

THE Harbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO
ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

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

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THE new Spiritualistic journal, *Light*, calls attention in one of its latest issues to the lull in phenomenal Spiritualism, or diminution in the occurrence of sensational phenomena, asking the why and wherefore of it, but giving no explanation of its probable cause. Incidentally, however, it suggests to investigators in this field of enquiry a more scientific method than that generally pursued, and in the lack of this in the past we see the key to the decadence of the class of phenomena referred to. The actual work pertaining to material manifestations of spiritual power is performed by spirits not far removed from the earth plane, who being in closer rapport with the elements surrounding its surface, and having more material bodies, can operate to greater advantage in the production of phenomena cognisable to the physical senses of humanity. But we are convinced by our experience and converse with intelligent spirits, that all organised movements in this direction originate in the higher spheres of intelligence, where scientific knowledge abounds, the spirits occupying the more material plane being used as the workmen or instruments to carry out the plans of the more advanced intellects. Such being the case it is essential that those who co-operate with them on this side should offer such conditions as would give the directing minds a reasonable ground to expect some substantial result in the development of a knowledge of those hidden forces which are "back" of all phenomena, but more particularly manifest in those transcendental ones exhibited in the physical manifestations pertaining to modern Spiritualism. The universal testimony of the spirit world points to one great object—the advancement of humanity. To enable those on the other side to more effectually promote this, it is essential for man to be made cognisant, first, of their existence, and secondly,

of their power to assist him. There are a few minds so susceptible to spiritual impression, and so well balanced as to receive intuitively the teachings of the spirit world, which, flowing into their souls as living truth, becomes a part of their nature; but the vast majority are incapable of realising the stupendous fact of man's continued sentient, individualised existence, until their physical senses are convinced by a demonstration of intelligent force acting apart from any material organism. So diametrically opposed to his previous experiences are these phenomena to the investigator, that he not unnaturally demands the exclusion of every possible means by which human agency could be brought to bear in their production, and with sufficient mediumistic power we see no reason why these demands should not be complied with.

It is well known to those who have studied the subject, that mediumship is a quality belonging to the individual, and not dependent in itself on the moral character of its owner. Exercise of the faculty develops its power, and circumstances give it direction. With low and undeveloped surroundings, the manifestations will be powerful but disorderly, being produced by the spontaneous action of undeveloped and misdirected minds in the lower planes of spirit life. With higher surroundings that offer promise for the development of instructive phenomena, guiding spirits come forward and direct the operations on the spiritual side, utilising the conditions as far as practicable for the presentation of that class of manifestation which to them seems most appropriate. If the investigations are not pursued scientifically, or at least with some religious ardour and unselfish motive, the morale of the circle decreases, the séances degenerate into a show, and the guiding intelligences withdraw, leaving the media to the control of the often well-meaning but unwise workmen, and the way open to the intrusion of mischievous and unprincipled spirits, who are ever ready to avail themselves of an opportunity to connect themselves with material life. Mediums of this class are rarely strong-minded individuals; it is inconsistent with the passive state which is essential for their control that they should be so. They are plastic, and are readily elevated or depressed by the mental influence brought to bear upon their sen-

sitive natures; and to this is due the degeneracy of many previously reliable mediums, who, by those who know the psychological difficulties they have to contend with, are rather to be pitied than blamed.

Scientific and rational Spiritualists, when once they have proved a medium as such, should rally round him and protect him or her from adverse influences. Were half the care bestowed upon them that was given to the Pythonesses and Oracles of old, their usefulness would be vastly increased, and there would be fewer lapses to chronicle.

The scientific Spiritualist should remember that they are delicate instruments and require keeping in the best possible order for experimental purposes; the religious and emotional Spiritualist, remembering that they are the links which connect him with the dear ones gone before, should love and cherish them accordingly.

The obscure country preacher who expounds biblical texts to the obfuscation of his hearers and the presumed glory of God, is cared for and supported by those he ministers to, as a medium between themselves and God, though he gives no evidence that he is such; whilst the medium who proves in his person his connection with the world of spirits (the invisible children of the Great Father) is often necessitated to sell his gift and risk prosecution for doing so. Those who desire to keep Spiritualism out of the mire, and make both a science and religion of it, must take these things to heart, and do something practical to remedy them.

With due care of the physical and mental condition of our mediums, and a truly scientific method of procedure in our physical circles, we may rely upon the co-operation of able, scientific minds on the other side, and a proportionate increase in both the quantity and quality of phenomenal Spiritualism.

FAMILIAR LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM.

I.

"Magnetism is the *Aurora* of Science; Spiritualism its *Rising Sun*."

RESPECTED FRIEND,—I have long felt a desire to address a series of familiar letters to you on the subject of Spiritualism generally, and as the great prominent fact of the present period of the world's history. I am very much impressed to believe that, since the Reformation under Martin Luther, no greater movement in its application to the mental and spiritual nature of man has arisen among the nations of the earth. Reform is a process which is continually going on and effecting most important results; but, as a prominent feature in the history of our times, no movement has excited so much attention, led to more discussion, or been the cause of a greater advance in the direction of freedom of thought, and exacter information on man's relation to the hereafter than what is termed Modern Spiritualism.

But not only has this movement attracted much attention all over the world; it has also, during the brief period of its progress, secured a vast number of adherents; these including men of genius, learning, and high standing in society, men who have made it their business to devote much time and careful study to the examination of its claims. Under these circumstances, it need not be wondered at that, on the other hand, very great opposition has been manifested to its teachings; and, by the religious community especially, the system has been condemned, and regarded as an indication that the devil has indeed at last been let loose among men to lead them to eternal ruin.

It is a most curious fact that, while such should be the case with a class of persons whom it might have been supposed would gladly hail the more complete opening up of the future, and thus another confirmation of immortality; that, while this class should reject such a means of enlightenment and confirmation of their dearest hopes and most express teachings, the men who seemed to be sunk in materialism, and, in some instances, given over to a worldly life, refusing to receive one jot of evidence of a life to come from the teachings of the pulpit, and theology; that these were the very persons who hailed the glad tidings which Spiritualism brought, saw by its light a direct road out of their materialism; and, while thankfully acknowledging that it gave them something worth living for, accepted its teachings as the suitable guide through life to immortality.

Thus, at the very time when the men of the Church thought that the world was about to be converted to a religious belief by its theological teachings, another system arose diverse, but more suited to attract men, and do for them what the so-called Christian teaching has utterly failed to accomplish. I would call your attention, however, to one consideration here, viz., that after all, the so-called Christian theology has been but a temporary means of aiding certain classes of minds, while others could never be touched by its influence; and, consequently, that it should either become modified—which is a fact most patent to the student of present Church history—or, that some other system of a more powerful and universal tendency should arise, does not at all surprise the thoughtful student of human nature in its relation to the Infinite Ruler of the Universe.

Now, although the period during which Modern Spiritualism has been before the public is brief, yet the aspect which it has presented, the influence which it has exerted, the claims which it has put forth, and the opposition which it has raised, are of sufficient moment to make it desirable to do what its advocates can to remove the difficulties which stand in the way of its acceptance generally; and, also, to place it in its true light, that men may see what it really is, and that, in place of its being a device of the devil, it is really a dispensation of love and wisdom from God to man, to awaken him out of his indifference to the future, and to lead to the acknowledgment of those claims upon the cultivation of his higher nature which God, who is a Spirit, requires of His creatures.

I therefore propose in this series of letters to do what I can to aid the accomplishment of these ends; and I beg you will give me your candid attention, and dismiss all feelings of prejudice from your mind, so that its claims may have their due weight in leading you to deal with the subject fairly and honestly, and with a desire to find out the truth, and to act accordingly; and if in my delineation of its characteristics, and my advocacy of its advantages I should seem to manifest a spirit of enthusiasm, I would ask you to believe that this arises from the fact that, after a long period spent in its examination, and a deep conviction of its value as a factor in the conducting of human life, both in its relation to time and eternity, I have come to the conclusion that it is an invaluable blessing from heaven, and a source of enlightenment and comfort unparalleled by any other system yet current among mankind. I may be pardoned, then, if in my attempt to help you in this direction I appear enthusiastic; and would assure you that it is a zeal not without knowledge, but tempered with a clear and well-tested experience of the value of this means to raise the soul to God, and to unsullied purity and happiness.

Your well-wisher,

H. J. B.

Melbourne, April 1881.

WE are in receipt of a copy (No. 8.) of the *Rising Sun*: a new Spiritualistic monthly, published at Portland, Oregon; from which we find that Spiritualism has taken root in that city. A Society has been formed, and two public meetings are held every Sunday.

To Correspondents.

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

THE CENSUS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—In your last issue I read your Notice to Spiritualists to enter their belief as Spiritualists in the religious columns of the Census papers left with them. You did right to call their attention to the matter, but unless they are sincere and not ashamed of their faith, your request will not have been complied with: the fear of Mrs. Grundy and business reasons will prevent large numbers from so openly avowing their belief, preferring the ignoble hypocrisy of deceit to bearing a cross for truth. But to the true Spiritualist, the opportunity would be eagerly availed of to proclaim in the light of day and before all men that glorious truth which has brought consolation to their minds of the reality of a life beyond the grave, and of a higher and nobler view of divine things. The latter who have become Spiritualists from conviction, and as the result of long and patient investigation, you may depend would take your advice; the others would follow their old course and rehabilitate themselves in their cast-off clothes rather than have the moral courage to write themselves Spiritualists. Our cause has little to expect from such moral cowardice as such conduct displays. Therefore, sir, the census will not show anything like a fair criterion of our numbers; but it will at least show one thing, namely, that our spirit-friends are raising up many witnesses in this new land for "the truth against the world."—Yours, etc.,

A SPIRITUALIST.

April 12th, 1881.

CHRIST—GOD OR MAN?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Your editorial in last issue ably presents the position of the Rationalist in relation to the deity of Jesus. As, however, the ideas and objections formulated by your correspondent, "F. B.," are much in vogue among orthodox Christian reasoners, perhaps you will permit me to meet F. B. on his own ground, viz., the Scriptures, and answer him from the standpoint of Unitarianism.

