

THE

# Harbinger of Light

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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"MODERN THOUGHT" for January last contains an article by Moncure D. Conway, entitled "A Recovered Gospel," being a review, with extracts, of the "Gospel according to the Hebrews," the fragments of which have been recently translated by E. B. Nicholson, M.A., of London. These fragments are written in the Aramaic language, which was the language of Palestine at the time of Jesus; and though omitted from the canon, bear as strong evidence of authenticity as the received books, their primitive character and independent origin being in the opinion of the writer proved.

In considering the causes of the rejection and suppression of this Gospel for so long a period, Mr. Conway points out its conflict with the idea of the Miraculous Conception; indeed, a totally new light is thrown upon the matter in the account here given, by the substitution of a purely spiritual for the ordinarily received spirito-physical birth of Jesus. The brethren having asked Jesus to go with them to John and be baptised, He, after some objection as to its necessity in his case, accompanied them, and was baptised. The story goes on to say—

"After his baptism, 'as he went up (i.e., out of the water), the heavens were opened, and he saw the Holy Spirit in shape of a dove descending and entering into him.' And a voice out of the heavens saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased;' and again, 'I have this day begotten thee.' And straightway a great light shone around the place. And when John saw it he saith to him, 'Who art thou?' Further on it is said that the Spirit also spake and said: 'My son, in all the prophets did I await thee, that thou mightest come, and I might rest in thee; For thou art my rest; Thou art my first-born Son that reignest for ever.'"

On the assumption of the authenticity of this Gospel, we have here an ample basis for the legend of the Miraculous Conception and the special divinity of Christ—doctrines which were unknown until upwards of a century after his death. It was easy for interested

persons to adapt and apply this to the physical birth, and history shows that the early fathers were not over scrupulous in this direction.

In this new Gospel the "great light" which shines over the Baptism becomes the glory that shone around the shepherds, and elsewhere, the Star of Bethlehem—

"The voice from heaven, 'Thou art my beloved Son; this day have I begotten thee' becomes in the birth-legend the angel's saying, 'that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' And the heavenly choir sang, 'Unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' This day it is at birth against *this day* at the baptism: it cannot have been both, but they may be versions of the same thing. And finally, the address which on this version of the baptism is made by the Holy Ghost to Jesus, 'In all the prophets did I await thee; thou art my rest, my first-born Son that reignest for ever,' corresponds with the ecstatic utterance of Simeon at Christ's circumcision. Simeon came by the Spirit into the Temple and said, among other things, 'Mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.' The incarnation is the physical counterpart of the baptism. The phrases for baptism used by Paul, 'the washing of water,' 'the washing of regeneration,' in the original signify the bridal bath and the bath of birth; they are the old Jewish purifications of the bride before marriage, and of the babe; and among Jews, whose Levitical law provided those turtle-doves which Mary sacrificed, such expressions by Paul would point the way to that development of the baptismal birth and dove to a physical birth and the doves of purification."

While there is much in this Gospel in harmony with and corroborative of the other four, the portions quoted though not absolutely antagonistic to them, conflict directly with the construction put upon them and adopted by the early fathers, affording an ample reason for their rejection by them. Instead of destroying the reliability of the received Gospels, the one under notice rather adds to their interest and value by clearing up some of their obscurities and rendering them more acceptable to the religiously inclined but rational mind. Its publication will doubtless lead to controversy, and its authenticity will be challenged, but the translator is a scholar of some note, and the reviewer (Mr. Conway) one who would not be satisfied with superficial evidences of their authenticity. It is, however, not improbable that when the revised edition of the Scriptures comes to light we may find a greater harmony between this Gospel and the canonical ones than at present.

## WISE WORDS FROM SWEDENBORG.

*Continued.*

FOLLOWING this we have to point out to you in what way the earthly experience culminates in the advanced experience of the future state, carrying into that all its characteristics and defects there to be illumined, elevated, and purified. 89. Viewing the various phases of earthly experience as these are presented to the observer, whether in the daily movements of society, or as recorded on the page of history, you cannot fail to be struck with the contradictions which prevail between those precepts which are admitted by men to be wise and good, and the systematic actions of men themselves. The strife and misery, for instance, which are incident to war, and the persistency with which the art of warfare is cultivated as a necessary appendage to national existence; this undeniable feature of life on the earth, with all its misery, never securing the settlement of those vexed questions which are said to necessitate it, how opposed to the expressed desire for the goodwill of mankind which the religious sentiment breathes, and which is found in the mouths of those who at one moment admit the universal brotherhood of man, and at the next, charge their cannon with the elements of human destruction, and with the weapons of warfare deprive their fellow men of their right to live out their lives on earth. 90. I have no hesitation in saying that this arises from those false notions of religion which prevail, and the utter failure to comprehend and practise the precepts of truth as possessed by man, but which are strained to suit the cravings of his own perverted and selfish nature, unregulated by that rule of right which should ever recognise the claims of others to freedom and prosperity. 91. Taking earthly experience then, with all its apparent contradictions, tracing it from first to last until the record is sealed by death, you may imagine that then the wrong is made right, and that the disorder culminates in a state of order and repose. Such, however, is really not the case, for that record which you suppose to be sealed up at death has to be opened again, examined and reviewed under the influence of circumstances which will tend to make the wrong appear in its true light, and reveal the necessity for such a reversal of the order of things as shall at once deliver the soul from its disorders, and at length introduce it into a condition of harmony. 92. But how much is involved in the process which hence takes place. The human will has to be convinced; it has to be delivered from all those erroneous notions to which it was subject on earth, and together with this the recognition and acceptance of higher motives, constitutes a purgatory of no ordinary character through which the soul must pass that it may attain the standard of excellence which is implied by the term regeneration. 93. And just as all the processes of nature are governed by their appropriate laws, and characterised by suitable stages and degrees, so is the regeneration of man in the future life. The "ceasing to do evil," and "learning to do well," which is spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures, carries with it as to its accomplishment such a reversal of all the earthly purposes of life that the metaphor also used by the Seer has a forcible meaning in the way of illustration: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots," then may they who have been accustomed "to do evil, learn to do well." 94. I do not wonder, therefore, when I reflect on the conclusions of theologians respecting the future destiny of man, especially of the so-called wicked, that that dreadful doom is introduced which consigns the soul and all its capacity to an unending condition of damnation in a literal hell fire. The purification of the soul is an object so imperative in the order of the Divine Government that all its experience in the future life is regulated to secure that end; and whatever experiences it may be called to pass through in the state of existence which follows the earth-life, these are the appointed means to accomplish the object of rectifying the mistakes and undoing the evils of the earthly state. 95. On this basis, then, is founded the positive experience of the future life, faintly shadowed forth in my writings, but defective in this

respect, that I introduced into my conclusions that notion of finality which must, if insisted on, for ever exclude the possibility of that eternal progress which marks the movements of the universe. Could I rewrite my work *Heaven and Hell*, I should have to recast the whole of the ideas which are advanced therein; but as I must now enter more fully upon particulars which have to do with those two phases of human experience in the future life, including the passing away from earth-life thereto, I may as well enter upon this branch of my discourse at once; after which I will wind up the whole with an exposition of such definitions of a theological import as will further tend to explain the nature of soul experience, and thus aid the growth and culture thereof. 95. Man's earthly experience, as you know, comes to a climax, and is wound up, when, as the result of disease or any other cause, the bodily life is withdrawn. The causes which bring about this climax are too numerous for me to dwell upon; and inasmuch as the issue in all cases is the same, viz., the removal of the spirit with its ethereal covering from its more palpable dwelling to one of a more sublimated character, I need not go into particulars in this respect, but content myself with the general remark that, in the removal thus effected, man is always the subject of a control which is quite beyond his own immediate intention; for the same law which regulates the incoming of his soul to material life, also regulates its departure therefrom; and however peculiar those circumstances may be which attend that departure, you may rely upon it that he has the least to do with it, so far as the regulating of these circumstances are concerned. 96. It would be impossible for the finite mind to grasp the many causes which lead up to that issue, so intricate are the leading-strings which guide man to his appointed destiny. I would have you understand, however, that man is not a mere puppet; he is not a blind agent, but in accordance with the measure of his development, so does he harmonise or blend with the circumstances which govern him; and these, in a most remarkable manner, will take a different form just as he is wise or good enough to infuse into them the characteristic element of his own spiritual attainments. 97. The crimes of human life, its accidents, its more or less peculiar features which attract the attention of mankind, are each and all the development of soul-experience, working in the circumstances which mature to remove man from the earthly stage to the next in order. 98. I would have you to understand that this removal is a feature in soul-experience of no ordinary character, and I would beg of you to dwell much in thought on the certainty and reality of that event which to every man is of such vast importance. If human life on the earth were regulated more with a special reference to its termination, then there would arise this double advantage—a more serious application to the duties which daily devolve upon man, and a greater composure when the time arrives to pass through the process called death; and lest it should be thought that such a course would in any way interfere with either the discharge of the ordinary duties of the material state, or with the pleasure arising therefrom, I would remark that, on the contrary, the effect would be to impress the mind with the greater necessity for care in every act performed, and the anticipation of greater pleasures beyond, and to succeed those of the earth-life, rendering them more enjoyable in the realisation of their continuance under more advantageous circumstances.

