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[For the Christian Visitor.]

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

BY REV. J. D. CASEWELL.

[Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?—Heb. i. 14.]

As we glide o'er being's deep stream,
What joy to know, it's not a dream,
That angels bright, unseen and fair,
Who move about in viewless air,
Pilot our bark, with outspread wings,
To keep us from all evil things,
And, in the garden of the mind,
They sow the seeds of heavenly kind,
From whence do spring the flowers of love,
And thoughts, that bear the mind above
The strife, and storms, and wild commotion,
Which meet us on life's troublous ocean.
Thus they clothe in vernal bloom,
Which smiles o'er winter's dying gloom,
The secret passions of the mind,
And breathe the gentle and the kind
Into the feelings of the soul;
And give their beauty to the whole.

They also tune the unstrung lyre,
And give to man devotion's fire
That he, in lofty song, may raise,
The rapturous notes of heart-felt praise;
And roll in strains of soft acclaim
Jehovah's awful, reverend Name:
And, in his smiles of sweet repose,
Which flow through Sharon's bleeding rose,
Robe the entranced and tranquil mind,
Whose thoughts, by matter unconfin'd,
Do walk with Seraphs in their bliss
And, far from all that's low in this,
Tread worlds beyond the blue serene,
The dwelling of the Great Unseen
Thus, in Religion's close communion,
With spirits bright we are in union,
Who under Love's immortal reign,
To minister, in wisdom, deign,
To those, who live, where snares are spread,
And forces evil would strike dead,
The saints, who in the moral strife,
March upward, in the path of life.

In the hour of my dissolving
When the mind's essence is evolving
Into the Spirit-land afar,
Radiant with that changeless Star,
That brighten'd Bethlehem's peaceful plains,
And breathed good-will through angels' strains;
Hover around my dying place,
And, in your gentle, fond embrace,
Ye ministers of Heavenly good,
Conduct me o'er death's swelling flood,
Where ye do live in glories bright,
That I may know the calm delight
Link'd to Perfection; and praise Him
Through endless life, who died for sin!

PHYSIOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL TABLE TIPPING.

BY E. ANDREWS, M.D., ANN ARBOR, MICH.

(Concluded.)

We hold that every muscle in the body is subject to the same influence, and that the reason why we do not notice it, is because the superior power of volition masks the effects of the other mental functions. If this is true, then we should expect that by giving these functions a relative preponderance over the will, they would re-assert their motor power and bring the muscles under their control. This may be done by giving the emotions unusual power, as in terror or in pain, the involuntary writhing and recoiling of which are too familiar; or it may be done by concentrating the thoughts on a particular action and withholding the will. This is the method of the mediums, and by it they secure action which corresponds to thought without volition.

Normally, however, this power acts in conjunction with the will. This is the triple strength which nerves the limbs of men under intense excitement—the superadded force which renders them competent to meet great

emergencies. We often see at a fire instances where men, with a very slight voluntary effort, will pick up and carry off a piece of furniture which they could not lift in their cooler moments. A striking instance of the tremendous energy of this superadded force occurred in one of the old Scottish wars. A soldier struck a horseman with a battle-axe with such violence, that the weapon at one blow clove down through the rider and his horse, killing both, and then broke a paving-stone beneath.

The common experiment of a few persons lifting another on the tips of their fore fingers is another instance. Standing around, they all take breath together, and at a given signal they blow under the person to be raised, when he rises like a cork. So striking is the result, and so little is the consciousness of exertion, that the operators often imagine that the person is raised by the breath they blow under him, and not by their fingers. It is obvious, however, that the sole use of the breath is to be a signal, and by the formality of the preparation, to concentrate their thoughts intently on the desired action.

Here, then, we have the power for producing the spiritual manifestations, viz., muscular power without volition, and without distinct consciousness. It now remains to show how involuntary power can produce intelligent actions, which is quickly done.

The most striking law of this involuntary force is its tendency to execute whatever motions the mind dwells upon, even contrary to the will. Who has not felt the irresistible disposition to move his head, when sitting for a daguerreotype, simply from fixing it so strongly in mind that that motion must not be made. So in the above cases of excitement, the superadded force comes in to execute the movements upon which the mind is intent; hence it coincides with volition. The case is the same in a thousand instances in life where a vivid conception of an action causes an unconscious imitation of it. It is seen also in skilled musicians, in whom the mere desire to have a certain note prompts the requisite motion of the fingers without any consciousness of volition, and it is remarkable that this involuntary style of action gives a more delicate and perfect execution than acts of mere will.

Now the spiritualists have the merit of having demonstrated that this involuntary power may be separated from the voluntary, and made to act alone; and also that the thought or wish of any motion is as efficient as willing the motion. This is the whole mystery of involuntary writing and tipping. Any sensitive person may try the experiment for himself. Take a pencil in the hand, and without any support for the arm, hold the point lightly on a sheet of paper until the hand begins to twitch and tremble with nervousness and fatigue—a little superstitious awe will help—then looking earnestly at the pencil, picture in your fancy vividly the letters you wish to produce. If you are of nervous temperament, you will now feel an involuntary impulse of the hand in the requisite directions, and by perseverance and repetition, you may in a little time become a writing medium, a telegraph operator for the devil, as Beecher would say, but really, one over whose muscles fancy has usurped the place of will.

We have proved this by actual experiment, and have been able ourselves to write involuntary communications. Table-tipping is still easier.

