father, my father!"

"Hush, darling! There is One here to-night who never fails to cross the threshold or ascend to the garret—One, Mary, who comes alike to rich and poor. His footsteps have been echoing in my ears for many a weary day, and I thank our Heavenly Father that He has come for the last time to-night. He has come, my beloved one, to lead me home, to *my* home, to my sweet, sweet home in Heaven."

A shriek from the lips of the agonized girl, a heavy fall, and even as the "golden bowl was broken, and the silver cord loosed," the strings of the old Cremona snapped one after another, and all was over.

CHAPTER II.

"HOME, SWEET HOME," IN HEAVEN.

THE poor are ever merciful and helpful to each other. In that old and dismal tenement-house were many tender hands, which bore the dead musician to a quiet empty room, performed the last sad offices over his silent form, and were ready to offer all the kindly sympathy that circumstances demanded to the unhappy orphan. Gratefully acknowledging their good service, she only prayed to be left alone till the following morning. Within one hour after they had retired, poor Mary's sobs were hushed, and her weeping eyes closed in what she subsequently described to some of her biographers as the deepest sleep she had ever known. From this she would declare she was aroused by a soft hand tenderly but firmly clasping her own. In the dream, trance, or vision that then fell upon her she unclosed her eyes, and looked up into the loveliest, sweetest face she had ever before beheld. The exquisite female form that now bent over her inspired her with neither fear nor surprise, and though no words had been spoken, she *knew*, by a strange, newly-acquired sense of perception, that she was in the presence of her angel mother—the mother that had passed from her in her early childhood. For a moment the thought of her dead father flitted through her memory, but, wonderful even to herself, she thought of him now with neither regret nor pain. She loved him better than ever, but the presence of the angel mother hovering over her filled her with such an inexpressible calm, such a sense of heavenly rest, that she could only feel that all was well, and sorrow and suffering had no place there.

But now the scene changes. In an instant Mary feels herself borne away—away, far away through space; above the earth, above the stars, away into unknown realms of warmth and beauty, shining skies above, sunny airs and glorious scenery all around her. Still her angel is at her side, one arm thrown lovingly around her, and her radiant face pressed closely and tenderly to the face of the poor child of earth. Once more the scene changes, and now—oh, horror!—though Mary feels no cold, they enter a region of impenetrable ice and snow. They float far above it, but its utter desolation and the effect of a howling storm which drives its way through this dreadful scene are palpable to the sense of sight, if not of feeling. And now—oh, piteous sight!—there are dreary, shivering, tempest-tossed men and women there—no *children*, but wild, passionate-looking, fierce, and desperate men and women—inhabitants, as it would seem, of this woful place. No need to ask the beholder why they were there. Hearts as icy as the scene around, passions as fierce as the storm that raged about them, lives of cruelty and utter selfishness, were stamped visibly on every form, and Mary *knew* that each one's nature was represented in that awful scene.

Whilst she gazed in horror and compassion on these self-doomed spirits, whilst the prayer, "Father, forgive them, they knew not what they did," involuntarily rose to her lips, the form of one she did recognize drifts into view, filling the stormy air with alternate imprecations and supplications for mercy.

His garments are costly, yet the piercing cold of the storm causes the form beneath them to shiver and tremble. His limbs are portly and well covered, yet the gnawing pangs of hunger distort his animal features, and the insatiate desire for drink whitens his paroned lips and burns in his starting eyeballs. In deep and agonizing sympathy Mary droops her head on the bosom of her angel guide, and murmurs—

"Alas! alas! I know him. It is Alderman Driggs!"

"It is his icy heart, my beloved child, which creates the piercing cold around him," murmured the angel. "It is his greedy hand, which converted the toiler's blood and bones into his luxurious home, which makes him homeless now. He never clothed the naked, fed the hungry, nor comforted the afflicted. Surely, surely, he is only reaping as he has sown! Hunger, thirst, cold, the scoff and jest of the poor he has oppressed, these are the lessons by which man is to learn the tremendous truth that the soul itself creates its own heaven or its own hell by the good or evil it has wrought on earth."

"Is there, then, no mercy for the wrongs done, the dreadful mistakes, sins, and evils of earth, mother?"

"Aye, is there, my child. There is not one, but twice-told ten thousand Christs preaching to these spirits in the prison houses of their sins and evils, and when, by penitence,

remorse, and the effort to atone for their wrongs, they shall be moved to higher aims and nobler purposes, they shall come forth purified by the fires of suffering, and move on for ever up the steep of eternal progress through the paths of eternal good. Then cheer up, my beloved child, and see how near is the kingdom of heaven, and how truly it is born within the very spirit of man himself."

As the angel spoke, a veil of curling, silvery mist seemed to fall on the entire scene around them, hiding from view the icy ground, the desolate seas, rivers, rocks, and snow-covered landscape; and now the misty veil is tinged with golden hues, as of melting sunbeams; a moment more and a flutter, as if of clouds of birds on the wing are heard; delightful fragrance fills the balmy air; bursts of sunlight pierce and dissipate the mists; and a lovely, lovely land, filled with lovely people, fair women, stately men, dancing children, and homes ravishing in beauty, glorious white cities, and far-away landscapes, all melting into sunlit glory, dazzle the eyes of the entranced beholder. She cannot speak, her lips are sealed, and she would have fallen on her knees in praise and prayer but for the supporting arms of the angel; another moment, and a strain of ravishing and wonderful music bursts on her ear. No earthly instrument ever gave forth such sounds of delicious melody, yet the strain it plays is familiar—"Home, sweet home," it plays—it grows stronger, nearer; it sweeps the balmy air as it fans her very face; a crowd of bright and lustrous forms arrayed in robes of shimmering light approach her, and in their midst is the tall, erect, transfigured form of her old dead father—now young, alive for ever, a radiant ministering angel. Even as her senses are reeling and her drooping form is sinking beneath its weight of unspeakable joy, she hears the now strong, clear accents of her father, crying in tones that became engraved on her memory for the rest of her mortal life,

"Go back to earth, my beloved child, and cherish well the precious boon of life; feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and care for the widow and fatherless."

Something of her old helplessness, poverty and suffering, came rushing like a cold chill upon the child of earth as these commands were given. How could the sick tenant of the garret obey them? No word was spoken, yet, instantly, *her thought* was answered.

The bright crowd of angels that surrounded the radiant form of her father parted, a single brilliant star shone out in the cloudless firmament, while above it, in golden letters, whose burning fire entered her heart, and never after left it chill or desolate, she read, and ever after lived out, the one word—"FAITH."

CHAPTER III.

It was the morning after Christmas Day when Mary Macdonald awoke from her long trance—awoke to find herself a changed being, both in body and mind. Her first act was to spring up from her straw pallet, perfectly restored to health—in fact, *well, strong*, with every shade of suffering or weakness gone, whilst the memory of her father returned to her, no longer as the dead mendicant musician awaiting burial in the next garret, but as the arisen spirit—young, bright, glorious; rags exchanged for the robes of immortality; want, despair, and death for eternal life and happiness. Under the stimulus of a new life—too deep, too mighty and sacred, ever to be depicted in words—Mary hastily attired herself in the best fashion her threadbare garments permitted, and for fear she should encounter and be detained by any of the kindly sympathizers whose poor service her past helplessness had drawn around her, she passed quietly and swiftly down the narrow stairs into the grim alley ways, and on, on, on, until, in a retired and aristocratic thoroughfare, she stopped before a large handsome mansion, hastily ascended the steps, and rang the bell. For a moment the shadow of the *past dead life* was upon her, but the star of the new birth in FAITH soon lifted the veil, so that when a powdered and gilded lackey answered the summons she was *inspired* to ask humbly, yet firmly, to see the master of the mansion, a well-known magistrate of the city, Mr. McManners. The lackey looked at the girl's shabby externals, but *something he could not resist* impelled him to admit her, and before he knew it, that threadbare-looking figure had followed him to the magistrate's study door, and quietly but firmly passed him, as he announced that "a person wished to see him."

Unlike the late Alderman Driggs, Mr. McManners had the reputation of being a stern, unmalleable, law-abiding magistrate. Now and then a few old and humble people

spoke of him lovingly; but common report (that common liar) represented him as a "harsh, hard man."

As her first act of FAITH, and under the inspiration of "the world that knows," Mary had come to him. For the first few minutes, under the impulse of which she had followed the lackey into the room, the high-strung invisible chords which had directed her movements sustained her; but whether under the same power, or more human guidance, who can say? It is enough that her prepared sentence, *demanding* burial for her father, dead of old age and want, failed her; and, instead—bursting into an agony of merely human weakness—she fell at the feet of the magistrate, sobs choking her utterance, and only allowing her from time to time to pour out her tale of the old crippled dead musician, dying from cold and want, in the midst of luxury and extravagance, and his penniless orphan asking for the means to bury him.

Oh, sweet, gracious ties! that bind up all humanity into one chain, anchored around the heart of the common Father, God! Touch that, appeal to that, and the plea is answered, and every human pang that rends a brother's heart pierces every other nature. Mr. McManners wept with the girl that knelt prostrate at his feet. The cold, stern magistrate had merged into the man, and he murmured to the stranger at his feet—

"Tell me your grief, poor child, and be assured the hand of human sympathy shall be extended in its aid."

"Oh, sir," replied the weeping girl, "I came here to *demand* money to bury my dead father, cut off by cold and hunger. I meant to *claim* of you rent for our miserable garret, fire for my frozen limbs, and bread for my orphaned lips; but, ah me! the heart that was steeled against humanity in its cruelty and pride, melts like the snow beneath the sun of kindly sympathy. Oh, sir! let me depart with my rebellious protest *against*, not for, humanity, unspoken."

But Mary Macdonald did not so depart. All she had felt and suffered Mr. McManners had seen throughout, and longed to revolutionize if he had only known how. Mary had not been inspired by the higher powers that held her in charge to come to him out of all the celebrities of that vast city in vain. For two hours the magistrate and his strange visitor talked together of the things alike of time and eternity. The real meanings of that long interview have never come into Mary Macdonald's printed biography, they are inscribed alone on the archives of eternity. The result was that Mr. McManners, who was going from home for a fortnight, sent her away with one of his officials, charged to bury her father, pay her rent, provide every "comfort" her orphaned state required, and on the magistrate's return he would see her and provide properly for her future.

All this was done, but when the good man did return, and hoped to find in the garret his mercy had converted into a home the protégée his kind heart had determined to adopt, the garret was empty, the inmate flown, and on earth they never met again.