99. I shall now enter upon the consideration of the passage of the soul from the one stage to the other, as involved in what you term *death*. Let me remark, then, that it is to all a conscious progress; that is, so far as the soul is concerned. The external or physical nerve consciousness may be blunted or deadened by the prevailing circumstances of disease or otherwise, but that inner consciousness, which properly belongs to the soul, can never be suspended, and it will be as capable of understanding those events in its history as any other which has or will transpire. Consequently, the process which takes place in the breaking of the bonds of the grosser materiality, and which opens the door for the spirit to walk out into a greater freedom, will be fully

recognised; and like the traveller who starts on a journey to a strange country, every, even the most minute circumstance of that transit, is comprehended, and affords matter for thought and reflection. 100. But here again the diversity in experience is so great that every one must, to know the circumstances, test them for himself; inasmuch as the pleasure or the pain, the light or the darkness, the character of the association realised then will all depend upon that degree of progress made by the departing one, or the operation of that law of compensation which ever accompanies man as an intelligent agent in the order of the universe. 101. That transit of the soul from earth to the next stage of existence must not in any way be confused with what takes place after the process has been completed; it is a distinct experience, an intermediate feature of conscious realisation involving a longer or shorter period of spirit history as may be required by the necessities of the case. 102. There is only one thing which can give the soul confidence and comfort in its passage from the material body into the wide world of spirits, and that is an unwavering trust in the author of its existence. Failing this the soul will be the prey of tormenting fears as to the issue of that incident in its history which it is then experiencing; and fear will effectually close the windows, not only of hope, but of that confident expectation which should be enjoyed that He who hath appointed the soul's existence will continue to make full provision for its best interests. When an individual can look back on the earth-life progress, and can trace, not only the leadings of a Divine Providence, but also the ready acknowledgment thereof which a faithful and obedient life implies; then there will be no difficulty in exercising that confident trust referred to; but when there is felt a rebuke arising from the way in which earth-life has been conducted, then you may rely upon it the outlook will be dark and threatening, and pressing in at the windows of the soul, will be imaginative forms not at all calculated to cheer or comfort in that trying hour. 103. Thus you will perceive that from man himself there will proceed those shadows by which the coming events are prognosticated; and it behoves everyone to think seriously of this, and thus make provision beforehand for an event in the experience which is so inevitable. If you could but realise what a fair and beautiful outlook will be provided for the soul in its passage to spirit-land by a life of order and use cultivated with reference to those principles of truth and goodness which are so obvious to the reflecting man, then how eager would you be not to lose a single opportunity to make the necessary provision for that eventful time. 104. And I would especially entreat you to think of this while I endeavour to delineate what may be termed the *heaven and hell* experience of the after-life. These terms are used by me more for the purpose of conveying suitable ideas to the mind, than as the appropriate names of conditions to be entered upon. These are definitions of human construction, implying under the figure of elevation or depression, the happiness or misery which such exaltation or debasement would seem to imply; heaven, the appropriate symbol of freedom, light, and happiness; hell, of bondage, darkness, and misery. I admit that there is a great deal of force in such an attempt to formulate the ideas thus intended to be conveyed, and probably the nearest approach to the conception of the reality which man can grasp while in the earth state, with this proviso, that whether it be heaven or hell as the result of circumstances preceding, these are no more than conditions through which the soul passes in its purification and education along the line of a continuous existence: for whatever may be the school into which man shall be placed when he leaves the earth-life state, the intention will always be to prepare him by such process for a higher condition of being. With these few remarks as somewhat introductory, I shall now proceed to delineate the character of the after-life, both in relation to the orderly and disorderly spirit.

*Marnias Meti.*

Melbourne, April, 1880.

H. J. B.

## To Correspondents.

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

### HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I have now a few words to say about healing mediumship. During my recent stay in Sydney, I attended a circle at Pyrmont; having a severe cough. A gentleman was controlled by a spirit-friend, who said, "*Would our friend,*" meaning me, "*like to be magnetised?*" I said I had no objection, and after the operation of our spirit-friend, I felt my breathing much easier. That night I slept well; previously I suffered much.

To all similarly afflicted I strongly recommend this method of cure; and every one so benefited should, for the good of the cause of Spiritualism, make it known, I think.

On Easter Sunday I attended Mr. Tyerman's lecture. This gentleman deserves the support of all Liberals. It is quite a treat to hear Mr. Tyerman, who is one of the most able exponents of Spiritualism and Freethought that we have.

Through the *Harbinger*, I desire to make an appeal to the Spiritualists of each colony, to start a Society, either in Sydney or Melbourne, for the purpose of assisting itinerant lecturers. Let every one pay weekly, according to his means, a contribution, to be fixed by himself. By this means much may be done; and I would be glad if all willing to join would send in their names to you, Mr. Editor. To start with, you may put down mine. All should contribute something as soon as the Association is inaugurated, and proper rules might be constructed.

The Victorian Association is doing a vast amount of good, but we require a central Society to meet the wants of all the colonies, and to assist them to travel into interior parts—a Society which will guarantee lecturers their expenses at any rate, when travelling from town to town.

It might not be in every case that the help of such a Society would be needed, but assistance should be at hand.

I again ask all interested to forward their names to you, Mr. Editor, without delay. Let no one say I cannot afford it; surely every one can give something, be it ever so trifling.

F. E. S. HEWISON.

Bathurst, N.S.W., April 11th, 1880.

### MR. THOMAS WALKER.

MR. WALKER left England for the Cape of Good Hope by the s.s. "*Conway Castle*," on the 16th March last. His friends and admirers at Blackburn, Lancashire, entertained him at a tea-meeting, where Mr. Atkinson and others spoke eulogistically of Mr. Walker's geniality, and earnestness in spreading the cause of Spiritualism. It was intended by the meeting to make a presentation in the shape of an enlarged photograph of Mr. Walker, but the artist not having completed the work, it was arranged that it should be presented to his mother. The Dalston Association of Enquirers also passed a vote of confidence and thanks to Mr. Walker.

It is to be regretted that a serious disagreement has occurred between Mr. Walker and Mr. James Burns, resulting in mutual recriminations. Those who have tested Mr. Walker's mediumistic powers here, and listened with pleasure and instruction to his trance discourses, will resent Mr. Burns' insinuation as to the genuineness of his mediumship; but all we have to read in the *Medium* against Mr. Walker does not in our opinion justify the animus shewn in his reply, which is more of an attack on Mr. Burns than a vindication of himself.

## THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCHES TOWARDS SPIRITUALISM.

By J. TYERMAN.

THE attitude which the Christian Church has assumed towards new discoveries or movements in the past, especially such as did not originate with itself and were supposed to be contrary to its teachings, will some day make an instructive chapter in the history of the conflict between truth and error. Professing to be an institution of Divine authority, and to be supplied by God with an infallible standard of truth, it has ever claimed the right to sit in judgment on new movements, and test them by its boasted unerring rule; particularly if they were of a religious character, or in any way affected theological doctrines. That assumed right has been exercised on many occasions, and when the thing in question has not met the church's arbitrary requirements, it has been condemned, and in most cases openly resisted and persecuted. It mattered little how excellent was the character or eminent the authority of the parties who made the discovery, initiated the movement, or promulgated the principles, as the case might be; or what amount of argument or evidence could be adduced in their favour; the fact of their being deemed contrary to the Church's teachings was quite sufficient to rouse its jealousy and provoke its active opposition. To look at a thing impartially from the first, and judge it on its real merits, with the sole desire of ascertaining its truth or falsity, its beneficial or injurious character and tendency, was simply impossible while the Church was dominated by the foregone conclusion, that nothing opposed to its doctrines or to its views of the Bible, could possibly be true or good. And thus it has been from age to age, that whatever secured the Church's endorsement was pretty sure of speedy acceptance by the general public; while everything that incurred its displeasure, though demonstrably true and of great importance to the world at large, has had to contest every inch of the way to popular recognition.

But what has been the result of the Church's conduct in thus dealing with new principles and systems? Have the assumptions it put forth with such self-assurance, and the functions it exercised with such rigour, been justified by facts? Has time confirmed all its judgments, and fortified its claim to the possession of an absolutely reliable criterion of truth? Has its estimate of new movements been invariably such in the past as to warrant our confidence in its views and treatment of such movements in the present? Alas for its honour and credit, the very reverse of this has been the case! No impartial and competent judge will answer these questions in the affirmative. The verdict of history is against it. In almost every case its judgment of fresh discoveries and new movements, and the character indicated, has been proved to be erroneous. And hence its opposition to them was altogether unjustifiable; and it has been compelled to alter its tone and attitude, and to accept as established facts and undeniable truths what it formally rejected as baseless myths or denounced as wicked frauds. And thus the world has beheld the melancholy but instructive spectacle of a church claiming to be under special Divine protection, and boasting an infallible guide, actually falsifying its own pretensions, reversing its own decisions, and receiving in one age as a blessing from God what it spurns in another as a curse from the devil. The history of the last few hundred years furnishes many examples of this; some of which could easily be pointed out; but most readers are so familiar with them as to render this unnecessary. And with these facts before us, so fatal to the Church's vaunted authority, and so damaging to the Bible, by which it professes to be guided, how can it expect us to accept a new thing because it approves it, or reject it because it condemns it. The many errors and wrongs of the past that it must plead guilty to, are far more likely to excite distrust than inspire confidence in unbiased minds. As all events they will require a better warrant than its simple *ipse dixit* for either believing or disbelieving, approving or denouncing anything new that may be brought under their notice.

The chief reason of the Church's antagonism towards so many new movements was that they were supposed to be contrary to the Bible and likely to injure the Christian religion. It was believed that both were from God, the fountain of truth and goodness, and anything that conflicted with either could not possibly be founded in truth, nor calculated to benefit mankind. But when a thing, at first scouted and condemned by the Church, strengthened its claims and multiplied its converts in spite of ecclesiastical opposition, the Church modified its tone and gradually retreated from the contest. The attitude of a passive and silent spectator was then assumed as a rule, to allow the memory of its opposition to fade, and the wounds it had inflicted to heal. After a while it again approached the thing from which it had recoiled, began to smile upon it and address it in words of approval and friendship, and at last took its stand by its side, and declared itself in perfect accord with it. There was after all no real difference between the new thing and the old! What was at first denounced and persecuted as being 'opposed to the Bible was found, when rightly understood, to be in thorough harmony with it; and the enemy that was going to do so much harm to Christianity turned out, on better acquaintance, to be one of its best friends. Such has been the Church's treatment of astronomy, geology, and almost every scientific, religious, and social movement whose principles, when first made known, were opposed to its teachings. And at the present day it not only adopts as true what it formerly branded as false, and thus shows how little its judgment is to be relied upon, how small is its credit for consistency; but it has the audacity to assert that there never was any real difference between it and those movements, and even tries to make the world believe that we are mainly if not entirely indebted to it for the blessings that have sprung from what it at first so bitterly and persistently opposed! But these pretensions are too glaring to pass unchallenged.

(To be continued.)

### SLATE WRITING EXTRAORDINARY.

THE Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, whose lectures are making quite a stir in the religious world just now, relates in the course of one of them, on the "Scientific Triumphs of the Biblical View of the World," a test séance with Mr. Watkins, the facts of which are attested by several sceptical witnesses who were with Mr. Cook in the brilliantly lighted parlour of Epes Sargeant, Esq., where the séance took place.

