

THE

Harbinger of Light

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE; FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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Who Mr. Alfred Mallalieu is, or what his literary status in New South Wales may be, we are unaware. He comes under our notice for the first time as the writer of the "Prize Essay" against Spiritualism, which appears in *Freethought* for March last. Whatever his capacities as an essayist may be in other directions, in this one at least he does not shine, and we can only presume that there was either no competition, or that his was the best, of a bad lot.

In spite of previous disappointments we had entertained a faint hope that the premium offered would have ultimated in something better. We look in vain for a foeman "worthy of our steel" with arms and armour as nearly as possible on a par with those used by the philosophic Spiritualist of to-day, not the rusty obsolete weapons of a past decade, which we have over and over again proved the worthlessness of. Were it simply an essay against Spiritualism from a local standpoint, we should leave our contemporary to settle the matter; but a prize essay challenges a wider criticism, and on behalf of Victorian Spiritualists we will review Mr. Mallalieu's production.

The essayist's first proposition is faulty. He asserts, "He who advances theory must produce proofs—cannot prescribe conditions." The latter sentence may hold good in some instances, but when a theory and its demonstration are based upon conditions, these conditions are necessarily prescribed by the theorist, and cannot legitimately be ignored by his opponents. In the next paragraph he quotes approvingly a remark of Carpenter's on "Snail Telegraphy" to wit, "that it was inherently impossible," and being so no amount of evidence would convince. This the writer appears to think applies to Spiritualism, which, if not impossible, was so strong an improbability as to demand "an accumulation of the most cogent testimony" from "persons

who are altogether independent of" or, still better, "opposed to" the subject. Had he only an average knowledge of the subject he is treating on, he would have known that all he prescribes in this direction has been given. Not only did Professors Mapes, Crookes, and Hare approach it in an independent spirit, but the latter (at least) entered into a scientific examination of the phenomena with the object of exposing its fallacy, and was forced to a conviction by the very instruments his ingenuity had devised to detect the supposed imposition. It is a well-known fact, which may be verified by enquiry, that the majority of present believers in the phenomena entered into its investigation in a sceptical spirit.

On the next page we find the following: "And Animal Magnetism, with its attendant Mesmerism and Clairvoyance, all claiming to be the results of superhuman action."

Wherever did Mr. Mallalieu get his hazy notions on these matters from? We have about eighteen years' experience in Animal Magnetism and its concomitants, but this is the first time we have heard of the claim put forward by the essayist. He need not look far to find Animal Magnetists or Mesmerists who are Materialists, having no belief in anything superhuman; in fact, the very term Animal Magnetism would be a misnomer, did the claim referred to exist. After a page or two of trivialities concerning the different opinions of Spiritualists, the writer comes to what appears at first glance a serious reflection on Spiritualism. He says, "Spiritualism would have obtained in many instances a better consideration had its upholders realised the necessity of scrupulous, unchallengeable purity of character in the professing phenomena exponents." The upholders have not been blind to this need, but the essayist probably forgets that they have not the appointment and control of Media. There is no college for mediums to graduate in; no board of examiners, or senate to grant or refuse them a diploma. The public are the judges, and by their demand for sensational manifestations, not only tempt unprincipled people to manufacture bogus manifestations, but encourage imperfectly-developed mediums to supplement the genuine phenomena occurring through them by tricks, the discovery of which

naturally destroys faith in the genuine manifestations that may have been presented through them.

The fact that Spiritualism relies on evidence and reason is so well known that we need not pause to consider or contradict the assertion that it relies on authority; nor does the subsequent one, that "all manifestations occur under circumstances of great mental excitement," require more than a passing notice; its untruthfulness will be apparent to any students of Hare, Edmonds, Crowell, Binney, Wallace, Crooke, Owen, or M. A. Oxon's works.

The idea of a Spiritual Material World as depicted by some media, is too absurd for Mr. Mallalieu to dwell upon; but he does not furnish us with what heaven is or ought to be according to his conceptions; it is, however, just possible that his idea (if he has one) might appear quite as absurd to the Spiritualist critic.

A series of sweeping untruthful and illogical assertions, such as that "table turning had not survived Faraday's test—that the phenomena, if real, must be miracles—everything that has yet taken place as phenomena has been explainable on material grounds, and accepted on unsatisfactory evidence, or rather testimony," &c.—forms the balance of the essay, the writer of which is evidently lamentably ignorant of the subject he has ventured to descant upon. The outside world, equally ignorant with himself will (metaphorically) "pat him on the head," and think he has said some clever things, but the Spiritualistic student will smile at the puerility of his maiden effort, and advise him to study the subject and get better "posted up" before attempting to enter on it again.

WISE WORDS FROM SWEDENBORG.

[CONTINUED.]

72. But although I speak thus of the soul, do not think that I would have you give up the enquiry; because, even though the essential nature of the soul is beyond the discovery of man, there are characteristics in connection with it with which both man's present and future are bound up. 73. The progress of the soul as it has fulfilled the purpose of the Infinite, and as it shall still pursue the course marked out for it, involves so many considerations, that the line of thought to be followed out is endless in its operation, as it is in its results. Search through the pages of human records and observe the vast amount of thought, speculative thought, which has been devoted to the attempted elucidation of questions relating to the experience of the soul. Why, all the theories of religion which have been propounded, and urged on the acceptance of mankind, have arisen from the conceptions of soul experience which men have revolved in their minds, and then formulated into these systems. 74. Take away soul, in all its essentially divine characteristics, and you have at once lost the motive to dwell upon a line of conduct, or experience, which extends beyond the present moment of your existence. But when once it is felt that, the soul, the man proper, is of a more extended nature than the physical body; that although this body falls and dies in the order of nature, the soul lives on, and is responsible for its actions while in the body, and answerable for its mode of life to the great Being from whom it derives its existence, then, you will be unable to repress thoughts concerning what will be the result to it of life on the earth in the future, and how best that life may be conducted in the present, so that the most desirable condition possible in the future may be obtained. 75. And this is really what the ideas of the religions of the world involve, for religion as to its

proper conception, must be confined to these two propositions, the first, having a reference to motives, and the second to actions; thus, as to the future expectations; and then to the due preparation for it. 76. I need not carry you through the course of theology which I promulgated when on earth in my works, both as it referred to human conduct, or to the future experience which that conduct would involve. If I did so, I should have to correct step by step, many many errors, both as to motives and results; as, also, in relation to man's dependence upon the Divine Being; I would rather in view of enlarging on the subject of "Soul," draw your attention to what I now conceive to be man's paramount duty; and, hence, his future realization in connection therewith. And in doing so, I would reverse the order; and instead of urging the future expectation as the motive for a good and orderly life, I would strive to make you understand the importance of living in harmony with the Divine intention now, that you may thus be prepared to enter with effect on the higher work of that more advanced state; for the life of use in its highest and noblest forms, is the grand motive which you should ever keep before you in the cultivation and employment of the faculties God has bestowed upon you. 77. At this stage, however, I can imagine the enquiry arising in some minds, as to my right to assume authority on this point; and also, why, if I now condemn my former teachings, I should urge with such persistency the ideas now promulgated: for may it not be possible that in another hundred years, another and still greater change may have taken place in my views; and thus as the result of such a conclusion, is not all teaching of that absolutely speculative character as to make it uncertain and unsafe, and therefore to be rejected on that account. 78. I may find it convenient to reply to these suggestions now, and I proceed to enlarge on other matters relating to the experience of the soul, both in the earth life, and hereafter. As to my authority, I claim the right which everyone is entitled to, by virtue of his manhood, to do what I can to aid my fellow man in his progressive growth; moreover, it is given to some men to exercise the calling of teacher by virtue of a peculiarly endowed mind, just as it is given to others, to labour specially in other departments of life. Therefore, it is, that, in the exercise of my vocation, I desire to speak in such a way, that I may be successful in leading others to follow what I believe to be the best course, and most in harmony with the infinite order of things. 79. And in thus fulfilling my course, I would do so in the exercise of that humility and brotherly love, which a felt dependence on the All Wise produces; and also the knowledge of my inseparable union with all souls, as an agent, both for good or evil. I assume no authority but that which one brother who has risen higher in the life of soul, and attained a greater measure of experience, may claim over the other who has yet to fulfil his course. And in this respect, while I am God's servant to fulfil His Will, I am at the same time, my brother's keeper, to advance, and warn and help him into the enjoyment of all those advantages, which by God's mercy, I myself possess. 80. Then as to the other suggestion, viz., that I may yet find it necessary in the future to correct myself, as I now do in reference to the past; this involves a question of such general importance, that I must be allowed to dwell upon it at some greater length than the question of authority, inasmuch as it embraces a feature of progressive life intimately affecting the immediate present as it passes on. If you could fully enter into, and understand the relative value of knowledge and experience as it concerns the earth-life state, and the condition of existence which succeed, you would perceive that thoughts conceived in the former, must of necessity, be imperfect and liable to correction in the latter; because, in our sphere of existence, we enter upon clearer light and more definite knowledge: while onward from this point, we rise in the grasp of truth, but have already arrived at a knowledge of first principles. That it should be possible to stand corrected, therefore, in relation to the formulated thought of earth-life, is no unreasonable thing; but that I should at any time be led to deny, or to correct the great principles of truth laid down by me

