

THE Harbinger of Light.

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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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influence either on the medium or witnesses. In these instances a decadence of the moral tone of the medium is the almost inevitable result, until stimulated by the demand of his clients for more marvels, upon the production of which his pecuniary success depends, he supplements the phenomena with a few manifestations on his own account, and emboldened by the success of his experiment, pursues the deception till the detection of some of his handiwork destroys all the value of previous legitimate phenomena. This has been the result over and over again. Setting aside the numerous imitators of mediumship, who by impudence and dexterity impose upon the public, there are a large number of individuals whose psychic powers have in the early part of their career been proved beyond question, who have subsequently been detected in fraud; and so it will be, with very few exceptions, so long as a stereotyped form of physical mediumship is professionally pursued for any lengthened period, the exceptions being where a high moral tone and a strength of will (which is rare in mediums), enables them to counteract the deteriorating tendency of their surroundings. The investigation of this class of phenomena should be conducted scientifically, and it should not, as is too frequently the case, be made a show of; it does not convince even honest inquirers, for unless their minds have been prepared by previous study or experiments leading up to it, they are mentally incompetent to realise the spiritual basis of what they witness. Nothing is so conducive to the acquisition of satisfactory evidence as a well-conducted private circle; and it is worth the while of those who adequately realise the importance of the subject to interest themselves in the formation of such. True, many of these come to nothing, from the defection of members who, failing to get a sensation to start with, give it up. These can be well spared; they are seldom any good where there is work to be done; but the intelligent, patient investigator who succeeds in getting together half-a-dozen like-minded individuals who, appreciating the value of what they are seeking, work diligently for it, will rarely fail in evolving at least some of the simpler forms of the phenomena, and the cultivation of the mediumistic power will undoubtedly lead to higher and more complex phases. Directions for the

THE prevalence and spread of the Philosophy of Spiritualism in Victoria, and the published testimony of its facts, has aroused a widespread desire to witness phenomena demonstrative of the alleged facts of spirit return; and we are frequently interviewed by persons desirous of obtaining the *entrée* into circles where such phenomena may be witnessed, or the addresses of media able and willing to give the desired demonstration. This desire is natural enough, but we question very much whether the influx of a number of physical media would be an unmixed good, or even answer the purpose of convincing a majority of the inquirers that the phenomena produced were of spiritual origin.

Experience shows that phenomenal mediumship, and more especially that of a physical nature, does not depend upon the morality of the individual, but upon a peculiarity of constitution, which generates and emits an aura or property capable of being utilised by supramundane intelligences in the production of mundane phenomena. The uses to which this force can be applied is dependent upon the knowledge and experience of the intelligence working with it, and the ruder and unintelligent phenomena, such as the violent movement of bodies, erratic percussive sounds, and bad drawings are usually the product of undeveloped spirits, or those ignorant of the scientific application of the force. The higher and more intelligent phases, such as the production of spirit lights, passing matter through matter, materialisation of forms, playing of music, &c., imply the action of scientific minds, or at least those conversant with this phase of Psycho Dynamics; but as in this world, there are many clever men who are neither wise nor good, so on the other side are there many clever but unprincipled spirits, who amuse themselves with experiments in this direction utterly regardless of their

guidance of investigators are easily obtainable at a nominal price; but we would not advise any one to commence practical work in this direction until they have some comprehension of the philosophy of spiritual intercourse, which they can readily acquire by reading some of the standard works to be found in the Melbourne Public Library. Spiritualism in its phenomenal aspect is scientific, and like other sciences requires preliminary study before the experimental phase is reached.

THE RELIGION OF TRUTH.

PART VIII.

By H. J. BROWN.

We are living two lives, the outward and the inward, the life of sense and the life of spirit; we have consequently already commenced the life-everlasting. No one is or can be all perfect, for "to err is human." On the other hand, no one is all bad, for even the most depraved have some redeeming qualities. Every one is relatively good and bad in degree, and this proportion of good and bad qualities constitutes each one's character or personality. As the poet has truly written:

"Virtuous and vicious every man will be—
Few in the extreme, but all in their degree;
The rogue and fool, by fits, are fair and wise
And e'en the best, by fits, what they despise."