Each person wrote privately on a piece of paper the name of some deceased friend, and after folding the paper rolled it into a ball or pellet; these pellets were put upon the table and mixed, so as to be undistinguishable one from the other. Two slates, after careful examination by all present, were put together with a small grain of pencil between. Nine persons then grasped the slates with one of their hands, holding them under the bright light of a four-burner chandelier, and while so held, all distinctly heard the writing going on inside. Six messages were given in this way, being correct answers to the names and questions propounded in the pellets; and subsequently the Rev. Mr. Cook obtained the date of birth of his father. In another experiment Mr. Cook held a clamped slate in his own hand and obtained writing on it. Mr. Cook and his friends affixed their signatures to the facts, agreeing that nothing of fraud would cover them, but some of them still clung to the purely hypothetical theory of the medium's mind acting on matter to produce the result! Oh the "credulity of incredulity!"

### INVOCATION RECEIVED AT A LOCAL CIRCLE.

SPIRIT of Truth, Eternal God,  
The universe is thine abode,  
Accept our Evening Sacrifice,  
To Thee our aspirations rise;  
Supremely Wise, Supremely Good,  
Give each to taste the Ambrosial Food;  
Into each heart may true light shine,  
While waiting at Thy regal shrine.

Sandridge.



## THE ORPHIC CIRCLE.

PREPARATORY to the introduction of the proceedings of the above circle, it may not be out of place to give the origin of its organization. I have been witness at one time and another to pretty well the whole of the phenomena connected with Spiritualism, and about six years ago paid several visits to some of the best media in London, one, Mr. C. E. Williams, talked of coming out to Australia. "Peter," a control of his, even endorsed the idea in the direct voice.—It is to be hoped he will keep the promise. I have seen the materialised forms in full gaslight, shaken hands, and talked with them, including those of John and Katie King. I have also been present at Mrs. Guppy's seance, had several interviews with the renowned Mr. D. D. Home, and seen nearly all media in London could show. Apart from the phenomena I have witnessed as invoked by others, twenty years ago I had some mediumistic power myself, of a physical character, due perhaps to my being then much mixed up with the cause—being editor of a Spiritualistic paper &c.,—and later I have met with some success in the practice of spirit-photography.

Reviewing the past with the conviction, "what has been done, can be done again," and certain that in the circle any phrase of power may be obtained by patience and perseverance. I started a circle just nine months ago consisting of my family and two intimate friends—seven in all, with the avowed purpose of sitting until we got manifestations, come what might.

The Orphic Circle was formed for the express purpose of obtaining materialisation, and physical manifestations, believing these to be the most convincing to the sceptical mind. Writing, trance and inspirational media swarm everywhere; but media, who can introduce the materialised form in which one can recognise his departed friend, converse and embrace him, are few and far between. Such a phenomenon is self evidently more pleasing, useful, natural and ennobling, and therefore higher than any other.

For eight months we had sat regularly, when the table one evening, suddenly started, and by movements kept time to a tune being played on the harmonium by my son. The alphabet was called over by myself in the usual manner, and the name spelled out was "Willey," who persistently claimed relationship with Bennett sitting on my left, but he could not recall such a name, it was equally foreign to us. However the table tilted with considerable force emphatically adhering to the relationship. Of course this set Bennett thinking, when he suddenly exclaimed:—"How stupid I am, of course I know who she is." Whereupon the table fairly danced with delight, at the recognition. It proved to be the spirit of a lady who twelve months back, partially through the influence of Bennett, had embraced the doctrine of spirit communion; she died shortly after, promising to manifest herself to him at the first seance she was able. Here was the fulfilment of her promise to the letter, and in the form of a test too, for no one else in the circle had ever heard of her name, and even Bennett did not recognise it for some minutes after it was given. No mental-reading theory will explain this.

At our next seance we had a new phase of phenomena altogether. It appears in the interim Bennett had been unwell, but we did not know it. During the sitting he experienced the sensation of medicinal flavours arising in his mouth, which increased so fast and produced such salivation, he was compelled to leave the room. We were then told they had given him medicine, and upon his return the following communication was received.—"Health queer, dose him with a little iron, then podophyllin." Further instructions were given respecting the taking of these remedies, which he has followed to advantage. It is worthy of remark that podophyllin in toxic doses produces salivation. On the day of our third seance, it had been very stormy, much electrical disturbance in the air, and it was raining hard when we sat round the table. Conditions were altogether unfavourable; and we had sat an hour without a movement, when the following sentences were spelled out, letter by letter, without any difficulty, hitch

or mistake.—"Do not expect much—weak occasionally, patience some time, perhaps weeks."

"Beware, we and you have difficulties and opposition—important changes above and below."

"Do not waver—get nothing sometimes; do not seek more now, good night."

The fourth seance was beyond our expectation. The table floated slowly up into the air, so high we had all to stand up to keep our hands upon it, thus it remained fully half a minute suspended, rocking to the tune being played, and then slowly descended. One lady was touched by a hand from both below and above the table, which at first somewhat startled her, but as time went on, with her the reality of this phenomenon appeared to wane; and the power, apparently desirous to make her realize it beyond all question, moved the table close to her, when a large hand from underneath, grasped her leg—she distinctly felt the fingers and thumb; a scream, some nervous excitement of course followed; this time it was a fact not to be doubted. As soon as order had been restored, I expressed a wish to be touched, and instead of the anticipated three tilts for "yes," or even one for "nay," five rapid tilts were given calling for the alphabet. The sentence spelled out was:—"Are you timid?" I replied in the negative, we continued singing when I felt a hand pulling the bottom of my trousers and as I showed no sign of timidity the power increased, until the hand pushed me hard several times above the knee. Bennett experienced the same thing shortly after. Our next sitting surpassed everything, the table rose clearly three feet off the ground and whilst suspended rocked in the air to the tune being played, and then actually before coming down, turned gradually over,—upside down! We were standing up, and of course had to slip our hands, so as to still keep them on the surface of the top. The legs thus uppermost it ascended a little higher, carefully turned over again, and then descended. This evening the power was great. Hands passed round the circle and touched me and others freely about the head and face, once I had to firmly close my eyes or the fingers would have gone into them. The hands appeared cold, and the touches were very light and feathery. Nita, a young lady sitting on my left had not yet been touched and being of a reticent nature, we were ignorant as to what extent she realized the phenomena. I asked if the spirits would touch her. Receiving an affirmative, I said:—"Please to touch Nita in such a manner that she will have to admit it." We sang loudly, the table moved towards her, and notwithstanding the harmonium and singing we all distinctly heard a loud slap, and Bennett saw at the same instant, an electric flash of light pass over towards Nita. We stopped instantly, she then told us, she had felt fingers "feeling, as it were" for her eye, and then a sharp slap was given, which had brought tears into the eye. The controls then intimated they had carried out my request as far as it was possible without hurting her. During the singing a soft delicate voice joined in with us, carefully commencing each verse just after we began and leaving off about three notes before its close—determined not to be heard alone; we are told it will gain power as we proceed. We constantly see lights and luminous forms, the forerunners of materialisations.

Our last meeting opened with good attempts at physical manifestations, but finding they could not produce them then, the following communication was given instead,

"Conditions excellent—we have much to say. Changes in both spheres affecting manifestations. We hoped to produce physical manifestations but doubt. If you persevere you will get intellectual and spiritual tests. You must attend patiently, do not interfere. Our advice is:—Let truth more than marvels be aimed at. Be devotional and spiritual in spirit and conversation. Be patient in failures—let music be harmonious not boisterous.—Adieu."

R. H. W.

We are in receipt of a circular letter from the Circle "La Verdas" meeting at Toluca, Mexico; we have it translated for publication, but are unable to find space for it in the present issue.

## MEDIUMSHIP.

## GIVEN IN TRANCE.

MEDIUM, G. SPRIGGS.—AMANUENSIS, R. LEWIS,  
At Circle of Light, 5 Montgomery Terrace, Cardiff,  
January 80th, 1880.

We will try to speak to you this morning upon a subject that is so much talked about just now. We see the result of it, yet the laws which govern it are but very imperfectly understood.

The subject is Mediumship, and how spirits work and manifest themselves to your senses. When a circle is held for the first time for the manifestation of spirit-power, as a rule, all are but novices in the science of the laws and influences that go to make up and govern the manifestations. The result is, as you know, jumpings and twitchings of sensitive persons. In the first place, when a circle sits for the development of spiritual powers and manifestations, the greatest care ought to be taken in observing and fulfilling the laws. In the next place, no circle ought to be formed unless there is a well-developed mind; one that is capable to govern and see things right, and to place each person in their proper place. It ought to be understood and seen that there are persons whose place should not be in the circle, owing to their organisations; as when they sit in a circle, instead of giving off the fluidic matter which the spirit is obliged to use in producing manifestations, such persons draw from the other sitters and from the spirits, and thereby leave nothing but weariness, headaches, and dizziness to all present, especially to the sensitives. These persons ought not, under any consideration, to sit near the place where manifestations are taking place, and in a developing circle they ought to be kindly asked to withdraw.

When a circle is formed, and for development, there ought not to be put to any control *test questions*. We will explain a few of the difficulties spirits have in getting within the sphere of the medium to control. Always have in a developing circle the same sitters, because the fluidic matter that emanates from the brain-centre we have to prepare, so as to clothe ourselves with this matter in order to bring ourselves into harmony with your sphere. After that process we are obliged to experiment on different sitters, trying to find the most suitable organisation. As soon as we have found one, our next work is to bring the mind in subjection to ours. At first we excite sympathy. You no doubt have noticed some mediums at a first sitting to burst out suddenly in a flood of tears. Others are differently affected, according to how the organs are balanced. We always prefer those persons who have large sympathy in preference to the opposite. After we have excited them, if we find we are successful, we often try to put them into an unconscious state. When a medium speaks in that state, do not think at first you have the entire individuality and mind of the controlling spirit. The controlling spirit stands near the medium trying to impress his thoughts and views on the medium, at the same time having to excite other organs of the head. Seeing these difficulties you will not be surprised at finding some half-and-half statements given through the entranced medium. At times, when the medium is more sensitive than others, you may appear to get very good evidence of subjects that are not in the mind of the medium; but, doubtless, you may have noticed a sudden break, and he is not able to give more evidence, owing to the controlling spirit having used up the force that was supplied him from the brain centre; consequently, the impressions which he wished to convey ceased. In other cases we give this advice, that you on no account ask the control to strain a point to finish the evidence which he was about to give you; but patiently wait, and it will come with other and far more overwhelming evidence.