now, is not at all likely. 81. This, however, I admit, that it is utterly impossible for me to convey to you a full and adequate conception of the truth in relation to God and the soul, or any kindred subject, because the condition of mental capacity which pertains to the earth-life state is incapable of receiving it. It is possible, however, to lay a good foundation for the time to come, and this is what I am seeking to accomplish. The growth of the mind in relation to its conception of truth, must ever be accumulative as it advances; but the condition of growth in the more spiritual regions of the spirit realm, are of such a character, that growth must be rather progressive than corrective; while the reverse order pertains to the earth-life, or at any rate, it is corrective as well as progressive, and only ceases to sustain that double character when the enlightened soul reaches the heavenly state of emancipated existence. 82. Having dwelt upon these two incidental considerations, I will now proceed to speak of soul experience, as that is involved in the earthly progress; and then in connection with the upward flight, and its eternal growth in the realms of more spiritual existence. The first, and most striking feature of soul experience on the earth, arises from its tendency to go out from itself, just in the same way as the seed when planted in the earth, manifests its potency to expand and grow and develop into a plant. You will remark, however, how that seed to which I refer, in its expanding and ascending process, passes through many stages, all of which are characterized by peculiar relations, not only in regard to the soil in which it is embedded, but to the light and heat and moisture of the atmosphere, on all of which it is dependent; and could that plant utter words as you do, during its progress, it would reveal an experience more marvellous than ever could be conceived of. 83. So it is in regard to the human soul. Located as it is in the physical frame, the ethereal within the material, it realises as it passes on all those sensations which arise from contact with other souls, and also the influences which enter its outer domain through the material encasement. There is no point of existence of which you can conceive, so sensitive to those motions of force which fill the universe, as is the soul of man, hence, wherever he goes, however he may be employed, there are current influences flowing in upon him, which have the effect of either retarding his progress, or of accelerating it; and he needs to be protected from some of these, and brought into closer contact with others, as much as the plant does in its culture and care by man. This, then, is at the very basis of that spiritual education which that law of order which prevails in the universe calls for, and the earthly experience of man will improve in proportion as he realizes and follows out this rule. 84. The various phases of soul-experience which you may catalogue in relation to the earthly state, reveal a very wide diversity of characteristics, and produce results which are equally as diversified, affording to some individuals a true and unfeigned happiness while in other instances you behold only misery and disorder. It is on this ground it has been the custom with mankind to impute to either the one class or the other, the definitions of fortunate or unfortunate, viewing the happy as the favourites of heaven, while the unhappy and misfortunate are regarded as the victims of a stern decree which consigns them to a life of misery and woe. While on the other hand, you have theological definitions which speak of sin as the precursor of misery; and obedience and righteousness as the procuring cause of everything which can tend to peace and prosperity. 85. There is this peculiarity, however, about soul-experience, that whether it be marked by the turmoil and strife which arises, either from a neglect to protect or properly cultivate it, or as the result of the serene, and pleasurable sensations which arise from uninterrupted prosperity, the whole experience thus gathered, will constitute a very important element in its future progress; and it is this, connected with the fact, that a considerable modification may be effected in the character of human progress on the earth by the adoption of rules of life, which should lead mankind to dwell more than they do, on soul-culture in its relation to the circumstances of earthly existence; for to again return to

my simile of the plant, it is precisely the same in relation to man as it is to that when a proper care and judicious cultivation is exercised. 86. Oh! that men were wise and discerning enough to perceive how much depends upon themselves, both relatively and individually, to secure that soul-prosperity and happiness which will contribute an element of comfort now, and lay the foundation for a successful growth hereafter; for, believe me, the Infinite and all wise Father hath not decreed any untoward circumstances to befall His creature man, but hath rather, in the appointment of laws to be obeyed by man, made it possible to him to realize the supremest good in the progress of his soul's experience. 87. Soul-experience, then, on the earth, when it shall attain its normal condition, will be the expression of a will to manifest the most unqualified blessedness which man in that state can enjoy. At the present time, you behold only the abnormal condition of that experience—a sorry picture—more particularly when viewed from our stand-point; but which it is our aim, as the servants of the All Wise and Loving Father, and as the brethren of those whom we thus serve, to reduce to a state of order, and thus of happiness; and by which means the great ends of human earthly existence shall more fully redound to universal well-being. I would ask you, therefore, when contemplating the subject of soul-experience on the earth, to discard all those conventional notions which arise from the teachings of theology as at present prevalent, and to dwell rather on the beautiful results visible in nature when subject to the wise and faithful care and culture of skilled attendants. You, the plants of earth-life, are our care, and what we ask you to do is, to second our attempts to reduce the disorder, and bring in a reign of order, and thus of happiness; for the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together to reach this very consummation..

Marnias Meti,

Melbourne, March, 1880.

H. J. B.

COMMUNICATION.

FAR away to the West is an island that I have lately visited. Upon it are the shipwrecked crew of a vessel lost some years ago. The name I cannot give you. Many a heart has mourned over the imagined death of those dear ones. They appeared to be a happy community, although isolated from the rest of the world, and are not without domestic comforts. One of them has taken the lead, and is looked up to by the others as a kind of Director. The community consists of men, women, and children. They are doing much as did the people of the "Bounty." The only thing that perplexes them much is how to provide clothing.

This island is not marked on the ordinary charts; hence it is not visited. The island is salubrious, well watered, and productive. There has been no death, but the population has increased. I think there must be over a hundred there. Being in affinity with one of the members, I was drawn thither; and now, at the first opportunity, make known their existence; not that they are to be pitied, but rather to restore hope to some sorrowing heart, mourning the untimely loss of some dear one. They have ceased hoping to hear from the outside world; but the outside world may hear of them through your and my agency.

1. The vessel was outward bound from England to one of the Australian ports.

2. The island is south west of Cape Colony; about 50° S. lat., 10° E. long.

K.

Castlemaine, Dec. 21st, 1879.

WE are requested by Mr. Milligan to copy the annexed Advertisement from the *Argus* of April 17th, and have italicised a portion to correct a false rumour which has been circulated.—"MILLIGAN.—On the 15th at her residence, 33 Dryburgh-street, Hotham, Marion, the beloved wife of Mr. Samuel Milligan, aged 34 years."

* (1 and 2 answers to queries.) Finger made to stop on map at this spot.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

"F. E. S. Hewison's letter," and other articles are held over for want of space.

EARNEST INVESTIGATOR.—We have a letter for you, but having mislaid your address are unable to forward it.

THE PRESENT CONDITION AND OUTLOOK OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

By J. TYERMAN.

(Concluded from No. 115, p. 1573.)

It has been seen that Christianity has not established permanent peace among the nations professing it, nor united the people together in the bonds of a common brotherhood, nor effected the moral re-generation of the world—objects which we are frequently assured form part of its God-given missions; although it has had ample time and opportunity for doing this. Let us next see whether it has produced a *harmonious and consistent system of religious truth*, on which all its professors agree, to present for the acceptance of the world at large. It is an infallible system, resting on an infallible book, and controlled in the working out of its mission by an infallible Deity, at least this much should have been done. Its teaching ought to be so clear, unequivocal, and emphatic as to be beyond the possibility of misapprehension; and widely as its believers might differ on other subjects for which there is no infallible authority, they ought to be thoroughly united in their views of it. But such is not the case. There are a few points on which Christians agree, but there are many on which they differ widely, some of them being of the utmost importance to man as an immortal being.

Suppose an intelligent truth-seeker, say a Pagan, is urged to embrace Christianity—a not uncommon occurrence. He will naturally want to know what it teaches on certain questions of paramount interest, and on being assured of its Divine origin and authority, he will of course expect perfect agreement among its professors on these matters. But in this reasonable expectation he will soon find himself woefully disappointed. He will be told by some believers that there is but one God, the sole author and supreme governor of all things; and by others that there are three Gods, coequal in infinite attributes. The Bible will be represented to him by one school of critics as inspired throughout by unerring wisdom, and hence absolutely true in every particular; another school will frankly admit that some parts are spurious interpolations, and others undeniably inaccurate, and irreconcilably contradictory. He will find some paying homage to a mortal man, as God's alleged infallible representative on earth, and the duly authorised head of the Christian church on earth; while others are denouncing that old gentleman as an arrant impostor, and waging incessant war against the section of their fellow-Christians whom he leads. Some will inform him that Christ was infinite Deity, incarnated in human form, to save the world by the shedding of his blood, and must be trusted in and worshipped as God; others will try to convince him that that illustrious personage was after all only a created, finite, and fallible being, to worship whom is to be guilty of idolatry. One party will assure him that God elected a certain portion of mankind to everlasting happiness, and doomed all the rest to eternal misery, before either class was born, and altogether irrespective of their moral merits or demerits; another party will insist that man is a free agent, and that God, by means of Christ's atonement, has offered salvation to the whole world. The alternative schemes of salvation by faith and by works will be pressed upon his attention, to still further puzzle his brain and obstruct his progress. Seven sacraments will be inculcated by one church as distinctive of this particular religion; while two will be all that others will contend for, and that without being able to agree precisely as to

what their efficacy consists in. The imminence of Christ's second advent, to wind up the present economy will be pointed out by one class as an essential part of the correct creed; but only to be scouted by another class as a mischievous fiction. He will be asked in one quarter to believe in the resurrection of the physical body at the last day; in an other quarter he will be warned that that is unscriptural teaching, and that a spiritual resurrection is what the word of God reveals. The doctrines of a personal devil, and of the eternal punishment of the wicked, will be held up to his wondering gaze, as vital parts of the Christian scheme of truth, by one section of theological authorities; while other authorities, equally distinguished, will condemn those doctrines as blasphemous errors, whose continued propagation is a disgrace to this enlightened age.

Upon these and many other subjects of the deepest interest to mankind, Christianity teaches, through its recognised exponents, the most glaring and helplessly contradictory views. I cannot think this would have been the case had it been of Divine origin, as claimed, and characterised by that clearness, simplicity and unity which ought to mark a system intended for the world at large. And our hypothetical Pagan truth-seeker might fairly resist the pertinacious overtures of Christian proselytisers, at least till they are agreed among themselves as to what their system really teaches; and might also point with pardonable pride to the greater harmony and consistency which distinguish his own religion, from that to which they are so anxious to convert him.

It may be inquired in the last place whether Christianity fully meets the intellectual, moral, and spiritual demands of man's nature in this age of enlightenment and progress. Any system of religion that had God for its author would certainly do this. It would not only always be abreast of the times, but considerably ahead of them. That many excellent and able men are satisfied with it no one denies, and this is sometimes urged as an argument in its favour: but whether any of them are unduly biased in its favour—whether most of them may not owe their views of it to early education, conventional custom, or professional and interested motives, is another question. One thing is certain—many of the most intelligent and thoughtful persons of the present day have discarded it, as a thing that no longer satisfies either their reason or conscience. They feel that they have outgrown it, especially many parts of its dogmatic teachings; and whilst they admit that it may still have its use for a certain class of individuals, they no longer recognise its authority on many of the subjects with which it deals. Nor are they, as a rule, persons whose rejection of it might fairly be attributed to questionable motives; for many of them are of the highest moral character, and as conscientious in their pursuit of truth as their Christian opponents who condemn their infidelity. And judging from the present aspect of affairs, this defection from the popular faith is likely to become still more general as time rolls on. The number of those who have rejected it, because of its inability to satisfy their judgment and better nature, has increased with amazing rapidity within the last fifty years, and almost every day swells the list. Our Christian friends admit the fact, and deplore it; but they seem powerless to arrest the progress of revolt, and win back the wanderers to the orthodox fold. It does not appear, however, to strike them that there must be some defect or fault in a system when so many truth-seekers reject it, notwithstanding that their eternal well-being is said to depend upon their acceptance of it. And yet if their minds were open and unbiassed, this conclusion could hardly fail to force itself upon them, as the most rational explanation of the present state of things.