Although a subscriber to several freethought papers, your correspondent is evidently little acquainted with Unitarian literature, else he would scarcely have brought forward with so much confidence his arguments in favor of Christ's deity.

To support his position that Jesus claimed to be God, F. B. quotes two texts, and supplements them by the consideration of an incident which he alleges to be related in the Scriptures. Let us deal with these *seriatim*.

I. "I and my Father are one." These words, says F. B., "show that Christ places himself on the same level as God." Do they? Then those other words of Jesus in reference to his disciples, viz., "I pray that they also may be one in us . . . even as we are one." (John, chap. xvii.), must show that the disciples are placed by Christ "on the same level as God." Cannot F. B. see that the *oneness* in each case is a unity of feeling and purpose, and not an identity of persons.

II. "Before Abraham was, I am." Your correspondent thinks this text clearly shows that "Christ plainly and undeniably represented himself to be God." How so? Does pre-existence necessarily imply deity? It has been held by many that the Platonic idea of the eternal existence of the "ego" influenced to some extent the religious thought of Judaism in the time of Christ. But apart from such speculations, I must remind F. B. that if the text really means that Jesus existed before the time of Abraham, then there is another text which equally proves that Jesus was crucified before the world was made. I allude to the passage in the thirteenth

chapter of Revelations, where it is said that Christ was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

The Unitarian interpretation in the two passages under notice is that the facts alluded to, viz., existence in the one and death in the other, were purely subjective, and existed only in the *thought of God*.

III. Your correspondent alleges that the Jews crucified Jesus, "not because he taught a new doctrine," but "because he represented himself as being Jehovah—God. Unfortunately, however, no evidence is produced to show that such was the case. In the absence of such proof I must content myself with remarking that Jesus was crucified because he claimed to be the "Christ," and that at his trial, which was the proper occasion for the allegation against him of so great a blasphemy as claiming to be God, that charge is not once preferred!

Until F. B. can prove, and I challenge him to the task, that Jesus represented himself as God, it is useless for him to ask, "If Christ is not what he represents himself to be, how can he be a good and holy man?" The question, however, would come with greater pertinacity from a Unitarian. And, as such, let me ask F. B. how Jesus can be exonerated from the charge of being a deceiver if he was Almighty God, when he told his disciples, "My Father is greater than I," and when he said to the man who addressed him as "Good master," "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." (Mark x., 18.) If Jesus was really God, it was tantamount to an emphatic disclaimer of deity when he uttered the foregoing words.

Commending to F. B. a closer study of the Scriptures, I am, &c.,

UNIT.

LETTER FROM MRS. TYERMAN.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT"
TYERMAN FUND.

The ladies and gentlemen who generously responded to the appeal made in this paper on behalf of the widow and family of the late Mr. John Tyerman, will be pleased to read the following letter of acknowledgment received from Mrs. Tyerman.

W. H. TERRY, Esq.

MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge your kind letter of the 29th, which reached me in due course, and to state that I feel exceedingly indebted to yourself and friends for the handsome amount, for which you enclosed your cheque.

Your short but valued communication impresses me all the more with the evidence, which this gift affords, of the consideration and regard entertained by the subscribers for my beloved husband, and the practical sympathy reflected on myself and children on his account.

As, but the other day, in a similar case, when overcome by my feelings of gratitude to the friends in Sydney, I am at loss to express myself with such words as can approach to duly thanking those who have been so good to us. And I would plead my poor ability to render becoming thanks for such kindness—even more than broken health, unrecovered spirits, and exacting cares,—as the hindrance to my not replying to you earlier.

Permit me through you to assure all my friends, that I recognise the great assistance I have received, not only as a tribute to Mr. Tyerman's remembered services, but also as a special help towards the educational advancement of my children so that they may be the more worthy of the father whose name they bear. As far as in me lies, this will be my remaining object in life, and I cannot but be deeply grateful to the good friends everywhere whose generous aid has sought to lighten my affliction and encouraged me to go on working, and hope for the best.

Please let me thank you personally for much kindness to the husband who has gone before me, and for the

interest and labor you have been so good as to take in my behalf.

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,
J. TYERMAN.

259 Liverpool St., East,
Sydney, April, 14th., 1881.

THE WAY-MARKS OF A PILGRIM.

(Continued.)

NEXT on our list is a thick pamphlet with a not very attractive title, as follows: "Witch Poison and the Antidote, or Rev. Dr. Baldwin's Sermon on Witchcraft, Spiritism, Hell and the Devil Re-reviewed."

This appeared in 1872. It seems that while the Pilgrim was lecturing in Troy, N. Y., in the early part of that year, a Baptist divine of the place, Rev. Dr. Baldwin, thought it important to counteract his influence by assailing Spiritualism from the pulpit in a sermon on the "Witch of Endor." This discourse was briefly reported in the daily press. Wishing to reply to the attack through the same channel, Dr. Peebles requested a loan of the clergyman's manuscript, that he might make no mistakes; but was refused. He then prepared a brief review, using such reports as were available. This was printed. Subsequently the rev. gentleman published his own discourse, with emendations and additions, materially changing its character in some respects. This, at the request of citizens in Troy, Dr. P. re-reviewed, and the whole, including the reverend Doctor's sermon, appears in this pamphlet of ill-avowed, though perhaps not unfit title. It hardly need be said that the assumptions, mistakes and weaknesses of the reverend gentleman's assault, even after emendation, were amply sufficient to afford material for an overwhelming rejoinder. And the Pilgrim did not fail to use his opportunity. The review is trenchant and scathing in manner, but courteous and fraternal in spirit.

In 1872-3 the Pilgrim made his first journey around the globe, and after his return issued, in 1874, a somewhat ponderous volume, entitled:

"AROUND THE WORLD; or, Travels in Polynesia, China, India, Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and other 'Heathen Countries.'" Of this work, containing upwards of four hundred pages, it must suffice to say that it is of absorbing interest from beginning to end. The Pilgrim's notes of the incidents of travel, of the people, customs, scenery, ethnology, antiquities, religious notions, spiritual beliefs and phenomena pertaining to the various countries through which he passed in circumnavigating the globe, are always crisp, graphic and racy. The chief fault to be found with them is their brevity. But this, doubtless, was enforced by the plan of condensing the whole into a single volume. The interest of the work, to the Spiritualist, is greatly enhanced by the notes given of a number of spirit seances held with the author's fellow-traveller, the facile medium, Dr. Dunn—on the ocean, in various lands, on the summit of an Egyptian pyramid, in old Jerusalem, and elsewhere. At these interviews, spirits claiming to have lived in the long past made interesting statements relating to their times, the changes that have since taken place, etc., etc.

While in Palestine Dr. Peebles obtained, from Jewish records and other sources, additional confirmations of his faith in the personal existence of Jesus, and held seances, as he believed, with the Evangelists and others of the New Testament times, the result of which has been to impress him with a somewhat different estimate of what is *real* Christianity, and of the propriety of using the term "Christian," from that expressed in his previous work. He says:—

"This rational position lifts the Christianity of the ages out of the slough of sect, out of the realm of the partial, and places it upon the basic foundation of the universal. Seen from this sublime attitude, all true Spiritualists are Christians."

The foregoing work was followed in the same year by another volume, entitled:—

"THE GARDARENE; or, Spirits in Prison. By J. O. Barrett and James M. Peebles." 232 pages, 12mo.

In the preparation of this work, judging from the style of its contents, our Pilgrim had but a minor share, though it doubtless reflects substantially his convictions. Its title gives little idea of its contents or bearing. It deals largely with the darker side of Spiritualism—obsessions, or manifestations of evil and undeveloped from the Spirit-world—which the authors deem it their duty to expose and warn against. It also undertakes to show how evil spirits may be redeemed and brought into divine order and beauty of life.

This is a subject confessedly delicate and difficult of treatment; nevertheless, it must be grappled with seriously by one who aspires to be a teacher or even an all-sided learner in the Philosophy of Life. There are Spiritualists (and spirits, too), who deny *in toto* the existence of evil-disposed spirits; and there are others who, admitting this to an extent, deny that such are ever permitted to interfere in the mundane sphere of life. But these denials do not dispose of the facts which now and then force themselves upon the notice of widely-experienced observers. While it is doubtless true, in accordance with spiritual laws, that a perpetual dwelling upon and morbid fear of infesting spirits tends to bring them about us and open the way for their infestations, yet it is also true that an ignoring and denial of their existence is no safeguard against them. This is to be found only in their utter sincerity of soul and purity of purpose, which afford no ground of affinity or loophole of admission to such.

The authors of this volume, with a wide range of thought and illustration, and an acute power of discrimination discuss in successive chapters the following topics:—Good and Evil, Demons and Gods, Mundane and Celestial Spheres, Obsessions, Witchcraft and Hallucination, Effects of Association, Psychology of Sentiment and Heart, "Set thine House in Order," Mediumship—Orderly and Disorderly, Shall we Worship Spirits? Hope of the Bewildered, Registry of Life. The views presented seem to the reviewer to be for the most part eminently rational and sound, and worthy of the thoughtful consideration of all sincere searchers for the truth, though perhaps, in some minor particulars, subject to future modification.

Next we have, issued in 1876:—

"THE CONFLICT BETWEEN DARWINISM AND SPIRITUALISM: or, Do all Tribes and Races Constitute one human Species? Did Man Originate from Ascidiæ, Apes, and Gorillas? Are Animals Immortal?"

This thin pamphlet of barely 34 pages, 12mo., is a vigorous protest, in the name of Spiritualism, against the materialistic and atheistic tendencies of modern thought, which the author regards as having been promoted by Darwinian studies. Small as it is, the treatise has probably aroused more discussion and provoked more and sharper criticism within the Spiritualist ranks than any other work by Mr. Peebles. It is impossible to fully represent the merits of this controversy without taking more space than is intended in this review.

Suffice it to say that Spiritualism, as understood and defined by Mr. Peebles in common with many if not most other Spiritualists, recognises and is based upon an Infinite Spirit Presence and Personality as the source and efficient cause of all intelligence, order and evolution in the universe, material and spiritual; and hence it is held that the production of each successively higher order of organic life and functions implies the impartation or effusion in some way of a higher or more complex spiritual germinal essence or element, which expresses itself in matter in accordance with the laws of generation.

