

Section Twenty-seven.

Monday, May 23d, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and Mr. and Mrs. S. were present. We had for two or three hours manifestations through Mrs. S., of which I give an account only so far as they were of general interest. She became influenced by what was evidently to us a new spirit. The influence seemed to be uncomfortable, and I approached and made passes over her, in order to relieve her. She pushed me from her, and retreated to a distant part of the room, and there stood gazing at me. I did not at all understand it, when it was written through the Doctor's hand:

Let your will be firm, yet *mild*, Judge, and will gently its true manifestation.

I then walked up to the spirit as manifested in her, and stood in front of it, looking steadily at it. It told me, with a good deal of vehemence, to go away. I replied, No; I can't do that. I must know who you are, and what you have come here for.

After looking for an instant steadily in my eye, it sank on the floor at my feet, and embraced my knees. It wept, crawled upon the floor, and finally lay prostrate. At this moment it was written through the Doctor:

Speak to the spirit, Judge, kindly, and ask who it is.

I did so, and it arose to a sitting posture, and looking at me, said:

I am not obliged to tell you my name.

It was then written:

In the name of God, Yes. Hand to the Judge.

This was handed to me by the Doctor, and when I read it, I said to the spirit, You must tell me your name and purpose. It is in the name of God I demand it.

It looked at me, and then, after something of a pause, said, in a gentle voice:

Yes, I must tell my name.

Well, what is it?

Tom Jones.

You are fooling me. I want your true name, no fictitious one.

My true name is Jones.

Are you, then, the spirit of one who was tried before me for murder, was condemned to death by me, and executed?

Yes, I am he, Judge. Oh, forgive me, forgive me!

Nay, I have nothing to forgive; but in the name of Heaven, with what purpose have you come to me?

Do you know why I embraced your knees just now? Well, Judge, I was so thankful that I was removed by your mandate from my former state of ignorance and blindness into the next sphere, where I have become a man, and I am now sent here by wise ones to speak to you.

Why, then, were you so reluctant to give me your name?

It is so hard for an ignorant man like me to make myself understood. In the first place, I thought I was an unwelcome guest. In the next place, it was hard for me to manifest myself.

A very accurate account of what he said was not kept, and so I can only state the substance of it.

He said he was commanded by wise spirits to come and talk to me, to let me know of the great change in himself, and that he now exists where he can realize all that is good.

He said that he was sacrificed to laws which one class condemned as barbarous, and another regarded as necessary; that one class deemed they ought to render good for evil, and the other, that "eye for eye" ought to be rendered. That he was told, however, that the laws which required that such as him who had raised their hand to take what they could not give should be put out of existence would be unnecessary when the revolution of morals shall be accomplished, in which, he said, you, Judge, are taking so prominent a part.

He acknowledged the wisdom and justice of the sentence which sent him out of this life, and he came to give his experience, as one who had been relieved from the evils brought upon him by the present ill-organ-

ized state of society, and who, through an evil deed, had been ushered into a better and happier state than that which he occupied while here.

I remarked, that I supposed it was the force of circumstances which had led him to commit the deed for which he had suffered?

He answered:

That is it, Judge. That is the evil of society. I knew it was wrong, but my mind had not been so educated as to teach me to control my passions. They ran wild, and forced me into every excess, and I finally became reckless.

He said that I must not suppose he was convicted of a bloody crime, and then sent direct to a state of happiness. Oh, no; far from that. But when his spirit was released from his vile body, made so by his evil passions, he was led to a spot, and told to choose his companions. On one side they were black and dark, blacker than himself, and distorted with evil passions. On the other, they had been vile, like himself, but they were not all dark, a little light shone upon them, and their faces were turned upward with hope. "My choice, Judge," he said, "was soon made, for I never loved evil for the sake of evil, but I was led into it by circumstances combined with my unregulated passions." Now, when on one side he saw that dark repulsiveness, he beheld himself in his real image, he recoiled from himself, and sought to fly far away to join those who looked so much in advance of him, and said to himself, polluted sinner that he was, there might yet be mercy for him who had despised it, who had turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of justice; and he saw clearly which path he was to tread to reach that happiness which he never sought on earth.

And, Judge [said he], I made my choice. I braced my heart against evil, I stood firm in the strength of my manhood to do right, and began my labor for eternity; that labor which should have been begun in my youth. I have so far been able to advance upward, that I have been permitted, have been commanded, to come and speak to you of my condition. It was a hard task, as you may imagine, to come to you.