I submit, then, that the present condition of the religious world is not such as to justify the extraordinary claims of Christianity. That system has completely failed to vindicate its pretensions in the five particulars pointed out, as well as in many others that I have not space to introduce; and the sooner this fact is generally recognised, and the mundane origin and imperfect character of that religion are acknowledged, the better it will be for the world.

But if the present condition of the religious world is

unsatisfactory, when viewed from the orthodox standpoint, is there anything more cheering for our Christian friends in the outlook? Does hope gild the horizon with its pleasing rays? Can any promise of better things be discerned in the future, so far as it can be judged from present appearances? I do not think so. The outlook for the churches as such is as dark and depressing as it well could be. The signs of the times clearly point to one thing—*Christianity must either submit to extinction or revision*. It cannot maintain its present exceptional position in the world. Its narrow and arbitrary creeds have had their day; its repressive and intolerant spirit is inconsistent with the principles of true liberality; its conservative and obstructive policy is opposed to that of progress, which is being so rapidly developed in all directions; and it must either be re-adjusted, and adapted to the spirit and tendency of modern thought, or be swept away by the growing forces that are arrayed against it. There are already some indications that it will take warning in time to save itself in part at least. It has not been able to entirely resist the liberalising and progressive influences of the age. A slow but sure process of modification is going on, especially in its sphere or dogmas. Some of those which were formerly insisted upon most stringently, are not defended so vigorously as they were, and may in due time be abandoned as no longer tenable: while others that are still deemed of the most vital importance will probably also be affected by the rational and corrective principles that have already effected some changes on doctrinal questions, and may likewise by-and-by be modified or surrendered as the interests of truth and justice may require.

In conclusion, I will only add, that whilst the present condition of the religious world is not such the orthodox can fairly be satisfied with, there is much that true Liberals may be thankful for. And as to the outlook, gloomy and cheerless as it may appear to our opponents, to us it is radiant with hope. Our principles are gaining ground everywhere, and if we are faithful to our trust, and honestly do our duty, the future will assuredly bring forth a glorious harvest of success.

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

MR. MARCUS CLARKE has done good service by republishing in pamphlet his controversy with Bishop Moorhouse on "Civilisation without Delusion." The Bishop's admirers will be glad to have, in so convenient and cheap a form, his scholarly answer to Mr. C's first article; whilst the strategic acuteness by which the latter gentleman, in his final rejoinder, pins his antagonist to the canons of "*revealed religion*," combined with his scorching review of popular theology, will invite the patronage of many Freethinkers to this reprint. But what a mere logomachy it is, in which these disputants are engaged! How pitiable to see two men of such ability, each confident that his position is right, yet each groping in darkness—a darkness which only the divine alchemy of Spiritualism can transmute into light! In the matter of miracles, for instance, with what difficulties does the Bishop invest his case by ascribing extraordinary phenomena (called "miracles") to the direct influence and operations of Deity! Nothing—not all the eloquent sophistry in the world—can save such a position from swift destruction. Miracle, so defined, involves on the part of Deity the discovery of some necessity for a special procedure, an idea which excludes from the Supreme an original knowledge of all causes and their issues. But a God denuded of the attribute of *omniscience* is surely no God at all! This, Mr. Clarke and many co-thinkers clearly perceive, and for this reason, and others, they repudiate the notion of miracle *in toto*. But, as Wallace shows, their objection is valid, not against the occurrence of supramundane facts, but against only one mode of interpreting them. Spiritualism here throws a world of light upon this *vexatam questionem*, or, as Maurice less pleasantly puts it, "The demonology of our times has supplied me with a luminous commentary on the evangelical narratives." It exhibits on the attestation of witnesses, overwhelming in number, and of veracity not to be impeached, the reality

of occurrences transcending the known power of terrestrial man to produce, and it leads us to infer thence the existence of ethereal beings capable of directing and guiding "new modes of ethereal motion." The Bishop may be reminded of this statement of Dr. John Henry Newman's, "The cogency of the argument from miracles depends on the assumption that interruptions in the course of nature must ultimately proceed from God; which is not true, if they may be effected by other beings without His sanction"—an alternative enforced by Scripture as well as by the course of human history. And Mr. Clarke's attention may be invited to the words of one of his chief priests, Professor Huxley, "That the possibilities of nature are infinite is an aphorism with which I am wont to worry my friends."

The *Inquirer* is the name of a journal claiming to be "the weekly Organ of the Unitarian Denomination" in England. The first part of the term we are almost disposed to regard as nearly correct,—in some respects, at any rate, there can be no doubt as to the weakly character of the publication; but in the interests of English Unitarianism, we sincerely hope that this organ is not a *vital one*, else we should be seriously apprehensive of the speedy collapse of the whole body. Says this debilitated "Organ":—"How much longer, we wonder, will the Spiritualistic imposture—the absurd superstition of modern times—delude even intelligent and upright persons? . . . The time, we hope, is not far distant, when the profession of belief in Spiritualism will be stigmatised by public opinion either as connivance with fraud, or a sign of incipient idiocy." And yet, of the denomination of which this *Inquirer* claims to be the official mouthpiece, one of the most prominent, active, and accomplished members, is John Pogo Hopps, who has certified to the genuineness of Spiritual phenomena, and has claimed the Spiritual philosophy as the true exponent of Christianity; and to this same denomination belonged Theodore Parker, the heroic preacher, who once said of Spiritualism, "This belief, without priests, without creeds, without churches, without any established form of worship or teachers, entering silently every pathway of life, piercing every department of science, of literature, of religion, is destined to be a religion of the future."

O, consistency, thou art a jewel! "How thou shinest with undimmed lustre in the diadems of our" Star Chamber potentates!" Such must be the reflection of those whose experience of the "manner and customs" of colonial "governors, and magistrates," is that "in the interests of morality," the doors of the Opera House were closed against all seeking the rational path of life and light, while "in the interests of religion," the holy portals at St. Patrick's are thrown wide open to receive all who are willing to pay handsomely for the privilege of witnessing a superstitious harlequinade. Admission—Nave, 5s.; eastern aisle, 3s.; western aisle, 2s.

Melbourne *Punch* has seldom been more felicitous in its selection of phrases than when under a recent cartoon of Bishop Moorhouse it inscribed the "apothegm"—"Fall of Fight!"

His lordship is pre-eminently an *episcopus militans*. We all know of his tilts against Davidson, Ewald, Tayler, Pfeleiderer, Baur, and Heckel—to say nothing of minor windmills like the Rev. J. Watsford, Rabbi Jacobson, and Marcus Clarke; the materialistic *Age*, and the Sir Oracle of our *Daily Telegraph*. And now we have him engaged in a brief controversy on the Resurrection of Christ, in which he is good enough to take some notice of Spiritualism. The debate was more than a "triangular duel," for some eight parties had a hand in it, and some of them regarded the subject from rather different standpoints; but the principals were two in number—Dr. Moorhouse and a writer who assumed the *nom de plume* of "Sceptic." The ball was opened by the latter in a calm and cogent epistle, addressed to the *Age*, criticising a sermon of the Bishop's, wherein the right rev. preacher had urged the paramount weight and sufficiency of the evidence that attested Christ's physical resurrection, and "the utter insignificance of

the testimony of those many honest and intelligent persons who believe they saw the so-called medium Home float in the air, compared with that supporting the faith in the resurrection of our Lord." "Sceptic" protests that is far more difficult to "believe that a dead body was restored to life in contradiction to the known laws of organic existence and in direct opposition to the common experience of mankind, than to suppose that a certain number of people who recorded the circumstance either deceived themselves or intended to deceive others." As regards Mr. Home's flotation, "Sceptic," who proclaims himself an utter sceptic as to Spiritualism, says, "I have always found the narratives of those who profess to have witnessed Home's manifestations characterised by three things:—1st, the quantity of attesting evidence; 2nd, the painstaking effort to relate them exactly as they occurred; and, 3rd, the perfect unanimity and agreement which pervades the stories." And he proceeds to show that these characteristics are absent from the records of Christ's resurrection, which are discrepant in the extreme. "If I cannot accept the one event," he argues, "in spite of the multiplicity of evidence, how am I to accept the other still more astounding phenomenon, when the evidence is by no means so plentiful or so accessible, and when its value is seriously weakened by the historical looseness of the details?" On the following day Dr. Moorhouse replied, but did not seek to disperse the discrepancies in the Biblical account urged by "Sceptic," contenting himself with referring to a work by Thomas Cooper, which professes to accomplish that result. His lordship, however, proceeds to enforce his positive arguments, such as "How came the apostles to believe that they saw the Master after His resurrection, if they never saw Him?" &c. Then addressing himself to Home, he admits the validity of the testimony to that gentleman's floating, but contends that it was done under prepared conditions which admitted of trickery—an hypothesis not entertainable in the case of the Saviour, for His moral character and that of the apostles vindicated them from being parties to a fraud. The same issue contained a short note from Dr. George Lewis, correcting the Bishop's assertion that Home did his levitation for money. "Permit me to state," writes the Professor, "that in saying this his lordship is entirely in error. Mr. Home has never received any pecuniary compensation whatever for his remarkable exhibition of mediumship." This is followed by a rambling letter from "Believer," which speaks with the courtesy by which the polemics of "believers" are so generally distinguished, of Spiritualists or any other kind of impostors, and contends that the harmony in the accounts of modern phenomena indicates "a commonly-devised fable," and tells us that Lord Lyndhurst admitted the testimony of Christ's resurrection.

In his rejoinder, "Sceptic" does little more than iterate his former arguments. "In a question of relative probabilities we are entitled and ought to believe the most probable. . . . We have daily experience of rogues and dupes, but we have no experience of the re-animation of the dead. We can imagine any moral enormity, but we cannot conceive of such a physical portent." And then with considerable tact he quotes against the position assumed by the Bishop. Professor Baden Powell, a fellow-churchman of his lordship's, to the effect that "the proposition that an event may be so incredible intrinsically as to set aside any degree of testimony in no way affects the honesty or veracity of that testimony. . . . It morally means this, that from the nature of our antecedent conviction the probability of some kind of mistake or deception somewhere, though we know not where, is greater than the probability of the event really happening in the way and from the causes assigned."