On the other hand, Materialists and a certain class of Material-Spiritualists are understood to either practically ignore or totally deny the existence of any such Infinite and Intelligent Spirit, finding no place or use for such an agency in the universe, and think they discover in matter alone "the promise and potency of every sort of terrestrial life"—and of celestial life, too, if such they admit—which forms are evolved in orderly succession by the action of forces inherent in matter.

The latter theory may perhaps properly be termed Darwinianism, as being the theory held by a class at least of the disciples of Mr. Darwin. But some writers make a distinction between Darwinianism and Darwinism—the latter term applying strictly to the hypothesis put forth by Mr. Darwin himself, who appears never to have gone the length of some of his disciples. That hypothesis seems to be fully involved in the title of his principal work, viz., "The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life." He does not deny, if I rightly understand him, the existence of an Infinite Causative Spirit, but, on the contrary, plainly recognises such a being in the words:—

"Life was originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one; and whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved."

Nor does Mr. Darwin distinctly deny, so far as appears, the constant agency of spirit or spiritual forces, in conjunction with material or mundane agencies, in the process of Evolution by "Natural Selection." The grand defect of his work would seem to be a *non recognition* (through undoubted ignorance), of what the Spiritualist naturally deems the more important and really efficient factor in the mighty process of evolution—the material side of which Mr. D. has so pains-takingly traced.

In his pamphlet Dr. Peebles deals ostensibly with "Darwinianism," though he does not state that he purposely distinguishes it from "Darwinism." On the contrary, the reader is left to regard them as identical, which appears to be an oversight.

The mode of human genesis which Spiritualism, in Dr. Peebles's view suggests, in contrast to that propounded by Darwinian materialists, is thus stated:—

"The Divine Spirit, moving upon *Kosmos*—moving upon and interpenetrating the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, sublimating matter, and quickening the life-germs related to each series in the chain of being—was long preparing for the crowning work, man. And all these myriads of time, typal man was waiting to take on physical form, as the acorn waits through the winter time for conditions to start oakward. * * * The glacial period with its snows and ice had now passed away. Many of the formidable beasts of the tertiary period had disappeared in convulsions and revolutions. Suns were golden. Summers in tropical lands, leafy and perpetual, were crowned with ripened fruitage; while spiritual, magnetic, and electric forces, acting upon, refining, moulding and shaping earthly elements into forms—really *matrices*—had so adapted conditions that the divine soul-germ could become incarnated. Then transpired the divine descent of the heavenly into the earthly; and nomadic man, primitive man, commenced his mortal existence."

This semi-poetic description, while perhaps essentially correct in a general way, leaves somewhat vague a critical point. It seems to imply (though not necessarily) that the prepared matrices for the divine soul-germ were of *inorganic*, though refined matter. With our present knowledge of the conditions necessary for the incarnations of soul-germs, it is as difficult to conceive of the origin of the first man or woman in this way as by the Bible method of forming a body out of dust, and breathing into it the breath of life! The theory has then a "missing link," which it is desirable should be supplied. *Organic* matrices seem to be required.

If the reviewer mistakes not, this desideratum is fully and rationally provided for in the theory or process set forth in Mrs. King's recently published "Principles of Nature," Vol. II., pp. 25, 26, as follows:

"The first forms were incipient cells. These were multiplied over the sea-bed, until a force had been generated to cooperate with spiritual force of sufficient strength to perfect the cell, and to commence the building of more complex forms. The starting-point of the variety which was to characterise the organic kingdom was where the first germinal cell life was impressed with the characteristics of the qualities of matter and elements dis-

tributed over the surface. Life, species, of all varieties, were to correspond with the varieties of the forms of matter—the combinations of which the elements were susceptible in the progressive development of the planet. *Variation was to be effected through the law of generation; the law whereby the generating forces impress their image on resultant forms. This is the law of parentage, from the inception and birth of a world until its last form has been generated, bearing the image of the forces concerned in its creation. Accretion of cells by a plan or after a pattern which was not in the material world is the mystery of formation which finds its only solution in the foregoing principle; viz., that spirit impels formation after a pattern within it so nearly allied to that with which it cooperates for generation that it is possible for the two to coincide in one resultant form. This form will be different in specific characteristics from the material progenitor, but will bear the stronger impress of the spiritual or positive force."*

This pregnant passage, particularly in the statements I have italicized, is believed to furnish the long-sought key to the whole mystery of the origin of life and the evolution of varieties, species and races on this planet—fully recognizing the action of intelligent spiritual forces at every step, working to a purposed end.

On the whole, it would appear that Dr. Peebles, though open to criticism on some minor points, was plainly right in regarding Darwinianism (in its materialistic phase) as opposed to a true Spiritual Philosophy; while Darwinism, strictly defined, in postulating a creative miracle at the outset, and in recognising none but material agencies thereafter, has failed to satisfy acute thinkers on either side.

(Concluded in our next.)

DR. BEARD AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

THE celebrated Dr. Beard, who has so strenuously opposed the belief in Clairvoyance and Spiritualism, has been compelled to change his front with regard to the former, and, if he only has the courage to face the latter in the same way, he may live to correct the errors of his past opinion and undo the unsound work he has been engaged in. Dr. E. D. Babbitt, writing from New York to the Religio Philosophical Journal, says, in reference to this matter:

"Dr. George M. Beard has been so positive in all his writings and speeches in stating that there can be no such thing as clairvoyance, no one human being having a gift which all human beings have not, but now a gentle lady has gone and flouted him, just as Mrs. Simpson defeated the world famed magician, Hermann in Chicago, by means of her spiritual manifestations. This lady is Mrs. Julia Carpenter, the wife of the famous psychologist, for she would insist in trampling all of Dr. Beard's theories under foot by actually seeing through opaque substances, in spite of all his expertness, and he gave it up. Then he told some of his scientific friends and two prominent medical men of New York, Drs. Dana and Morton, thinking that he must be deluded, were brought to Mrs. Carpenter and they too were put *hors du combat*. They were filled with delight and wonder, and had to admit the whole matter. Now then they are almost in the very vestibule of Spiritualism and can almost see into the golden city."

The Dunedin correspondent of the *Mataura Ensign* writes as follows:—

"A progressive Lyceum for children is to be established here, and promises to be a success. Already great steps have been taken in the matter by Mr. R. Stout and others, and, in a short time, we should see the scheme in full working order. Music is to be one of the items; and in other subjects, a great number of ladies and gentlemen have promised to instruct. The idea is a happy one indeed, and will do a great deal of good for children, as with such a mode of instruction they become more filled with interest than they would otherwise." [News has since arrived of the successful starting of the above.—Ed. H. L.]

MESSAGE DEPARTMENT.

[THE following Messages are given through the organization of Mr. George Spriggs, by invisible intelligences professing to be the Spirits of human beings who formerly inhabited a physical body in this world. They come spontaneously whilst the Medium is in an abnormal state called a "Trance," and are taken down as spoken by an amanuensis. They are published, not alone for their intrinsic interest, but in the hope that some of them will attract the attention of those to whom they are addressed.]

MY DEAR MR. CARSON,—You will not be surprised at my coming to you after my departure, as I know you understand, and have had experience in this direction. If I had made my appearance to those who were strangers to the philosophy of Spirit-life, I should not be understood. I come here this evening in the spiritual condition; although not visible to you, still I am as real, and my identity is as active as ever. Death does not rob us of the consciousness of ideas, but, speaking from experience, it illuminates the mind and makes it more subject to impressions from different sources. Now, in earth-life I could not for the life of me comprehend Spiritualism. I did not exactly believe you were fools, and I could not accept the Spiritual hypothesis. It appears to me that our early training has a great deal of influence on us, whether we reject or receive the Spiritual impressions. Now, Mr. Carson, you know well the early colonists were not subject to many impressions; neither did they have the requirements around them to make them subject to them. You remember the gold rush? It was enough for a man to preserve the equilibrium of his brain; and many other excitements, such as the Prince Alfred affair. Now, going on to Spiritual experience—I do not find things here as I expected, and some are quite opposed to what I thought. This world is so natural and real that, were you transported here, and did not know that you had left the body, you would think that you had found a more beautiful island than Australia. I shall be very pleased to talk to you again. I shall know more, and also be able to control the atoms I have managed in giving this message. Farewell!

ROBERT KERR.

6th January, 1891.

(FROM THE SAME.)

Last time I spoke to you more of earthly things. On my entrance into Spirit-life my mind seemed at once to become illumined. Seeing everything around me so natural and beautiful, I exclaimed, "My God! Is this Heaven?" The atmosphere appeared to be laden with welcome sounds that set my whole frame in vibration, and returned the same, with grateful thanks to the Great Father of All. Entering into Spirit-life, I soon became acquainted with the old friends. How easy it was to recognise each other, although this beautiful world had acted like magic upon their frame, and had invigorated them to youth and health, and made them appear like the fabled Adonis. My heart seemed to be full of love and sympathy with the beautiful. When I got nearer to the friends, I found our old friend, C*****h, located in a beautiful home, surrounded by trees and flowers. He bade me welcome, and soon commenced to talk of old affairs, which had interested us both in earlier times. Then he showed me around his home, and I was quite delighted with it. I at once asked him if I was not going to have a home as well? The reply was: "You have a home, prepared for you by one whose love has ever been dear to you." He then took me in, and showed me the beautiful things. I thought, "This can hardly be the Heaven that is spoken of, because it seems so real and natural;" but my friend informed me that there were greater things in store for me. Then my mind seemed to wander back to earth, and things connected with it. It brought a kind of dulness over me, and seemed to cloud my aspirations for a time. This I could not understand, but I was informed that these things I should soon become acquainted with. I asked my friend to take me to my

home, when I found myself travelling on in space. My soul seemed enlivened with divine music, and the nearer I approached the more I felt the warm rays of love penetrate my heart; and soon I arrived near to the one that I loved, and there beheld my home in perfect grace and beauty. It indeed was my ideal of a home. After friendly congratulations, I was bound to acknowledge that this was a superior home and Heaven to what I was led to believe in. I soon became acquainted with others, and I found we can be as free to roam, and to seek after the beautiful to enlighten our minds as, in a manner of speaking, the birds of the air. Grace, love, and beauty, seem to adorn the homes of Spirit-life, and lift us to a higher and a more perfect ideal of our own beings, and the beings that are in advance of us. I at times regret that I did not give more thought to this subject before, as I find it of immense importance to everyone to obtain a true chart to their homes hereafter. I shall be with you again, but for the present, farewell.