Sixty miles from the first scene of our history was another large town, full of wealth and woe, luxury and misery; the rich grown rich out of the sweat and toil of the poor; palaces of millionaires, in the shelter of whose silent doorsteps flocks of outcast and homeless spent the nights. In the immediate vicinity of this mixed heaven and hell upon earth was a house, large, roomy, and commodious, but tabooed as a "haunted place," one which no mortal, however venturesome, could inhabit. The proprietor at length, in sheer desperation, advertised the place rent free to any persons who would pledge themselves to inhabit it for a given period of time. Towards this place early in the new year after our Christmas story's date, a sweet-faced, fair young woman, in a rough hat, camlet cloak, and wooden shoes, might have been seen trudging the last of sixty miles on foot, carrying one bundle, whilst a little ragged street Arab, holding her hand, was carrying another. Three days later the house might have been seen swept and cleaned, though nearly empty, sheltering the young woman and the orphaned street boy, whilst a large board was fixed up over the door with the inscription newly painted upon it of "REFUGE FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN." In the early morning of the fourth day of their tenancy, the young woman said to the boy—

"We have but one shilling left of good Mr. McManners' store, Peter, and I am going out to get some furniture, beds, firing, and food. There is enough bread and milk in the house for you, dear, and you know what to say to any who may call, don't you, Peter?"

"I would just die for you, Mother Mary," replied the blubbing lad. "But how are you going to get all those things you say, please, mother?"

"By FAITH, my child," was the answer, and by faith they came, and by laying her case and her needs before the Lord of the earth in prayer every day, all that was necessary to support, educate, feed, and provide for thousands of street children, orphans, lost ones, and not a few destitute old people, was brought to Mary Macdonald's refuge during a period of some THIRTY YEARS. We, the Spiritualists, know something of the effect of human "Psychology." We know it is in the air, and when its blessed influences for good are directed by God's ministering angels towards those quarters where earthly ministering angels are to be found, they arose, under a strong and resistless impulse, and *had to* bring to "the Refuge" all that the Mother Mary asked for in prayer—to "feed her sheep," "feed her lambs."

Mary Macdonald has long since passed to her heavenly home, and though the memory of her blessed work has been preserved only in old ballads, legends of her priceless worth, and tales, some true, some perhaps exaggerated, of the noble men and women that in this very century have graduated from her home, and become, like her, ministering angels on earth, the historic marks of this blessed creature's work, are still extant, though few and slender.

The house she converted into her Refuge was still haunted, but only by angels, and whilst deeded to her for her lifetime, has long since been pulled down, and a modern terrace of respectable dwellings erected on its site. Peter, her first inmate, who took the appropriate *sobriquet* of "Trueman," attended at the grave of his more than mother when her earthly pilgrimage was done, and then, with knapsack on his shoulder, walked to the nearest port of embarkation for the United States. Having worked his way thither as a common sailor, he next worked his way upward as a farm labourer, became an employer, a husband, father of a houseful of happy children, and possessor of a vast estate, from which the hungry and the outcast were never turned away empty or comfortless. Finally, it was Peter Trueman who communicated, as a very, very old man, to the writer of this narrative, the history of "MARY MACDONALD: A MINISTERING ANGEL UPON EARTH."

SYMPATHY.

You were made for something, brother,
Don't despair.
We have each our weary burdens,
Hard to bear.
We have each our share of sorrow,
But the hand
That allots it gives no more than
We can stand.
Yes, the night seems drear, and dreadful;
But the day
Will ere long the murky darkness
Chase away.
And in the soul-thrilling gladness
Of the light,
You'll forget that you were fain to
Quit the fight.
Keep your courage up, my brother,
Go ahead.
You will ne'er regret the straight path
That you tread.
Closer clasp the faith that lasteth
To the end,
And the heights shall glow with beauty
Yet, dear friend.

—Ida Estelle Crouch.

YOUR GOOD WILL FIND YOU OUT.

"Be sure your sin will find you out!"
Ah, yes, perhaps, but just as sure
Is good to follow on your track,
To gain some day upon your steps,
Flit past, then flash a radiance back
To brighten all your afterway.
Though, blinded by the gathering tears,
You may not know it as your own,
That good you did and then forgot;
The weary feet that follow yours
Are safer that it was your lot
To beat the unused path for them.
Life holds of sunshine more than shade,
And more of right than evil things.
Some blessed day, if now or then,
If here or there, we cannot tell,
The good we do will come again,
Some blessed day will find us out.

—Lupah.

BOOK REVIEW.

"THE SPIRITUAL SONGSTER."

THE Kersey Spiritual Song Book, so long and anxiously expected, so sorely needed at public, private, and every other service where Spiritualists hope to invoke aid from the dwellers in the land of harmony and melody, has come at last, and right royally welcome it is, and should be to every one who hopes to keep the great Spiritual movement abreast of the age, and worthy of taking its place in the van of progress. When we record the fact that there are 176 capital pieces set to noble poems, and all finely harmonized in the ordinary musical notation, with the now popular Sol Fa Notation added above every line, something of the tremendous work of selection, resetting, copying, interpreting the musical notes into Sol Fa, and the final reading and correction of the engraver's proofs, may be faintly conceived. All this has been effected by Mr. Kersey and his accomplished sister, Miss Kersey, during many months of ceaseless labour, and at an outlay large and onerous for persons of modest means only. That the gratitude of this and perhaps of many succeeding generations will be accorded to these devoted workers we are fully assured, but even then something more is demanded. The labourers have expended large sums as well as time and service on this great work, and nothing short of a rapid and widespread sale of their beautiful music book is called for, in which we earnestly hope this festive season of Christmas, and the value of this book as an appropriate gift, will be an incentive towards its purchase. We notice with high approval that there is a "classified index" at the commencement of the volume, in which all manner of subjects, such as Anniversaries, Closings, Greetings, In Memoriam, Thanksgivings, Welcomes, and subjects appropriate to the various addresses to be given, are classed and indexed. Any number of good Lyceum pieces and musical readings are also similarly indexed, and though no doubt the professional *grumbler* may, after studious research, find something to murmur at, thousands of earnest Spiritualists will find this lovely volume a means of uplifting their souls to the source of all harmony, and join in our unqualified psalm of praise for the work. We must add that amongst the numerous sources from which the hymns and poems have been collected are some of the following well-known names: Arthur Sullivan, Rev. H. R. Haweis, J. Burnham, A. D. Wilson, Messrs. Morgan and Scott, Colby and Rich, Manchester Sunday School Union, J. J. Morse, E. W. Wallis, W. Stansfield, A. Kitson, and Emma H. Britten. Others too numerous to mention are referred to in the preface. We have only to add, in reference to the *last-named* personage, that both the words and music presented in this book (by Mrs. Britten) are direct Spiritual improvisations. The circumstances under which one at least, "The Spirit Sailor Boy's Song," was given, although too long for this notice, shall be described hereafter as an addition to the wonderful records of the great Spiritual movement of this century. We would remind our readers that when Dr. Parker, of the City Temple, London, with all his power of mind, voice, and eloquence, is obliged to add a brass band to his Sunday attractions, when the *Daily Telegraph* suggests, as the only means of winning the people in to Sunday services, "Music, sweet music," and the Catholic Church has flourished on that tonal attraction chiefly for the last thousand years, the Spiritualists are simply mad if they disregard these obvious "signs of the times," and fail to make the new and beautiful "Spiritual Songster" an immediate means of resolving their present order of dismal old hymns into the attractive performance of some of the best Sunday songs and services of the day.*

There is quite a sermon in this story, told me by an old Scotchman who happened to be seated in the same carriage with me. A Dundee navvy, on awakening one morning, told his wife of a curious dream that he had during the night. He dreamed that he saw a big fat rat coming toward him followed by two lean ones, and in the rear a blind one. He was greatly worried over it, and swore that some great evil was about to fall upon him. In vain did he appeal to his wife, but she could not relieve him. His son, who, by the way, was a bright lad, volunteered to interpret it, and he did it with all the wisdom of a Joseph. Said he: "The fat rat is the mon who keeps the publichouse where ye gang to sae often, the twa lean anes are me and me mither, and the blind one is yersel', father."

—Frank Leslie's Weekly.

* See advertisement front page of this journal.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1891.

OUR CHRISTMAS SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

THE late Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*—than whom no man living knows better how to sail with the stream of popular opinion—has put out, for the delectation of that particular class of readers who deem that a warm fire-side at Christmas and stories of "spooks" and apparitions are one and inseparable concomitants, a full and imposing-looking number of *The Review of Reviews*, entirely devoted to what he announces as "Real Ghost Stories," the number in question being highly garnished with fairly-executed illustrations. The stories are for the most part taken from the Proceedings of the Psychical Research Societies of England and America. They are well told, sufficiently authenticated, but do not begin to touch the philosophy of the life hereafter, nor bring into view the relations and duties of mortal existence in connection with the conditions of that hereafter—in fact, they are, as announced, a full and amusing enough series of "Ghost Stories," and nothing more nor less. Without in the smallest degree censuring the astute compiler either for administering so freely to the popular taste for "ghost" literature, and yet omitting its more serious application to human life and duty, without grudging the enterprising publisher one single sixpence out of the hundreds of thousands he has realized by the sale of his ghost number, we cannot avoid contrasting the tremendous difference between Spiritual literature prepared solely for the purpose of amusement, and the same class of literature carrying along with the narrative such awful lessons of retribution and incentives to good and true lives as are put forward generally in our papers, volumes, lectures, tracts, and pamphlets. A good illustration of this is to be found in the Christmas story of this very number, and the picture reported to be a transcript of one of the visions given to the historic Mary Macdonald. Even if this were not true, similar and corresponding visions have been given, not only to the present writer, but to hundreds of other seeresses, and that under conditions that proved them to be genuine representations of the kingdoms of heaven and hell, which man's good or evil deeds build up within him. When we remember the inestimable worth of our literature, and the certainty that it can and does bring us face to face with the judgment which our mortal lives here incur hereafter, we feel deep regret to observe the neglect and apathy with which in too many instances it is treated; nay more, we might feel something of shame to find the societies who obtain our clean, wholesome little paper, prepared with ceaseless toil, and reverend care, and sold in

numbers at less than cost price, unable to obtain the trifling outlay of the penny for a paper from those very Spiritualists who have eagerly invested shillings in the "Real Ghost Stories" of the *Review of Reviews*, "just to give away."

Good friends, this is neither the way to proselyte the noble cause of Spiritualism nor does it reflect credit on those believers who catch at the ghostly shadow and neglect the stupendous revelations concerning the life hereafter with which our rostrum lectures, spirit communications, writings, and teachings abound.

Now, as heretofore, we cry, "Awake, friends! work while it is yet day, nor leave—as Christian theology might impel you to do—the preparation for the higher life until 'the night cometh when no man can work.'" We have the noblest faith in the world, the strongest of incentives to live it out in the assured knowledge of our conditions of life hereafter. We have an abundant, pure, and exalting literature, and a few, at least, indefatigable workers. All that Spiritualism needs to make it both the religion and Spiritual science of the age is SPIRITUALISTS. Our ranks call for recruits. Who are ready to join this army of eternal progress?—Ed. T. W.