I asked him, Why so?

Did I not know that my presence would be unexpected and repulsive? Did I not fear that you would not wish to hear me? But I was commanded by wisdom that does not

err, and which has guided me so far. The light that is around me is yet dim and obscure, but it is becoming stronger and brighter, and will continue to grow so.

Forgive me, Judge, my wicked thoughts toward you, forgive me! forgive me!

My friends above are patiently waiting when I shall be divested of my grossness and darkness. My mother, my gentle mother! I shall see her face again. My father! I have erred. They tell me I shall see you both again. God is merciful. His mercy endureth forever.

With these words he left us.

After he left, a female spoke to us through Mrs. S., who put on a good many airs. She fanned herself with her handkerchief, complained that the air was close and oppressive, walked to and fro with a stately air, said it was not often she visited such obscure places. She had occupied in her time stately palaces and marble halls, etc. When asked her name, she said it was so long since she had heard it that she had forgot it, etc.

Mrs. S. then went through the death-scene, and the same spirit spoke to us through her again. She said she had been a lunatic, and had died in an asylum. That when she died, for a few hours after her death she labored under the same insanity, but it soon passed away, for she had left the disease behind with the body which had caused it. And now she knew her real position, and she understood the necessity of progression.

After she left, another came, who first represented through the medium a fine lady in the form. She professed to be extravagantly fond of music and dancing; said she was altogether too ethereal for earth, but her mind was intent upon her pleasures. She had a dry, hacking cough, and complained of a pain in her breast. She asked the Doctor if she could not with safety attend a ball to-night.

In a little while she, too, went through the death-scene, and her spirit appeared just entering upon the next sphere.

She was first intent on examining herself. She looked at her limbs, and seemed surprised at herself, and somewhat disgusted. She often asked, "Where am I? where am I?" She said there were many persons around her, but she did not know them. She said she was very unhappy, that that was not heaven, and in a sorrowful tone inquired, "What shall I do?" At length, among the people she recognized one whom she called "Anna, my old schoolfellow." She asked her how long she had been there, and what she did there? It seemed she got an answer that they labored and studied. "Labor!" she cried, "I never la-

bored! and study! I can't study; I never studied. But she says I may do as I please. May I? Then I vow I won't study. But what do you do here? Have you no music and dancing? No? Then what shall I do? I shall be so unhappy among all these strange, dark people. But she says, if I will labor and study I may get away from this unhappy, dismal place. Then I vow I'll study and work hard, hard. So good-night, friends, I am going to my studies."

Section Twenty-eight.

Wednesday, May 25th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, Mr. and Mrs. S. being present a part of the time, the interview began by writing the following in the tremulous hand of a very old man.

WHAT is one moment of joy, the joy of the spirit, when it realizes the good it has done to years of this world's pleasure!
I. T. T.

Then this was written:

This is the spirit, and a bright one too, of an old man whom you knew slightly, years ago, but who desires not to-night to give his name.

Let us proceed with our work.

(Which was the revision of the previous teachings.)

After that had closed, it was written:

For a few moments listen to another kind of teaching. No gifted one can enter into our charmed circle without his or her proper share of work.

In a short time Mrs. S. was influenced, and spoke as follows:

MY EARTHLY FRIENDS:

I have been permitted to return to my old, my former

place of abode for a few moments, that I may give you a few of the sentiments which now fill my soul with wonder and admiration.

I have not been long an inhabitant of these upper regions, of which I am about to speak; but short and blissful as my experience has been, I would not exchange it for all the honors and glories which a thousand years on earth, with all their changing scenes of times, and of action, and opinions might heap upon me.

My station on earth was considered an honorable one; by my fellow-countrymen I was looked up to as endowed with a degree of wisdom which enabled me to—

[Here his power over the medium, which had been evidently diminishing, seemed to be spent, and after several efforts to finish the sentence, it was written through the Doctor's hand:]

enabled me to exert a controlling influence over the minds of my fellow-men. The spirit wished to say that.