Since writing the above, we see by the journals that Dr. Carpenter, of England, has put forth an essay in which he proves that other acts of mind than the will may control the muscles. We have also just received a letter from Dr. John C. Norton, a highly intelligent physician of Illinois, in which he says:

"In regard to the writing, I have probed

the matter to the very bottom. I have been a writing medium, and can demonstrate by an analysis of my own mind while engaged in receiving communications, that the spirits of the dead are not at all concerned in it. I do not take the ground that it is all imposture; in fact I know better. *The will has nothing to do with actions performed, and yet they are all the work of the mind.*"

We are perfectly aware that most unexplainable stories are every day told; but be wary of two things—first, of phenomena not rigidly tested, and secondly, of second-hand statements. We have in our investigations detected eye-witnesses of the highest integrity, in egregious false statements in consequence of their excitement.

In conclusion, we give it as our own impression, that the claim of "spirituality" for the "manifestations" is an unmitigated humbug, and we are willing to test it with any decent medium that dare try it. We will ask twenty plain and fair questions, and we defy any medium in or out of Michigan to answer them all correctly, either by writing, rapping or tipping; and we will set a suitable table in the middle of our room, and after we have taken the proper measures to prevent the application of muscular action and mechanical force, we defy all the spirits out of Pandemonium to move it a single foot.

WHITHER, AND WHY?

A MEDITATION FOR THE END OF 1853.

A vessel was once discovered, far out at sea, with her sails filled by the wind, and apparently in good trim, but pursuing such a changing, fitful course, that it seemed as if her captain's sole object were to mimic the sports of the flying-fish that were playing round her.

A boat's crew pushed off to investigate the mystery; and on reaching the strange vessel, they found that there was not a human being in charge of her; no one to trim the sails, no one to guide the helm. The varying breeze drove the deserted ship hither and thither, and the rudder shifted with the wash of every passing wave.

Let me change the scene to the thronged thoroughfares of one of our great towns. What a bewildering contrast between the ocean and the city! What a change from the solitary ocean-path to the stream of humanity pouring along the streets! From the plashing of the wave at the vessel's bows, the sea-gull's mournful cry, and the sighing of the wind through the ship's rigging, to the mighty roar of this vast tide of life!

A contrast, indeed; and yet my thoughtful readers will have discovered a striking analogy. What is life, but a boundless ocean stretching backwards and onwards beyond the flight of human thought! That ocean narrows, indeed, between the dark and frowning portals of death, but only to spread again,

"Without a mark, without a bound."

And what are all these myriads of our fellow-men, but so many vessels on that broad bosom, bound on many different errands, freighted with many different burdens, but all with more or less of living power; all gifted with more or less of intellect, all bearing a rich treasure, compared with which the "Mountain of Light" is as a worthless stone,—that treasure an immortal spirit!

In the solitude of the high seas, a strange sail is at once an object of interest and speculation. What is she? Whence, and whither bound? But in the thronged pathways of the city, we thread our way amongst our fellow-men with little thought or care as to the destiny of the imperishable spirit which lives in every one of them.

Yet, were it possible to arrest the tide of population pouring along some great highway

and to summon each individual to give an account of his desires, his pursuits, his hopes, his fears,—in short, of the great purpose of his life,—methinks the enquiry would soon prove to possess an absorbing interest. And as we watched the rapid step, the thoughtful brow, the calm, determined eye, and remembered whence came the first "living soul," which, when breathed into the human frame, gave man the image of his Maker, it would be with intense anxiety that we awaited a reply to the question, Whither, and why?

But look at man as God has bid us look; as at a being who must be immortal, and whose life here is given him as a precious boon, by the right use of which he may live for ever; and then, if his whole soul be wrapped up in some pursuit that has reference to this world alone; if the darling object be one from which the grave will for ever separate him; if the dread image of the unknown future be systematically banished from his thoughts, with all the hopes, the fears, the aspirations, the misgivings, which it might kindle; and if a spirit which might even here hold communion with a reconciled God, a risen Saviour, a divine Comforter, is bound down to the earth; then the man is a traitor to all his noble endowments, and the sacred purpose for which they were bestowed, and is drifting about on the great ocean of life, without a purpose that deserves the name.

And drifting whither?

There are currents mighty in operation, though silent and unperceived, which carry vessels far from their track, and cast the unsuspecting seamen on the fatal rock. And even so the stream of time bears these busy triflers on its silent, but rapid course, to that deep gulf wherein the world shall one day disappear.

The christian feels the strong tide bearing him onwards, and rejoices at the lessening distance that separates him from the haven where he would be.

But the worldling—of the earth, earthy—whither is he drifting?

Whither? To the land where all things are forgotten; to the unbroken gloom of the grave; to the deep shadows of death; to the extinction of all his hopes, all his ambition, all his enjoyments!

Whither? To the hour when all that he now holds dear and valuable will be torn from him by a ruthless spoiler; when his wealth must pass to other hands, his reputation cease to gladden him, his knowledge of earthly treasures fail to fill his soul; to the hour when the voices of loved ones will fall fainter and fainter on his dying ears; when the hand of friendship will slip from his palsied grasp, and he that lived in a throng of admirers, will die alone!

Whither? To the awful judgment seat of One whom he might have had for an almighty Saviour, but whom he has made an angry Judge!

Whither? To the dread tribunal, where he must give an account of rich endowments misused, of precious opportunities neglected, and noble powers misapplied; and be reminded, nay, accuse himself, in unspeakable agony, that the voice of Divine mercy spake unto him, but he would not hear!

Whither? Who can picture the next fearful step? Who can tell what it is to "dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Reader, another year has gone. One after another the months of 1853 have rolled over thee. And now that thou art come once more to this annual resting place, this milestone in the great journey of life, ask thyself solemnly the question, "Whither am I going?" How rapidly time passes away! How many who were with us when the year began are now no more amongst us! And the time will come when we shall be looked for in the old circles, but found not; when