CASES OF PROVIDENTIAL SPIRIT INTERPOSITION.

BY JAMES ROBERTSON, ESQ., OF GLASGOW.

No. I.

I HAVE, during my life, had many strange experiences, which, though complete and satisfactory to myself, as evidence of the reality and power of Spiritual people, still would not perhaps make much impression on others if repeated—in fact, some of the most valuable bits of evidence to myself would be of no service to the average secular or orthodox thinker. The following chapter from my life is, I think, sufficiently clear to be worthy of acceptance:—

"Towards the end of 1883 I had been travelling in the North of England, and coming up from Leeds on Saturday, 29th September, 1883, I met by appointment my valued friend, Mr. Harry Burton, of Newcastle, in Middlesbrough, he having arranged to address the Spiritualists of that town on the following day, Sunday. I was glad of the opportunity of getting introduced to the Spiritual workers there, many of whom I see, from your columns, are nobly working in the cause till this hour. I have not been in Middlesbrough since, though formerly I used to visit it frequently. I mind well the earnest faces of Mr. Hall, Mr. Gulletti, and one who since then has fallen upon evil days, Mr. Goodchild, the secretary. Towards the evening, nine or ten o'clock, Mr. Burton, Mr. Goodchild, and myself strolled into the Market Place, where, amid the babble of sounds and the light of the naphtha lamps, a voice seemed to say to me, 'Send £25 to B. C., at Glasgow.' B. C. was a gentleman whom I had known for years when I was a young lad. I was often in the house of his parents, his mother being much attached to me. He had risen in the world—had become the possessor of wealth; but I knew sometime before the voice came to me that he had suffered some misfortune, and was verging towards bankruptcy. I could not, after catching the impression or voice that came to me, pay much attention to the talk of my friends—I was filled with the one thought. I put it away from me as much as possible, saying to myself, 'If this comes back to me to-morrow, in the same kind of way as it has done to-night, I will attend to it.' I parted with my friends, got to my hotel, slept well, and at breakfast had a clear recollection of the kind of feeling I had had the previous night, and of my promise to give it attention should it come back, but there was no return of the sensation. I went to the forenoon meeting at the Spiritual Hall, and with Mr. Burton to Mr. Goodchild's house, where we had dinner. Coming out for a walk afterwards, we strolled into a small public park not far removed from the centre of the town, where here again was the same feeling, and the positive urging, 'Send £25 to B. C., at Glasgow.' There was no mistaking the kind of objective pressure which was on me. I said to myself, 'This is Sunday, when I cannot give the request attention. I will see what to-morrow does.' I seemed to get rest after this. I attended the evening meeting at the hall, where I took the chair, and where Mr. Burton delivered a masterly address on "The Immortality of Man," which perhaps many still in the Newcastle district will remember. I had known and corresponded with Mr. Burton for long, but this was the first opportunity I had had of hearing him speak from the Spiritual platform. On the following day, Monday, I had arranged to go to Saltburn-by-the-Sea in the

forenoon, but agreed to meet Mr. Burton on my return at Middlesbrough Station, and accompany him back to Newcastle. When I got on the way back from Saltburn, and while in the railway carriage, again was I met with the imperative message, 'Send £25 to B. C.' I had not conveniently at hand that I could pay away quite this sum, but I was compelled to write in pencil in the train to my wife, saying, 'Go to B. C., and offer him £25.' I enclosed, as far as I remember, my cheque for £20, saying I would hand over the other £5 when I got back to Glasgow. I posted my letter when I got to Middlesbrough, and afterwards met Mr. Burton, who said that instead of going direct to Newcastle he would like to go round by Spennymoor, to visit an old friend. I made no objections to accompany him by this route, especially as I had a customer there who might be worth calling on. I had no idea we were going to Spiritualists or mediums, and I left him at a shop door in the town, where he said, 'When you get through, come in here.' I finished my business, entered the shop, and was invited to the back, where, in a cosy parlour, we had tea together. After tea, and some talk on Spiritualism, the lady of the house went into a trance, while I was mysteriously moved—could not get rest on the sofa where I was sitting, but was forced to rise, very much against my wish, and kneel before the lady. I have very seldom had the same strong power at work on me; and now began the description, in marked outline, of a lady who said she knew me as a boy, and whom I at once recognized as the mother of B. C. Not only so, but the lady in trance went on, 'She calls you Jamie. What does that mean?' I said it was the only name I well recollected she had called me in those early years. I now knew at once the influence that had been with me these three separate days. I recognized a case of genuine spirit intervention which satisfied my soul to the full. Very much more transpired that night of real Spiritual powers which I will not readily forget. I have not asked authority, or I might give the lady's name; but in the early investigations of Alderman Barkas he got some good tests of the continued assistance of spirit people through her. But for this meeting—call it séance, if you like—I might not have paid so much attention to my previous experiences. When I got back to Glasgow, and saw B. C., he thanked me sincerely for the £25, and said it seemed to him and his wife as most providential, for just that *exact amount* he was in deep want of, and did not know where it was to come from, when my wife stepped in as the angel of providence with the good news. I told him, though he was not like to believe such, that it was not me so much as his own mother who had sent it; that I had only yielded to the Spiritual impressions which came to me."

CASE No. II.

A SPIRIT ASKING FOR A FIVE-DOLLAR BILL.

SKETCH FROM EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

SOMETIME in the winter of 186— (I forget the exact date) I went out West to fulfil several engagements, amongst others to lecture during the month of December at Rockford, Illinois. The winter was unusually severe, and even in that icy region of the North-West it was almost unparalleled. During the week-days I lectured at several surrounding districts, amongst others at Dixon, Illinois, where I was hospitably entertained by a Mr. Henry Bacon. There was much Spiritual power in and about that place, and a constant and beloved attendant of mine, my dear young spirit sailor brother, made himself very popular, giving my friends many tests and becoming almost as familiar with them as was his sister Emma. On taking leave, the good people asked this spirit, "dear Tom," as they had learned to call him, if he would not occasionally come and make them a visit at their séances. This he promised to do "soon," and I set out on my fifty miles of cold freezing travel back to Rockford. On arriving there I found my good hostess, Mrs. B., deeply concerned about a number of poor emigrants that had come out in the autumn from the old country, and who were wholly unprepared for the fearfully severe climate to which they had drifted. Mrs. B.'s account of their sufferings by cold and semi-starvation was heartrending. She told me she had obtained from her husband all the means he could spare, and as he had promised to let her have a sleigh and horses every day on her benevolent mission, she intended to go out the next day "on a foraging expedition," to try and raise more

means. Would I accompany her? Of course I would, and what was more, I would anticipate the end of the month and borrow my salary in advance from the treasurer. This was good news for the dear missionary, especially as our residence was off out of town, and on looking over the possibilities of obtaining much help from the poor folks around us our chances seemed very slender. For two days, *i.e.*, Saturday and Monday, we drove about among the frozen, starving emigrants, spending all we could lay hands on, and putting every friend we had under contribution for goods, clothes, or money. It was on the Monday evening when we were returning, nearly frozen ourselves, worn, weary, and heart-sick, that a half-clothed girl came running out of a log hut before our horses, who were carefully picking their way over the icy hillocks of snowdrifts, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, positively freezing ere they fell, implored our help. Her father was "bedfast with rheumatism," her mother had just brought a hapless little baby into the world, and there were two little ones more, all crowded up in that hut *without a scrap of fire*. They had, it seems, some of our provisions, in the shape of tea, coffee, meat, bread, and other matters, and the difficulty was the entire absence of fire, or any means of kindling one. We thought and thought, and decided at last that Mr. B. would, and could, and *should*, send down one or two of his gardeners with cords of wood. But how to make that into a fire without a stove, that was the problem. We had got no less than three stoves from the only accessible purveyor of those articles *on trust*, and at our last venture there, the vendor, whose patience was worn out with us, positively refused to let us come into his store unless we came to buy and pay for what we took away. What could we do? "We can get one—I know where from," said Mrs. B., "a capital one, too, for five dollars. We will go home and beg that sum on our knees from Mr. B., Emma." Of course we would, and get it too; and so, off went the horses and clang went the sleigh bells, until, driving like the wind, we stopped at our own door. It was Christmas Eve, and we were *sure* Mr. B.'s heart would be open to our prayer. Unhappily, however, and reckoning in very truth without our host, Mr. B. was out. He had gone in another sleigh some miles away, to a grand Masonic meeting, and would not be home till midnight. Before we could cry, swear, or do any other desperate thing, the housekeeper brought me a letter. I was savagely preparing to throw it on another unopened heap on my little writing table when a voice clearly and emphatically pronounced in my ear the words "OPEN QUICKLY." I did so, and at once a five-dollar bill fell out on the ground. It was from Mr. Henry Bacon, of Dixon, Illinois, and after sundry kind words and greetings the writer said, "Your spirit brother Tom came to me this morning, and said I must immediately send you five dollars, as you would want it to-night, and would be unable to get it. . . ."

I have that letter yet, and the spirit who dictated it is not very far off. Suffice it to say the horses were soon jingling their sleigh bells again, the stove was bought and paid for, the wood we deliberately appropriated, and the gardeners helped us.

That night there was a gloriously warm fire in a certain log hut we know of, and no one under its snug shelter was frozen to death. More anon.

"THE DRUNKEN SERMON."—A curious custom, dating from the year 1780, exists at Grantham, Lincolnshire. What is locally known as "The Drunken Sermon," is preached in the parish church annually on the Sunday nearest November 5th, in accordance with the following bequest: "Item, notwithstanding my bequest aforesaid, I give to the Alderman of Grantham, and his successor, for ever, a rent charge of forty shillings a year, to be paid out of the Angel Inn, in Grantham aforesaid, every Michaelmas Day, upon his trust, that he procure some able divine in the afternoon of the Sunday after every alderman's choice, for ever, wherein the subject shall be chiefly against drunkenness, and then pay the preacher forty shillings for the same, I looking upon that sin to be the inlet of almost all others." This singular testimony against intemperance is the more singular as Michael Solomon, the donor of the bequest, was for many years the landlord of the Angel Inn, the principal hostelry in this quaint town. The mayor, aldermen, and members of the Grantham Town Council, on the occasion of the delivery of this sermon, attend church in civic state.

OPEN COURT CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor cannot be held responsible for any opinions published under the above heading. All correspondents, though signing initials or any *nom de plume* they choose, must send their names and addresses to the Editor in token of good faith, as no anonymous communications can be noticed. Harsh personalities must be avoided, and correspondents are kindly reminded that our space is limited, hence brief letters—each in turn to be inserted as opportunity permits—will be most acceptable.]

SHOULD MEDIUMS BE PAID FOR THEIR SERVICES?