ROBERT KERR.

January 13th, 1891.

(FROM THE SAME.)

DEAR FRIEND,—I have been waiting anxiously to finish my communication. The past has been to me a pleasure, to think that my thoughts can still be echoed into the ears of my old friends. I need hardly tell you, Mr. Carson, that the Spirit-life is a life of reality. It is not all a world of flowers, strewn with roses, but to me it is a world of reality, and the work which I have to do may surprise you. The great important work that I had to do on my first entering into Spirit-life was to get a strong, healthy physical frame; then came the mental work in getting new ideas, which gave me fresh insight into these truths. At first sight my mind seemed to *repel these truths, until they became a part of one's self.*

In answer to a question as to the nature of his home, the control said:—My home is surrounded by fine trees and flowers, which take me some time to attend to. This need not be a laborious work, but only mental, the mind developing in form and substance. This development going brings us increased knowledge. We are able to find that we have great and godlike powers. Perhaps what I have stated is not very clear, but what I mean is this. You have an ideal of a home, and of trees, flowers, and all the surroundings of a home. In Spirit-life you must develop the mental powers, and not the physical. These homes are produced by your own inherent powers. You will see that there is always something to occupy the mind. No sooner do you get one idea in form, which, for the time being, you may think perfect, than you will see something higher and grander. The consequence is, there is always mental work; no stagnation, but ever going on, producing grander and more beautiful ideas. Thus is progression a stern reality to one's soul, and in all its surroundings in Spirit-life. Then comes the task to teach others who are not in the same highly-favored condition as one's self, and with some it is a difficult task. Thus, you will see that Spirit-life is a life of activity, and more a life of reality than earth-life, because the conditions are so plastic that you are able to develop your own ideas, and bring them into form before you.

I need hardly tell you of the difficulties you have in earth-life to contend with, and to live according to your own ideal and standard of truth. In the Spirit-life we find the difficulties removed, but there is a gracious feeling towards those in earth-life, and some spirits spend much time in trying to impress their own relatives; while others take a more universal standard, and produce educational and scientific teachings for the masses in Spirit-life; others, again, (more artistic) in the production of beautiful pictures, and in other beautiful arts.

Here we have to co-operate with each other in a similar manner to earth. The difference is, we help each other out of pure love, and we are not obliged to meet those of antagonistic minds, but are drawn together into minds in accordance with our own. Thus the great principles of self-development and progression go on, leading you to a higher ideal of the great, the true, and the beautiful; carrying the mind away from earth and

its surroundings, removing all imperfections, and making ourselves fit and noble subjects to stand in the presence of our Infinite Father, God.

When I contemplate this wonderful road to happiness I feel lost in adoration to God, our Father. Thus, you see, the Spirit-life is a life of activity, and no one need fear about coming here. I will now draw my long epistle to a close. Good morning.

ROBERT KERR.

March 17th, 1881.

Good Morning.—I have been informed that by coming here I could send a message to my son. My son's name is James Garth, Port Cygnet, Tasmania. I should like him to know that we are happy in the spirit world. We often think and talk about him, and wish that he would open the way for us to communicate. We feel as anxious as ever about him and all the friends. We cannot say more this time, but may God bless you. From father and mother in spirit life.

JAMES & MARY GARTH.

I have been waiting this morning to send a few words to my wife. It is very pleasing to me to find I am able to communicate. You are no doubt aware of the training in earth life. They taught us to believe that at death we went to a country from whence no traveller returned. But I find that a great deal of our training in earth-life is misleading, and more especially about spiritual matters. Being brought up strictly in the belief of Jesus and the Atonement, you can readily realise my position when I arrived in spirit life. The one dominant idea was Jesus in Heaven, my own salvation and happiness, but arriving in spirit life I could not realise it as a heaven, neither as a hell, but it seemed a middle place for me, like a school to prepare me for the greater truths in spirit life. I have often had a strong desire to return to earth, but could not find suitable conditions. I am delighted with my success. Kindly tell my wife that I am enjoying the spirit life, and am gaining knowledge that will make me happier and wiser. I am often with her in her lonely moments, trying to impress my presence upon her, and at times I know she can realise that I am near her. My wife's name is Jane Martin, Raglan Street, Creswick. I will bid you farewell, and thank you for this opportunity.

WILLIAM MARTIN.

(a Police Constable.)

Good morning, dear brother and fellow-worker.—I congratulate you on your noble and disinterested work. It is to us a source of great pleasure to be able to assist the friends in coming back to give their messages to their relations. We would advise you to keep the circle for the messages as select as you possibly can, so that the brain-waves may not interfere with the vibrating sounds from the spirit friends. There are times when waves of force emanating from the brain repel the sounds of the spirit voice, and they become unintelligible and contradictory; but when the minds work together in unison, then the brain waves assist the spirit voice, and help the message to have a clearer stamp of identity upon it. You will be required to keep your mind as passive as possible, and as calm as circumstances will allow, for you have entered on a work in which you must not expect the ground to be strewn with roses without thorns, but by perseverance, and by the numbers continually coming back, it will be a means of assisting others, and preparing them for the reception of greater truths. At these sittings never try to force any message, but let them come spontaneously. You will see the wisdom of this by experience. I take a deep interest in the circle, as I have always done, and am very pleased you have taken the place of our very dear friend and brother worker, Mr. Lewis. Give our kind greetings to him, and all the friends. I shall continually be with you.—Farewell. From one of the guides of the circle.

"LIGHT"

EYES OPENED.

A GENTLEMAN writing from Adelaide for some Spiritualistic literature, prefaces his order with the following, which we publish as an illustration, amongst the many, of the beneficent mental and moral influence of Spiritualism:—

SIR,—It is nearly twelve months since I first heard of Spiritualism, and you can judge how I ridiculed such a belief when I tell you I was a pious Church of England man, and never dreamt for a moment that anything could upset my favorite belief; but, thanks to a friend of mine (Mr. Richmond, formerly of Melbourne), I have had my eyes opened to what I consider the grandest gift God has given us in this age. And the very weapon I used against Spiritualism was the one that caused me first to become an investigator, for I used to say to my friend:—"Show me where communing with spirits is taught in the Bible, and then I may listen to you?" How easily this was done you can judge, as in less than a week I was sitting in a circle; and for the past six months, truly, I have been living in a new heaven, and on a new earth; and, if there is one thing more than another that makes me 'unhappy,' it is because it is not more universally practised. If the people in Adelaide understood what Spiritualism really was, I am sure it would in a very short time become Catholic. This can only be done, in my opinion, by some of your speakers coming 'over and helping us.' And I trust, Sir, should such an opportunity offer, you will not forget us in this City of Churches.

GEO. K. A.

AN UNEASY GHOST.

(BY BIRJ LALL, ESQ.)

As I have read many interesting accounts of spiritual manifestations in your journal, I feel inclined to acquaint your readers with a singular experience of this nature.

I have felt very great interest in the phenomena of spirit-manifestations from the early days of my life, and have consequently been making numerous enquiries from trustworthy sources. Some years ago there lived at Lahore an old Pandit of a very high position, well versed in Sanskrit and acquainted with the English language also. He held a very important position in Maharaja Runjeet Singh's Durbar, and had good opportunities of being associated with every European officer. He had a very exalted mind and was much above the superstition by which the common Hindoo Pandits are generally suspected to have been influenced. I had the honor of being well acquainted with this Pandit, and on more than one occasion I enquired of him of the truth of spiritual phenomena, telling that I would not believe anything but what might be the result of his personal experiences. He related to me the following story, which I write *verbatim*.

"Many years ago," said he, "I knew a Khutree resident of Lahore who often used to come to me, and attended regularly at *kutha* reading at my temple every evening. This man was well known for his devotion, and was consequently called Bhagat. After a few years, this Bhagat died, and his departed spirit began to manifest itself through his living younger brother, whom he used as 'medium.' This spirit manifested himself very often, and used to tell strange things through his medium. He even sometimes predicted future events, which afterwards came to pass exactly as he had predicted. The sign of the manifestation was that the medium used to become senseless suddenly, and after one or two minutes, while the living body of the medium appeared quite senseless, the spirit used to talk through the vocal organs of the medium. In the course of time the familiarity of the spirit became so great with the medium that the spirit used to come whenever the medium would merely recall him to mind. The news spread abroad, and I was at last informed of it. I could not believe the story at first, and sent for the medium, viz., the younger brother of the deceased man. I enquired of him whether the story I had heard was true, and he answered in the

affirmative. I asked him to show me the phenomena; whereupon he fixed his mind upon the spirit and immediately fell senseless on the ground. After a minute the spirit addressed me thus,—"Good morning, Punditjee; I now see you after a long time. I used to come to your temple to hear *kutha*. Now tell me what you wish to ask me and why you have called me." I was quite astonished to hear this speech of the supposed spirit, and told him that before I asked my questions he should tell me through what had *Karma* he had become a ghost, or an earth bound soul. The spirit replied,—"Why do you ask this, Punditjee? This has no connection with your object. I am happy in this state also, and even now I spend much of my time in devotion, as I used to do when living on earth with the material body." I then asked him some questions as to the future fate of some principal men then residing at Lahore, and the spirit predicted their destinies exactly as it came to pass thirty months afterwards. Sometime after the spirit obliged his brother, the medium, to go to Gya and perform his shradha; and after this was done, the spirit neither spoke nor appeared any more."

Whatever view your readers may take with respect to this fact, I regard its authenticating evidence so strong that I am not prepared to deny it, though I am a great sceptic about these things.—*Theosophist*.

Lahore, November, 11th., 1880.

WHO IS A SPIRITUALIST?

By C. W. ROHNER, M.D. (CHILTERN.)