The Bishop's final answer is very argumentative. His argument is this: If there is a God with will and wisdom, He can work a miracle like the resurrection; He is likely to do so, if it is beneficial; there is some evidence of such miracle; all such evidence against it implies dishonesty on the part of Christ or His disciples—an untenable assumption.

As to the parallel instituted between Home and

Jesus, the Bishop says, "Either Home floated—in which case the rabid materialism of the age receives a severe shock—or he did not, but only imposed upon the beholders by a trick." But, his lordship contends, in the latter alternative there is no parallel, for Christ was morally unable to deceive. And then he continues, "while it is impossible for Jesus to have deceived, it is not impossible that Home did so, for Mr. H. himself shows in his *Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism* that the whole system 'is so permeated by the most sickening imposture that no man can help distrusting all mediums.'"

The Bishop's letter is followed by two others—one signed "Spiritus" * (evidently a Christian Spiritualist), and the other "A Spiritualist," who cites from page 162 of Wallace's work, a vindication of D. D. Home, whose character the Bishop had tried to asperse. Then after a hiatus of a few days, two funny letters appear, signed "A Believer in the Bible," and "Anglicanus," respectively. Neither of these adds aught to the controversy, but the latter very handsomely advertises Mr. Browne's new work, "Rational Christianity," a favour for which, I am sure, that gentleman will be truly thankful.

PROFESSOR CROOKES, F.R.S., appears to be unusually fortunate and the recipient of many favours. It has just been announced that "an extraordinary prize of 3000 francs has been awarded by the French Academy of Sciences to Mr. Crookes, in recognition of his recent discoveries in molecular physics and radiant matter." Not long ago Mr. Crookes made some valuable discoveries in *psychic force*, and put on record—accrediting it with his own high credentials and irrefragable name—one of the best demonstrations of Immortality ever given to man (See his "Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism"). For this the Professor was also liberally rewarded—with abuse.

THE *Church of England Messenger* is eminently "respectable"—at least so the *Argus* has said. It is just as well to have such a fact told us sometimes, for we should never have found it out ourselves. Says the *Church of E. Messenger*, "Spiritualism still ventures, we believe, to hold up its stupid head in Melbourne." It is satisfactory to know, in these times of instability, when the thread that binds "believers" to their tabulated creeds is of the most elastic as well as attenuated character, that the *Church of E. Messenger* has some definite belief, and especially gratifying is it to be able to state that this specific item of faith has the unique quality of possessing some modicum of truth—"Spiritism" (we won't quarrel about the name) does "hold up its head" in Melbourne, as well as elsewhere. The *Church of E. Messenger* says "stupid head." One feels sorry at not being able to return the compliment in its entirety, but the clergy have so monopolised politeness that there is left no appropriate term by which to designate the "head" of Church of Englandism. Fortunately, however, we need feel little concern at our incapacity in this respect, for there is no head to designate.

Regarded neither in the abstract, nor in the concrete form represented by its Victorian exponent, has the C. of E. any head. Almost in every land its members are in revolt, while the organ of the denomination in this city is, by general admission, supremely debilitated and wane. Save when Bishop Moorhouse prints in it one of his lectures, or Dr. Bromby contributes one of his "genial, jovial strains," the pages of our contemporary form the dreariest reading it is possible to imagine; and its articles are cold and dead, destitute of "parts and passions" (except acridulated temper), without head or tail.

Recent copies of the *Spiritualist* contain accounts of two sances with Miss Katie Cook (sister of Mrs. Corner), by Florence Marryatt, and Hensleigh Wedgewood, J.P., where both medium and spirit form were distinctly visible at the same time. The same paper also publishes copious extracts from the last report of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists.

* "Spiritus," I should remark, calls "Believer's" attention to the fact that Lord Lyndhurst "was a Spiritualist, just as he was a Christian, by intellectual necessity."

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN NOTES.

At the February meetings of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, on the motion of Mr. Stainton Moses, the following rule was passed and ordered to be conspicuously placed in the séance room:—"That under no circumstances shall a cabinet or other contrivance for secluding the medium from view be used at any séance held in the rooms of the B.N.A.S. to which enquirers and strangers are admitted.

We also learn from the record of proceedings that Dr. Monck was recovering, and had offered his services to the Association.

The *Medium* of February 27th contains a highly interesting letter from Madame de Steiger on "Celestial Photography," giving an account of the presentation of luminous pictures of Spirits, having the appearance of illuminated life-size photographs. The medium was Mrs. Hollis Billing, and the spiritual director, "Skiaukie," the powerful Indian control whose name and work is so intimately connected with that lady.

THE *Banner of Light and Religio Philosophical Journal*, by last mail, are rich in interesting and high class matter. Professors Buchanan and Brittan, A. J. Davis, Hudson Tuttle, J. M. Peebles, Mrs. Cora Richmond, and other eminent writers and speakers, are among the contributors. We are glad to observe from the *Banner* that the "Editor at large" project is succeeding, and that Professor S. B. Brittan has entered upon his duties in this direction. The principal duty of this official is to reply to letters and articles against Spiritualism which appear in the secular papers, and to contribute to such papers as will publish them, articles on Spiritualism. A better man for this duty than the veteran Spiritualist and Journalist referred to could scarcely be found.

The many readers of Mrs. M. M. King's "Principles of Nature" will be pleased to hear that the second volume is at length completed and about to be published.

The *Religio Philosophical Journal* of February 14th contains a portrait and Biographical Sketch of Emma R. Tuttle, the talented wife of Hudson Tuttle, whose name with hers has been intimately associated with the Spiritual movement. They have both been practical workers in the field since the advent of the modern manifestations, and the literature of Spiritualism has been materially enriched by their work. Mrs. Tuttle is a true poetess, and the themes which she embellishes with her genius are invariably elevating and instructive. Her name will be familiar to the many who have been connected with the Lyceum here from her contributions to the "Lyceum Guide," which she also assisted in the compilation of. Her biographer has inserted, among a few illustrative gems of poetry, one kindly written for the *Harbinger* by Mrs. Tuttle, entitled "White Souls—White Roses," which was published in this *Journal*, March, 1879.

REV. DR. HUGHES.

In reference to statements made to the effect that Dr. Hughes has been unhandsoemly treated by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, we are in a position to state authoritatively that Dr. Hughes was neither invited or encouraged to visit Melbourne by that body. That any arrangement made by them with him was subsequent to his arrival here, and that they have fulfilled to the letter their obligations towards him.

In another column we publish a full report of the inauguration of a new Association. This looks well for the cause, especially as nearly all its committee and members are new men. Much work is promised by its promoters; if the quality of it is equal to the quantity, we may expect some good results. It is encouraging to know that the old Association maintains its strength. We are informed by the Secretary that the enrolments and resignations during the past month have been exactly equal, viz., six of each.

MATERIALIZATION CIRCLE.

MR. J. C. MORRISON of Hotham, who appears to have had considerable experience with Physical and Trance Media in England, advises us of his intention to form a small but select circle for the development of materialization. We trust if he does so he will profit by the experiences of the past and eschewing cabinets conduct his circle in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of fraud or imposition. Manifestations of this kind to be of any value to the outside public must be produced under strictly test conditions and seances should be conducted on scientific principles.

The following communication having some bearing upon the subject was forwarded to us by Mr. Morrison.

"In relation to the varied Phenomena of Spiritualism there are conditions to be observed. Persons who indulge in too much animal gratification are totally unadapted to advance the cause. The phenomena at our sittings will be in accordance with the condition of the medium and his or her surroundings, if these are not good our time is lost. We entreat you therefore, to meet in good condition. Do not think we are in the same state now as when in the body, I will tell you as near as I can our present condition.

On entering this sphere we find ourselves in a position of trust, and as we use that trust so is our advancement or otherwise. As a rule we are happy but the spheres above us are as a sealed book. It is only the grand self immolation of the few in the birth sphere that enables them to rise at once to the glories of the higher circles. Keep yourselves as immaculate as you can, the greater the preparation here, the more rapid will your progress be hereafter. Countless ages may pass before the guilty one will see the face of his maker. I know many here who have quitted the earth long since, but content to pursue the pleasures of the first sphere, are no nearer God than when they quitted earth. Not that there is no help for them, but the steps necessary to ensure progress appear too difficult to them. Our present sphere is much like earth, but less material. There are not the facilities for committing crime, only so far as we can be our own enemies. Keep yourself from all sin in the material life because one improvement that is within your reach, one fault that could be rectified, one bad habit that could be conquered in a few days takes here centuries to overcome, because we cannot redeem the past, while you earth dwellers to some extent can, or at least modify the effects of wrong actions, repaying with kindness undeserved censure, doing good for harm previously done and making reparation.

The necessity of keeping guard over yourselves and others, to protect the weak against the strong, to be foremost in self abnegation is imperative for your own future gain, and what a gain it is! This I will prove to you more forcibly if my medium will carry out better the instructions given him."

THE (London) *University Magazine* for February, contains an article by J. P. B., on "Traducianism (the continuous hereditary evolution of the soul with the physical body), and Metempsychosis" (or Reincarnation). The writer, after fairly presenting the evidence and argument for Traducianism, argues in favour of Metempsychosis. The paper is ably written, but purely theoretical and metaphysical. A fuller knowledge of Psychology and the revelations of Spiritualism would enable the writer to arrive at more definite conclusions.

The same journal for March has an article on "The Soul and the Stars," somewhat favouring the Traducian theory, and accounting for the deviations from heredity by the influence of the planets and their aspect at the time of birth. Numerous instances are given in support of the writer's position; forty-six natiivities of historical characters born under similar planetary aspects, who developed analogous characteristics, are presented, the writer presenting his evidences from a materialistic, scientific aspect, and disclaiming for this phase at least of Astrology anything of an occult nature.

ANOTHER ASSOCIATION.

FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.

On Friday evening, April 9th, an adjourned meeting of persons favourable to the formation of a Society in the interests of Spiritualism, assembled in the upper room of the Temperance Hall, Russell-street, Melbourne. At 8 p.m. there were about sixty persons in attendance, but that number was considerably augmented by late arrivals.

Mr. Vevers having been installed as chairman, requested Mr. Hall, acting secretary, to read aloud the minutes of previous meetings, which were adopted and signed.