To the Editor of "The Two Worlds."

Dear Madam,—In reading *The Two Worlds* this week I notice you have opened a column for free discussion of subjects of interest to the cause. I hope you will pardon me for taking advantage of this announcement so promptly to introduce such a contentious question as the above, but I feel it is a point upon which the cause is divided. I, therefore, hope your readers will view what I say in a friendly spirit, and discuss the question freely, with the hope of arriving at a fair and just conclusion. I have often heard mediums when lecturing denounce the extravagant salaries of parsons, yet we find these same mediums increasing their fees year by year. Is this consistent? Does it not show that their object is gain and not love? Love, say the mediums, the committees are quite able to look after that. Yes, it is they who do, and it is they who find the requisite deficiencies for LOVE's sake. In my opinion a priesthood is gradually but surely coming upon us. The cause, no doubt, is spreading, and when societies get more numerous the demand for mediums will be so great that the market value of these paid personages will become as great as that of parsons. How can this inevitable result be prevented? In my opinion reform is needed among the mediums. We want them to "learn to labour and to wait" for the reward until they pass over to their heavenly home. Thanking you in anticipation,—I am, dear madam, yours truly,

47, Lower Seedley Road, Pendleton.

J. H. BLAKE.

OUR "TWO WORLDS" SPIRITUALISM.

To the Editor of "The Two Worlds."

Dear Madam,—I have read with deep interest and great satisfaction the list of candidates (announced in *The Better Way*) for the task of representing our grand cause of Spiritualism at the World's Fair in Chicago.

Amongst that list I notice your honoured name, dear madam, and though I am an out and out Yankee myself, and love my people all over, I love good people of every nation, and esteem you in particular both in your history and spirit as the representative of EVERY NATION, literally and most worthily the mouthpiece of *The Two Worlds*. Dear lady, I was present at Mrs. Crans the night when you took leave of America, I think, if I am not mistaken, for the last time. I was, like the rest of that great party, dreadfully sorry to part with you, and felt as if it would be—as it has proved to be—a national loss.

Now we want you back. I have made several journeys from London to hear you at various places, and I am quite sure you are better than ever—just splendid—and I am sure all your friends, and they are legion, would set up a regular "Hallelujah" to have you back again. Come back, dear lady, to the people who love you so, and see if we won't make you the successful candidate out of a list twice as long as that in *The Better Way*. If the good people here like to send you out, so much the better, we shall have nothing to say against that, and an Anglican representative will be indeed welcome—but come, anyway—the folks all love you, and the platform needs you. A shout of welcome even now re-echoes from across the ocean. I enclose my card (not for publication), and am, your loving friend,

COSMOPOLITAN.

[NOTE BY ED. T. W.—It is only due to "Cosmopolitan" and his warm-hearted letter to say that Mrs. Hardinge Britten's name was put in *The Better Way* amongst the list of candidates for representing Spiritualism at the Columbian World's Fair entirely without her knowledge, consent, or sanction. Mrs. Britten appreciates the honour and kindness of such a mention notwithstanding the impossibility of its realization.]

PROPOSITION FOR WORK.

To the Editor of "The Two Worlds."

Dear Madam,—I am very glad to see that you have opened your columns to correspondents who wish to throw out suggestions from time to time, with a view to assisting (if only in a small way) to spread the truth as we perceive it.

I was very glad to see the report from Ashton of good work done there. But would it not be much better (as the gentleman in the audience remarked) to have fewer and shorter speeches, and more time for questions and answers?

I will, with your permission, make a suggestion to the Missionary Committee of the Federation that, as soon as they can see their way clear, they engage a speaker whom they consider is worthy of being their representative, *who lacks worldly wealth*, and whom they consider it would be the means of giving him or her a help on the way, say for a month on trial AT GOOD PAY, to visit districts free of charge to societies who are either too poor to help themselves or have fallen into a state of lethargy, so that they want awakening and stirring up.

I consider it would be giving a lift to the speaker, and raise the Spiritual movement to a healthier condition. At the same time, it would help the Federation forward by showing that they intended good work.

Objections might be raised that the expense would be too heavy under the present financial position, and that it would be creating "professionalism."

In answer to the first, I may say that I will be my small mite, and I am willing to co-operate with others in trying to raise funds to make up any loss that was not covered by the collections at the missionary

meetings. I have done a little in preparing the way for speakers in times gone by, and am willing, as far as my time and ability will allow, to do a little more in that direction.

In answer to the second objection, I think that, engaging good and efficient speakers, would be a sufficient reply, to commence with. Some may ask, but would you engage them regularly? Yes, if I found it beneficial to the speaker, as well as to the cause generally. I think there is room in the country for more than one revivalist to do nothing else.

I would form a small working committee in each district to report to the Federation Committee their ideas from time to time, and let them be utilized when required in their particular district to prepare for the missionary work. Hoping to see other opinions expressed, and wishing the Federation every success.—I remain, yours respectfully,

December 6, 1891.

A WORKING LAD.

ORGANIZATION OR DISINTEGRATION.

To the Editor of "The Two Worlds."

Dear Madam,—I have now watched the course of the Spiritual movement with much attention for the last twenty years, and the result of my observation convinces me of one of two things, namely, that the future of Spiritualism must be either organization or disintegration. What is organization but coming into order? What is disintegration but its entire opposite? Is there anything in Nature that is not an organization, from a daisy to a nation? And how can the Spiritualists expect to live and work and be outside of the laws of Nature? Of course I know what the "cry down" and against organization is, and especially so by the lawless who cannot endure any restraint, and the selfish who do not want any individuals or bodies of individuals to flourish except themselves. For all the outcry that these two classes make against having churches, popes, bishops, priests, or leaders we ought to have a few cut and dried answers. "You, Sir Screamer, are in business. Is not every step of your way taken in organization? Your house is built through the organizations of workmen. Every atom of food you consume or clothing you wear is produced through trade organizations, and whether you live under a republican or monarchical form of government, your comfort, protection, law, and order are all due to an organized system of government. Whether, Sir Screamer, you are a tradesman or a professional man, all you can do or earn is due to the organization in which you labour and through which you are employed. As to your outcry against priests, bishops, popes, &c., in the matter of organizing religious meetings and disseminating TRUE religious ideas, what is the real source of complaint against them? Why, simply—first, that some of them are too highly paid and 'stuck up,' and some of them are too little paid and crushed down. Secondly, that the entire body of ecclesiasticism is a fraud—a body broken up into hundreds of fragments that don't fit in together. Thirdly, that what the one or the many teach is neither true, authoritative, beneficial to humanity, or promotive of the best interests of the country." The trouble, then, is not with priests, bishops, popes, &c., but with what they practice, teach, and preach, and what *we* want—aye, and presently WILL HAVE—is a priesthood that will and can teach the truth; will and can meet the people's spiritual needs, and will and can command the people's ear, the people's hearts and consciences, and for such an organization I not only plead, but I conclude, as I began, by declaring that Spiritualism has all the elements of supply for this popular demand; next, that unless that supply is given, and that after the fashion that the people can accept, and in the TIME PRESENT, farewell to the spirits and Spiritualism. It will become a thing of the past—a spasmodic outpouring, remembered only as an offered Christ, crucified between the two thieves of selfishness and ignorance. If, dear madam, these my revolutionary words find acceptance in your noble paper, I will venture to give a second letter on the methods by which I would propose to carry forward the great work of reducing our divine cause to working order.

SIRIUS.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. LOTE's letter of inquiry insufficiently addressed. State always name, street, number, &c., clearly.

J. L.—No anonymous communications noticed. *Nom de plume* or initials received for publication, but no letter answered without full name and address sent to the Editor.

LOTUS, EBEN, and W. W. W.—Notice the above.

W. H. LOTE.—The article referred to was taken from the *Arena* journal, and is borrowed from the lives of Bouddha and Christ. Write to Editor of the *Arena*, published in Boston, Mass., U.S.A. In *The Two Worlds* article in question the names of the books from which the questions are taken, also pages and chapters, are given. Let the unlearned read before they attempt to deny what is now known to every wellinformed reader, or if they don't know let them apply to the *Arena* Publishing Co., as above. We give our authorities, and that must suffice for us.

CHRISTIAN KINGDOM SOCIETY.—We have received a package of pamphlets, letters, and what is claimed to be a spirit communication, also claimed to be from one incapable in earth life of writing such stuff, and simply travestied in the higher life under the name of Abraham Lincoln. And all this is an appeal that the Editor of *The Two Worlds* shall aid in establishing "Christ's kingdom upon earth." To this we answer—If the present wealth, luxury, palatial splendours, and past sacrifice of millions of lives—all through nearly two thousand years—have failed to establish the "Christian Kingdom" upon earth, we can only advise the above-named society to search their own scriptures, wherein, amongst hundreds of other passages of a similar nature, they will find *The Two Worlds* Editor's answer in the following passage from Daniel, c. v., vv. 25 et seq.—"MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."

ADMIRING FRIEND.—Mrs. Britten's farewell lecture to the Spiritual Rostrum is necessitated by her still more urgent duties in the editorial work of this paper. The Manchester address will be reported and printed as soon as space permits.

THEOSOPHIST's letter when next we answer questions.

OUR FOURTH ANNUAL CENSUS OF SOCIETIES.

NAME OF SOCIETY.	Number of Membership.	Seating Capacity of Hall.	Average Attendance.	Mediums.	Number of Circles.	Lyceum Membership.	Average Attendance.
Aberdeen	6	A	5	3	2	—	—
Accrington	60	190	130	7	not known	70	50
Armley	13	120	120	4	1	—	—
Batley	28	200	150	7	6	53	30
Belper	—	250	150	several	several	84	60
Birmingham, Ozell Street	34	70	70	10	6	—	—
Blackburn	140	350	350	many	numerous	110	80
Bolton, Bridgeman Street Baths	30	200	200B	13	5	—	—
Brighouse	41	500	170	22	13	98	70
Burnley, Hammerton Street	70	400	300	numerous	scores	150	70
" Robinson Street	36	300	160	—	1	153	80
" Maden Fold	10	60	55	3	several	—	—
Cardiff	50	150	70c	14	10	23	18
Cowms	19	60	54	1	2	—	—
Felling	32	300	60	10	4	—	—
Foleshill	30	60	40	3	2	—	—
Glasgow	38	200	40	12	5	—	—
Halifax	81	250	250	23	several	135	84
Hanley	20	200	80 to 100	6	5	—	—
Keighley, Assembly Rooms	63	400	250	12	5	—	—
Lancaster	75	300	170	5	2	80	60
Leeds Institute	60	250	250	8	not known	60	45
London, Forest Hill	20	50	35	12	6	—	—
London, South, 311, Camberwell New Road	50	70	50	many	many	—	—
Manchester, Edinboro' Hall	40	400	80	—	D	—	—
Middlesborough	48	200	160	6	5	—	—
Northampton	35	160	120	—	—	—	—
Nottingham, Masonic Hall	25	250	100	8	2 or 3	—	—
Sheffield	40	100	100	9	6	—	—
Shipley	39E	200	100	7	many	—	—
Slaithwaite	14	150	80	—	—	36	28
Stockport	50	400	200	F	F	50	35
Sunderland	80	200	100	20	12	40	25
Whitworth	30	100	40	4	1	—	—
Wisbech	34	300	150	9	4	—	—
Walsall	30	400	50G	4	several	50	40
Yeadon	20	100	90	10	4	—	—

A Private at present, but are arranging for a public meeting. B Special meetings of late in larger hall, 500. C With special speakers, 140. D A private and a public circle—indefinite knowledge. E We have had 50, but 11 left us to form a society at Windhill. F No public, many private. G We have received another estimate of attendance, viz., 100.