We shall now speak on "Materialisation."

Like other spirit sciences, it can only be understood by a spiritual or corresponding person. When a circle sits for materialisation they ought always to be careful of the conditions, or say, the positive and negative

influence. Always let those sit around mediums who have a superabundance of the brain aura, who throw out their entire sympathy towards the spirit friend. The medium is a magnet to attract the fluidic matter around him; being for the time an attractive power to the spirit friend. It is always safer for the medium to be away from the eyes of the sitters, because the influence that penetrates from the eyes is most severe and detrimental to the building up of a material form. The matter which is drawn from the medium and sitters is made into a vapoury cloud; then the spirits who desire to shew themselves plunge into this cloud; but first they make themselves positive, so that the matter may be attracted to them. If the spirit has a more powerful or positive mind than the medium, and if there be not a sufficient supply of these forces from the sitters, then there is much more force attracted from the body of the medium; not that they take the flesh and blood from the medium, but they draw the spiritual substance from his surroundings, consequently gravitation is altered. In this case the medium's body would become much lighter in consequence of the matter having been attracted to the spirit body, and when there has been unfavourable conditions and a deficiency of this force, the attraction between the spirit form and the medium is always greater. Every person who may be admitted into a circle ought to be very careful as to their state of mind before entering, for they are truly most delicate laws that are now brought into operation. The minds of the sitters have a great effect on the manifestations, and when a few go to a circle with minds made up to expose it, there are oftentimes things which occur to give them the opportunity. But here it is they forget, that in the case of materialisation it is mind acting on matter to make spirit visible to their gaze, and when a number attend a circle merely to expose it, their minds may have power to becloud the spiritual influence or drive it away from the medium, or their influence may govern the medium's actions and produce the very result they wanted. Of course you will understand these sitters stand on more advantageous ground than the spirits. These things can be proved even from nature; when there are unfavourable conditions, you never can get beautiful flowers. You must in nature always provide conditions for the development and expression of these beautiful products; so how much more in a spirit circle, where you deal with the influence of mind upon mind. No person ought to be admitted to materialisations until they have learned to understand the laws that govern them.

You ought to provide schools, and let every investigator commence at the most simple rudiments of manifestations, then let the mind try to grasp the knowledge of laws that are brought into operation to produce them; then will be laid the foundation for the study of other manifestations. A circle organised in this manner with minds that are spiritual would get stupendous manifestations. When no manifestations take place, very often the fault is with the sitters rather than with the medium. The medium is merely an instrument for the spirit friends who use him by their brain power; but it is possible, when the harmony is not intact, for the minds who are in the circle to use and control the medium. Purify the circles, you will then get higher manifestations. Uplift the aspirations, assist the spirit friends, then they will be able to come and walk and talk with you the same as when in earth-life; then the darkened rooms will be no longer darkened, but the Divine rays coming from the Great Source of Light, will enlighten all, and the minds of the mourners shall be made glad, and the angels shall not in ones and twos, but in numbers appear and manifest themselves to their friends. Get knowledge; be scientists in the true meaning of the word, and place your sitters so that one mind will fit in with the other; that it may indeed be a chain with all links complete. Then exposures will only be relics of the misunderstandings and neglectfulness of those who profess to understand the laws; but these exposures will be marks to show where you have erred. Tests will be a thing of the past, because in a circle like that which we have mentioned you will have no need of them, as there will be but one pervading

desire of the circle, and that for truth. These statements will apply to other phases of mediumship as well. By the development of the brain aura, and the mental condition of the circle, and when the desires of the sitters become united, not in wishing for wonders, or in indulging in suspicions, but in seeking and offering the best conditions they possibly can for the communication established, the manifestations will become higher, purer, and better, and come nearer to the true ideal of spirit. Unity is earnestness, for truth must be the main support of the circle, bringing around the sitters a sympathetic cord; for it is only by sympathy that friends do come and make themselves known. With such brain aura and sympathy for the spirit world as is possessed by our worthy friend Mr. Carson, of Australia, there could be wonderful manifestations produced in a circle with a number of persons of similar temperament and mental power.

This subject we hope will be studied, and the lessons of the past will be a source of great reflection for the future.

Trusting we have interested you a little, we shall give you at an early date further explanations of various manifestations. Farewell!

CARRELEIGH,  
The Presiding Spirit of the Circle.

#### DOGMATIC FALLACIES.

CONTRIBUTED BY ANDREW TIMBRELL.

THE recent controversy respecting the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, when viewed from a true Spiritualistic standpoint, was conducted upon fallacious and untenable principles. To dispute the authority of the occurrence as narrated by the Evangelists and Apostolic writers, would be equivalent to a repudiation of the doctrine of immortality. The subject may be considered as evidence of the complications and absurdities which are inseparable from Orthodox belief. There is no resurrection from the grave, but there is an immortality of the soul. Resurrection is altogether an unsuitable term, for it implies what is an obvious absurdity. Supernatural, also, is another phrase which ought to be expunged from our dictionaries. Suppose the case of a man who has lost an arm in Europe, a leg in Asia, an eye in Africa, and both his ears in America. That man dies; and according to the theory asserted by the Orthodox creed, he cannot participate in the resurrection until Europe restores his arm, Asia courteously returns his leg, Africa magnanimously surrenders the eye, and America gives up both his ears. All the component particles of that mysterious man's physical organism will have to be collected and readjusted before actual rehabilitation can occur; and when, after a separation from the parent stock for it may be several myriads of years, the dismembered organs consequently fraternise with the sportive limbs, then you have the perfect man restored to your imagination under difficulties. I do not know how it will be in the case of Richard 3rd, because we have Shakespeare's authority for the king's confession that when he came into the world he was only "half made up." So that there is the prospect before you from and beyond the Cimmerian darkness of the terrestrial graves, of an imperfect resurrectionist coming up under difficulties, too distressing for our contemplation. Such are only a few of the impossibilities which go to invalidate the absurdities of the present Orthodox notion. But if we look at the subject from the higher platform of an illuminated Spiritualism, all difficulties are at once removed. Jesus did not rise from the grave. He reappeared a materialised spirit; so did Moses and Elias, who are reported to have communed with him at the Transfiguration. There was nothing remarkable in the reappearance of Jesus after his crucifixion. What occurred in his case had frequently happened to others, and is actually going on at this day. Spirits of the departed come to convince us of immortality, and to console us with the assurance that we "live for eternity." The reappearance of Jesus to his disciples was merely a spiritual manifestation in corroboration of that supermundane

truism which finds an echo and confirmation in the irrefutable and consolatory *principia* of Spiritualism. While Orthodoxy embarrasses the human mind, Spiritualism comes to its relief, and demonstrates a majestic, an eternal TRUTH. I have said that as there is no resurrection, but a Spiritual manifestation, so also is there nothing supernatural, but much that is supermundane.

Were I not apprehensive of incurring the imputation of blasphemy, I should say that the reappearance of Jesus upon the earth-plane, so far from sustaining the imbecile and idiotic theory of a resurrection from the grave, was precisely the reverse, and ought hereafter to be designated a descension from the spheres. Unless you renounce the Newtonian principle of gravitation, I cannot see how you can make a man fall up. The difficulty is removed when you contemplate a spirit coming down. He didn't come up. The descension of his Spirit was a condescension to humanity. The phenomenon of his manifestation was supermundane not supernatural, for whatever occurs to our vision from the distant realms of the spirit-spheres is only natural to spirit-law, which of course must always be supermundane to our observation. Out with the absurd theory of a resurrection! Welcome to all, bringing peace and goodwill, and assurances of immortality to mankind—the infallible and irrefutable credentials of Spiritualism.

And now it may be convenient and permissible to enquire—how came so many pernicious falsities to be engrafted upon what the churches in their infatuation have impertinently and improperly called Religion. To begin then with the Biblical histories and Scriptural records. What about them? Your orthodox ministers accept as genuine and authentic a mutilated and imperfect Book, and they call it Holy, even as they themselves affect to be so! whereas there is no positive or perfectly reliable historical evidence to show that the persons to whom most of the books of the Bible are ascribed had anything to do with writing them. SAMUEL DAVIDSON, D.D. and L.L.D., says in his "Treatise on Biblical Criticism," that "from the time the respective books were written till the close of the Canon, B.C. 200, the Old Testament books themselves are the exclusive source of information, as to the state of the text, besides the Samaritan Pentateuch, and Gesenius—a renowned Hebrew scholar—prove most incontestably that this same Samaritan Pentateuch is of little or no value. Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Tertullian, Eusebius, Origen, and Jerome—Christian Fathers, mark you—accuse the Jews of having corrupted their sacred text. Eusebius, a celebrated theologian who flourished in the fourth century, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, a man of vast learning and who, in 325, was appointed by the Nicene Council to deliver the address to the Emperor Constantine on his entering into the Council, and who made the draft of the Nicene Creed, has had the boldness and candour to declare "how it may be proper to use frauds as a medicine, and for the benefit of those who may require to be deceived!" The most early and pious writers of the primitive Christian church were infected with this leprosy. Even Ambrose and Hilary, Augustine and Gregory of Nazianzen, and St. Jerome, were corrupted with the scandalous doctrine of Jesuitism of *lying for the sake of religion!* Bishop Faustus, in the fourth century, distinguished for piety and literary attainments, boldly and honestly declares—"It is certain that the New Testament was not written by Christ Himself, nor by his disciples, but a long while after them, by some unknown persons, who, lest they should not be credited when they wrote of affairs they were little acquainted with, affixed to their works the names of apostles, or of such as were supposed to have been their companions, asserting that what they had written was according to those persons to whom they subscribed it." And he says again—"For many things have been inserted by your ancestors in the speeches of our Lord (*ric*), which though put forth under His name, agree not with His faith; and much more to the same effect. For not long after Christ's ascension, several histories of his life and doctrines, full of pious frauds, and fabulous wonders, were composed by persons whose intentions perhaps were not

bad, but whose writings discovered the greatest superstition and ignorance. Nor was this all: productions appeared which were imposed upon the world by fraudulent men as the writings of the holy apostles." And Paul lets the cat out of the bag when he tells the Corinthians that, "being crafty, I caught you with guile"! Mosheim, in the third century, declared that pious frauds and impositions were among the causes of the extension of Christianity! More shame to him!