No two individuals are exactly alike morally or intellectually, any more than there are two faces exactly alike. A wrong act once committed cannot be undone or blotted out, but may be compensated for by good actions either here or hereafter, consequently the doctrine of instantaneous remission of sins by man or Deity is false and delusive. Moral probation fortunately does not cease with this life, as is generally supposed. To do wrong is to be unhappy, if not at the time, eventually, and unhappiness is hell; to do good is to be happy, and happiness is heaven. Consequently the kingdom of heaven is truly within us. Our every act carries with it its own reward or punishment. In fact, we take our own heaven or our own hell with us when we enter the inner-life, in which, by the natural law of affinity, we gravitate to the company of those of similar character to ourselves. The position which we occupy on entrance into spirit-life is therefore almost entirely dependent on the character we have formed for ourselves through the thoughts we have cherished and the lives we have led when upon earth. Eternal happiness, however, is the destiny of all eventually.

Most people, irrespective of their religious belief, and whether aware of it or not, have one or more guardian spirits. As a rule, according to the character of each individual so is that of his or her spirit-guides, for like attracts like. Occasional acts of indiscretion do not form a man's character, it is his customary actions and daily habits that do so. The great majority of people are, as yet, unaware of how much they are indebted to their spirit-friends for help and guidance. Though many profess to believe in the ministry of angels, only very few, comparatively, are cognizant that they are influenced by their guardian angels. Individuals who are highly gifted in any particular branch of study have bands of spirits in sympathy with them who influence and assist them. All the most brilliant geniuses of the world have been impressionable mediums or sensitives, who, whether conscious of it or not, have been largely indebted to their spirit-friends for much of that which secured for them the approbation of their fellow-men. Inspiration, as previously stated, is a natural gift, consequently it is universal and continuous, and not confined to any particular locality or epoch, as is falsely taught. Shakespeare, for instance, could not have originated all the ideas comprised in his works without inspiration, for he possessed neither the education nor the court experience to write all that is therein set forth. What is the meaning of the poet invoking the muse but the asking of his spirit-guide for assistance?

Our guardian-spirits can influence, but they cannot control us. It is only mediums when in a trance or semi-trance state that they can control. As mankind are influenced by spirits so are the latter by spirits in a higher plane of existence, who, in turn, are influenced by still higher spirits, and thus ever upward to the great Father of all spirits. Many who have passed through the change called death whose affections for some friend on earth are strong even forego their own advancement in the inner-life that they may assist in the spiritual development of the earthly one whom they love, in order that when the latter passes to the Spirit-world they may both be on the same plane, and thus be enabled to tread the path of progress together. Most people shortly before their death have their spiritual vision opened so that they see their spirit-friends waiting to welcome them to the higher life, but owing to prejudice they cannot realize what they behold, and foolishly discard what they see as an illusion. On awakening in spirit-life, however, they find that what they beheld was not imaginary, as they supposed, but a living reality.

"Oh what were life, if life were all? Thine eyes
Are blinded by their tears, or thou wouldst at see
Thy treasures wait thee in the azure skies,
And Death, thy Friend, will then give all to thee."

In the transition from the physical to the spiritual plane of existence, when that magnetic tie which connects the physical body with its spiritual counterpart has been physically loosened by disease or decay, there is no pain. Violent death, however, causes suffering to the spirit through sudden separation. Those who pass from Earth before having arrived at maturity attain in time to manhood or womanhood as the case may be. Their undeveloped spirit-forms are built up by the spiritual atmosphere which they absorb in the Spirit-world. All who pass away before they have gained the necessary mundane experience have to return in spirit-form to the earth-plane in order to gain that experience. The greater the age we attain on Earth the more fitted we are for the change. Those who pass from this life through natural causes sometimes retain consciousness without interruption during the death-change, and are cognizant of all that transpires around them, although unable to communicate this at the time to their sorrowing friends in the body. Others experience longer or shorter periods of unconsciousness ere they awake in spirit-life. Infants on passing to the other life are cared for by loving angels, called spirit-mothers, until their own enter spirit-life, or until they are so far advanced as not to require a mother's care. As in coming into this world we are received into the arms of kind and loving friends, so when we are born again to the higher life we are met by friends equally loving and considerate. The parent's care, the husband's solicitude, the wife's affection, the friend's sweet love, survive the change called death, for human affections are divine, consequently they are undying; they know no diminution and suffer no loss, on the contrary they experience continual increment, ever expanding in the free atmosphere of angelic love.