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.
HOLIDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Old friends and new are invited to the following social meetings :—

ACCRINGTON. 26, China Street.—Jan. 2 : Tea party at 4 p.m., and entertainment ; tickets 1s., children under 12, 6d. Mr. F. Hepworth will sing some of his favourite songs.

BIRMINGHAM. Oozell's Street Society.—Dec. 31 : Annual tea and entertainment at the Broad Street corner Coffee House. A varied and lengthy programme.

BURNLEY. Hammerton Street.—January 2 : A free tea for the Lyceum children. They can bring their playmates at 3d. each. Adults and friends 6d. Friends wishing to contribute for the same, please send to Mr. John Foulds, 5, Crow Wood Terrace.

BURBLET.—Jan. 3, Miss Jones ; 4, annual tea meeting.

HALIFAX. Winding Road.—A grand knife and fork tea, Friday, January 1. Tickets, 1s. 3d. ; proceeds to the building fund. Saturday, Dec. 26 : Annual Christmas tea and entertainment. Tickets, adults 9d. ; children under 12, 4d. Entertainment only, 3d.

HUDDERSFIELD. 3A Station Street.—Jan. 2 : Annual tea party and entertainment, songs, duets, recitations, &c. Tea and entertainment, adults 9d, children 5d ; after tea 3d. only.

LONDON FEDERATION. The Athenæum Hall, 73, Tottenham Court Road.—Entertainment, Tuesday, Jan. 5, at 8 p.m., in aid of the Sunday Lectures. Mr. J. Maltby's unique exhibition with the oxy-hydrogen lantern, "The Life of Gordon." Songs, recitations, &c. Reserved Seats, 2/- ; Second Seats, 1/- ; Admission, 6d. Tickets of Mr. Tindall, 4, Portland Terrace, Regent's Park ; Mr. Rodger, 107, Caledonian Road ; Mr. Smyth, 123, Lancaster Road, Bayswater ; Mr. Ward, 59, Trinity Square, Borough ; and Mr. Bendelow, 18, Mortimer Street.

LONDON. Forest Hill, 23, Devonshire Road.—Wednesday, Dec. 30, at 7-30 p.m., a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music. Refreshments provided during the evening. A pleasant evening may be expected. We possess a fair share of musical talent. Price for concert and refreshments only sixpence.—H. W. Brunker, sec.

LONDON. Marylebone, 86, High Street.—Jan. 3, tea meeting at 5. Tickets 9d. Quarterly meeting. Public meeting at 7 p.m. Jan. 10 : Mrs. Vincent, "My Experiences in Spiritualism."

LONDON. Peckham. Winchester Hall.—Thursday, Jan. 7, Social evening, at 6. Songs, &c., and dancing.

MANCHESTER. Ardwick Public Hall, Higher Ardwick.—Annual tea party and ball, Jan. 1. Tea at five p.m. Tickets, 1s., from the committee.

MANCHESTER. Collyhurst Road.—Jan. 1 : Lyceum free tea party, at 5. Adult non-members, 6d. We hope all interested friends will kindly assist us to meet expenses, and give the children a pleasant New Year's treat. Jan. 2 : Mr. Rooke, on "The Science of Phrenology in relation to life as a Spiritual power." Profusely illustrated. Admission 3d. Examinations after, 1s.—T. T., sec.

MANCHESTER. Edinboro' Hall.—Tuesday, Jan. 5, annual tea party and soirée. Tickets 1s. After tea, for dance and entertainment, 6d. Tickets from the treasurer, Mr. Winson, Edinboro' Hall.—J. G. M.

NORTHAMPTON.—December 29 : Tea party. Tickets 6d.

NOTTINGHAM.—Tea and social evening on New Year's Eve. Tickets 1s., after tea 6d.

OLDHAM. Spiritualists' Hall, Bartlam Place. —Saturday, Jan. 2 : Annual Lyceum festival, tea at 4-30, adults 6d., child en under 12, 3d.

OPENSHAW. At Granville Hall.—Jan. 2 : Tea party, entertainment, and ball, tickets 1s. are strictly limited, from members of the society at the room, and should be secured early.

PLAN OF SPEAKERS FOR JANUARY, 1892.
YORKSHIRE FEDERATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

ARMLEY. Temperance Hall.—3, Mr. Rowling ; 10, Mr. W. Hopwood ; 17, Quarterly Conference ; 24, Mrs. Jarvis.

BATLEY CARR. Town Street.—3, Mr. Peel ; 10, Mr. J. Kitson ; 24, Mr. H. Crossley ; 31, Mr. Armitage.

BATLEY. Wellington Street.—10, Mr. A. Walker ; 17, Mr. Metcalfe ; 24, Mr. Webster and Mrs. Colbeck.

BEESTON. Temperance Hall.—3, Mr. and Mrs. Hargreaves ; 10, Mrs. Fleming ; 17, Mr. A. Walker.

BINGLEY. Wellington Street.—3, Miss Walton ; 10, Mr. W. Stansfield ; 24, Mr. Hepworth ; 31, Mrs. Beardshall.

BRADFORD. Birk Street.—3, Mr. A. Walker ; 10, Mrs. Jarvis ; 17, Mr. Rowling ; 24, Mr. Parker ; 31, Mr. J. Kitson.

BRADFORD. Little Horton Lane.—3, Mr. Parker ; 10, Mr. J. Boocock ; 17, Mrs. Beardshall ; 24, Mr. Bloomfield ; 31, Mrs. Wade.

BRADFORD. 448, Manchester Road.—3, Mrs. Marshall ; 10, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall ; 17, Mrs. Bentley ; 24, Mrs. Russell ; 31, Miss Walton.

BRADFORD. Otley Road.—3, Mr. Cross and Mrs. Burchell ; 10, Mr. Rowling ; 17, Mr. Todd ; 24, Mr. Armitage ; 31, Mrs. Craven.

BRADFORD. Walton Street.—3, Mr. Armitage ; 10, Mrs. Whiteoak ; 17, Mrs. Russell ; 24, Mrs. Berry ; 31, Mrs. Connel.

CLOCKHEATON. Walker Street.—10, Mr. J. Lund ; 17, Mrs. J. Burchell ; 24, Mr. J. Kitson.

HALIFAX. 1, Winding Road.—3 and 4, Mrs. Crossley ; 10 and 11, Mrs. Ingham ; 18, Mrs. Midgley ; 24, Mr. Robt. White ; 31 and Feb. 1, Mrs. W. Stansfield.

HECKMONDWIKE. Blanket Hall Street.—3, Mrs. Wrighton ; 10, Mrs. Mercer ; 17, Mr. Dawson ; 24, Mrs. Whiteoak ; 31, Lyceum Session.

HECKMONDWIKE. Thomas Street.—3, Miss Patefield ; 10, Mrs. Crossley ; 17, Mrs. Craven ; 24, Mrs. Dix.

IDLE.—3, Mrs. Craven ; 10, Mr. and Mrs. Hargreaves ; 17, Mrs. E. Jarvis ; 24, Mr. H. Netherwood ; 31, Mr. T. Murgatroyd.

LEEDS. Institute.—3, Mr. J. Boocock ; 10, Mrs. Berry ; 17, Mr. J. Kitson ; 24, Mr. Rowling ; 31, Mrs. Russell.

SHIPLEY. Liberal Club.—3, Mr. J. Lund ; 10, Mrs. Hoyle ; 17, Mr. and Mrs. Hargreaves ; 24, Mr. Boocock ; 31, Mr. Rowling.

WEST VALE. Green Lane.—3, Mr. J. Kitson ; 10, Mrs. Craven ; 24, Mrs. Crossley ; 31, Mr. Blackburn.

The Yorkshire Federation having decided that the first meeting in each quarter shall be movable, the next meeting will be held at Armley, on Sunday, January 17, 1892. At 10-30 : Business meeting. At 2-30 and 6 : Public meetings, when short addresses will be given by the delegates of the various societies.

BLACKBURN.—3, Mr. George Edwards (trance), Miss Janet Bailey (clairvoyant) ; 10, Mr. James Swindlehurst ; 17, Mrs. Wallis ; 24, Mr. J. C. Macdonald ; 31, Mr. F. Hepworth.

BURNLEY. Robinson Street.—3, Mrs. Wallis ; 10, Mrs. Butterfield ; 17, Mrs. Stansfield ; 24, Mr. W. Johnson.

HUDDERSFIELD. 3A Station Street.—8, Mrs. Whiteoak; 10, Mr. H. Hunt; 17, Mr. J. Bloomfield; 24, Mrs. Wade; 31, Open.
WHITWORTH.—3, Mrs. Johnstone; 10, Miss Gartside; 17, Circle; 24, Mrs. Horrocks; 31, Mr. Blackledge.

A PUBLIC CIRCLE.—79, Taylor Terrace, Mount Pleasant, Gateshead. Having had a circle for about twelve months, we now desire to help to spread the cause. Our medium is T. R. Penman.—Geo. Cuthill.

BACUP.—Dec. 27: Mrs. Britten's afternoon subject, "What do we know of the life hereafter?" Evening: Farewell lecture, "Thirty Years' Experience in the Harvest Field of Spiritualism."

BKLPUR.—Mr. E. W. Wallis will give his services on January 11, and lecture on "Spiritualism Defined and Defended." Written questions answered. Admission: 6d. and 3d. Proceeds to be distributed among poor widows.

BRADFORD. Walton Street.—Dec. 28, at 7-45, Mr. Bloomfield. Clairvoyance and psychometry. Jan. 4: Mrs. Wooley will prescribe for the sick, and describe spirit friends.—S. R.

BURNLEY. Robinson Street.—December 27, Mr. Campion. 2-30, "England as she is to day;" at 6, "Spiritualism at the bar of reason."

COLNE.—Dec. 27: Rev. C. Ware.

LIVERPOOL.—Dec. 27: Mr. E. W. Wallis, at 11. "Believe and be Saved, or Behave and be Saved: Which?" 6-30: "A Spirit's Thoughts on the Questions of the Hour."