As concerns the ridiculous dogma of the Trinity—a God with three heads, like a Brahminical idol, as described in 1 John, 5th ch. 7 v.—DR. ADAM CLARKE, one of the most noted scholars in the Christian church, says of this verse, it is not genuine. "It is wanting in every manuscript of the epistle written before the invention of printing, one excepted, the Codex Montforti, in Trinity College, Dublin. It is wanting in almost all the ancient versions but the Vulgate; and even of this version many of the most ancient have it not. It is wanting also in almost all the Greek Fathers, and in most even of the Latin."

I think the authorities that I have quoted may be accepted with confidence in refutation of many dogmatic fallacies, still being unblushingly promulgated from orthodox pulpits. The little game of "lying for the sake of religion" is being continued by the gentlemen who, "being crafty, catch their congregations with guile." And what does it all culminate in? Is the system doing any good to humanity? Does it suppress vice, and promote righteousness? Does it convert sinners from the evil of their ways, and uplift our fallen women? Does it in reality accomplish any other object beyond providing fat benefices and snug livings for a host of clericals who are subsisting upon the infatuation and ignorance of the thousand and one congregations who attend church because it is so respectable to do so? Talk about grace and work, indeed! Why, according to the late DOUGLAS JEROLD, there once lived in the city of London, two serious tailors, who were brothers, and in partnership. They were very religious, and were constantly TALKING about divine grace and good works. At last they quarreled, and each determined to go his own way. In course of a very short time one of those saints terminated his mortal career inside the walls of a penitentiary, and his eccentric brother perished upon a scaffold. No matter; they can try and enter heaven by the atonement railway; a resurrection will see the pair into paradise; and eternal crowns, golden harps, and robes that have been dyed in the consecrated blood, shall be their portion and inheritance for ever, and ever, and ever! Do you believe it?

In thus proclaiming my religious opinions, it will always be my controlling desire to treat all my dissentients with respect. Animated by an intuitive and irrepressible impulse, my only object is to denounce error and vindicate truth. The holy crusade now marshalled and advancing under the banner and championship of Spiritualism, is conducted solely for the subversion of pernicious theological systems, and *not* for the purpose of either ridicule or scurrility. Spiritualism was against systems, not against individuals. It recognises among the ranks of its opponents men and women of unassailable integrity, heroic virtue, and high class mental calibre. Bishops, and deans, canons, and priests, are equally respectable and trustworthy as are any members of our Order. I would as soon stretch my legs under the mahogany of an orthodox divine as under the table of a Spiritualistic philosopher. The Esenian Reformer condescended to consort with publicans and sinners. The scheme of Jesus was to build up the human mind, to elevate the immortal part, and to fraternise mankind. Are the orthodox party invariably and universally inspired by similar motives? NO! Ten thousand times NO! Look at your prelatish shoe-buckles, broad-brimmed hats, and sombre vestments! Look at your palatial cathedrals, towering-spired churches, and pompous priesthood! A saint in black is as good as a saint in lawn. Aminadab Sless still persists to solicit your contributions, and has the impudence to call them voluntary! And the entertainment continues until some rollicking Murphy Maguire whisks Lady Sowerby Creamily through the mysterious

mazes of the dance! Ask HER for a subscription in furtherance of a genuine charitable and meritorious object, and witness the contortions of her wrinkled countenance as with elevated hands and eyebrows she croaks out the rejoinder—"It is not in our line." Certainly not! The Orthodox Star-company, now fulfilling a lucrative engagement at the Theological Circus, go in for "heavy business," with a box-office round the corner. Funny fellows, all of them. "And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails." Do you believe that tale? But it is even now as it was in the deepest ages of darkest corruption, a publicly adopted maxim, that it is not only lawful but commendable to *deceive and lie for the sake of piety and religion!* And where is your authority? Is it Paul of Tarsus who, being crafty, has caught you with guile? Is it the Nicene Council, exponents only of the opinions of CONSTANTINE, who, according to GIBSON, was a sanguinary, tyrannical Emperor, whose hands, when he entered the Synod, were dripping with the gore of several members of his own family? He summoned 2048 bishops, but on the suggestion of Bishop Alexander, of Alexandria, singled out 318, who manufactured your orthodox religion! Give the world a substitute; Give humanity a true certificate. Spiritualism is the only reliable passport for all eternity. Listen!

I love the man who scorns to be  
To crowd or sect a slave:  
Whose soul is, as the sunshine, free—  
Free as the ocean wave.  
Who, when he sees Oppression—Wrong,  
Speaks out in thunder-tones;  
Who feels with truth that he is strong  
To grapple e'en with thrones.

## BLESS THE ORGAN!

(BY PAX).

WE ask the Attorney General, and the law-officers of the Crown to be consistent.

The sanctity of the Sabbath is violated, and we ask all Sabbatarians to come to the rescue.

The grand organ at Paddy's Cathedral was blessed on Whit-Sunday, May 16th., by His Grace the Archbishop, but we are ready to swear an affidavit, or subscribe to a statutory declaration, which is the same thing that the instrument is not a *whit* the better for its consecration; and there is wit in that.

We ask that Mrs. Lupton may be watched. That defiant musician has desecrated the "Lord's Day"—it doesn't matter whether it was, and is the first or the seventh day of the week—but it was on the 16th. of May, at all events." By performing in an operatic selection. Gounod's *Messe Solennelle*, and actually played the harp for an accompaniment; and Signor Paladini, also, assisted, in the evening, when Rossini's *Stabat Mater* was given: (for a consideration.)

What on earth are the Hierarchy about?

Look after that Arch-Bishop,—and his organ!

The *Harbinger of Light* is our organ, but *his* organ is only a musical instrument, and he has the profanity to bless it!

Watch him, ye saints, and assert your order! They have infringed upon the holiness of your Sabbath, by performing *Messe Solennelle*, and a precious mess it is.

We ask the Attorney General, and the law officers of the Crown to be consistent.

Bless the organ—and bless me, even me also, O my father. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

DURING the past month, Debate, Experience, and Séance Meetings of an interesting nature have been held by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists; the Melbourne Spiritualistic Association have also held similar meetings, Mr. Deakin lecturing for them last Wednesday to a numerous audience.

"SPIRITUAL NOTES" for April is an interesting number.



## SCIENTIFIC SPIRITUALISTS.

To those who rely on Scientific authority for the facts of Spiritualism, the following extract from a lecture recently delivered in Boston by the Rev. Joseph Cook should be of interest. We commend it especially to the notice of Mr. Alfred Mallalieu of Sydney:—

"Six renowned German names, to their own credit or discredit, can now be quoted in the list of believers in the reality of the alleged facts of the modern psychical or spiritual manifestations. They are Profs. Zoellner, Fechner, and Scheibner, of Leipzig University; Prof. Weber of Gottingen University, Prof. Fichte of Stuttgart, and Prof. Ulrici of Halle University.

Zoellner was born in Berlin, in 1834, and is therefore yet a comparative young man. He is Professor of Physical Astronomy at Leipzig University, perhaps the foremost educational institution of the world. It is doubted in Germany whether Berlin or Leipzig stands in the first rank, but of late years the palm has been given to Leipzig.

Fechner was born in Gross-Saarchen in 1801, and is Professor of Physics. He is renowned for his publications on Mental Physiology and a most searching experimental investigator of nature.

Scheibner was born in Gotha, in 1826, and is Professor of Mathematics.

Weber was born at Wittenburg, in 1804, and is Professor of Electricity, and author of celebrated works on that topic.

Fichte was born at Jena, in 1797, and died at Stuttgart, in 1879. He was the son of the famous John Gottlieb Fichte, and was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tubingen. He is the author of important philosophical works, carrying out the thoughts of his father and establishing what is well known as the system of concrete theism. He was founder and one of the editors of the *Zeitschrift fur Philosophie*.

Ulrici was born in Lusatia in 1806, and is Professor of Philosophy and editor of the *Zeitschrift fur Philosophie*, published at Halle.

## JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

A few days ago I took up the *Southern Cross* but quickly put it down. *What* did I see? The name of J. Page Hoppes appended to a paragraph! I rubbed the place where my spectacles may some day be, and looked again. *Could* it be?

"Do I live, do I dream,  
Do I wonder, or doubt?  
Are things what they seem?  
*Or is visions about?"*

No! there it was clearly, distinctly printed. But could anything be more extraordinary than John Page Hoppes approbatively quoted by the *Southern Cross*? A glittering gem on a pauper's hand, a rosebud lying on a rubbish-heap, a snowflake in a turbid pool, could not present a more striking illustration of incongruity than did the appearance of this, the following extract, in the pages of the *Cross*:—"Religious spirits have always felt, and must always feel, that the permanent things are not the things that pertain to controversy. The enduring things are those that relate to simple-hearted joy in God, and to the calm confidences of the soul. The restless clouds are evanescent; it is the tranquil blue that remains. The mists of earth fleet by or die away: it is the gracious sunshine that abides. Battlefields are for a day; but the quiet meadow-lands lie ever open to the dews and beams of heaven. The torrent rushes on in the hour of storm; but nature loves to return to her 'still waters,' and on these she lavishes her sweetest treasures and most enduring gifts. So, while in every age contentions about creeds have mainly served to keep good men and women apart, it is to the religious trusts and aspirations common to all faiths that we are indebted for the living things of God that are as the bread of life to the world to-day."<sup>\*</sup>

Fancy this appearing in our contemporary from the writings of a man who calls the creed adored by the

*Southern Cross* "dry and dusty" and deserving to be "gibbeted;" who calls orthodoxy "an ugly idol," and the Glasgow United Presbyterians, "obsolete theological barbarians;" who repudiates the popular theory of the atonement (the "scientific necessity" of which, the *Cross* has been obliged to call in the aid of Mr. Joseph Cook to prove,) who designates the dogma of Christ's deity "a monstrous absurdity," and says of the youthful Jesus himself, "He had his faults like other children;" in whose sight the doctrine of "Eternal Hell" is "a gigantic and intolerable atrocity" and the Holy Bible is "manifestly the most unequal and most contradictory volume in the world, whose blemishes are as strongly marked as its beauties, whose deformities are as repulsive as its graces are attractive—a volume reflecting all the lights and shadows of poor humanity, and not the changeless splendour of the mind of God."<sup>†</sup>

And fancy the *Cross* publishing with apparent relish, this homily on controversy, when itself has been pre-eminent among journals for the spirit of disputatious irascibility! Witness its indecent attack upon, and misrepresentations of the Rev. H. N. Wollaston, because he dared to let out too much truth regarding matters Biblical; its opposition to Bishop Moorhouse; its controversies with other journals such as the *C. E. Messenger*, *Spectator*, *Advocate*, *Presbyterian Review*, and the *Age* and *Argus*. Witness, too, its growls at Canon Farrar, and the Broad-Churchmen; its snappings at Messrs. Finnis, Windoor and Clarke, its abuse of the Roman Catholics, and its oft-repeated vilifications of Spiritualism. Was there ever a better illustration, than in its appropriation of Mr. Hoppes' words, of the self-condemnation pronounced by a Hebrew king before the judicial Nathan? It is, perhaps, a hopeful sign when we see the writings of men like Page Hoppes finding their way into the columns of such a print, and we may regard his words as the heaven that will eventually "leaven the whole lump." Yet, there is something which suggests the idea of *desecration* and *sacrilege*, in the use made by that journal of the noble and inspired preacher's words.