There was then something of a pause, and at length the spirit seemed to recover his influence, and continued his teaching in these words:

And I have since discovered that many things which were said and done by me have left a lasting impression behind; and for all those true and earnest efforts which were made for the good of my fellow-men in the form, and which have left their impression on the race, I now thank God from my inmost soul. But for many others done by me in moments of thoughtlessness, or when acting under the impulses of impetuous feeling or aroused passions, my deepest regrets are awakened, and the more that I am daily witnessing their baleful effects.

It is very delightful, after leaving the earth, my friends, to return and look back on a life well spent in doing unto others as I would that they should do unto me. It is a most pleasant reflection, and gives back a sweet perfume from earth even while dwelling in heaven.

My mind is gazing back on the hours spent while here, and I have thought, within the depths of my soul, that

were it my mission to return again to the form I left, and live over again my short life, how differently would I employ it!

It is but a reflection, for well I know it is impossible. But how clearly does reflection cause every past action to stand forth before my eyes in bold relief at this moment! It is so impressed on my mind, and oh! how I would impress it upon others, how much of joy or sorrow, of heaven or hell, we create for ourselves!

I have been permitted to come here, night after night, and gaze upon the wise spirits who have been directing your minds to higher wisdom than mine has ever tasted of. My soul has expanded, and my soul swelled out, as I have gazed on the vast fields of living light and beauty that, spread before me, are yet to be explored.

My labor has but begun; I am but learning the first lessons of profound knowledge, which belongs not to earth, but to eternal and ever-living happiness. What a mere child of knowledge I realize myself to be when gazing around me!

Wise men of earth! could you but gaze up and see the wisdom that is around you, and ever impressing your minds, your wisdom would seem so foolish you would veil your faces in meekness and humility, and you would feel glad and thankful to see those majestic forms who surround you, who assist and uphold you by their wisdom, and whisper words of strength to your weakened spirits, when struggling for light, like the bird struggling in the net of the fowler.

I would again say, did the wise men of the earth know how much they depend on sources other than themselves, they would not be puffed up so much with their own self-love. The impression of their self-importance would be dimmed, and they would be willing to come as little children to learn internal wisdom.

Here the influence seemed to wear away again, and after remarking

that this was his first effort, and that, with our permission, he would come again at another time, he left.

Mrs. S. then asked what it was that prevented inferior or unprogressed spirits, if any thing, from thrusting aside superior ones, and communicating in their stead?

It was answered:

What hinders a loafer, as you call him, from seeking the society of a parson or a judge? Want of congeniality with the tone of your minds.

Mrs. S. asked whether spirits actually saw material objects through her eyes?

It was answered:

Does the Judge look through his spectacles?

She asked if the spirit present could read her mind?

It was answered:

I can't do that, unless I were with you constantly, and influenced you often.

She inquired why it was that while inferior spirits, whose influence was unpleasant, would at times thrust themselves upon her, superior spirits never did?

It was answered:

They ask permission. A good spirit *never* obtrudes himself. When an inferior one does, resist him in the name of God, and he will always go away.

She said something about retiring as it was late.

I said that it mattered not, as the spirits did not care about the time. They were often with us until after midnight.

It was written:

We take no note of time, but in the good we do. The minutes lengthen into hours, the hours to days, the days to years, the years merge always in eternity. BACON.

Section Twenty-nine.

Thursday, May 26th, 1853.

The circle met at Dr. Dexter's; his hand was influenced, and the following was written:

FROM the farthest verge of my sphere, where the reflected brightness of the celestial land sheds its glorious sunshine over all, where the good and true, the ever-living, the ever-progressing spirit sends up his shout of joy and gladness, where the untiring and never-ceasing action is forward and upward, come I to-night with my soul radiating the brightness of that sphere, and a spring of gushing love in my heart toward you, my friends, whom to meet is indeed a joy even to me. I give you my spirit-blessing, and greet you in God's name. SWEEDENBORG.

The properties of our nature are so multifarious, that it is a matter of no little trouble justly to discriminate between what are the results of our organic condition, and what the offspring of our spirit-consciousness. It is difficult for human nature to appreciate the capacities of its own organization, the almost omnipotent powers of mind, and the vast development corresponding to the spirit's intimacy with matter.