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION. Athenæum Hall, 73, Tottenham Court Road.—Sundays, Dec. 27, and Jan. 3, closed; Tuesday, Jan. 5, at 8, entertainment in aid of Sunday lectures; Sunday, Jan. 10, Mr. T. Shorter, "Spiritualism defended against Theosophy"; Jan. 17, Mr. A. Lovell, "Curative Mesmerism"; Jan. 24, Rev. F. R. Young, "Our Duty to our Opponents"; Jan. 31, Mr. A. F. Tindall, "Jesus Christ and His religion by spirit-light"; Feb. 7, "Exposition of Spiritualism," by various speakers.—A. F. Tindall, 4, Portland Terrace, Regents Park, N.W.

LONDON. Peckham, Winchester Hall, 33, High Street. Mrs. J. M. Smith, of Leeds, psychometrist, &c., will give inspirational addresses and clairvoyance on Sunday, Dec. 27, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. On Monday, séance at 8 p.m. Spiritualists cordially invited. Mrs. Smith is open for engagements during the week, including Sunday, Jan. 3, 1892. Societies desiring her services please apply to J. T. Audy, 28, Gowlett, East Dulwich.

MANCHESTER. Edinboro' Hall.—Sunday, Jan. 3: After afternoon service, annual meeting for the election of officers. Members earnestly requested to be present. Tea will be provided at the hall at a moderate charge.

MANCHESTER.—Sunday morning circle at the Bridge Street Chapel off Fairfield Street, and Pin Mill Brow, at 10-45. Doors closed at 11, prompt. Admission 2d., to defray expenses.

MANCHESTER. 10, Petworth Street.—Thursday, January 7, Fabian meeting. Mr. E. W. Wallis on "Would Socialism Abolish or Perpetuate Slavery?" Discussion. All are welcome.

Mrs. F. TAYLOR is now booking dates for 1892. [See advt. card.]

MR. W. J. LEEDER regrets that, through a change in business, he is leaving Halifax for the South of England, and, therefore, is unable to make any engagements with societies in the north. His address is 29, King Street, Devonport, Devonshire, from which all letters for advice or medicine will be promptly replied to. He extends his thanks for the uniform courtesy displayed to him by the societies of Yorkshire and Lancashire.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE. Cordwainer's Hall, Nelson Street.—Sunday, December 27: Mr. J. J. Morse. Morning at 10-45, "Temples for God or Homes for Men?" Evening at 6-30, "Ghosts: their nature, location, and pursuits." Monday: Same place. Evening at 8. Replies to questions.

OLDHAM. Temple (Lyceum).—Jan. 2: Children's Christmas tree, fancy fair, and tea party. The Christmas tree will be opened by Mrs. Foster at 4. Tea party at 4-30. The Temple will be beautifully decorated. The after meeting will consist of Japanese songs and fan drill by the children. Songs and recitations; also an electric machine, stereoscopic views, bran tubes, &c. Tea and entertainment, adults, 6d; children, 4d; after tea, 3d. Chairman, Mr. C. Thorpe.

OPENSHAW. Granville Hall.—Will friends and speakers please note my term of office as corresponding secretary expires on the 31st inst., and in future all communications connected with the society must be addressed to Mr. Pierce, 36, Neden Street, Openshaw, Manchester.

PASSING EVENTS AND COMMENTS

(Compiled by E. W. WALLIS.)

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS. GREETINGS, THANKS, AND ALL SORTS OF GOOD WISHES.—We give you fraternal sympathy and good-will. We are thankful for your kindly support and appreciation of our efforts, and extend to one and all our heart-felt wishes for your temporal and spiritual progress, happiness, and well-being. May you have a happy holiday season, rest from toil and care, health of body and hope for the future. Remember, we shall try with increased earnestness to make *The Two Worlds* indispensable and a welcome guest in the home of every Spiritualist in the land.

NO REPORTS NEXT WEEK.—Owing to the New Year holidays we must go to press a day earlier, and two pages must be devoted to the *Index* for Vol. 4, therefore we shall not be able to print reports until our issue for Jan. 8th. Monthly plans should be sent in at once. Secretaries please note.

RECEIVED LATE: A. Kitson, W. Jeffery, J. W. Oliver, next week.—Too late: T. J. Middleton, J. C. Batley, Henry Garratt, Bolton.

REMEMBER that the PRIZE STORY commences in our next issue. Order *The Two Worlds* to be supplied to you regularly at once, and don't miss a number.

WE regret that Mr. W. E. Long, of South London, has been down with the Influenza and congestion of the throat, and trust he will soon be well again.

IMPROVEMENT is still the order of the day with Mr. Morse's *Lyceum Banner*, the December issue of which is the best yet. It is varied, bright, newy, and readable.

MRS. GROOM spoke well at Foleshill recently and described spirits to persons in the audience. A brief report appeared in the *Coventry Times*, in which paper a correspondence on "Spiritualism" is being maintained.

WALSALL.—We should be pleased to see more unanimity manifested, and feel confident the local friends could readily obtain larger audiences if they each regarded it as a duty to support the work of the cause by their attendance and sympathy.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—There are a number of earnest inquirers in this town, but no organized body. There should be circles started to develop mediums, and a big public meeting arranged to challenge the attention of the people. Mr. Aldridge is an ardent supporter of the cause.

WARRINGTON.—We had hoped that a society would have been formed and regular Sunday Services instituted in this town long ere this. Mr. J. Pemberton, late of Blackburn, is an earnest worker and trance medium. Surely something can be done. Do not hide the light and let people remain ignorant.

END OF VOLUME FOUR.—In our next issue we shall give the index of the fourth volume of *The Two Worlds*, which is completed with this number. We shall be happy to bind up the papers for 2s. 3d., carriage extra, or for 3s., carriage paid. Send in your papers.

LONDON. Marylebone. Spiritual Hall, 86, High Street.—Opening meeting a great success. Miss Florence Marryat gave an impressive address on "There is no death." Splendid meeting, many could not obtain admission. Fine collection, nearly £7. Friends encouraged.

SMETHWICK, BIRMINGHAM.—Good work has been accomplished here. Mr. D. Findlay is an enthusiastic secretary, and we should not be surprised to see a strong society grow up.

COVENTRY.—So far as we know, although there are many resident Spiritualists, they have not succeeded in establishing a society, or holding public Sunday services. Cannot something be done, friends, to spread the truth?

LEAMINGTON.—Mr. John Lloyd, of Knightcote, sows the seed in this district, and, in his way, is a Spiritual missionary distributing papers and arousing enquiry. He has arranged with a newsagent to sell *The Two Worlds* and show it in his window.

ADVERTISING REGULARLY in the local paper pays. So said a friend at Knightley. "It keeps us before the public and increases our audiences."

SHEFFIELD Society is on the up-grade, and there are signs of growth, not only in numbers but earnestness. Active propaganda work should lead to good results.

TO MEDIUMS.—"Dream not, but work." Cultivate your gifts and then give a helping hand to those who sit in darkness and doubt, in the shadow, and the fear of death.

SALCOMBE.—A correspondence is going on in the local papers ably sustained by Mr. Hy. Stone, which should keep our truth before folk in the south-west of England. A missionary medium in that district is sadly needed.

A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE.—A gentleman resident in Burnley says that he was married on August 31. . . . The first child was born Aug. 30, one year after; second child born Aug. 31, two years later; third child born Aug. 13, three years after. A fourth child was born on Aug. 24, and his wife died on August 31, a week later.

Mrs. CRAVEN is a medium whose addresses are much enjoyed. She is sympathetic and thoughtful. A good Spiritual tone runs through her inspirations.

Mrs. BUTTERFIELD is being warmly welcomed back to platform work after a spell of rest. She has lost none of the old fire and sound common sense which made her popular.

Mrs. GOLDSBROUGH's work grows apace. "Never so busy as we are at present" is the latest report. It is a glorious thing to be able to alleviate suffering and restore the sick to health as Mrs. Goldsbrough has been enabled to do.

Mr. G. FEATHERSTONE is a thoughtful and earnest Spiritualist and a good speaker. He is winning good opinions, and should be constantly employed. We regret to learn that his brother "Samuel" is seriously ill, and trust he will speedily be restored.

Miss PATRICK is as keen of as quite a "missionary medium." Her addresses are earnest and her clairvoyance good. She gives names frequently and is developing her gifts.

WHO WAS THE PRINTER? DID HE MEAN ANYTHING BY THAT SPIDER'S WEB?—Some time ago we received a ticket, on the face of which was the following invitation: "Come to the Young Men's Bible Class, Sundays 3 to 4 p.m., at the Y.M.C.A., 30, John Street, Sunderland." In the corner of the ticket, by way of ornament, was a picture of a spider and web. How very suggestive!

MANCHESTER SOCIETY, Tipping Street, have lately secured their room for the whole of the year, so that it can be used on week evenings as well as Sundays. It has been beautified, and new, comfortable seats have been purchased. The services have been very much improved by excellent music and singing, and good audiences assemble at night.

LONDON.—Judging from the information which reaches us most of the Sunday meetings are small and poorly attended. The prevalence of intense "individualism" has had the usual effect. Spiritual development, increase of harmony, sympathy, patience, and tolerance are needed. The Marylebone society has grown considerably of late. Membership will increase where earnestness, respect, and fraternal love prevail. At Forest Hill too the growth in numbers, usefulness, and goodwill are apparent. Provincial Spiritualists look for better things in the Metropolis.

"PAID MEMBERS."—Representatives to Parliament should be paid. Right. Schoolmasters should be paid. Right. Teachers should be paid. Right. Spiritual representatives or teachers or mediums should be paid. Right. All workers should be honestly paid for honest work. It is the system of exorbitant and excessive salaries to high officials and the paltry pittance doled out to the staff that is wrong. Every one should be paid sufficient to enable them to live comfortably and pay 20s. in the £. We ought to "level up" to that, not "level down" to the verge of poverty.

NOTTINGHAM. Masonic Hall.—Mr. J. C. Macdonald gave good addresses on Sunday, Dec. 13, and on Monday we had a very successful tea party and entertainment, an interesting feature of which was the reading of character from the back and front of the hand. Mr. Macdonald occupied an hour and a half in giving the characteristics of twelve sitters, and caused some little astonishment and admiration by his correct descriptions.—J. F. H.

LEICESTER has two meeting places, and good audiences attend. This town is one of the most advanced in the kingdom. Co-operative production has proved successful in the hands of intelligent workmen in the boot-trade. Labour candidates are getting into the governing councils. Vaccination has become a dead-letter and cannot be enforced, and Spiritualism finds a congenial home in such a place. The Rev. John Page Hopps is well known as an earnest Spiritualist.