THE Unitarian Church, which in Great Britain, America, and Hungary, has numerous adherents—including among them many representative minds—possesses in this colony but a limited and insignificant following, at least nominally. The advent of a new pastor to the chapel on Eastern Hill, will, let us hope, mark a fresh era in the history and progress of the denomination, and be accompanied by an accession to that body both in quantity and in quality. Mr. Mellone comes to us with excellent credentials from the Rev. James Martineau, LL.D., D.D., William Gaskell, M.A., Professor Upton, B.A., B.Sc., and others; and in him we may expect to find an able exponent of by far the most acceptable and rational of all the many phases which Christianity has presented to the world. In the honoured men just named our visitor will find examples worthy of all imitation. Like them, he will be expected to show both by word and deed that the faith he professes is not wanting in the spirituality which the other sects deny it; and it will further be required of him that whilst, perhaps, wisely abstaining from platform debate, he show that the trinitarian sophistries of accomplished champions like Dr. Moorhouse can be met by public and swift exposure.

What may be Mr. Mellone's relations to ourselves cannot at present be judged. He comes from a school still haunted by the materialisms of Priestley; yet, one can but trust he will show himself catholic in spirit and possessed of a mind open to the reception of light. One will, perhaps, be pardoned for warning Mr. Mellone against the errors fallen into by his talented predecessor, as revealed by her discourse preached some six years since and entitled "The Creed of Spiritualism." The fallacies of the lady evidently arose from her very imperfect knowledge of the subject on which she descanted. Her successor is commended to investigate fully before pronouncing a verdict and to avoid *high priori* methods when dealing with ascertain-

<sup>†</sup> The originals of these citations can be found in *The Truth-seeker* 1877-79, "The Life of Jesus Re-written," and "The plain Truth about the Bible," all works by Mr. Hoppes.

<sup>\*</sup> *Beside the Still Waters.* By the Rev. J. P. Hoppes.

able facts. Let his references to our literature and the record of evidences, be to accredited and representative works, such as those of Wallace, Crookes, Stainton, Moses, Crowell, Britten, &c., and not to outsiders. And let him bear in mind that the greatest Unitarian, Theodore Parker, treated Spiritualism in his day with moderation, intelligence and respect, auguring the likelihood of its becoming a universal faith; and that Mr. Page Hopps openly avows our philosophy and his admission of our facts.

THE *Wesleyan Spectator* has been reviewing Mr. Browne's new volume, and seems to cherish the conviction that it annihilated him by quoting Max Muller to prove that Mons. Jacolliot's version of the Hindu account of man's origin is a pure invention, having its source either in the Frenchman's imagination or in the knavery of an ingenious pandit. It is a pity to dispel a pleasing illusion, yet one cannot avoid the temptation to point out that the method *Ex pede Herculem* is not a recognised principle in modern logic: to prove a fallacy in one part of a work is not quite equivalent to demonstrating the worthlessness of the whole, any more than the discovery of a withered leaf on a tree indicates decay in the entire growth. If the *Spectator* instead of getting jubilant over the supposed detection of a possible error, would pay a little more attention to the numerous arguments urged by Mr. Browne against the popular creed, it would more worthily fulfil its mission as "a fearless vindicator of revealed truth and upholder of the right." There is much in other portions, e.g., the chapter entitled "Christianity before the time of Jesus," and especially the delineation of "historic" parallels between "Christna" and Christ, to which our Wesleyan friend would do well if it gave some consideration. However, to return to the portion assailed by the *Spectator*, I must remark that Mr. Browne by no means rests his case solely upon Jacolliot, but quotes from Strange, Monier, Williams, Cousin, Max Muller, Leibnitz, Amberley, Jones, Graves, Tennant, Child, Dow, and Higgins, evidences that ideas of creation's processes prevailed in times prior to the "Pentateuch; and his list might easily have been augmented by the names of Maurice, Faber, Von Bohlen, Kalisch, Delitzsch, Tiele, Knobel, Tuch, Gliddon and Clodd.

As regards the narrative rendered by M. Jacolliot, it is quite possible that, as Professor Muller says, "what M. Jacolliot calls a simple translation from Sanscrit, is, so far as I can judge, a simple invention of some slightly mischievous Brahmin, who took advantage of the zeal and credulity of a French judge," though there is some evidence to the contrary. At present my space will not allow me to enter into the merits of this case. I can pause only to state that the learned Société Académique de S. Quentin appointed an erudite Sanscritist and most loyal Catholic, M. Textor de Ravisi, who had for many years resided in India as a Governor in Tanjore, to examine Jacolliot's work, *La Bible dans l'Inde*; and this is the report:—"M. Jacolliot's book—written with good faith, in a style easy, forcible and zealous, having a form of argument easy and varied, is of absorbing interest . . . an able work . . . a learned work on known facts and with familiar arguments.

GREAT indignation is felt by the Freethinkers of Sydney at the introduction of a clause in Sir Henry Parkes' new Licensing Bill, prohibiting lessees of theatres, or public buildings, letting their platforms for lectures, &c., on Sundays without a special permit from the Chief-Secretary. It is assumed that this clause is introduced with the view of suppressing the Sunday services now held by Messrs. Bright and Tyerman. The latter gentleman reviewed the whole bill in a lecture at the Victoria Theatre, and while giving the Premier credit for much that was good in it, strongly condemned those clauses which interfered with the liberties of the people. The lecture is reported in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of May 13th, which paper, though disclaiming sympathy with the lecturers referred to, deprecates interference with their liberty of speech.

† Observe the professor's hesitancy.

## DR. HUGHES ON "THE SABBATH."

ON Sunday, May 9th, Dr. Hughes lectured on the "Sabbath for the People." Although the weather was inclement there was a fair attendance, except in the dress circle. Alluding to the origin of the Sabbath, he said that it was not peculiar to the Hebrew nation, though to them we owed the precious heritage of a seventh day of rest from labour. The Sabbath of the early Christians was the Sabbath of their country—the Saturday—and was kept from necessity rather than as a religious ordinance. No doubt that on the Sunday they had to work.

Constantine, who established the present Christian Sabbath, made a special enactment allowing agricultural labour to be done on that day.

Sunday was a joyous day at the time of the Reformation, and James I. recommended games in the afternoon after Divine service. It was the Puritans who adopted the Jewish Sabbath, in their zeal to strictly follow the Bible; but the injunction in the Bible was to keep holy Saturday, or from Friday, at sunset, to the following day at the same time. No biblical student had been able to produce evidence that the Jewish law applied to Christianity. He pointed out the inconsistency of the rich and well-to-do who advocated and upheld the orthodox idea of the Sabbath, but who drove in their carriages to Church while their cooks were preparing a substantial dinner for them. The railway, steamboat, and cab were the poor man's carriages, and why should he be debarred from using them? The Sabbath of the Jews had no reference to church-going; there was only one temple in Jerusalem, and it was not enjoined that the people should attend it on that day; on the contrary, it appeared that they met for supper, a commingling of all ranks, each bringing his own provender. He recommended this practice to the bishops and church-goers of the present day. The best way for a man to keep the Sabbath-day holy was by following out the dictates of his inner consciousness wherever they might take him. The man who studied books or nature, or attended to social duties calculated to improve the mind of himself and others, kept holy the Sabbath-day; whilst they who met to encourage a sectarian religion, which infringed on the liberties of others, desecrated it. You are encouraged to read the Bible, and in it you find History, Politics, and Poetry; hence it is lawful to read history, politics, and poetry on Sunday; and the history of William the Conqueror or George 3rd was as instructive as that of some of the Hebrew kings.

In using the day let each consult his own nature and circumstances; those who laboured should take rest; those who were idle during the week should be active in some good work. The law for stopping trade was only partially successful—trains and steam-boats ran, and liquor was surreptitiously sold on Sunday. The bishop broke the Sabbath by driving to church. The old English Sunday was a joyous day in Queen Bess' time. He advocated the opening of museums, libraries, and picture galleries, on grounds of justice and morality, and insinuated that the fear of the clergy at the prospect of Sunday freedom was not so much its effect upon their religion as upon their revenue.

The Christian teaching had failed to elevate the masses, and why should we keep the Sabbath it ordained?

Dr. Hughes concluded his able discourse by exhorting all to do their part in the next struggle for Sunday freedom.

THE Melbourne Progressive Lyceum is still a "Live" institution, and has had some excellent sessions lately. A Sunday evening "Instruction Meeting," held on the 16th ult. was well attended, over 100 members being present. For the information of those who have not visited this practical reformatory institution, we may mention that its sessions are held in the Horticultural Hall, Victoria-street (top of Russell-street), every Sunday at 11 a.m., and that visitors are admitted; non-members are, however, expected to contribute a trifle (3d.), towards the expenses of the institution.

## THE BISHOP'S EASTER SERMON.

TO THE LORD BISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

(Per favor of the Editor of the *Harbinger of Light*.)