Mr. Rice now read the draft rules *seriatim*, as follows:—

1. That this Society be styled—"The Melbourne Spiritualistic Society," and shall consist of believers in, and inquirers into, the reality of the future state, founded on the evidence of spirit communion, having for its objects:—

Mr. McLoughlan took preliminary objection to the title of "Melbourne Spiritualistic Society." He preferred that the new association should be styled the "Melbourne Society of Spiritualists."

The Chairman pointed out that the old society was known as the "Victorian Association of Spiritualists," and he thought it was necessary to adopt a distinctive appellation.

A gentleman remarked that there existed a distinction between a friendly society and a society of friends.

The Chairman observed that to alter the name would be equivalent to placing the church before the people, instead of the people before the church.

Question was then put, and carried.

(a) The promotion of a rational comprehension of the Supreme Life Principle of the Universe, and of the infinite attributes of causation, power, justice, and love, necessarily emanating therefrom. Carried *sem voce*.

(b) The dissemination of revealed truth in reference to spirit life and communion.

A gentleman suggested that the word "revealed" should be omitted.

Mr. Rice could not understand the objection, for the word expressed what was required to be conveyed. Carried.

(c) To elucidate and inculcate—That in order to realise the greatest amount of individual and collective happiness, it becomes a man's highest duty to know and conform to the laws which regulate his being.

These principles to be effected by means of public lectures on psychology, theology, science, history, etc., or discussions thereon; a library and reading-room; Providing facilities for the formation of investigating and developing circles; the encouragement of local mediums; by the institution of private and public seances; and by such other means, compatible with the objects of the society, as may from time to time be deemed desirable by the committee, or by a majority of the members in general meeting convened. Carried unanimously.

MEMBERSHIP.

2. Persons agreeing to the foregoing, and desirous of becoming members of the society, shall send in their names, addresses, and subscriptions to committee; if elected, the secretary shall forward to the new member a card of membership, a copy of the rules, and receipt for subscription. Persons desirous of promoting the objects of the society—though not Spiritualists—may be admitted as associates, and shall enjoy all the privileges of the society except that of holding office.

3. Members and associates shall subscribe not less than 10s. per annum, payable in advance, either quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly; and shall participate in all privileges (except as specified in rule 2) connected with the society; provided no member be more than six months in arrear of subscription, and having been notified to that effect by the secretary. Fourteen clear days' notice must be given before a member be disqualified. Children of subscribing members, under 16 years of age, shall participate in all privileges of the society, except holding office or voting at general meetings.

A gentleman considered that the word "secretary" should be substituted for that of "committee."

Mr. Rice said the secretary was an official of the committee, but not master of the committee. Carried.

GENERAL MEETINGS, &c.

4. There shall be held a general meeting of members of the society in the second weeks of the months of April and October of each year. A special general meeting may be called by order of the committee, or by the president on his receiving a requisition signed by not less than 15 qualified members and associates of

the society. But no general or special meeting shall be held, except such meeting be called by circular setting forth the time, place, and the business to be transacted thereat, and received by each member at least four days prior to holding such meeting.

5. That no business other than of a routine character shall be transacted at any half-yearly or special meeting of the society, excepting that contained in the circular summoning the meeting. That every general and special meeting may be adjourned to such time and place as may be agreed upon; but no new business shall be considered at such adjourned meeting.

In the fourth clause, the word "called" was substituted for the word "held," so that the amended rule now reads, "a special general meeting may be called," &c.

The Chairman stated that these rules had been culled from various societies, and remarked that a great fault in general societies was that these rules were impracticable, and the committee who, in the present instance, drafted these rules, had studiously guarded against the occurrence of any "deadlock." Carried unanimously, as altered.

GOVERNMENT, &c.

6. The society shall be governed by a committee consisting of president, two vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer, and ten members, who shall be elected half-yearly by ballot. Candidates for office to be nominated by two qualified members at least seven days before general meeting. The secretary to have ballot-papers printed containing candidates' names, which shall be distributed to members and associates present at the general meeting at which the office-bearers for the six months ensuing are to be elected. Two scrutineers—not officers—shall examine the ballot-papers, and should any of the candidates have an equal number of votes, the question which one is to be elected shall be decided by show of hands.

A gentleman suggested that it would be prudent to elect a secretary every half-year.

Another gentleman enquired if the scrutineers would be elected by the meeting, or appointed by the committee?

The Chairman replied affirmatively, and said no proxies would be allowed, as they had occasioned a deal of ill-feeling in the old society. The question was put, and carried.

7. The president shall act as chairman at all meetings at which he is present, but in his absence one of the vice-presidents shall so act, or in their absence the meeting shall appoint a chairman from the members present. The president shall also keep a careful supervision over all transactions of the society. His ruling, as to order, interpretation of laws, etc., shall be final. Carried, without discussion.

8. The secretary shall receive all subscriptions and other moneys on account of the society, and hand them over to treasurer, at least once a week or oftener if requested by the president. He shall attend every meeting of the society; enter minutes of all transactions and business of the society; carry on its correspondence, issue all summonses, sign all orders of the committee, and be under the direction of such committee; and in case of his absence the committee shall appoint one of its members to act in his place *pro tempore*. He may receive for his services such sum as the committee may decide. Carried.

9. That the treasurer of the society shall receive all moneys from the secretary, give receipts for same, and make all payments on account of the society, keeping accounts of such receipts and payments. He shall lodge the whole or any part of the moneys in his hands in such bank as the committee may from time to time direct, to the credit of the society; and shall produce the bank-book and book of accounts whenever demanded by the committee; he shall not hold at any one time in his hands a greater sum than £5. He shall receive for his services such sum as the committee may decide.

Mr. Rice explained that no society could have a legal claim upon a treasurer unless he received remuneration of some kind for acting in such capacity.

The Chairman stated that the object of the rule was to make the treasurer honest, by making him liable.

10. Two auditors shall be appointed at each half-yearly meeting, who shall carefully check the balance-sheet prepared by the secretary, and to whom shall be submitted all vouchers and memoranda of receipts and expenditure for the past six months. They shall not be members of the committee.

11. The committee shall prepare and lay before each half-yearly meeting a report of their proceedings during the past six months; together with the balance-sheet, and such other information as may be deemed necessary for the well-being of the society.

These clauses were carried unanimously.

12. That the committee shall appoint three of their number to act with the secretary as a finance committee, whose duty shall be to check the receipts and expenditure each month, prior to being submitted to committee; they shall also manage the financial business of public lectures, etc., and after counting the proceeds, hand over all moneys received therefrom to the secretary or treasurer.

Mr. Rice mentioned that this rule would compel the counting of all moneys at the time of payment. The old system of receiving money without counting it was a very loose principle.

Upon the suggestion of a gentleman in the body of the meeting, the words—"taking receipt for the same"—were added after the word "treasurer;" and the clause, so amended, was adopted.

13. The committee shall meet the last week in each month, at such time and place as may from time to time be agreed upon. Special meetings may be called by order of the president, on resolution of committee, or by any three members thereof. Seven to form a quorum.

Mr. Rice stated that the object of this bye-law was to provide that there shall be no meeting convened unless by sanction or authority of the committee. Carried unanimously.

14. All accounts over the sum of £1 shall be submitted, before payment, to the committee; and such payment made by cheque signed by treasurer, and countersigned by president or secretary. The treasurer may pay accounts under £1, provided that such do not amount to more than £5 in any one month, and which shall be submitted to next committee meeting. That no moneys be voted out of the funds of the society except for the specific purposes set forth in these laws, unless notice of at least twelve days has been given.

The Chairman observed that this was a very important financial rule. Put, and carried.

15. The committee may appoint sub-committees for special purposes. Three to form a quorum. No decision of any sub-committee to be binding until ratified by the committee. No resolution of the committee to be rescinded except on notice of at least seven days, such notice to appear in circular calling meeting to decide the same.

This clause was greatly altered, and made to read thus:—"The committee may appoint sub-committees for special purposes, three to form a quorum. No division of any sub-committee to be binding until ratified by the general committee. The remainder of the draft-rule was omitted, and adopted as bye-law 16. "No resolution of the committee to be rescinded except on notice of at least seven days, such notice to appear in circular calling the meeting to decide the same." This stands as a distinct clause *per se*.

Mr. Rice now proposed the following additional rule:—

17. Committee may rescind and make bye-laws relating to public meetings, but no bye-law shall override a general law.

This was adopted, and now stands as rule 17.

18. The committee to have power in the event of a vacancy occurring in any of the offices of the society, to fill such vacancy by electing any qualified member to fill up such vacancy.

A gentleman asked if this bye-law would apply to a vacancy occurring on the committee?

Mr. Rice: Certainly.

19. All questions (whether in committee or general meetings) shall be decided by show of hands, except the election of officers and of committee. Three members, however, may demand a division when doubt exists as to numbers voting. Carried *nem con*.

20. The chairman may direct any motion or amendment to be submitted in writing and seconded before it be taken into consideration. One amendment only shall be discussed at one time; on an amendment being carried it shall become the substantive motion. No more than three amendments to be moved on any motion or substituted motion.

Mr. Rice said that this clause would operate as a safeguard against protracted discussion.

A gentleman enquired if it would not be competent for the chairman to receive more amendments than one.

Mr. Rice: Not at the same time.

A gentleman: In the event of four amendments being handed up to the chairman, which is he to decide shall be dismissed?

Mr. Rice: He should not receive any amendments at all. Carried.

21. That the property of the society should be vested in three trustees—to be hereinafter named—and in the event of death, or removal from colony, refusal or apathy to act, the vacancy to be filled by committee or at any general meeting of members.

The Chairman observed that they could name the trustees, but not the property.

Mr. Rice did not think it was of any use to nominate trustees until the society possessed property. Carried.

22. That these rules shall not be altered, rescinded, or any new rule adopted, except on one month's notice to the secretary

(whether moved in committee or proposed by any qualified member of the society), except at half-yearly or a special meeting of members; such meeting to be called by circular setting forth the proposed alterations.

Carried without discussion.

23. No resolution for dissolving the society shall take effect until consented to by two-thirds of the members present at two consecutive special meetings duly convened for that purpose.

Carried without discussion.

ENROLMENT OF MEMBERS.

A gentleman suggested that the enrolment of members and associates should be taken before the officers were appointed.