NORTHAMPTON, like Leicester, is in the van of progress. Both towns are pretty, and their peoples public-spirited. There are plenty of trees, and flowers, and walks, and open spaces. Compared with dull, dirty, smoky, dismal, dreadful Manchester they are a delight. The ladies, Mesdames Nelson, England, Walker, and others, have done good work, their mediumship having been a comfort to hundreds. London speakers are more in touch nowadays with these friends than we of the north country are, but we "don't forget the old friends."

FOLESHILL, about two miles from Coventry, maintains Sunday services, and we were pleased to make the acquaintance recently of Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson, Messrs. Lloyd, Grant, and Cox, all of whom are earnest workers and a credit to our cause. The "boom" which the subject received lately, owing to Ashcroft's advertisement, should lead to extension of work and increase of membership. A useful correspondence is going on in the local press.

"WORKING MEN."—"Brain workers" are as much entitled to the honourable distinction of being "working men" as manual labourers are, for they frequently work longer hours, and their nervous energies are more often over-taxed and exhausted. There must be union and sympathy between "men of brain and men of brawn." Muscle and mind must combine, if not in the individual, then by individuals uniting to secure the good of all.

To **CORRESPONDENTS**.—Mrs. Goyder (Australia): Your subscription received with thanks. The new postal arrangements will enable us to send the paper for seventeen additional weeks. Your subscription will terminate, therefore, with our issue numbered 284.—J. B. S. (Tuowomba): Your subscription to end of 1892 will be (under the new postal arrangements) but 7s. 8d. That is from No. 209 to No. 267 inclusive. All sorts of good wishes.—T. S.: Many thanks for cuttings. They are always welcome.—S. T.: The prize story begins next week. Read it, and recommend it to your friends.

NOTTINGHAM.—Dear old Nottingham! Some of the happiest years of our life were passed in "lace-land." We would that Spiritualism had a firmer grip of its people. The standard-bearers remain staunch and true, though some have departed, but the rank and file are hardly steady enough. Close up the ranks, friends. "True till death." In the other life there are many spheres, so in this. Hence it is sometimes necessary to establish more than one "home," but we are brothers yet and our aim is the same. New life and vigour can be imparted where earnestness and deep convictions exist. Mrs. Barnes ministers acceptably to the friends at Morley Hall, and various speakers proclaim the spiritual gospel at the Masonic Hall.

CHRISTMAS GHOST STORIES.—A former brother deacon of a Congregational church in Newcastle, speaking of Mr. Stead's Christmas number of *Review of Reviews*, said his daughters had read it and were disappointed. Asked why, he said they expected to find the usual novelistic tales of these uncanny, supersensuous, nonentities; but Mr. Stead's "ghosts were all real." Poor young ladies! like many another who may, notwithstanding the editor's premonition on the record, they discover it is still true that "Truth is stranger than fiction," and that Mr. Maskelyne (with his crude mechanical imitations) is not without real originals from which to borrow his profitable exhibit of ghost hallucinations.—Bevan Harris.

FAMILIAR SPIRITS.—A MISREPRESENTATION EXPOSED.—Stead's "Real Ghost Stories" are prefaced by a "Caution," part of which runs as follows: "The latest students concur in the solemn warning addressed in the Sacred Writings to those who have dealings with familiar spirits, or who expose themselves to the horrible consequences of possession." This "caution," he says, is "printed at the suggestion of Catholics, Theosophists, and Spiritualists." All we can say is, that while we agree "that all experimenting in Spiritualism, except in the most careful and reverent manner by the most level-headed persons, had much better be avoided," we most emphatically deny that rational Spiritualists have any dealings with the "familiar spirits" referred to, or that the warnings in "the Sacred Writings" (1) have any application to our practice of holding communion with our spirit relatives and friends.

MR. W. HOWELL has sent out his customary Christmas greeting to his friends, for which kindly remembrance he has our thanks. Among other good sentiments he expresses the following:—"If you have felt the quickening of the spirit, if you have heard the angels' song, if the frost of selfishness has gone from your life, and the springtime of generous impulses has come, then you will have a joyous Christmas. Birth and death are but episodes in the eternal life of the soul—when the shadows of mortality are passed and the dawn of the immortal morn awakens us to a consciousness of our heritage we shall find no vacant chair, no lost one, no dead; for God is Infinite Life, and the acknowledgement of death as a reality is a denial of the omnipresent God who is the essence of life itself. Hence there is no death, what seems so is transition. . . . During the past year how many heavenly days have we enjoyed. Ah! my brother or sister, we all find these days too few and far between. Do we live in a benighted world, let us be a star of hope in the darkness. Do we stand upon the watch-tower of the age and behold the coming morn, let us cheer those in the valley of shadows by heralding the rising sun. Life is realized most in activity of thought, catholicity of heart, and the indefatigable labour of the hands. Are we helping the helpless, instructing the ignorant, protecting the weak, subduing passion, quickening justice, mercy and self-respect? if so the memory of the past will be pleasant and the future prospect glorious."

BIRMINGHAM—For years Spiritualists have struggled to maintain public meetings with varying success. Mr. and Mrs. Groom did their level best, and such friends to the movement as Mr. Chas. Gray, Major-General Phelps, Mr. Smyth, and others, co-operated. Latterly there has come about a "parting of the ways" for local friends; each in their own sphere appear to be thriving, and possibly friendly rivalry may lead to more energetic efforts at both centres. There is room for all.

ETERNAL RUIN RAILWAY is the subject of a sketch in which a trainload of drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, gamblers, thieves, swearers, and adulterers, is represented as standing at "Repentance Junction." "Change here for Paradise" is the admonition to the passengers, which is all right as far as it goes, but it is not as easy to outwork the consequences of wrong-doing as to exchange one train for another. The mere getting into the "Gospel train" will not wipe away the effects of immorality or dishonesty. According to this sketch "Sabbath-breaking," whatever that may mean, is as bad as Adultery and Drunkenness. Was man made for the Sabbath then? By-the-bye, do ministers and preachers break the Sabbath, and cause others to do so, by riding to their appointments by train, tram, or carriage?

CLAIRVOYANT AND CLAIRAUDIENT TESTS.—Mr. Jas. Ridehalgh, of 34, Rockcliffe Road, Bacup, reports: "Two very good meetings at my house on Sunday, November 29. About forty friends invited to each to witness Miss Janet Bailey's remarkable clairvoyance." Mr. W. B. Hurst officiated at the organ. Messrs. Ridehalgh, Hall, and A. Hurst related interesting personal experiences. Songs and duets were rendered by Misses Ridehalgh and Hurst. Miss Bailey was very successful with her clairvoyant descriptions, giving names in most cases. She described to Mr. W. B. Hurst a little boy, and gave his name as "Ira Mellor Hurst." He desired, she said, that his Aunt Ada should be told that he had been, and Aunt Ada must take great care of his mamma, or she would soon be with him [Ira] in the spirit world. The description was perfect, the names correct, and Mrs. W. B. Hurst is ill at the present time, nursed by the boy's Aunt Ada. Miss Bailey then stated that on a seat in front of Mr. and Mrs. Hall she saw a woman lying, weeping bitterly. She was about 36 years of age. Further particulars as to her appearance were given, but Mr. and Mrs. Hall failed to recognize the description. She said, "Don't you know Agnes?" upon which a number of those present recognized her. Mr. Ridehalgh says, "She was my brother's wife, and a very dear friend of the Halls." My brother came to the meeting at night and obtained satisfactory evidence which proved, without a doubt, that it was really his wife who communicated. She passed on some six years ago. I know good clairvoyance is being sought after, and if evidence like the above can be given to the public, and Spiritualists live up to the high moral principles taught by the spirits, and develop love and sympathy, then Spiritualism will progress and become a beacon light unto many."

THE MANCHESTER CONFERENCES.—On December 16, Mr. Horrocks delivered a clear exposition of the aims and claims of Socialism, based upon the main position "that each person is entitled to have an equivalent of what they render to society." Faithful service ought to be honoured; the heroes of the future would be those who try to make the world happier. Under the present system, he contended, the best workman scarcely received as much care, attention, and consideration as the horse of a wealthy man enjoys. He referred to statistics of the comparative death-rates in leading Lancashire towns. Among the wealthy and privileged class it is 15 per 1,000, but among workers 66 per 1,000. He rejoiced at the growth of public opinion towards Socialism, and felt sure there was a better time for all not far off. Mr. Fryers admitted the evils, but so far had not been able to discern where the remedies could come in. Mr. Fletcher complained that no practical formula of the Socialistic scheme had been presented. Socialism would lead to organized tyranny, and he contended that no economist of note had supported Socialism. Mr. Shaw was a Communist and spoke warmly in support, while Mr. Leach claimed that work had different degrees of value, and was entitled to different degrees of equivalents. Mr. Tetlow contended for the equal rights of all to the necessities of life, and to opportunities for culture and enjoyment. Mr. Bourne supported the Socialist view. Mr. Walsh contended that where each man did the best he was capable of there was equality of service, and, in a less artificial state of society, the more fortunate would take pleasure in rendering fuller service. A number of other friends desired to speak, and an Individualist will oppose Socialism early in the New Year.

On Wednesday, December 30, the debate on "Should Spiritualists Organize?" will be continued, and on Tuesday, January 5, Mrs. Britten will open on the same subject, at 8 p.m., prompt, at the Vegetarian Restaurant, Fountain Street, off Market Street, Manchester.

WESLEYAN THEOLOGY.—The following handbill shows that orthodoxy dies hard:—"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? A terrible loss—

Stop, O Sinner, stop and think,
Before you rush across the brink
Of everlasting woe.

Give your heart to God. Do trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; accept Him as your own personal Saviour now. Is Jesus my Saviour? Have I gone to Him as a poor, lost guilty sinner, and asked Him to wash me from all my sins in His precious blood? If not, my soul is unsaved. Without Christ an eternity of damnation lies before me. An awful prospect. Praise God, 'He gave His only begotten Son' to suffer and die for sinners—Jesus, by the grace of God, 'tasted death for every man,' and rose again the mighty conqueror, completing salvation for 'all.' Blessed Saviour, how wondrous Thy love to 'bear our sins in Thine own body on the tree.' Glory to Thy name. If unconverted and unforgiven you are drifting to hell. You must be born again of the Holy Spirit, or perish. Jesus lives—mighty to save the vilest and worst. Fly to this blessed refuge, and ask Him to save you now. His loving invitation is 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Our blessed Saviour waits to be gracious. Glory to His name. Will you ask Him to receive you? When, now or never?" [If our salvation depends upon asking Jesus to wash us in His precious blood we reply emphatically—never! If we cannot enter heaven because we deserve it and are fit for it we will not go at all. Certainly not at the price of another's shed blood.]