MY LORD,—Your lordship's proved readiness to follow the example of your divine master in meeting enquirers—"both hearing them, and asking them questions," has gained you golden opinions among those who love the truth, and feel that it is best attained by the exposure of error in free discussion. The ill-natured rumour that you were *unable* to reply to Mr. Marcus Clarke's letter to you in the *Melbourne Review*, I disregard. Your lordship was doubtless anxious to rejoin to a reply which you had invited by answering Mr. Clarke's article on "Civilisation with Delusion," in the *Victorian Review*, and it may be presumed that you were only prevented from maintaining your position and credit, by the perverse meanness and narrowmindedness that suppressed a letter, which certainly demanded refutation far more than the article to which you had responded. By the courtesy of the editor of this paper, I am permitted to offer to your lordship an opportunity—perhaps as good as that of which you were so unfortunately and unjustly defrauded, of going about your master's business.

The reprint of your Easter sermon, has just reached my hands. Your lordship, has I hear put "Sceptic" to silence. If I venture to offer a few remarks upon it, and to hope for your lordships notice of them, it is because I am no sceptic, but the opposite of a sceptic. A sceptic, as your lordship is aware is a *doubter*, and so far as he has any definite opinions, he is no sceptic. If I have definite opinions and no doubts on some subjects which I have considered, I am still quite prepared to modify them as definitely and decidedly upon being furnished with adequate reasons. I am always ready to check and correct what little I do know.

Your lordship's text is "And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." An anomaly here strikes me my lord. Is not your vocation the saving of sinners? But if Christ really rose to save sinners, is not your occupation gone? Sinners are either saved or not saved by Christ. If the sinners have still to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and if it is your function to help them to do so, they cannot be already saved by Christ. If they are already saved by him, they, and you can have no saving to do. At present I have no doubt about the practical contradiction herein involved, but I await your lordship's solution of the difficulty.

Your lordship says on your first page that Sceptics allege that we cannot be sure that we have apostolic testimony to the resurrection, or that the Saviour was seen after his burial. My clear impression is that we have rational ground for being sure that there is no valid apostolic testimony on the subject. Your lordship must know that the titles of the gospels advisedly state that they are not *written by*, but *according to* certain apostles; that they are supposed to be based upon prior documents; and that the prefixing of apostles' names to them, was entirely arbitrary and subsequent. In fact the sole testimony available is that of certain *fathers* of the next three centuries; and of those fathers we have ample testimony (see Dr. Conyers Middleton's "Free enquiry into the miraculous powers, &c.") as to their folly, credulity, and disregard of truth. Your lordship appears indeed, to recognise the lack of authenticity of the gospels, when in your first page, you desert them, and rely upon St. Paul. Now my lord, did St. Paul ever see the risen Saviour at all? I admit that he says in general terms in Cor. xv, 8. that "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." But this was after—not only the resurrection, but the *ascension* also, and therefore was not properly seeing him at all as the others are supposed to have seen him. And if we take St. Paul's particular specific account, given repeatedly in the Acts of the Apostles, of what really happened, he saw *nothing but a light*, and thought he heard a voice which he did not know as that of Jesus, for he had to ask "Who art thou Lord?" By his own ac-

count he saw no more, being struck blind on the spot. What guarantee then had he, that the answer was really Jesus?—none. There was nothing but a vision, as St. Paul himself calls it, (Acts, xxvi, 19) and a vision implies something subjective, not objective. Then to say that he saw the risen Saviour, is inadmissible. His incidental assertion in Cor. xv, 8, is evidently a mere rhetorical expression, inconsistent with the date, and his own repeated particular statements on different occasions, as preserved in the Acts of the Apostles. Then to build anything upon the fact that St. Paul "knew Peter, James, and John," seems fallacious in the extreme; St. Paul strenuously disclaims having received anything from them, (Gal. i 16-7.) apparently met them only to quarrel with them, (See "Not Paul but Jesus,") speaks disrespectfully and with animosity of them (Gal. i, 7, 8, 9, also ch. ii.), and repudiates all connection with them. Yet your lordship appears to accept St. Paul's incidental assertion that they had seen the risen Saviour, as irrefragable proof of the fact, though we have seen that his general assertion that he himself had seen him was contradicted by himself, and was therefore and otherwise inadmissible. St. Paul's writings prove him to have been exceedingly rash and unprecise in statement. His round assertion that 500 brethren at once saw the risen Jesus, (see your lordship's repeated mention of it—page 5.) has no support from those who profess to relate the circumstances. Your lordship eagerly accepts his assertion that *others* believed that they had seen such an extraordinary and inexplicable phenomenon as a person risen from the dead, when his own statement regarding his own conversion are (as given by the inspired recorder of the Acts of the Apostles) so conflicting and so contradictory. (see "Not Paul but Jesus," conversion table.)

Your lordship conceives (page 6) that there was "no possibility of mistake when a supernatural being takes a long walk with two men, converses with them copiously by the way upon the prophecies of the Jewish scriptures, goes in with them to their dwelling, and then vanishes away." Is your lordship warranted in entirely ignoring the plain statement in the record that they did not recognise their familiar teacher and master in all that time: and only imagined that it was he when he suddenly left them, and when verification was impossible? What sort of evidence is this to us?

Yet even all this is beside the point. What is required is evidence of the resurrection itself, not of what happened afterwards. Your lordship's whole sermon is an implicit recognition of the importance of the facts, and of the connection of those facts with us by means of the evidence of them. What evidence then have we? Authentic statements of independent unbiased witnesses? The very opposite. The only alleged spectators—the disinterested guard—who must have believed what they saw, are said (by interested persons who were not present) to have made, for money, a false statement respecting it. There were no other spectators. A few persons whose statements, with perhaps one doubtful exception, have not come to us, arrived at the sepulchre *after all was over*; but had they been present, they were too interested and partial to be eligible witnesses. The statements about them and what they saw are contradictory, and they are said to have thought that the person whom they saw was someone else.

But your lordship ignores some important facts to which I invite your attention. It was quite possible to have convincing proof (to persons on the spot at the time, if not to us.) of the resurrection; the initial steps of it are said to have been actually taken; but the failure to complete it, seems fatal to the credibility of the story. Independent, unbiased, disinterested witnesses were available and ready. A large stone had been rolled over the mouth of the sepulchre, the seal of the chief priests was upon it, and a Roman guard kept watch. So says the inspired record. If then, at the expiration of the appointed three days and three nights, Pontius Pilate, his officers and soldiers, independent and disinterested,—and the chief priests—biased rather against than in favor of the resurrection, had been summoned to be eye witnesses of the event;—if the seal had been broken by

the chief priests, the report of the guard duly made to Pilate, the stone rolled away, the stiff and decomposing body, minutely examined and identified, and if then the resurrection had unmistakably taken place before the astonished gaze of such unexceptionable witnesses,—what room for doubt, dispute, cavil, or suspicion would there have been? And would not the honesty and veracity of the divine record have been triumphantly vindicated, at least to those living at the time and place? And what difficulty was there in the way of such desirable verification?

But what was admittedly the result? After all the preliminary precautions had been duly taken, what happened? *Long before the time appointed by Jesus himself, the seal was broken in the night, the stone rolled away, and the corpse removed!!!* Was not the failure implicitly yielded? the fiasco complete? The "lame and impotent conclusion," is only aggravated by the attempted explanation. If the Roman guards had really beheld what it is stated that they saw, would they not have reported the truth at once to their own officers and governor? But having as stated gone to the chief priests instead, is it probable or credible that they would have taken from them money to report a lie to criminate themselves, and secure their own severe punishment? *What but the truth could exonerate and save them?* Would any guards have been so stupid as to falsely state that they slept, and state also what happened while they were asleep?

Further the chief priests are stated to have believed the report of the guards!!! but to have acted as if they disbelieved it! If they believed, in what respect were they not converted christians? But if they believed the guard, would they not have done the very reverse of what they are reported to have done? Would they not have been baptised at once? And if they believed not, would they not at once have reported the guard to the governor as lying conspirators? Is not every item and circumstance of the story irreconcilably inconsistent with others? Wholly improbable and incredible? Let me remind you my lord that these considerations affect the value of the evidence to persons living at the time and place, not to those separated from the events by thousands of miles, and years; to whom in comparison it would be valueless, even if it had been perfectly satisfactory to those on the spot at the time.

From the difficulties of materialism, as you call them my lord, you will not find me shrink. You my lord, as a believer in the bible, can scarcely refuse belief in hereditary transmission of moral qualities (see John viii 41, & 44.) I demur to the term *automatic*, which involves a solecism. "No body can originate motion in itself"—is a fundamental law of motion. The cause of all motion is external. To hold and make men responsible for their acts, I hold to be right and proper, though I concur with you at page 8, that that being so, to blame or punish them, is unjust and irrational. But to prevent their injuring society is a moral duty and is dictated by wisdom. *That we can do, and yet repudiate the idea of punishment.* Let us inflict no pain on wrong-doers, but seclude or narcotise them. You say "We must blame and punish." That I hold to be adding evil to evil, and experience proves that no anticipated good results. You say "we feel and know that we are free; that we can choose to do right, and ought to be punished when we do wrong." St Paul differs from you (Rom. vii. 15, 20.) All men desire good, to be good, and to do good; and if they do not and are not, it is from error or incapacity. Surely it is the reverse of charity to insinuate the contrary. But, in common with many of the greatest and best of men, I feel and know that I am not free, and that all our choosing is determined by heredity education, and circumstance, and the bible, particularly, your favourite, St Paul, is on my side again. "*For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Phil. ii. 13) But I decline to (with St Paul) lay the responsibility upon God, who, he says *predestinated* us to good or evil before our birth. (Rom. viii & ix) I could of course multiply quotations to the same effect, but I think the above from St Paul should answer my purpose with your lordship.

I venture to deprecate the style of your lordship's

adjuration to your congregation (pages 8 & 9). You do not attempt to lead your hearers to judge coolly, reasonably, and conscientiously, according to the evidence before them; you do not appear to recognise that *faith* is not demanded or required, except for incredible or doubtful statements, and that our supreme responsibility is for the earnest and conscientious *use* rather than *suppression* of the discrimination and judgment with which we find ourselves endowed. On the contrary, you appeal to your auditors' aesthetic imagination, urge them to ignore every principle of evidence and science, and demanding blind admiration of an impossible hyper moral character, you conclude your sublime exhortation by asking.—"Say if you can keep yourselves back from the centurion's confession, verily this was the Son of God!"