RECOGNISING, as I do, the absolute necessity there is of establishing the external phenomena of modern, and, for that matter, of all historical Spiritualism on a sound scientific basis; appreciating to the full extent the high value of the labours of such men as Crookes, Wallace, and Zollner; men who have so faithfully and so manfully laboured in the vineyard of Spiritualism, with the hot sun of vulgar scorn and silly popular derision over their heads; well aware of all these preliminary requirements, I still hold that, after all these important scientific demands and pre-requisites have been fulfilled and accomplished, only a very small portion of the task, the real task, of Spiritualism will have been performed. What would be the use of Astronomy to us, with all its grand Keplerian laws, and its still grander Newtonian *principia*, or celestial principles of mechanics, if there was no practical application of their science possible; if Astronomy did not show us what position we occupy physically in God's universe; if it did not help us to go through our work rationally, and in obedience to eternal and rational laws, whilst we are residents, as a kind of undeveloped human butterflies, on this magnificently little wandering-star of ours? Because Astronomy does so help us to go on with our terrestrial work do we value Astronomy, but not for its perfect geometry or mathematics, which pleases and gratifies, perhaps, the pride of human intellect, but leaves the higher cravings of the human heart unsatisfied, which always pushes all merely intellectual pursuits into the narrow corner of the question: *Cui bono?* If Astronomy had simply told us that its work was done when it had helped a poor ship captain to calculate every noon his longitude and latitude, we should have been dissatisfied with this limited scope of so unlimited a science. Man wanted that scientific Astronomy should enable him to rise on its magic Faust-mantle to other heights in the heavens; and Astronomy, *volens volens*, had to accede to this peremptory request, and is now in a fair way of examining the claims which the strange idea of a "plurality of worlds" makes both upon our intellects and our emotions. Although John Stuart Mill told the world that it would have to be for ever satisfied with a mere knowledge of phenomena, and that it was futile to attempt to look behind the screen of the law of universal gravitation, the world would not take his word for it, as Newton himself already was not satisfied with his own ultimate views of gravitation, looking, as he did, for a more advanced and ulterior cause, in the assumption of a still hazier universal magnetic ether, which united in a common magnetic dance the innumerable spheres of

infinite space. Thus, also, when Auguste Comte announced to the world in his "Positive Philosophy," in a most positive manner, that man's duty was to confine himself to this little world alone, and that he had nothing to expect from any other worlds around him in space, the world did not accept his too positive *dictum*; and, not long after Comte, the combined genius of Bunsen and Kirchhoff demonstrated, in their discovery of spectrum analysis, that we terrestrials are closely related with other planets, other suns, other stars, nay, even with nebulae and comets, which an astro-chemistry now assures us to be made of the same stuff, more or less, as our earth. Having forced this admission of material identity, or close similarity, of all globes in space from a reluctant and hesitating material science, the next step to be taken was to make good the further claims of the material and simple logical inferences that, if the material basis of the bodies in space is identical with or similar to that of our earth, why should it not be possible to demonstrate that, also, a still higher, a spiritual relationship, may exist between the inhabitants of our globe and those of the orbs in the universal heavens. To a great extent this task has already been performed, and our generation talks already as glibly and fluently about a plurality of worlds, and a plurality of existences, as if such men as Mill and Comte had never lived and reasoned on these, to them, utterly impracticable and inscrutable subjects, themselves utterly forgetful of the grandly profound words of Arago, that, "to the restless and untiring mind of man nothing is either inscrutable or impossible."

Scientific Astronomy, then, having furnished us with this valuable illustration, through its own historical career of development, that all science, in order to be of value to man, must make itself subservient, not only to man's intellectual, but also to his emotional wants; must, in fact, link him together with the infinite chains of all the worlds outside him, and thus open a prospect for him of an eternal and interminable relationship with the All, it naturally becomes the duty of a scientific Spiritualism, an *à-fortiori* duty, after having satisfied the intellect of man with regard to the reality of the Spiritual phenomena, to proceed without delay and hesitation to the far higher task of showing to man impressively that the facts of a Spiritual science are only useful in so far as they serve as a step in the ladder which allows humanity to rise from its present low level of terrestrial existence to still higher spheres in the unfathomable depths of space, thereby securing to the human spirit that exalted privilege which so vehemently and so universally expresses itself in the inextinguishable desire and constant longing, for eternal progression.

Having thus defined the ground on which scientific Spiritualism rests, in common with all the rest of the human sciences, and having shown that all facts of all sciences, and especially the facts of our Spiritual science meet ultimately in one point, converging into the focus of an absolute logical necessity of universal development, evolution, and progression; or, of what is called spirit, universal spirit, from the spirit of the monad to the spirit of the most exalted divine intelligences, I shall reserve for future contributions the consideration and answer to the now so often-asked question:—"Who is a Spiritualist?"

The Platonist is the title of a substantial 16 page journal published at St. Louis, the first number of which reached us by the last American mail. As its name would imply it is devoted to a presentation of the platonic philosophy and the number before us contains, besides several original articles, translations from Plato's works, also one from Plotinus. The paper will be found both useful and interesting to the philosophic thinker.

We commend to the notice of those who have access to the *Theosophist* the lecture on "India, Past, Present and Future," by Col. H. S. Olcott, which appears in the March number of that journal. Also an article on the "Heaven of Theosophy," in the same issue. A copy of the *Theosophist* is filed in the library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, 84 Russell Street.

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

The *Victorian Banner*, a new aspirant to public patronage, professes to be "a weekly journal of religion and politics," and presents itself under the editorship of the Rev. Dr. Gilchrist.

Says the *Banner*, "we are undenominational, advocating no ism but Protestantism. We shall know no party in the State except the party of Righteousness, Enlightenment and Progress. We shall be plain spoken calling things by their right names and commenting on the sayings and doings of public men and of public bodies in a way that will leave our readers no room to doubt our meaning."

If our contemporary adheres to this programme, it should certainly command the support of candid minds and of the many who view with feelings akin to disgust the one-sidedness, the truckling to authority or to party, and the propensity to descend to the *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, which too often characterises the Colonial press.

As the editor of the *Banner* is a minister of the Presbyterian Church, it is a little surprising to find in the first two issues a skit, not altogether wanting in wit and humour, on the recent proceedings of the Presbyterian Assembly in the case of the Rev. Charles Strong. Under fictitious, but easily recognised, names, the principal actors in this latest heresy-drama are amusingly depicted.

In the *National Reformer* (London) the editor states that "Mr. James Holmes, of Leicester, who came over from Wesleyanism to Secularism, now announces that he has gone over to Spiritualism." Mr. Holmes was not long since a popular and energetic worker in the cause of Secularism, and, if I rightly remember, more than once vehemently attacked the system which he has since espoused.

It is well-known that Dr. George Serton, whose labours on behalf of Spiritualism are highly esteemed, was originally a prominent Secularist.

In another issue of his journal, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh acknowledges to a correspondent that he has not read Alfred Wallace's book on Spiritualism. Now, I have a great admiration for Mr. Bradlaugh in many respects, but I cannot help thinking that, before opposing Spiritualism as he has done and is still doing, he should certainly have acquainted himself with one of the ablest works ever written in its defence, and particularly a work by so eminent a man as Professor Wallace.

In these times, when it is so much the custom to sound the praises of everything *our own* at the expense of the *foreign article*, it is refreshing to find in an official publication like the catalogue of the Melbourne International Exhibition, such a paragraph as the following in the "Introduction to Turkey":—"The Koran, which abounds with moral precepts, and the Multeka—a code formed of the supposed sayings and opinions of Mahomet, and of the sentences and decisions of his immediate successors—encourage public education."

Readers of the Sydney *Free Thought*, now unfortunately defunct, may remember an article contributed by Mr. R. Allen in which he spoke of the "Koran of the Moslem with its borrowed and depraved ethics," and quoted Robert Southey as saying,—"There is nothing in the Koran which affects the feelings, nothing which elevates the imagination, nothing which enlightens the understanding, nothing which ameliorates the heart." Luckily Mr. Allen's statements were not allowed to pass unopposed, and a subsequent writer drew that gentleman's attention to the opinion of Mohler, one of the most candid of critics, to the effect that—"We can recognise in the Koran an original piety, an affecting devotion, and an entirely personal religious poetry which cannot by any means be forced or artificial." The Rev. J. Page Hopps, in his interesting discourse on "The Gospel according to Mahomet," remarks, "I find the purest morality commanded. I find the strictest justice enforced. I find the sternest front against all evil of every sort. And I find this not in one or two places only, but heaped up in well nigh every page; so that next to the New

Testament, it is to me the purest, manliest, book I know." And Professor Strong, of this city, in a lecture delivered in July, 1878, declared that "Islamism was a bright and pure religion which had been extremely effective in reducing barbarous nations to a less savage state, and was now, for good or evil, spreading very widely, and civilising to an appreciable extent the vast continent of Africa, from its coast right to the interior."

THE WORK OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

By the last Suez mail we are in receipt of a photograph of the Theosophical Society's Buddhist School at Point de Galle, where a reform in the right direction was initiated and is now in active operation, viz., the Redemption from blind Christianity to rational Buddhism of the Cinghalese "rising generation." On account of European influence in Ceylon the religious teaching of the youth in the principal cities had, until recently, been almost monopolised by the Missionaries of the Catholic and Protestant Christian Churches, but since the revival of Buddhism, occasioned by the visit of the Theosophical embassy last year, four schools have been started in connexion with the Society's branches in Ceylon, the "Galle" one numbering about 400 scholars.

Buddhism is a pure Theism combined with the highest morality, a religion calculated to expand the higher faculties of the mind, and exempt from the soul binding dogmas with which the Christian system is weighted.

The picture contains portraits of about 250 of the scholars, of good physique and having fine intelligent faces, it may be seen at the office of this paper. Annexed is the letter from our friend and brother, D. K. Mavalankar, Esq., which accompanied it.

