

without developing, at the same time, a burst of superstition.

It is not very easy to make Mr. Oliphant's new revelation quite intelligible. For one thing, he seems to maintain that the regeneration of mankind consists chiefly in the spiritual union of the male and female. Man is incomplete in either sex and complete only in the union of the two. So far we are greatly inclined to go with Mr. Oliphant. At least there is something here which conveys at least a partial meaning to our minds. When he says that the male and female principles exist in God, he is declaring something which we can neither affirm nor deny. We are reminded of the Kabbalah, Jacob Bohme, *et id genus omne*, and those who revel in such literature may find Mr. Oliphant more or less intelligible.

Furthermore, Mr. Oliphant believes that he in some sense, possessed by the spirit of his late wife—his physis and pneumatic molecules being penetrated by hers—and the result is the present revelation. We are very bold in thus interpreting the arcana of this temple. Very probably the author would say that we have only half understood him, or perhaps not at all. Well, we shall not be very much cast down, because we are warned that a great preparation which we may not possess, is needed for the understanding of the mystery.

We must, however, hasten to assure our readers that the book is not without passages of deep truth and of great beauty. If Mr. Oliphant would quit what seems to us, his delusions, and would accept the guidance of Holy Scriptures, he might really teach us what we would gladly learn; and as it is he utters often a true and clear testimony against the evils of the age in the religious sphere. Not only so, but here and there, we come upon brilliant statements of spiritual and biblical truth. Instead of going further in the way of criticism, we will give a passage which, although it cannot be accepted in its entirety, yet does show real insight into the mind of the Spirit. The passage adduced here refers to the same kind of difficulty which we experience in the history of Balaam and elsewhere. "The readiness of men open to these impressions to attribute them all to the one Divine Source, receives striking illustration from the dispute which took place between the prophets Hananiah and Jeremiah, in the 28th chapter of Jeremiah, in which they both prophesy 'in the name of the Lord;' and Jeremiah charges Hananiah with prophesying falsely, predicting his death the same year as a punishment." Here he quotes the passage and then goes on: "That Micaiah should in a trance, or even in a state of hypnotic consciousness, have had represented to him, by the spirits who had attached themselves to his organism, a scene such as the one above described, is perfectly possible,—that he should honestly believe that he had seen a vision of the Almighty sitting on His throne, discussing with attendant angels how He should lure to his destruction a king with whom he was displeased, and attain this object by commanding a spirit to infest and lie through His prophets,

is an evidence of a very debased mediumistic condition. Such a representation of God's methods of dealing with man, could only have been conveyed to the consciousness of one whose own moral and intellectual condition was of a very low order, and by the spirits who were themselves of a low order. It is a remarkable fact that the mass of professing Christians, even of the present day, will believe in the truth of this monstrous picture of the prophet's subsurface consciousness—which reflected the image appropriate to it, as projected through the agency of spirits also appropriate to it—and will believe, further, in the psychological invasion of the prophets of Ahab by spirits under superior direction, who ridicule the idea that direct action by similar spirits, not only upon the subsurface consciousness, but upon the external minds of men, is as possible now as it was three thousand years ago; for the laws which govern our relations with the unseen world are as immutable as the laws which operate in this one, and nothing can be more trivial or shallow than the contention that what is possible at one period of the world's history is impossible at another."

#### THE AFFAIRS OF ALGOMA.

THE Bishop of Algoma has our sympathy in the many trials incident to his position. Our correspondents in discussing the administration of Algoma are well within their rights, no Bishop is above criticism, so far as his episcopal dealings with his clergy go. But if his critics showed a little less acerbity, and a considerable amount more charity they would add much to the force of their complaints. We would, in the interests of the diocese and his own peace, suggest to Dr. Sullivan that he take especial care to avoid placing clergy in charge who are not found to be fully aware of their future work and surroundings, as well as thoroughly in accord with him as to parochial management, after a frank conference on this and other matters. A missionary diocese calls for specially endowed missionaries, and involves more intimate relations with the Bishop than an old settled one. We do this without any desire to question the Bishop's course in the past, but the changes in his staff seem to point to a need of more prevision. Dr. Sullivan is, we believe, as human as the rest of us, and has to learn by experience, as no doubt he has done and is yet doing, and will do, we hope, until the end.

As to the Bishop's alarm lest his Treasurer should resign if he is asked to prepare an annual statement of his trust affairs, we must say that we cannot support the Treasurer in taking such a position, as certainly he is not indispensable to Algoma. A Bishop naturally thinks the preparation of an annual statement an alarming ask. But one of the most experienced accountants in Canada informs us that if the diocesan accounts have been kept properly it would not take half an hour to draw off a statement at any time, showing receipts and expenditure duly classified. Besides, it is the manifest duty of every Treasurer to issue

such a statement at least yearly. That the office is honorary, only makes every honorary obligation the weightier. We have, however, if our memory is correct, seen a charge made for keeping these accounts. In the name of the subscribers to the Algoma diocesan funds, we ask the Treasurer to give a plain and full statement of his trust punctually and regularly every year.

#### THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH TO MERCHANT SEAMEN.

WE beg to thank Commander Dawson, R.N., for a copy of a paper read by him at the Manchester Church Congress on the 2nd October, with the above title, and regret our inability to publish in full. The paper opens with an allusion to the Church revival one consequence of which is that "Never since God the Son walked on the sea of Galilee and bade sailors become fishers of men, have seamen occupied a more forward place than now in making God's way known upon earth, His saving health among all nations." The duty of the Church of the greatest maritime country in the world is quaintly said to be, "to take to the water." The neglect of seamen has made them a reproach, but a better day has dawned. The number of persons engaged in the shipping trade, afloat and ashore, is said to be about 430,000, masters, officers, seamen, &c. The dearth of provision for the spiritual needs of these persons is lamentable. It is pointed out that needless Sunday work is done on board and in harbours, and as most owners of vessels are churchgoers at home, the seamen are thus prejudiced against religion. A highly interesting passage in Commander Dawson's paper on the peculiar fitness of the Church of England for the general oversight of men of mixed creeds and races. We give this section in full. "God the Holy Ghost makes distinctive Bible truth effectual to converting the soul. But distinctive Bible truth is Church doctrine, for the Prayer Book teaches that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation;' hence the great importance of the Church undertaking this duty to seamen.

Happily the mixed creeds and nationalities on board ship, if willing to unite together for worship at all, generally prefer to do so in connection with the National Church of the flag under which they sail. The scriptural liturgy of the Bible-loving Church of England stands to them in lieu of the living voice of God's ministers. It is the only book of devotions in the English tongue which contains scriptural offices for public worship in health and in sickness, for baptisms and burials, for the sea and its dangers, for the various exigencies of common and of individual life, as a book of private devotions in sorrow and in joy, in temptation and in trial, and for spiritual communion in the absence of a clergyman. Sailors, as a rule, prefer the Book of Common Prayer, because its worship includes so many selected portions of Holy Scripture; because they can follow the petitions with their own eyes and