THE HARVEST IS READY.—Never before was there so great an enquiry as now, or a more widespread favourable interest in matters psychical or spiritual. More workers are wanted; more mediums for phenomenal manifestations of a convincing character. Who will fill the gap?

MILLOM. Cumberland.—Some twenty years ago Spiritualism made a stir in this place, and a society was formed, but we have not heard lately of any public work being attempted, although a few faithful adherents have kept the light burning by continually meeting together in a small room to hold communion with their spirit friends. The friends recently secured the services of Miss Jones, of Liverpool, who delivered two public lectures in the largest hall in the town on Dec. 13. She discoursed on "Spiritual gifts," explaining their nature and varied phases of manifestation, to a large audience, and gave advice as to their development and exercise. At night she spoke on "The natural and spiritual bodies," and when she came to explain the spiritual body all eyes were intent upon her, the people listening eagerly. It was evident the people had come to learn, and were not disappointed. They will not readily forget the truths which were proclaimed so ably by Miss Jones, and successfully demonstrated by some remarkable tests of spirit presence by clairvoyance, and of her spiritual gift of psychometry.

SLOWLY COMING ROUND.—The parsons are preparing for a right-about-face movement, *re* Spiritual manifestations. Rev. Kendall, in the *Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review*, suggests that if the ultimate verdict of the Psychical Research Society is favourable, "it will have to be admitted that there are spiritual beings who are ordinarily unseen to us, but who have power to manifest themselves to living men, and from time to time are doing this. . . . There are several strange and striking details connected with supernatural appearances, as recorded in Scripture, abundantly confirmed by facts we are now receiving through psychical research." Yes; the honour of bringing up the rear will belong to the parsons.

THE WORK OF SPIRITUALISM in Middlesborough is being energetically pushed, and we note that more zeal, harmony, and enthusiasm are being manifested. Mr. Innes, the secretary, who is evidently an earnest worker, touches a note in his report that is well worth considering, viz.: "A crowded audience accorded that sympathy to the speaker and her controls, which enabled them to answer important questions effectively." That is a point too often overlooked. Our mediums depend largely on the conditions. Give them your hearty support and good wishes, and better results must ensue.

ASHCROFTISM AT FOLESHILL. **TACTICAL TACTICS.**—Mr. W. Bannister, of Heath Lawn, Foleshill, a non-Spiritualist, attended Ashcroft's lecture on November 11, and voted against his resolution, whereupon Mr. Ashcroft referred to him as a Spiritualist. The next night Mr. Bannister sent up a letter to the chairman, pointing out Mr. Ashcroft's mistake, and declaring that he was not a Spiritualist and never hoped to be one, but as a lover of Truth and Justice he opposed the resolution. He explained that he had heard the two previous lectures by Mr. Ashcroft and two by Mr. Wallis, and was best able to vote; but after only attempting to answer one question, Mr. Ashcroft would not allow the chairman to read any more, and thus suppressed Mr. Bannister's explanation.

A CLAIRVOYANT states that she sometimes sees spirits who begin to "make up," or partially materialise, an appearance of themselves, near to their friends, but, failing to get the necessary conditions, or "power," they remove to some more mediumistic person in the audience and complete the task near them. If she were not careful to give the description to the person near to whom the spirit first appeared she would make mistakes. This will explain some of the apparent failures by clairvoyants. We remember on one occasion when nearly a dozen spirits were described to one lady, but they were friends of other persons in the circle. It afterwards transpired that the lady in question was a strong physical medium from whom the spirits drew "power." This was the case, we have been assured, with some of the spirits described by Mrs. Smith at Glasgow recently. There is much to learn in regard to these things. Let us "go slow."

AN OCTOGENARIAN ON THE LARGER HOPE.—Sir,—We absent ourselves from the churches because the doctrines therein taught, instead of giving comfort overwhelm us with mental anguish beyond endurance. How can any person of a sympathetic, reflective mind feel otherwise at being told that almost all the human race are destined to be imprisoned within a liquid, sulphurous lake from which there is no escape? The sooner that these horrifying, pessimistic dogmas are renounced the better, for they greatly disturb the minds of the kindly-hearted. Who can be happy having any doubts of the safety of any one, especially of their parents and near relatives? Would the ministers inculcate the larger hope which is taught by most of the English divines, such as Archdeacon Farrar, Professor Momerie, &c., who hold the sufferings here and hereafter are remedial, not deteriorative, many would be more inclined to attend the churches. Although I am now upwards of 80 I am much happier in the belief that all mankind shall be ultimately delivered from the stain of sin and thereby made happy (nothing less than this can comfort me) than I was in my youth.—I am, &c., WILLIAM GRAY, *Alver, The People's Journal*.

AND EVERYTHING RATHER THAN THE SPIRITS.—It is wonderful that incredulity should be so credulous! To avoid the unwelcome conclusion that Spirits exist and can, under favourable conditions, manifest their presence to mortals, we have had a host of inventions in the shape of attempted explanations of the phenomena, which make too great a demand upon our credulity—credulous as we are supposed to be—to be accepted, and altogether more difficult of belief than that Spirit-people actually manifest. "Unconscious Muscular Action," "Electricity," "Animal Magnetism," "Unknown Forces," "Psychic Force," "Evil Spirits," "Unconscious Cerebration," "Dominant Ideas," "Hallucination," "Coincidence," and "Imagination" are antiquities worthy of "limbo" or a museum for "freaks." Then we have had "Sense Perception," "Thought-reading," "Thought Transference," "Brain Waves," "Brain Picking," "Duplex Action of the Brain," and "Double Consciousness." All these have done duty for a time, only to be displaced by "Elementals," "Elementaries," "Emanations," "Astral Shells," "Spooks," and "Corpse Lights." But the catalogue would be incomplete without the "Camera Obscura,"

"Double," "Sub-conscious Self," "Triple Consciousness," "Hypnotic Suggestion," &c. Anything—everything, rather than the undesired and unwelcome "Spirits!" Even "Ghost" appears preferable! Surely, we must find a new name, and call ourselves Ghostologists! What awkward facts the Spirit manifestations are. They cannot be satisfactorily "pigeon-holed"—they won't stay where they are put. The moment they are decently "put" and gotten rid of they experience a "resurrection," and "will be down." The Spirits have come to stay, that's the long and short of it. Unbidden guests they may be; but the marriage feast of Science and Religion—of knowledge and faith—cannot be celebrated without them. They are the witnesses, without whom the ceremony would not be legal or lasting. The two Worlds must be united, and the Spirits alone can lay the cable whereby the "messages" can be conveyed. Psychical Researchers, Theosophists, and all other sceptics to the contrary, Spirit-existence is a fact. Spirit-manifestations are realities. No theory which shuts out the agency of Spirit-people will cover the whole ground of the facts. Sooner or later this will have to be admitted, in spite of all attempts to ignore their presence and influence.

"We are each and all another's,
We can never stand alone;
And for pain or wrong inflicted,
We must every one atone.
Let us feel that we are brothers,
That our interests are one;
We shall help each other onward,
And the will of God be done."

THE *Mid Derbyshire Star* for Oct. 29, published a letter from "One disgusted," who says: "Mr. Ashcroft told his hearers that the Spiritualists taught their children to swear, lie, steal, &c., that they were a lot of drunken, immoral, dishonest villains, and their cause was, as a natural consequence, bad. Now, sir, it must be admitted that in all societies there are some who disgrace the same, and if the test applied by Mr. Ashcroft to the Spiritualists is applied to others, where will it land us? The churches and chapels will have to be closed if drunken, immoral, and dishonest members are expelled therefrom. How would the Primitive and Wesleyan churches stand in Belper? A few facts will suffice to show. Take the following:—A Sunday school teacher kept holy the Sabbath by sending two scholars out with parcels of drapery into the country on Sunday morning. A class leader and Sunday school teacher practised getting drunk and swearing like an old trooper, and cruelly thrashed his horse. Several local preachers can be found on Saturday night in 'pubs,' drinking and laughing at the obscenity, and pursuing other degrading practices. Members of classes are known to give their experience, then go to the pub. to drink, &c. After meeting in class and giving their experience, a married man and woman, both members, dropped, leaving their respective families, and lived together as man and wife. Four members of mission band took a trip to the Isle of Man for a week, but left without paying their board, &c., to Mrs. Kelly, Christian Road, Douglas, Isle of Man. These are facts, and can be proved up to the hilt; but because these drunken, immoral, dishonest members have so acted, would it be just and fair to denounce all the members of both churches for the doings of these few? Certainly not. Then let us have fair play all round. I am no Spiritualist, have never been in the Jubilee Hall, nor have I been to any of their meetings, but, like many others, was anxious to hear both sides and judge for myself, but was prevented by the rowdiness of the parsons and their friends."

"THE ASHTON REPORTER" AND "HERALD" each devoted over a column of space to reports of the National Federation meeting, and thus attracted public attention. A Baptist preacher has made haste to denounce Spiritualists as free-lovers, &c. We commend to his notice the cutting from the paper respecting Belper Christians and their immoralities, and ask him, are we justified in charging their misdeeds to their Christianity? We deny his charges *in toto*, and demand his evidence. He has none. Spiritualism proclaims the highest morality—do right because it is right. Not from fear of punishment, or hope of reward. A. Bogie [man] writes from America to warn Ashton people against Spiritualists, whom he classes with Mormons—both children of the devil, he says—and quotes some wretched doggerel to the effect that Spiritualism—

"Says to all, all shall be well,
No angry God, no endless hell;
Drunkards may into glory reel,
And after death no sorrow feel,"

which shows how little he knows of the subject, for Spiritualism emphasises that each one goes to his own place, suffers the consequences of misdeeds or enjoys the results of righteous motives and actions. It is the dismal orthodoxy which teaches that—to quote the Bogie-man's pet lines once more—

"Murderers from their gallows swing,
Up to the throne of their great king;
Like Judas, who sold Israel's hope,
Then swung to heaven on his own rope."

A little hocus-pocus by the priest, and a profession of faith by the frightened drunkard or murderer—a drowning man catching at a straw—and an administration of a sacrament, and the life-long sinner "swings from the gallows to glory, washed in the blood of the Lamb." Popular theology teaches that, not Spiritualism. Our spirit friends teach that only personal fitness can qualify us for the higher spheres. "Nothing avails but the life lived." But "eternal progression" is God's law. Retribution and compensation open the path of progress to happiness for all.

IN MEMORIAM.

COLNE.—It is with regret we announce the sudden passing to the higher life of our beloved sister, Margaret, the beloved wife of William Armistead, of Essex Street, Colne, on Dec. 5, aged 84 years. Her remains were interred at Kelbrook Church, Dec. 9. She leaves a large family of young children and a loving husband to mourn her loss. She had been connected with our society nearly from its commencement, but owing to family duties was unable to mingle with us as often as she would have liked. Our sympathy is with the bereaved ones.

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