W. H. TERRY, Esq., F.R.S.
Melbourne, Australia.

My dear Sir, and Brother,—I am to inform you that I have sent you by this mail a copy of the photograph of "The Theosophical Society's Buddhist School for boys at Point de Galle, Ceylon." You and the readers of your valuable paper may differ from us a little in our views and policy, but we still feel sure that we are both in thorough accord with respect to the disadvantage of Christianizing the "Heathen." Kindly therefore accept the accompanying photograph of about half the pupils of one of the six schools already established in Ceylon by our Society. It is not too much for us, we believe, to hope that you will find in it "proof palpable" that we are not only talking but working as well in Asia, and that while a few merely preach, the Theosophical Society teaches Buddhism against Christianity. These boys and their teachers are Buddhist Singhalese of the pure blood and three fourths of the pupils were until very recently being educated by the Christian Missionaries.

With best wishes and kind regards,

I am, my dear Sir, and Brother,
Fraternally yours,

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.

March, 25th., 1881. Joint Recording Secretary.

A LETTER has been received from Mr. Thomas Walker, offering to visit Melbourne and lecture for the Victorian Association of Spiritualists on very liberal terms. The consideration of it is necessarily deferred until after the arrival of the next Californian mail, by which definite news of the movements of Dr. Peebles and Professor Denton is expected.

WE KNOW WELL.

Oh! how sad to see Pilgrims on life's rocky road
Grown feeble with old age and care,
Trav'ling down hill to the valley of death
Quite unconscious of what they'll find there—
For if asked what their hope when death takes them
away,
With a sigh and a shake of the head they would say
They cannot tell.
Throughout their long lives they have been tempest
tossed
With Factions, Sects, Schisms and Creeds,
But, having discarded Theological trash,

They know not where destiny leads—
For if asked what's their hope when death takes
them away,
With a sigh and a shake of the head they would say
They cannot tell.

The present Dogmatic Traditional dross,
Which daily from pulpit is hurled
Quite fails to supply the spiritual need
Of its bearers, all over the world—
For if asked what's their hope when death takes
them away,
With a sigh and a shake of the head they would say
They cannot tell.

But oh! what a glorious light it had been
To their path, had they known from their youth
That, what we call death, is new birth to a life
Of progression in wisdom and truth—
Then if asked what's their hope when death takes
them away,
From their heart, with a smile, in all truth they can
say—
We know well.

This glorious Truth full flowing and free
Is proclaimed by the voice of the dead.
Bold searchers of Truth all over the world,
Have heard what the spirits have said—
And if asked what's their hope when death takes
them away,
From their heart with a smile in all truth they can
say,
We know well.

It's free unto all, if they will but conform
To conditions essential to gain,
A truthful account of our beautiful home,
When we're free from this body of pain—
Then if asked what's our hope when death takes us
away,
From our heart, with a smile, in all truth we can say
We know well.

W. C. SMITH.

Barnawartha, April, 3rd., 1881.

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF SPIRITUALISM.

In a recent review we commented upon the general improvement in the quality of Spiritualistic literature, and the increasing adaptability to the requirements of the times of the latest additions to it. The book now before us is an admirable illustration of our remarks. Replete with scientific evidences of the phenomena on which Spiritualism rests, supported by the direct and concise testimony of men of such repute in literary and scientific attainments as to render their evidence irrefragable, the first section of the book forms a basis, firm as a rock, upon which the author, with consummate ability, proceeds to erect the higher mental phenomena, selecting from a profusion of materials the most perfect and symmetrical for his purpose. Ever and anon, in the course of his work, he meets the obstruction; set up by such men as Youmans, Carpenter, Wundt, and Tyndall, and it is really admirable to observe the ease and precision with which he removes the foundations of their various postulates until they topple to the ground. In this connection his letter to Professor Wundt is a masterpiece. In the course of a review of the many unscientific objections to Spiritualism occurs the following excellent passage, which cannot be too prominently brought under the notice of professing Christians:—

"The cause of the unbelief in what is taught in systems of theology, sectarian creeds, and historical assertions, on the subject of immortality, is that the advanced intellect of the age lacks a scientific basis for a full, emerging conviction as to spiritual realities. It is idle to say that men ought to infer from their own natures that they have souls. They still lend too ready an ear on this point to the confident contradictions of an arrogant Materialism, sporting the credentials of science.

But here are the facts of Spiritualism, forcing upon those who will fairly investigate them, the great conviction that spiritual agency can be objectively proved. What folly is it, then, in the friends of religion to reject the aid presented, because there may be much that still seems perplexing, incongruous, and even offensive in the development."

Shortly following this comes the question—"Is Spiritual science opposed to religion?"—and, accepting Coleridge's definition (*i.e.*, "A true religion must consist of ideas and facts both; not of ideas alone without facts for then it would be mere philosophy; nor of facts alone without ideas of which these facts are the symbols, or out of which they arise, or upon which they are grounded, for then it would be mere history." He says:—

"Spiritualism fulfils those requirements. Its facts, rightly construed, hold out the loftiest inducements to a noble, beneficent life. It proclaims to us that we think and do in the sight of a host of witnesses; it recognises the supremacy of law, physical, moral, and spiritual; it looks for no relief from the penalties of sin through the mystical sufferings of another; it teaches no vicarious advantage. It illustrates the efficacy of prayer, but teaches that the power of finite spirits is limited, and that the Divine Benignity is exercised in harmony with laws which it is for us to study and obey. It proves that as we sow we reap, and that man is preparing his future condition while here, by his ruling thoughts, desires, and acts, and is thus his own punisher, his own rewarder. Thus the religion prompted by the facts of Spiritualism cannot differ largely in any essential point from that of primitive Christianity.

Having shewn that Spiritualism, *per se*, is not hostile to religion, he proceeds to deprecate that bastard Spiritualism which is the outcome of blind faith and increasing credulity. Rightly studied, he affirms, Spiritualism is the strongest safeguard against superstition; but, in its inchoate state, it is for clear heads, patient hearts, and tranquil temperaments to profit by.

We do not know of one book amongst the literature of Spiritualism which contains in the same compass so much sound evidence and logical argument as this last great work of one of its most rational and consistent advocates, whose genius has woven together the solid material it contains into so shapely and harmonious a form as to make it intelligible and interesting to the ordinary reader. We have said but little; but, we think, enough to recommend it to our readers. To review it in its various parts would take a small volume therefore we refer those interested to the book itself to read, and circulate far and wide.

THE MELBOURNE SPIRITUALISTIC SOCIETY.

THE second half-yearly meeting of the above Society was held at the Temperance Hall, Melbourne, on Thursday evening, April 7th, 1881.—Mr. J. Vevers in the chair. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Rice's notice of motion that the committee be reduced from ten to five was carried.

The balance-sheet, as read by the Secretary, was adopted, showing the half-yearly receipts £47 15s; expenditure £38 6s. 9d.; assets, £29 8s. 3d.; liabilities, nil.

The election of officers for the ensuing six months took place with the following results:—President, Mr. J. Vevers; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. Milligan and Blencowe; Treasurer, Mr. J. Vevers; Secretary, A. J. Hall; Committee, Messrs. Lees, Edwards, Hood, Evans, and Osborne. Messrs. Whitelaw and Devine were elected Auditors for twelve months.

The Society have taken rooms at 87 Little Collins-street East, which will be opened on Wednesday, May 4th, at eight p.m., by a members' meeting.

After the transaction of general business, the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

ALFRED J. HALL,

Hon. Sec., M. S. S.

A NEW TUNNEL TO THE SPIRIT WORLD.

(FROM THE *Medium and Daybreak*.)

The promoters of genuine physical phenomena, and the "Phenomenalists," are two very distinct classes of persons. The latter class are always on the hunt for wonders with which they are never satisfied, having their mouths full of doubts as to whether the facts are yet established, and regarding Spiritualism, as solely the means of giving satisfaction or amusement to such persons as themselves. These are the "dry rot" of Spiritualism: discrediting mediums, suggesting baits to catch presumed impostors, and demoralising all down to their own imbecile level.

The developer of physical phenomena is a scientific experimenter who uses the spirit circle as his laboratory, and enriches human experience with that which will be the grandest scientific facts of that future, which will be wise enough to appreciate them in their true light, and have intellect enough to understand them. Such a man as our friend Mr. W. Armstrong of Newcastle, has done much to bring the true claims of Mediumship to the front, and pity it is that the developed medium should become the plaything or victim of the phenomenalists.

No doubt, to some grave minds, it looks very much like a superabundance of effort to keep on year after year striving to increase the power of the spirit world over matter. "Having seen the manifestations once I am satisfied; let us have something spiritual," say some critics of other person's acts. These are something like a man who after seeing a steam engine, and having satisfied his curiosity therewith, would dispense with any other attempts at mechanical improvement. The genuine engineer goes on with his experiments, in due course gives us a new machine, or an altogether unprecedented motive power. The entrance to the Channel Tunnel is not much of a sight to look at, nor will it improve much, as a mere show, as the work of piercing under the Channel goes on. The practical surmounter of the difficulty is not content with merely looking at the yawning shaft, with his hands in his pockets, but he sets to work, and after years of boring into the bowels of the earth he comes to daylight on the French coast, and the locomotive speedily follows him dragging the train crowded with happy passengers—happy in that no raging sea longer divides our "tight little Island" from the teeming continent of Europe. The "Phenomenalist," who out of curiosity looks at the works, shrugs his shoulders, turns away and says, "It will never be done," is the most dangerous enemy of the enterprise. Far different is it with the enthusiastic miner who sticks to his dangerous and apparently hopeless task: still toiling in darkness, but daily gaining a few inches more progress towards the other side. He perseveres, he succeeds, he blesses the millions that follow him, his name is immortalised in his works, and the phenomenalistic critic and detractor of his enterprise is forgotten: and serve him right too.

What is all this labouring in the physical circle: developing new mediums, attaining to more demonstrative phenomena, and giving the spirits greater scope to manifest, but the piercing of a tunnel under the tumultuous and stormy channel that divides those in the spirit state from us in the earth life. Inch by inch the work goes on. First we have table movements—the telegraph at work; then, objects transported through matter—a pneumatic tube laid down between two states. Thirdly, come the voices—we are within speaking distance, but cannot yet see those on the other side face to face. Then we have materialised hands—a little opening is made through the rocky strata through which a hand may be passed. A face is next seen, but it is so dimly visible because of the defective light of the subterranean lamps, and the dust and dirt of the "Works," that it cannot be recognised. By and by all this improves; friends are occasionally seen, a passage to the other side has been effected; but it is only a footway passable under favourable circumstances when the waters and the force of air currents will permit.