Why do you educate your sons and daughters? Why do you admire and revere the man who is learned and wise? Were you to take the material answer, you would imagine that to educate, was to store his brain and memory with an array of facts, or impress his mind with the Greek and Latin languages, or with mathematics, or with philosophy, or with astronomy, or, indeed, with any or all of the

sciences, that he or she might become a man or woman capable of perfectly performing their part in life; or that the one or the other might, by their acquirements, have the chance of accumulating a fortune by their advantageous exercise; or that a wise man or a learned man was, indeed, to be revered and respected as one who knew more than you know; whose understanding had so far outstripped the common workings of that attribute of mind, that he must certainly be able to see farther into the misty night of the future, and to select from the shadowy outlines of the events in store those which will put the most money into his strong-box, or give him greater power and control over his fellow-man. Are not these the recognized ideas of learning, of wisdom among men? That the true end of wisdom is to enable one to amass either power or wealth by its exercise?

But the education of the spirit is not alone the filling the brain with the crude notions of other brains, or storing up in the capacious receivers of its vast magazines the facts or results of every known doctrine. No; neither is it the fashioning of its ideas according to the prescribed doctrines of Jew or Gentile, Romanist or Protestant; it is coloring it neither with the glaring red of bigotry, the somber hues of fanaticism, or the dull, dark, and ever black features of error. No, no; the mind, educated, is but bringing the spirit nearer the material world with which it is connected, by removing the impediments to its true manifestation. It is not the body or the brain that can retain the teachings of the schools, after they shall have perished in death and turned to the dust out of which they were created. The corner-stone of your churches shall last as a memento of the force of stern will long after the hands that laid them shall have moldered, and their very names be forgotten.

What then? The spirit it is, which receives and retains; the spirit it is, which can not erase the impressions that truth, knowledge, or love have made on its intelligence. The spirit it is, which, brought near your earth by the re-

moval of all the barriers of matter, speaks to you as your own spirits would speak to you, were they capable of presenting their true properties amid all the grossness which surround them. Bring the spirit near the world, then; you can not injure even its ethereal and sublimated organism, strong as are the forces which oppose its manifestation. By thus doing though, it may benefit the world, secure as it is in the propriety and soundness of the doctrines it professes, and the purity and loveliness of all its motives.

I have been led to make these remarks to-night, before proceeding to my regular subject, from a comparison between your world and the bright and glorious spheres from which I have just arrived.

It is not always that I am just returned from my sphere when I visit you at the circle; but, to-night, I had even that moment arrived from the sphere to which I belong, when I touched the Doctor's hand. By my own wishes, as well as by my mission, I am connected with your earth, and though, indeed, I have often the privilege of returning to my home, still I never leave it for earth without contrasting the almost incomprehensible difference between them.

But I will say a few words on my proper subject, and then I must leave you.

If the pure spirit suffers so much when conscious of wrong, how much must it rejoice when it feels the inspiring power of its own elevated desire lifting it, as it were, upward and onward toward heaven! How joyful, yes, ecstatic—how glorious must be the feelings of that spirit whose desires, whose aspirations, have directed him to those bright lands where the sun of truth, of love, of charity never declines!

Starting from the second sphere, which is the first point of its appreciable spirit-existence, it sends the eye of inquiry through all the spheres beyond, and revels in the unfoldings of that glance.

Think you that the spirit would be satisfied with green

fields, or bright skies, or balmy breezes, or even the dazzling radiance of the sun itself as a dwelling-place, if its innate yearnings were not gratified, the hope of throwing off all that is possible of his material creation, and exercising as a spirit belonging to the Godhead itself those attributes which characterize it as an intelligence?

What is the soul's longing after knowledge, truth, love, charity—yes, all that is good, wise, great, and beautiful—but the desire to exercise in some condition these properties as a right of its nature, when it shall have increased in the magnitude of its activity, and, conscious of its divine origin, it can ministrates as a spirit to the great good of the whole of which it is a part? Good-night.

Section Thirty.

Wednesday, June 1st, 1853.

This evening, in my library, the Doctor and I alone present.

There was a good deal said that was of a personal character, which it would not be worth while to insert here, except only so far as to show the nature and closeness of the intercourse which is going on between us and the unseen intelligence that speaks.

Thus, in reference to some personal trouble of mine, it was written:

THERE are seemingly certain tides in organic nature, as there are in the ocean, whose broad bosom covers two thirds of earth's surface, and sigh out the various emotions which stir up its mighty sentiment. This occasion is a tide in your affairs, dear Judge, and could you know how your friends have with anxious care watched your feelings, sym-