It was then moved and seconded that the names of members should be received and recorded, previously to the election of office-bearers. Names to be registered, and subscription, or entrance fees, paid at some future time.

Mr. Adkins assisted Mr. Hall in receiving and entering names.

Mr. Rice then stated it was desirable that no delay should occur in taking the field. The question now to be discussed was, where should this society hold its meetings—whether they should secure the room down stairs or engage the one in which they were now assembled. The room down stairs would not be convenient for holding *seances*. It was desirable that one week they should have a public meeting for debate, and another week hold a *seance*. He believed there were a number of mediums in and around Melbourne who would make a very creditable show on any platform. He was of opinion that they would be able to develop among themselves a very creditable class of mediums, and be thus able to convey a vast fund of information to the outside public; and as the question of the "Resurrection" was now engaging attention, Mr. Teignmouth had volunteered to commence a debate upon that subject. He considered that all debate meetings should be "free," but that a collection should be taken at the doors. He thought, however, that they should be more careful at *seances*, therefore they ought not to throw the *seances* open to the general public, but that a standard charge should be made for admission; and arrangements should be made with mediums that a very considerable proportion of the proceeds should go to themselves. The principal thing to be decided to-night was, whether they should hold these weekly meetings or not; and whether they should be held in this hall, or at the Masonic Hall?

A gentleman would like to ask if the committee would have any control over circles for special development of mediums, or would they be left to hap-hazard, and the accidental coming together of members of the society?

The Chairman mentioned that he had attended a circle the other night when this question came before the control, and the chief rule laid down in relation to circles was this, "That the society should not only encourage circles, but should register every circle and names of mediums; and that a committee should be appointed to regulate the formation of circles." He considered the committee would be quite competent to entertain this matter.

A gentleman: Circles, I believe, are generally formed on the principle of affinity?

The Chairman: Of course, we shall exercise no control over circles, unless they wish to come under our supervision. He had witnessed, in the course of the last few years, a great many obstacles arise, which might have been removed by a little *finesse*, so to speak, and he thought the unpopularity (?) of the old society was attributable to this identical subject.

Mr. Rice remarked that there was one thing very much needed. A rule entirely devoted to the government of circles altogether. If they could secure one room for debate meetings, and another for circles, it would be the best course to be adopted. It was impossible to form a circle in some houses; and if individual members could be assured that a convenient room was available, it would prove to be a great convenience. He might mention that a few of them attempted to hold a circle in the society's rooms in Russell-street, but it was found impossible to do so with any probability of suc-

cess, in consequence of interruptions and disturbances, such as running up and down stairs, &c.* If there was to occur any sudden manifestations of liberality among themselves, so as to enable them to engage the room they were assembled in, they might proceed with this business at once. In the meantime, the committee of this society ought to adopt a principle, and that is, that the secretary should ascertain from individual members of the society what accommodation they can provide for the holding of circles, and, if any, express a willingness to co-operate in such a direction, that the secretary register their names and addresses, whereby a guide would be obtained as to where the circles can be conveniently formed. He considered that Wednesday night should be left free, and should be exclusively devoted to public meetings, and they could not get circles into operation unless some enthusiastic member originated them at his private residence. Personally, he had a detestation of mediums coming into this country from America, about whom they knew nothing, and who might bring disgrace upon them at any time. He believed that if they went systematically to work they could find some very excellent mediums, although at present some of them were afraid to confess that they were so. The most extraordinary statement he had heard respecting this movement was, what would be the result of this splitting up? He believed it was one of the best events that could possibly occur. It would not only bring new life into the cause, but it would also infuse vitality into the old society. Competition is the life of trade; and he had no doubt that this competition would be conducive to beneficial results. Reliable mediums had pronounced this movement to be excellent, and he believed it would prove a most successful one.

A gentleman said he would like the society to be conducted in this spirit—that we look upon the next world as a spiritual world, and upon this life as a spiritual life.

The Chairman observed that this society did not go in opposition to the old society. They proceed with their movement in a friendly spirit. The object of this society was to push on the cause.

Mr. Rice referred to the case of Rev. Dr. Hughes, who had been betrayed by the old association, and their refusal to place a bill upon the board in Russell-street was another thing, and was not in conformity with the principles of Spiritualism. It was stated that the placard could not be put upon the board without consent of the association, but if the new society provided a board, of course it might be placed in front of the premises. It had been rumoured that this movement was initiated by Dr. Hughes. Now, Dr. Hughes had, and has, nothing to do with it; and it was really very absurd to punish Dr. Hughes by throwing him upon the streets after getting him here, because Mr. Hall and himself (Mr. Rice) were the principal movers in this case.

A gentleman remarked it would appear that it had been definitely arranged that Wednesday night should be devoted to debate meeting. He considered it would evince too much antagonism if they held their meetings on the same nights as the old society held theirs. By adopting different times of meeting members of this society might attend the meetings of the old association, and *vice versa*, their members might attend the meetings of this society. They should not display any antagonism as a body to the other association, because there cannot occur antagonism on one side without creating counter antagonism on the other.

The meeting next proceeded to the election of executive staff.

Messrs. Williams, Cunningham, Evans, Mackenzie, Kennedy, Hughes, and Mr. Rogers having refused nomination, the following office-bearers were elected:—

Mr. Rice—President.

Messrs. Devine and Adkins—Vice Presidents.

Mr. Hall—Secretary for six months.
Mr. Veevers—Treasurer.

COMMITTEE.

Messrs. Glencoe, Hancock, Lees, Waldron, Benson, Edward Millar, Turner, Edwards, Birley, and Pendleton. It was resolved further, to hold a *seance* at the Masonic Hall next Wednesday evening, at eight o'clock, price of admission to be sixpence.

Mr. Rice mentioned that Mrs. Reynolds had kindly volunteered to give a *seance*, or *seances*, in the future—and aid of this movement.

The meeting dispersed at 10.30 p.m., members of committee excepted.

RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY.*

THE book before us is a timely contribution to the literature of the day. Between the antagonisms of Orthodox faith and Iconoclastic Materialism there is a space whereon the rational but religiously inclined individual may stand, and by the aid of a clear perception and the many landmarks with which the labours of Oriental scholars have marked the way, trace the religious systems of the day to their origin, and then retracing his steps divest them of their accretions, exhibiting them in their pristine purity, discrete and undefiled. This appears to be the course pursued by the author of the volume under notice. He asserts that his only object is the elucidation and presentation of truth, that if anything he has found it necessary to say should hurt the feelings of sensitive orthodox friends, it will not be from any intention on his part, he having written in a spirit of brotherly love, and not to gain a victory for the views he at present holds, the statements he has made being founded on historical evidence and facts. In an explanatory chapter he incidentally alludes to the scruples most orthodox people have against reading books opposed to what is called revealed religion, and to this is attributed the wide-spread ignorance of the historical evidences which clearly prove the erroneous and misleading character of the religious views they entertain. In his case one of the strongest evidences against the Divine inspiration of the Bible, was the diverse and contradictory views of its numerous apologists. Relying, he says, on the unquestionable affirmation that in true religion "Truth is the most essential requisite—that antiquity can neither make that which is false to be true, nor that which is true false, that every truth is a fact which no amount of faith or doubt can gainsay," he makes twenty decisive affirmations in relation to orthodox Christianity, some of which are calculated to startle those who are at present comfortably resting upon the faith of their forefathers. Concluding with the following, which is the key-note to the title and object of the book:—

20. And lastly, that this simple religion which comprises morality, charity, love to God and man, and that which is true and good in all religions, is the religion of humanity, for it is as old as the race. It is the basis, theoretically, of all the established religions of the world, although not carried out practically by any one of them, I regret to say, and corresponds with that which was inculcated by the worthy Essenian Reformer over 1800 years back. This religion of deeds (not creeds) is not confined to a book or books given to a select few by a partial Deity, but is universal, and of universal application, consequently it is true and divine, and therefore I maintain, without hesitation, that it is destined to be the religion of the whole world in the future.

This proposition, and the nineteen which precede it, are ably sustained in the three hundred pages which follow, and the numerous quotations and references to works not easy of access to the many, make it a valuable compendium to those whom necessity compels to be scientific in their studies. Books of this class are generally rather heavy reading. Mr. Browne's work, though logical and pithy, is free from this objection, and may be perused with interest by the profound thinker, or more superficial reader. Those whose minds are emancipated from the thralldom of church dogmas, would do well to bring it under the notice of their more orthodox friends, who have the courage to peruse such works.

* Rational Christianity, the Religion of Humanity. Melbourne, 1879, H. J. Browne, author and publisher.

* As on the nights in question the only mortal on the premises, as a rule, was ourselves, and we are not given to nocturnal exercises of the kind referred to, we may suggest the possibility that it was "footsteps of angels" that disturbed the speaker and his friends; but from some (to us) unaccountable reason, they appear to have kept on the wrong (or right) side of the door.—ED. H. L.

PRESENT POSITION AND FUTURE NEEDS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND.

On the 28th January last, a paper bearing the above caption was read before the British National Association of Spiritualists, by a gentleman well-known to readers of Spiritualistic literature as "M. A. (Oxon.)," Although having a local reference, the ideas and lessons contained in the address are world-wide in their applicability. There is nothing new or startling in these, but a rational analysis of Spiritualism and Spiritualists, by which the true position of the movement is made clear, and a philosophical application of the means disclosed by the analysis to the purification, elevation and extension of the movement. M. A. divides Spiritualists into four classes, viz.—The Phenomenalists, who exist within and without the domain of Spiritualism, both attesting the fact, one believing spirits to be the cause, the other offering no theory, but neither caring for anything beyond the facts themselves.

Next, the sentimental or emotional Spiritualists, who form a very large and increasing section. Those who have proved, to their own satisfaction, that *their* dead are still alive, and in the privacy of the family circle, are temporarily re-united to them. In reference to these he says:—

"They care little whether others accredit their belief, or whether any phenomena come home to the world at large, or to scientific experts. They would desire in the abstract that all should be partakers of the privileges they themselves enjoy: but practically their experience is too sacred to them to be rudely handled by the outer world, which would probe, and pry, and ask cold questions, and so they shrink into seclusion, and seek only to be left alone. How many of such there are whom the world never hears of, Spiritualists *par excellence* as regards their faith, none but such as are behind the scenes can even roughly guess. With exceptional means in some ways of knowing, I am more and more astonished year by year at the extent to which this most private and personal form of Spiritualism—the very core and kernel of the movement—obtains amongst us, and especially in country districts."