This is an illustration of the present conditions of spirit communion through physical phenomena.

Wait a little, work on without flagging; soon the

tunnel will be made more commodious. It will be drained, ventilated, lighted. The rails will be laid down, and no longer will the din and discomfort of the present imperfect conditions of the "Works" annoy and disappoint us, but the locomotive will speedily whiff passengers from side to side, and all will reap the fruits of the well directed labours of men and women, who in their day, when the tunnel was first opened out, were not appreciated, because not understood.

Go on then brave pioneers with the development of more physical mediums, and the improvements of the grand phenomena of materialisation; but do not open the "Works" to conceited sightseers with unbridled tongues. Put up a board at the entrance: "No admittance except on business," and rigidly enforce the rule. Nay, more than this, have another placard posted at the gate: "Trespassers will be prosecuted." Let no one down the shaft or up to the breast of the mine unless they be engineers or competent workmen. Then we may expect to see success in the development of spiritual phenomena, and then there will be no longer any doubt as to whether spirits do communicate.

We hope the moral of our little parable will be abundantly clear. Phenomenal mediumship should be no longer made a show of, but be cultivated to extend true knowledge and improve the means of spirit communication.

Let us remember that we spiritualists of to-day are not the passengers of the Tunnel to the spirit world. We are only "Navvies" labouring in darkness and dirt to pierce a rude opening in the rocky strata. Let us then attend to our work—bore away diligently, and not place ourselves above our station by making an exhibition of our paltry beginning to serve our own private purposes. We must remember that the real passengers by the new route are to come after us; they are our own heels pressing forward, and who knows how many train loads may greet us from the other side before the close of 1881.

The passage is not altogether new. Jesus came by it when he appeared amongst his disciples in the resurrection body. Perhaps some modern engineers are boring in the wrong direction. Would it not be wise to send out a surveying party to rectify our bearings?

CHILDREN.

(A SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.)

BRIEF as life on this planet may appear, it is in most cases sufficiently long for the purposes intended; that is to say, where men and women outlive the meridian of their days. That so many should perish in infancy, as is the case, is a crying shame. Who would think of trampling down the flower just opening its petals to the sun? Who would think of cutting the wheat ere the ear was fully ripe? Only the idiot or the fool. Just so idiosyncrasy and folly are at work slaying their thousands by want of thought and care in their dealings with the precious lives intended to adorn and beautify your homes on earth. Many of the most precious are sent to us just as the bud is opening because of the rude hands, and still ruder hearts, which crush out the young life by their rough handling. Mark you, I say the most precious are sent to us thus early. Their sensitive natures, had they lived on earth and developed under suitable conditions, would have rendered them shining lights in your midst. Remember I am not now speaking of children cut off by disease, but of those who are sent to us from lack of love and sympathy.

If you have a rare exotic, do you not carefully watch it and protect it from the stormy blast? Yet, alas! the far more precious bud of promise is handed over to the attention of hirelings, where, if they thrive, that is to say continue to live, they are brought up in most cases in an atmosphere of deception and selfishness. Little wonder, then, that when grown to maturity these hidden vices are allowed full play, with the result as seen in your midst at the present day.

Mothers, if they knew their duty and loved it, would deem it the greatest privilege to be allowed from infancy to train the sensitive, delicate organism presented to their arms; they would love and cherish these little

ones, and permit them to grow up in the full blaze of their love, which should beam upon them through the windows of their soul.

Words streaming with magnetic love should fall as dew from their lips; then, with a fitting example from all around, there would seldom be need for chiding words, and blows would be unknown.

In this way must the reformation of the earth be begun. A nation is made up of families, and families of units. See then how necessary that each one should be properly trained from infancy. It is too late to begin curbing and restraining when the mischief has been done—punishing the ignorant for your own neglect. Parents, as a rule, are most unreasonable. They sow the seed, and are amazed as the crop ripens; then they delegate to others the reaping of that crop, and are surprised that teachers, men and women like themselves, have not the power to change the whole character of the plants committed to their care. Prune and train they may, but who can gather figs from thistles? Old Solomon was in the right when he said "Train up a child in the way he should go."

Whatever a parent desires a child to be, either as man or woman, that character must the parent stamp from the very time that they notice a beam of intelligence in its eye, and *no later*.

Children, how I love ye! Even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, so would I cover ye from all things hurtful either to soul or body. I would clasp ye all in my embrace, and baptise ye with the baptism of love. Precious jewels are ye! of more value than all the rubies and diamonds the earth has ever yielded up. Oh ye parents! why will ye not think to make these jewels yours? so that in your spirit homes ye may be crowned, as never earthly monarch was crowned, with a crown of glory set with *living jewels*!

I should be pleased if my words should reach the eyes of all men. Though that could scarcely be, they may, perchance, be read by some who may profit by what I have come so far to say. Should one precious soul receive benefit from them, I shall be more than repaid.

Now, kind friend, I must say farewell!

Castlemaine.

K.

MR. SPRIGG'S MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

THE Materialization Seances, at the rooms of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, during the past month have been going on satisfactory, and on several occasions most excellent results have been obtained.

At the first sitting, "Zion" and "Peter," both held back the curtain to show the medium, at the same time as themselves, and Peter, at the request of the sitters, carried the large stone (14lbs. weight) from the window-sill behind the curtain, then came out and deposited it on a chair. Following them came "Pearl," the beautiful star on her forehead being much admired; "Geordie," who came next, did not appear quite so strong as on the last occasion, and said, in a low voice, "I cannot get out," he was followed by the "Nun," and the "Little Black Girl;" then John Wright and finally "Charity," who sat on a chair, and taking some roses that were offered to her, put them before leaving on a desk at the opposite side of the room. This sitting was considered a very good one. On the 5th the manifestations were weak, four forms only appearing, only one of them succeeding in getting outside the curtain. On the 8th, the continued thunder and lightning prevented Materialization, but the spirit of John Williams, late of Sandhurst, was described as present, he expressed his regret that Spiritualism was not being more pushed there, and Ed. Bone, of Sydney, wished his wife to know that he was often with her, and if she would attend circles, he would communicate with her. On the 12th, the sitting was excellent, eight forms appeared; Peter and Ski-wau-ke talked freely. 19th, rather poor results, four forms and voice. On the 22nd, a considerable improvement was manifest, seven forms were visible, Peter and Ski-wau-ke talking freely; Geordie got on to a chair and spoke in a low voice, subsequently, dancing to the musical box; John Wright distributed flowers, and a child who appeared was recognised by her parents,

who were present. On the 27th, the conditions were pronounced very good, and as a result, excellent manifestations followed, ten forms were materialized, one of them being a girl, apparently, about ten years old; Geordie and John Wright distributed flowers, and they both spoke a few words; Ski and Peter talked freely, the latter amusing some of the company with his jokes. The power is evidently increasing and the manifestations bid fair to eclipse any that have preceded them.

HOW IT DID HAPPEN.

ROBERT DALE OWEN tells a most interesting story respecting a ship proceeding on her voyage across the Pacific. One day when the Captain descended to the cabin, he was surprised to see these words written on the ship's slate, "Steer to the East." He made inquiries of all parties on board, as to who wrote this sentence, and he even tested their hand writing. Not one had written it; all were as much surprised as the Captain at the writing on the slate. To steer to the East was a deviation from his course, and he did not at first feel inclined to obey the mysterious command; but at length he resolved to obey instructions, and the ship's head was turned due east. Strange to say, in a very short time, he met with a ship which was water logged; and the lives of the crew and passengers were thus saved. When visiting Queenscliff lately, I met with a well known and respected Captain of the British Navy. Amongst other interesting yarns which he told me, I was much pleased with the following story—quite a parallel to the narrative of Robert Dale Owen, but there was no intention on the narrator's part of explaining how it happened, or attributing the result to any interference of the powers above:—Off the Cape of Good Hope, some years ago, the ship *Regular*, of Liverpool, commanded by Captain Carter, sprung a leak, which increased so rapidly that the only way to put off immediate danger, was to scud before the wind. In doing so, the ship went so far to the south as to find herself out of the zone or track frequented by vessels. Next day there was no help for it, but to take to the boats and abandon the vessel. It was a gloomy prospect to those in the boats; they were now too far south to expect to meet with ships, and they proceeded on their journey northwards, absorbed in silent sorrow. By and by, the look out exclaimed, "Sail ahead." Come, come now, said the Skipper, do not raise our hopes by your lively imagination. This is not a time for joking. The look out assured his comrades that he was not joking, and told them to look out for themselves. When they came to the crest of the next wave, true enough, in a short time they beheld two ships, bearing right down upon them. Joy filled their hearts; but this was about to be succeeded by despair for, as the ships approached, it was evident, no one on board perceived the boats. As they were passing the Captain, in desperation, seized a red shawl from off the shoulders of a lady on board, flouted it in the air, and thus attracted attention just in time, and no more. One of the ships at once hove to—and soon all on board the boats were rescued. The ships were two French vessels, bound for New Caledonia, and the commander related how it was, that they were so far south and out of the track of ships. The afternoon before, he proposed to change the ship's course, but before doing so, he went below to take another look at the chart. On his desk there lay an open book, which he had been reading, he lifted it, and after reading for a time he fell asleep. He woke up after a time, it was dark, and he felt impressed with the idea that he had carried out his intention, and that the ship's course was changed. So they continued going south without change till morning—and the result was the finding of the two boats from the derelict vessel. It was strange, said the Captain, for I never fell asleep under such circumstances before.

What a curious accident, will be the general remark, it was lucky for the poor fellows in the boats! Accident! Oh! Yes! No doubt the world is governed by accidents! Those who have become acquainted with spiritualism know better than that.

T. L.

THE LITANY.

THE following alterations of, and additions to, the church of England's litany, are to be read in all churches, by order of His Grace the Arch Bishop of Cant-a-bare-e.

From all evil and mischief, from the crafts and subtlety of religious teachers; from all mental and wilful blindness; from ignorance, bigotry, and superstition; from hypocrisy, envy and malice, and all uncharitableness, Good Lord, deliver us.