My lord, allow me to remind you of another passage which you appear to have overlooked, though equally authenticated in the same record, and which, to unbiased minds has a clearer aspect of probability, while it suggests the very antithesis of such enthusiastic exaltation. "About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" That is to say, "*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" I ask you my lord, what should a man of unsophisticated common sense and human feeling gather from that despairing cry of mortal agony? What but a forced confession that the sufferer's eyes were at last opened; that he felt that his life was an error, his mission a delusion, and his death the dissipation of his faith, his aspirations, and worse than all—of his fortitude? My lord, My lord, how many thousands of pious christians suffer practically the like foretaste of your promised hell, when on their death beds, they in similar agony vent their parting breath in such despairing exclamations as "*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*"

These agonies are the natural effects of such irreconcilable contradictions, anomalies, and mysteries upon anxious, sensitive, and candid minds, which are driven by them to bewilderment and despair, sometimes to insanity or suicide.

Think my lord, how much you may contribute to such agonies by such sermons!

I am my lord with great respect your lordship's fellow-labourer in the cause of truth.

ANTI S(C)EPTIC.

Melbourne, April, 22nd. 1880.

#### A NEW TRANCE MEDIUM.

DURING the last month a new trance speaker has appeared upon the scene who gives promise of excellence and usefulness in the future. His name is Langley, and he has developed during the past twelve months at a private circle, meeting at Sandridge. It is only, however, within the last few weeks that acting under the instruction of their spirit guides, the circle determined to bring the medium before the public, and engaged the Temperance Hall, Sandridge, for that purpose. We attended his second lecture on Sunday, May 23rd, and were most favourably impressed with both medium and control. The subject of the lecture was announced as "Spiritualistic and Biblical Dissimilarity," and after a few introductory remarks from Mr. Marshall, the chairman, and the singing with musical accompaniment of an excellent invocatory hymn, which we understand was given through the same medium, Mr. Langley rose in the trance state and prefacing his address with a brief prayer and invocation, commenced by picturing the astronomer who with patient gaze explored the depths of space and revealed a world unknown to man. Him the world credited and applauded, while he who by like diligent research revealed and unfolded the spiritual worlds, was received with incredulity or at best reluctantly believed. Men sought by ancient monuments and hieroglyphics to discover the knowledge of the great departed called dead, but Spiritualism reveals them still living and ready to communicate their knowledge to humanity. Truth the speaker said, required no pyrotechnic display, it was unassuming and commended itself by its inherent qualities, hence he should present it without embellishment.



The lecturer then briefly reviewed the inconsistencies of the Old Testament and impugned its claims to infallibility. The man who wrote the book of Joshua was evidently ignorant and imagined this world to be the centre of the universe and the sun a satellite.

He compared the Spiritual doctrine of gradual and eternal progression, and the dross of the lower state as necessary for purification, with the irrational orthodox one of heaven and hell and justification by faith, and said that Spiritualism asked no faith until you had conviction of its truth. He denied that Jesus had ever claimed to be the son of God, and asserted that the verse in the fifth chapter of John, upon which the Trinitarians found their doctrine is an interpolation and forgery, and is not to be found in either the Codex Alexandria or other reliable early codes.

Spiritualism is no new thing but the oldest religion in the world. As in the great amphitheatres of old, the presence of dear friends amid the onlookers stimulated the gladiator to nerve himself for brave deeds, so should the knowledge of the overlooking eyes of our spirit friends stimulate us to greater energy in the battle with error.

The chairman announced that on the following Sunday the subject might be chosen by the audience or that the controlling spirit would defend his position against any champion those who dissented from him might select.

#### \* ALTRUISM, UTILITARIANISM, AND SELFISHNESS.

The above is the title of an Essay or "Lay Sermon" delivered by Mr. H. K. Rusden, at the Masonic Hall, in January last, and more recently published in pamphlet form. Its object is the advocacy of selfishness as superior both in a moral and utilitarian point of view to Altruism, or the Golden Rule. To many the proposition at first sight would seem so manifestly wrong as to be deemed unworthy of serious consideration; but the writer, not only from a materialistic, moral standpoint, makes a good case, but supports his position from that very useful and many-sided book, the Bible.

He argues that as honesty, justice, and morality tend to the comfort and happiness of the individual, they should be practised for that reason alone; and endeavours to show that Altruism, or working for others, is a principle hypocritical, false and abortive. In this direction, however, the writer overshoots the mark by presenting as illustration that extreme and impracticable self-abnegation which entirely ignores prudence and the most common-sense considerations of self-judgment.

The golden rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," is not so impracticable as Mr. Rusden seems to think, if rationally viewed; for a sensible man would only wish others to act kindly and justly to him, and would be prepared to do the same to them; and the assertion that "Communism is incompatible with the existence of wealth or the well-being of society," is erroneous, as at the present time there are several wealthy and well-doing communities in existence, notably at Guise, in France, and Oneida, in America, besides the many prosperous Shaker communities in the latter country.

We are inclined also to think that Mr. Rusden is in error in taking Jesus' injunction to His apostles as applicable to the world. Their mission and work was spiritual, and the recommendation to imitate the lilies of the field and "take no thought of to-morrow," whilst manifestly irrational and impracticable to the world at large, was consistent with their work. There is no comparison between the pretender to Altruism and the true philanthropist; the latter of whom may be quite as utilitarian as the strictest apostle of selfishness.

THAT excellent Magazine, the *Psychological Review*, ceased publication with the April number. We are informed, however, that a company, projected some time since to start a high-class Spiritualistic paper in London, will shortly be floated for that purpose.

\* Altruism, Utilitarianism, and Selfishness: A lay sermon delivered at Masonic Hall, Melbourne, by H. K. Rusden.

#### THE HAMILTON GHOST STORY.

UNDER this heading the *Hamilton Spectator*, editorially corrects the reports of the remarkable vision and prediction, seen and received by Archdeacon Innes shortly before his death. The *Spectator* says:—

What the Archdeacon really wrote was shown to us with a request that we would not publish it, as it could do no good, and might hurt the feelings of his relatives. As some other friend of the family has, however, with questionable taste, thought proper to furnish a very distorted version of the affair to the public, we have been asked to state that, the morning before his death, the Ven. Archdeacon Innes wrote and gave the Rev. J. W. Arnold, a memo, of which the following is a copy, viz:—"A few nights after poor Lissiman's death, I was sitting alone, and his room rattled so, that I ran up to see what it was, I looked into the 'dark' room and 'saw' nothing," so I said, with a laugh to myself. "It must be old Lissiman. What do you want?" Then I had an answer, not 'audible,' but such as 'possibly' a spirit can convey. "Never mind, you'll follow me soon." It was singular. I never told anybody. Mr. Lissiman died a month before the Archdeacon, and the latter expired less than twenty-four hours after writing that singular memo. we have been called upon to publish.

#### DID JESUS DIE BEFORE OR AFTER THE PASSOVER?

"THOU mayest not sacrifice the Passover within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee: but at the place where the Lord thy God shall choose to place His name; there shalt thou sacrifice the Passover at even at the going down of the sun."—Deut. xvi. 56. "Thou shalt roast it, and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning and go to thy tent."—Chro. xxx. 13-16.

According to Exodus, "None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning."—Exo. xii. 22.

#### THE PASSOVER.

Believe you Jesus did not know,

The priests the passover prepared?

Its' blood must on the altar flow?

For this we know the law declared;

That any strangers who came night

The altar, were condemned to die?

(Num. iii. 10.)

Did Jesus his disciples send?

Within the city to prepare,

The passover! and thus offend;

By killing, sprinkling, eating there!

While afterward all went abroad;

These are all forbidden by God?

Luke xxii. 7-17. Mat. xvi. 29-30.

For all presumptuous acts we know,

Death is the penalty declared!

Against all who to the altar go,

Save priest, or sacrifice prepared;

(If thus they did the law defy.)

They doubtless deserved to die!

Deut. xvii. 12. Num. xviii. 7.

These laws did Jesus disobey?

The twelve, the priests, the elders too,

Go out before the break of day;

The night the Pascal Lamb they slew?

Where then we ask the righteousness,

Of One who acted thus amiss?

Matt. xvi. 36-59.

'Tis true St. JOHN ALL THIS DENIED!

He teaches plainly them untrue,

Informing us that Jesus died!

The hour the passover they slew.

And Paul appears to teach the same

Pray reader! which of them's to blame?

John xix. 13-14. 1 Cor. v. 7.

"And when the hour was come he sat down and the twelve Apostles with him. And he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."—Luke xxii. 14-15.

"AND IT WAS THE PREPARATION OF THE PASSOVER and about THE SIXTH HOUR, and Pilate said unto the Jews, 'Behold your KING!'"—John xix. 13-14.

One thing is evident as light!

When scriptural statements disagree;

One of them only can be right,  
The rest are false! nay blasphemy!  
If written in the name of God,  
A wickedly designed fraud!

If any can! pray furnish proof?  
In order that we may believe,  
Which of the Gospels state the truth!  
Or which if any do deceive?  
For mere traditions we despise,  
The most of which are pious lies!

R.

### THE BUSH MISSIONARY.

By Pax.

ON Sunday afternoon, May 9th, 1880, Mr. Peter Campbell, editor of a periodical not generally known as *Pleasant Words*, discoursed against Spiritualism, at the Protestant Hall, in this city; and in the *Daily Telegraph* of Tuesday, 11th idem, there appeared a short notice of that deliverance. We welcome this demonstration as a favourable augury, because it is an evidence of the alarm felt by the opposition sects at the progress of our principles. Mr. Peter Campbell, like the proverbial lawyer, had no case for his heterodox clients, and therefore, in order to do something for his fee, he commenced to abuse the other side. We are sorry for his delusions, and experience an interest in his conversion. When he seriously reflects upon his past utterances, a remorse of conscience will become his Nemesis. We shall charitably hope for his recantation and his repentance; and as soon as he satisfies us of his contrition, and that he possesses a *mens sana in corpore sano*, we will not only take him cordially by the hand, but will introduce him to respectable society, and endeavour to do some good for him—poor man.

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