This class are the material from which the more advanced Spiritualists are as a rule evolved. Thirdly, the Philosophical Spiritualist, who has lately come into greater prominence. Under this heading are classed the Mediaevalists and Metaphysical Spiritualists, who waste their time in unprofitable speculations, the investigation of theories of no practical utility to humanity, and to whom the title does not strictly apply, the larger body, however, being best described as Theosophists, who combine the study of mundane with supra-mundane Spiritualism.

Last, though not least, comes Religious Spiritualism, which, as the writer remarks, is spreading rapidly in both England and America. He says:—

"I do not use a narrower term because the Spiritualist who sees in the midst of the apparent chaos that surrounds him the dawning of law and order as the spirit of God broods over its waste, does not always take the same view of the Supreme. The Spiritualist, who regards the abnormal conditions produced by the action of Spirit in this world as merely the phenomenal manifestations attendant on the close of one dispensation, era, or epoch, and the ushering of a new *regime*, with wider spiritual knowledge, and clearer insight into Truth,—he is by no means at one on all religious topics with his equally earnest brother, Theological training or the absence of it will tell; and one mind rebounds from a narrow cramping Christianity mis-called orthodoxy, to a broad and rather shadowy Theism, or to a still more shadowy Pantheism; while another rests on the familiar by-paths of the creed of its childhood, and sees no reason to love any the less dearly the lessons of faith learnt from a mother's lips, or to discard the old well-worn prayers to which the association of some past far ever lend such a mellowing influence.

These minds are infinitely varying in their conceptions of God, of His dealings with man, and man's necessary relations to Him. As time rolls by the views will harmonise, and out of their fusion will come what I think I can dimly discern in bold outline, looming through the mists that hang about me—the Religion of the Future. Be this as it may, the great cause for congratulation that strikes me in the outlook that I am attempting to take, is this undoubted inclination on the part of thoughtful Spiritualists to look beyond the surface phenomena, even beyond what I may call, without offence, the emotional aspect of the subject, and to dwell increasingly on its religious side, and to regard the vast movement as essentially a spiritual effort analogous to many that have preceded it, which has a beneficent aim for humanity."

Having thus summarised the various classes of Spiritualists, the subject is viewed in its revolutionary aspect,

and the angularities and discords which appear so prominent to a superficial observer accounted for, philosophical reasons being given for its wider spread amongst the earnest but unscientific than among the strictly scientific class who are prejudiced against it on account of its revolutionary tendencies and apparently disorderly manifestations, notwithstanding which there is ample evidence of the influence of the cultured and trained mind keeping the movement within reasonable bounds, and directing its course into more harmonious channels.

The next section treats upon the necessity of subordinating notions to the central idea, and speaking of this, the author says:—"I do not want uniformity, but I want unity in multifariousness. I want a little self-sacrifice of pet notions, even though they be ever so dear to our minds, as the children of our mature intellectual life. I want a resolute eye, fixed on central truth, contending for it, not to be diverted from it by any tricks of any foe." And then commenting on the minor differences of Spiritualists, he shows how their prominence gives an apparent basis for the calumnies circulated in regard to Spiritualism. He deprecates the diversion of energy into minor and unimportant channels, and especially the importation into the subject of many reformatory movements which have no immediate connexion with it, but from having been championed by some prominent Spiritualist, are attached to the movement by outsiders, and serve to swell the *impedimenta* of the Spiritual army.

Organization on a broad basis, he looks upon as a necessity and a blessing, giving strength and cohesion to the movement, and affording protection to Media, who may be unjustly assailed. And he remarks that "it is one of the glories of the British National Association that it saved Slade when other means would have been almost hopeless."

The next section on "Lessons of the Past," bearing almost exclusively upon the recent seizure of Mrs. Corner at the rooms of the B.N.A.S. we reprint in full:—

It is impossible to speak of organized public Spiritualism at this juncture and in this place without reference to that melancholy event which has brought so much discredit on the cause. I allude to the discovery, at one of the Enquirer's Seances held on the premises of the Association, that the medium was presenting a spirit-form. Having been placed in a chair behind curtains, and tied to that chair, she was discovered in a state of partial undress, personating a form which was presented as independent of her body, while her discarded garments were found on the chair to which she had been secured. These salient facts are undisputed, though they involve many considerations which admit of argument. Into these I do not enter.*

But we are foolish indeed if we do not attempt to learn from experience. Let us dispassionately look at what we have done, and see how far we have done wrong. It is easy to be wise after the event, and there are always plenty of good-natured friends to come forward with their "I told you so;" but that should not prevent us from seeing ourselves as others see us, if only we can attain that position, one more calculated to develop wise and wholesome views than any other can occupy.

What have we done?

(1) We attempted to show to a circle, composed largely of inquirers, gathered together on no other principle than that of a common curiosity—if I may exclude that of a desire to explode what, on *a priori* principles, many consider an impossible and ridiculous hypothesis—and selected on no principle of fitness, a phenomenon the most rare, the most difficult of satisfactory demonstration, under the best possible conditions. We have assumed that this rare phenomenon was procurable at stated times, and we have allowed those who have no antecedent knowledge of the subject to come together for the purpose of witnessing it.

Was this wise? In my opinion it assuredly was not. If such phenomena are procurable at all in a mixed circle, it must be under very rare conditions, and the attempt to elicit them must frequently end in failure.

(2) But it does not always end in failure. It sometimes demonstrably ends in the substitution of another phenomenon altogether. The beings, whoever they may be, who produce these manifestations, are able to laugh at our bonds, and to release a medium from the most complicated ligatures. They do also, as has been repeatedly demonstrated, dress up the unconscious medium, and present her transformed and sometimes transfigured body as a "Spirit-form." Of the moral aspects of such a procedure I will say nothing. It is a fact well known to experienced

* For a full and very clear account of the whole circumstances, see *Spiritual Notes* No. 20, Feb. 1886.

Spiritualists that the Spirits who are able to deal with gross matter so as to produce these physical manifestations are beings who are not possessed of high moral consciousness. Whether they are instruments in the hands of more progressed intelligences or not, the fact remains that they can give no trustworthy information, that they are not to be relied on in many cases if judged by the laws of human integrity and truth, and that they do demonstrably, in some cases, enact what must be described as a fraud, of which the entranced medium is or may be unconscious. Now, since experienced Spiritualists know that such power resides in the beings with whom they have to do, was it not a duty to explain to those who knew nothing of the subject, that they have such power, that they use it as they think fit, and that in any given case, unless absolute proof to the contrary is forthcoming, the form produced is most probably the transformed medium? In the vast majority of instances that have come under my observation, I believe this has been the case. And I think very decidedly that the fact should be plainly stated.

(8) But this is not all. It has been used to seclude a medium from view by means of curtain or cabinet. It is an old story now that I detest this method, and protest against the bewildering perplexities that it introduces into the investigation. I hope this exposure will at least abolish in public circles that mystifying device. It has, however, been customary to say, when a medium is secluded from view, it is very difficult indeed to say, with any certainty what takes place. She is bound to her chair, and if a form appears, and if, further, the medium and the form be seen at the same time, or if the medium be proved to be in her chair at the time that the observers see the form, there is good evidence for one special class of manifestation called Materialisation or Form-Manifestation. There is a compact and perfectly unimpeached body of evidence for the reality of this astounding phenomenon: and these exposures do not touch it.

If, again, the tying be secure, and a form be presented without any proof that the medium is in the chair, and if, further, she be found in her place, with tying unmolested, after the seance is over, there is evidence of an interference with ordinary natural law by occult power, but no cogent evidence of materialization. It is this phenomenon that I believe to be of the most frequent occurrence in cabinet seances. And, being as it is of a totally different order to that which inquirers come to see, when they find from observation that such is the case, they not unnaturally consider themselves duped.

Would not a plain statement of facts go far to prevent that idea? and should not such a statement precede every seance held in public for form manifestation? I strongly think it should.

I would hope, however, that for the future we shall be content with eliciting such phenomena as can be had without secluding the medium, and with light sufficient for observation. I am so convinced that no method of public investigation that uses cabinets and dark seances can be satisfactory to any mind worth attracting to the movement, that I should prefer to see no seances at all on these premises than such as I have described.

At any rate, whether my own opinion commends itself to you or not, we shall be agreed that it is our duty to present to inquirers, so long as we allow them to resort to us for information, nothing that can savour in the faintest degree to the most suspicious mind of fraud whether the imposture be earthly or spiritual. Better that all seances should be stopped at once, than that another cause of distress, such as we brought on ourselves, should occur. And better, too, that we should curtail the power of these irresponsible spirits to work mischief, and enact fraud, by placing the medium in a position where no such deception is possible. Dark circles should be relegated to family meetings when no tests are wanted, and where they have their place and their use.

The writer, commenting upon this and other exposures, shows that they have no effect upon Spiritualism proper, the phenomena of which are irrefragably established on too wide a basis of demonstration to be shaken, and concludes with a series of *desideranda* which comprehends the adoption of all reasonable tests, and checks on imposition whether by mediums or spirits, the discountenancing (as a rule) dark circles, the study of the laws of mediumship, the presentation to the world of the higher aspects of spiritualism, more self-sacrifice for the good of the common faith, and the combination of spiritualism with spiritualism.

We are glad to hear that the paper is to be embodied with other matter in a volume entitled the "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," which will be published shortly.

The Anti-Vaccination movement is making considerable progress in England; it has many energetic advocates and publishes two serials, besides a large quantity of pamphlet literature showing by statistics the evils of compulsory vaccination. Being satisfied by observation and experience that these evils by far outweigh any possible advantages that might be derived from inoculation, our sympathies are with the movement, and want of space alone prevents our giving more prominence to it.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The first Debate Meeting of the season, was held at the Masonic Hall, on Friday, April 9th, the subject being "Men and Women." The President took the chair shortly after eight p.m., and after making some announcements, called upon Mr. Deakin to open the debate.