From covetousness, blood thirstiness and rapine; from quarrelling with our neighbors without cause; from dealing out vengeance upon an offending people, thy creatures, by fire and sword, for the sake of plunder and captive virgins; as did thy chosen race in the land of Midian, Good Lord, deliver us.

From intestine wars and deadly strife; from disobeying thy command, which says, "Thou shalt not Kill," from reversing this law and killing every man his brother and every man his companion and neighbor, as thy people did by command in the camp of Israel, Good Lord, deliver us.

From all thievish and fraudulent actions; from borrowing silver and gold, with no intention of ever returning the same; as thy servants did by command of their law-giver from the inhabitants of Egypt, Good Lord, deliver us.

From all wanton cruelty, both towards our fellow men and unoffending beast; from slaying in a conquered city, both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep; as thy servant Joshua did to the inhabitants of Jericho, Good Lord, deliver us.

From lying and deception; from obtaining blessings, verbally, or substantially, under assumption; as thy servant Jacob did, an example followed by all teachers of supernaturalism, Good Lord, deliver us.

From all blasphemy and slander; from comparing an unparalleled villain in blood thirstiness and cruelty, to thee, who art infinite perfection and love; from believing and teaching that the adulterous tyrant and murderer of an innocent person was a man after thine own heart, as is said of David, King of Israel, Good Lord, deliver us.

From all insatiable covetousness of foreign lands; the homes and rights of aboriginal industry, or pioneering boers; from following out the bestial principle of might is right; as did thy servants of old, an example followed by thy bible loving Britains; hence the secret of England's greatness! Good Lord, deliver us.

Finally, we beseech thee to look down with Fatherly compassion upon this colony, and forgive the sin of those in authority, who have commanded a census of the people to be taken. Knowing as they do, that David, King of Israel, was moved by thee (or Satan, we are not sure which) to commit a like trespass, which sin brought down upon his people, a terrible pestilence which slew 70,000 innocent men, and spared the guilty, Spare us, good Lord.

E. W. EUSTACE.

A NATIONAL GYMNASIUM AND TRAINING SCHOOL.

WE are in receipt of a pamphlet from Mr. G. Techow, the well-known teacher of Oelithenics, advocating the appropriation of a part of the Exhibition Buildings to the establishment of a Gymnasium and Swimming School, for the physical education of our rising generation.

The scheme submitted by Mr. Techow seems a feasible one, involving little expense and promising great advantages to the large number of children attending the schools in Fitzroy, Carlton, and Melbourne.

Physical education is (or should be) the basis of all education. We cannot expect our girls and boys to develop strong, healthy minds in weak, sickly bodies, and the proposition of Mr. Techow deserves the hearty support of reformers and progressionists. In addition to the increased enjoyment of the bath, and the healthful exercise involved by a knowledge of how to swim, the more general acquisition of the art would save many lives that are annually sacrificed through ignorance of the mere rudiments of it.

"PIONEER'S" MEMORIAL FUND.

SINCE our last issue, Mr. T. W. Stanford of this city has promised to erect, at his own expense, a suitable memorial stone to Mr. B. S. Naylor. It will therefore only be necessary to raise a sum sufficient to erect a stone to Mr. Tyerman, towards which about £5 is already promised. Sympathisers with the movement are requested to send their subscriptions early to Mr. W. H. Tenny, and the amounts will be duly acknowledged.

A POSITIVE SPIRIT.

THE following interesting and instructive letter appears in *Light*, for February 5th:—

SIR,—It is often said that the communications received from unseen intelligences always partake more or less of the mind of the medium, or at least that the information imparted is within the knowledge of the persons present. To show, however, that is by no means invariably the case I should like to give you the particulars of a séance held some time ago at the house of a Mr. Mansell, when the messages obtained were in no degree whatever within the knowledge of any of the sitters, but were afterwards satisfactorily verified. The medium on the occasion was Mrs. Everitt—a lady widely known and highly esteemed amongst Spiritualists for her self-sacrificing devotion to the cause—and the company included Mr. Everitt, myself and wife, Mr. Mansell, and two or three personal friends of his, all being well-known to each other. I ask your attention to the name of *Mr. Mansell*, because on that will hang some of the interest of my narrative.

We were sitting under the full blaze of a gas chandelier when some loud raps came upon the table. Mr. Everitt endeavored to get the name of the Spirit spelt out, several times without success. I suggested that perhaps the Spirit had not communicated before and did not know the usually adopted signals, and I requested that one rap should be given for "No," two for "Don't know," and three for "Yes," and that for other answers the Spirit should rap at the letter required while the alphabet was being repeated.

I then asked, "Have you communicated before?"—One loud rap indicated "No."

"Will you endeavor to spell out your name while Mr. Everitt repeats the alphabet?"—Three raps, "Yes."

Mr. Everitt repeated the alphabet very quickly, and I pencilled down the following letters, "T-H-O-M-A-S-M-A-N-S."

"Oh," I said, "Thomas Mansell! This is a friend of yours, Mr. Mansell." But Mr. Mansell said No, he knew no such person. Nor did any one else present. The experiment was tried again, with the same result—"T-H-O-M-A-S-M-A-N-S."

I repeated that I had got the same letters as before, when a loud single rap indicated that I was wrong; and so I asked the Spirit, letter by letter, how I was correct. I then found that "T-H-O-M-A-S-M-A-N" was right; and when the alphabet was again repeated I learnt that after the "N" "T" was intended, and not "S," the letter immediately preceding. The name was then without further difficulty spelt out—"Thomas Mantion." Questions put to the friends present satisfied me that no one in the circle had the slightest idea of who Thomas Mantion was; and I next asked the Spirit to tell me how many years he had been in the other life. The answer came—S-I-X—

"Oh," I said, "six years?"—An emphatic "No." "Perhaps you mean six years and so many months? Tell us how many?"—Answer, "T-E—"

"Oh, six years and ten months?"—"No." "Go on."—"T-E-E—"

"Oh, sixteen years?"—"Again "No." "Well, go on."—"H-U-N-D-R-E-D."

"Then you mean that you have been in the other life sixteen hundred years?"—"No."

"Well, try again."—"Sixteen hundred and seventy seven."

"Do you mean that you have been in the other life sixteen hundred and seventy-seven years?"—"No."

"Do you mean that you entered the other life in the year 1677?"—"Yes."

"Tell us where you were born?"

Answer, "Laurencelydiard."

Knowing nothing of such a place as this, I asked where it was, and the reply was spelled out correctly and rapidly—"Somersetshire."

"Where were you buried?"—"Stoke Newington."

The Spirit afterwards told us that he was a Nonconformist divine; was at one time chaplain to Charles II.; was afterwards ejected from the Church and imprisoned; that he could say no more then, but that if we wanted further information we could learn something of him at Wadham College, Oxford. He added, however, that he had been introduced to the séance by a Nonconformist friend whom he had met in the other life, Dr. Jabez Burns, who, while in earth-life, had attended some of Mrs. Everitt's séances.

On turning next day to a Clergy List in search of a parish of a name that might bear some resemblance to "Laurencelydiard," I found "Laurence Lydiard" in Somersetshire. This gave me some hope that I might find all the rest of the narrative to be correct, and as the readiest method of testing the messages, I requested the Rev. W. W. Newbould, who was in the habit of frequenting the British Museum, to endeavor, if possible, to verify the facts for me, telling him, however, nothing more than I wanted a brief sketch of the life of Thomas Manton, a Nonconformist divine. The following is the report which Mr. Newbould supplied to me next day, and which, it will be seen, proves the accuracy of the communication in every particular.

"MANTON (Thomas), a learned Nonconformist minister, was born at Laurence Lydiard, in Somersetshire, in 1620, and educated at the Free School at Tiverton, and at Wadham College, and at Hart Hall, Oxford. He then studied divinity, and was admitted to deacon's orders by the celebrated Dr. Hall, Bishop of Exeter, and at Colyton, in Devonshire, he came to London, where he was admired for his pulpit eloquence, and about 1643 was presented to the living of *Stoke Newington* by Colonel Popham, and here preached those lectures on the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, which he afterwards published in 1651 and 1652. During his residence at Newington he often preached in London, and is said to have preached the second sermon for the Sons of the Clergy, an institution then set on foot, chiefly through the influence of Dr. Hall, son of the bishop, who preached the first. He was also one of those who were called occasionally to preach before the Parliament, but being strongly opposed to the execution of the King, he gave great offence by a sermon in which he touched on that subject. In 1651 he shewed equal contempt for the tyranny of the usurpers, by preaching a funeral sermon for Mr. Love, and in neither case allowed the fears of his friends to prevent him from doing his duty. In 1650 he was presented to the living of Covent Garden by the Earl, afterwards Duke, of Bedford, who had a high respect for him. At this Church he had a numerous auditory. Archbishop Usher, who was one of his hearers, used to say he was one of the best preachers in England, and had the art of reducing the substance of whole volumes into a narrow compass, and representing it to great advantage. In 1653 he became chaplain to Cromwell. He was nominated also by Parliament one of a committee of divines to draw up a scheme of fundamental doctrines. In the same year he was appointed one of the committee for the trial and approbation of ministers. In 1660 he co-operated openly in the restoration of Charles II., was one of the ministers appointed to wait upon his Majesty at Breda, and was afterwards sworn one of his Majesty's chaplains. In the same year he was, by mandamus, created D.D. at Oxford. In 1661 he was one of the commissioners at the Savoy Conference, and continued preaching until St. Bartholomew's Day in 1662, when he was ejected for Nonconformity. After this he preached occasionally either in private or public, as he found it convenient, particularly during the indulgence granted to the Nonconformists from 1668 to 1670, but was imprisoned for continuing the practice when it became illegal. His constitution, although he was a man of great temperance, early gave way; and his complaints terminating in a lethargy, he died October 18, 1677, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and was buried in the chancel of the church at *Stoke Newington*."—H. J. ROSE, New General Biographical Dictionary, vol. ix., pp. 464, 465 (1867).

Here, sir, is a clear case of a correct and truthful communication, not one word of which was known to any person in the circle, and which the Spirit succeeded in giving in the face of a somewhat persistent though unintentional attempt to make him say something else than he wished to say.

Yours respectfully,
R.

February 1st, 1881.

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