Mr. Deakin stated his intention of adopting the induction method, depending solely upon facts to prove his position. He would premise by saying that we must go back to a time long anterior to the supposed Adamic period if we are to view man in his primitive savage state, as he appeared after the natural genesis of the human race. We found that those portions of our bodies most used developed by use, and the same applied to the faculties of the mind; also that children inherited the qualities of their parents, and this was perpetuated from generation to generation. Woman had been from the beginning the child-bearer and child-rearer, and from this arose the difference between her and man; her place had been in the home—the home was her world—while on the other hand, man's duties lying outside, the world was his home. No one would deny the general physical superiority of man in all except facial beauty. In all intellectual pursuits in the physical sciences and philosophy, the history of the past showed that men invariably excelled. What instances could be given to the contrary? Woman's particular sphere was in the house, yet she never improved the utensils which she was constantly using. Women creditably filled subordinate situations in a house of business, but never succeeded as leaders of an enterprise. Though for centuries she had devoted hours to music, and in many instances had ample time to study it, she had never shone as a composer or director. With one or two exceptions all great artists were men. In emotion, feeling, and affection alone she excelled, because circumstances all tended to develop these qualities in her more than in man. In love she excelled, but man excelled in intellect. He could not accept the saying, "Women were more moral than men." In one part of morality, viz., chastity, doubtless she did excel, but this might be due to some restraint she was under; it was necessary that the restraints should be equal to enable us to judge fairly.

In charity, generosity, truthfulness, veracity, and justice, man equalled if not excelled woman, and the number of male geniuses was large, but of female geniuses very small. Woman was now taking a higher stand in intellect and in society, and every barrier in her way should be thrown down. She should have every right—political, professional, and social—that man has. In the sphere of home, where the great majority of women would always elect to remain, she should develop her intellect and talents. He would give all men and women a fair start in life, and equal rights and opportunities of developing character and ability, of whatever kind it might be. Humanity was one, and men and women equally necessary to each other.

Mr. Ross took exception to the speaker's line of argument. The gross conditions and forces manifest in the earliest ages were succeeded by a higher order, and mankind developed to a more refined condition with the transition of his surroundings from a gross to a more refined state. In the grosser condition the brotherly spirit developed, from necessity, by association for defence and offence. Mothers and children were a burden in war, and were either sacrificed to its necessities or formed a home centre. This home was man's rest—the superior portion, which man would fight to protect. Man's intellect developed from without, but his love and the highest emotions of his nature developed in the home. One evil in connection with strength in man was the tendency to consider the frail and delicate of the opposite sex beautiful; those false notions of man had something to do with the physical degeneracy of woman. Venus, as a type, outshone Apollo. The strong man was admired by woman. Man's reason was blind in comparison to women's intuition; man's notions in regard to women made them what they were; man imitated them in effeminacy. Florence Nightingale

organised the hospitals in the Crimea, and made order out of chaos, where the doctors had failed to do so; and for other instances of women's talent and ability, he referred them to Miss F. P. Cobbe's book. Feeling was higher than intellect. What moved the world, but feeling? Married men were, as a rule, the most feeling; the highest elements in society were feeling, instinct, and intuition: these were most manifest in woman, and evolved religion.

Mr. Trenwith opposed the position of the essayist, and commenced by quoting Burns, to show that man was the experiment, and woman the ultimate of God's handiwork. If man were the most beautiful, he was glad to know that beauty was only skin deep, whilst goodness reached the bone and marrow. Woman has had little opportunity to progress on account of the injustice of man. Men and women are intrinsically equal, but woman has been kept in degradation by man, and dare not originate. If a woman steps out of her normal line, men immediately suggest that she should keep in her proper place. A woman may see a man whom she would like to marry, but she cannot ask as men can. Women exhibit perseverance and courage beyond man. In his opinion women were better than men, because his "mother was a woman," and they ever appeared to him the best, holiest, and purest.

Mr. Joske, who spoke in support of the essayist, commenced by affirming the necessity of men and women to each other. Women, he said, played an important part in the history of the world; she had her privileges, one of which was the sympathy of men; she had all the liberty that man had, except being eligible for election to Parliament. It was admitted that the domestic sphere was woman's particular sphere; but in this she had not been noble, but often wasteful and extravagant. Mr. Ruskin, who some ten years ago wrote a book eulogistic of woman, had since publicly and deliberately withdrawn the opinions he had then expressed. In regard to morality he considered both sexes were equal.

Mr. Deakin briefly summed up, adroitly utilising his opponents' arguments in support of his own position, and concluding with a feeling tribute to the influence of woman as mother and wife.

Séance and Experience Meetings were held on the 16th and 23rd, and passed off successfully.

The Freethought Association of Dunedin exhibits evidences of vitality. The Inaugural Address for 1880, on "Inspiration," was delivered by the President (Hon. Robert Stout), February 11th, and has since been published in a pamphlet form. A Syllabus for the session has also been published, and includes ten lectures on important subjects. Mr. Stout's Address is an able one, but we have not space to review it.

THE *Psychological Review* for February is exceptionally good. "Spiritualism in some of its Religious Aspects," by M. A. (Oxon.); "Glimpses of Spiritualism in the Past," by J. S. Farmer; and "Spiritualistic Positivism," by the Rev. Dr. Maurice Davies, are full of interest to the philosophic reader, and form admirable material in the construction of the Spiritual edifice.

Freethought for April reached us too late for review. We observe, however, it opens with an instructive and interesting article on "Mesmerism," by Dr. Williams, of Richmond.

We have been informed of powerful physical manifestations occurring at a private circle near Melbourne, and are promised a circumstantial account of them for our next issue.

DR. HUGHES' Freethought Lectures at the Opera House continue to draw large audiences. To-morrow his lectures on "Thomas Paine"—a subject always popular here.

ORGANIZATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—The Spiritualistic movement throughout the world has been passing through a period of disintegration and levellings. With reference to the old forms of belief, it has waged war ruthlessly, as having freed its votaries from the mental thralldom of these beliefs, it was naturally anxious to pull them all down. It has, therefore, appeared to many as a purely combative and destructive agent, leaving its converts somewhat in the position of a ship without a rudder. Of necessity, this position has been forced upon it, and however disagreeable the work, it had to be done. With its back to the wall, and a hostile world in front, it has not hesitated to enter the lists, and to smite its bitter enemies hip and thigh. No quarter has been given, because strong in the knowledge which truth gives, it knew victory was its own. In every land it has spread out its banner to the breeze, and no movement in ancient or modern times has ever met with such success. In Roman Catholic Italy, Spain, Mexico, and France, as well as in Protestant England, America, Germany, Russia, and even in India, has the Spiritual Gospel spread, in the face of vituperation and aspersions of every kind, from thousands of Christian pulpits and materialistic sources, and, therefore, our noble cause has been compelled to fight with a drawn sword in its hand, and to be iconoclastic in its character and proceedings. Still it has fought with the sword of truth alone. Its conquests have been made not by the aid of carnal weapons, nor for selfish objects, but with spirit-aid and protection, and with the immortal motto of Judge Edmonds emblazoned on its pure white banner—"Truth against the world!" It is this shield which has proved its weapon of defence, and so long as it wears it the powers of superstition and of Hades shall never be able to prevail against it. But, Sir, now that our cause is taking a rest, if I may so express it, I think it a favourable moment for a friendly consultation about its future movements. Spiritualism has a higher mission than driving out the money-changers from the Temple of God. If it has destroyed, it must also build up, drawing to itself by its strong magnetic influence all that remains sound and good of the old foundations. If it has been in a manner of speaking revolutionary towards old and worn out superstitions of the dark ages which are only kept alive by vested interests, custom and caste, it is conservative in its tendencies and objects, as it seeks the happiness of all, and claims the human family for its own. The fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. Around this standard it calls upon all, irrespective of clime, colour, or creed, to gather, and on this foundation it seeks to build up a new faith and a new world. In this lofty purpose in which centres all its power and means of good to the human race, it needs what it must henceforth have—organization. If it means to rule and to make its young influence felt, and to be the power in the land its spirit-friends wish it to be, and are doing so much to make it, then, I say, it must set to work and organize its forces, and in such a manner too as will draw all men to it. We have before us the organizations of the past to guide us. In India these organizations have stood the test for ages, have kept the nations owning their sway in complete subjection, and can claim an antiquity and royal lineage, such as those of Europe never possessed. These religious or ecclesiastical organizations have given laws to the East, and imposed upon the West without their knowing it, their creeds, their books, their rites and ceremonies, and even their priesthood. The Romish Church of the West is but a baptized imitation of old Paganism, with Indian and Egyptian mummeries engrafted upon it: but these Indian organizations are so ancient and grand as to be lost in the long-buried past, extending back for thousands upon thousands of years, and possess a princely grandeur, and hold an imperial sway over the minds of more than a third of the inhabitants of this planet, such as the now rapidly decaying churches of the West, built upon a sandy foundation, never could claim. The fable of Krishna of India has proved a wonderful power

both in the East and West, and it would be difficult to say whether the cost has been greater to the one people or the other; but to both it has proved to the sacred orders a fertile source of revenue, and to the people a badge of mental and physical slavery. The progress of the world has been retarded by these ecclesiastical systems for ages. Progress has gone on without their aid, and in spite of their cruel persecutions, until nations long kept in brutal ignorance are approaching the light, and the Sun of Righteousness is appearing to them with healing on his wings. Spiritualism, therefore, has need to be cautious in all she does in the way of building up a new edifice, in order that she may not habituate herself in the gory old clothes of her enemies. Yet there is good in organization, and I would be glad to see spiritualists turn their attention to the utility of it. We cry out as a body against being a sect, but are we sure that our petty meetings are not leading us into the very evil we are so anxious to avoid. It appears to me we should establish churches and congregations on a large scale everywhere, where we are strong enough to do so; and as to ministers, we need not quarrel as to whether we call them lecturers or clergymen. Give me but a dozen Dr. Peebles in this colony and I shall not huxter about paying such men a stipend, or to their holding regular Sunday services, with music, &c. We want spiritual food just as much as we want a day of rest, and this can best in my humble opinion—be secured by such an organization as I have here shadowed forth. I know that thousands who at present stand aloof from us would then gladly cast in their lot with us, and our spirit-circles would then be properly organized and established as a powerful and useful adjunct in every such spiritual Church. Let me hope, Sir, that these few remarks will be read by all true spiritualists in the kindly spirit in which they are meant, and that if they like what I have said, they will consider in their minds whether it would not be wise and prudent to act upon them. I am glad to hear that a good man like Dr. Peebles has been invited to come to Australia again. This is a work for which he is peculiarly adapted, and I feel certain if we were organized as a body in the way I have indicated, immense good would follow such a step.

Sandhurst, April 10th, 1880.

D.

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