"Then learn the lesson of progression duly,
And do not call each glorious change decay,
But know we only hold our treasures truly
When they seem to us to have passed away."

As nothing is lost in nature so all knowledge acquired and every experience gained by us in this life is of benefit to us in the life to come, where, as here, the law of effect follows cause, and where everything is as natural, rational, and as subject to law as we must on Earth. And further, as in this life every one must gain experience for him or herself, so in the life to come all have to tread the path of learning for themselves, for there, as here, there is no royal road to knowledge. In spirit-life, which is one of activity and not as is generally supposed a life of indolence, (for without occupation happiness is unattainable), everyone has to work out his own salvation from error and ignorance, not with fear and trembling, but with patience and perseverance; with this glorious and encouraging knowledge, however, that even the very lowest can raise himself in the scale of being by his own exertions, aided by those brighter spirits or angels who are ever ready to assist so soon as

a desire to progress is manifested by those on a lower plane to themselves. In the inner-life, as well as in this world, spiritual knowledge is not valued until the consciousness of ignorance is experienced and the desire for more light is thereby awakened. Those who pass from earth-life with false ideas deeply impressed upon their minds retain the same until they awaken to the falsity thereof through the utilisation of the godlike faculty of reason, which they have previously culpably ignored. This may not take place for a length of time after they have entered the other life, consequently, as already stated, the various conflicting forms of religion which exist on Earth are represented and continued in the Spirit-world. The death of the animal body of man only alters his condition, it does not change the Mohammedan into a Christian any more than it changes the Christian into a Mohammedan. The latter sets about looking for Mahomet as the Christian does for Jesus, but neither of them being in spiritual affinity with him whom they seek they are unable to attain the object of their desires. Many are surprised and disappointed at not finding the theological hell in which they had fully expected to see suffering all who rejected the superstitious creed in which they believed; they, at the same time, are greatly disgusted at finding that in spirit-life everyone is seen, not according to his professions, or as he was credited with being when in the body, but exactly as his thoughts and actions in earth-life have made him. There, the Roman Catholic still prays to Mary and counts his superstitious beads, the Episcopalian still declares himself a miserable sinner, the Methodist still chants his sanguinary hymns, the Calvinist still trusts in predestination and election through grace, the bigoted of all sects still retain their hatred towards everyone who does not hold similar views to themselves, and thus they continue until their eyes are opened to the divine light of truth and reason. Therefore to doubt is not wrong or sinful, it is in fact, the first step towards knowledge, every doubt being a prayer to God for more light.

The aged and decrepid on awakening in spirit life find themselves restored to the hey-day of life. The blind, the deaf, the lame, and the deformed no longer are troubled by the physical infirmities which marred their earthly enjoyment. The oppressed and down-trodden are free from the heavy burdens they had to bear and the laborious toil they had to endure. Those whose reason has been impaired through injury or disease of their physical organism, on entrance into the Spirit-world, take up the thread of life at the point where reason left them, the interim being a perfect blank in regard to their earthly experience. Those who have wisely cultivated their spiritual faculties, and who, in this life, have occupied their time in benefiting others less favoured than themselves, find, on entering spirit-life, a congenial atmosphere in which to continue the good work begun on Earth. There, the scientist pursues his studies, the artist his paintings, the musician his music, all under far more favorable conditions than were attainable in earth-life. There, friendships formed here are continued. There, loved ones are re-united never again to part; and there are realised and acknowledged the infinite love and boundless wisdom of God our Father, whose goodness is everlasting, and whose mercy truly endureth for ever.

"Death is not the end of love;
True love cannot die,
Earthly loves are but reflections
Yet they weave us sweet connections
With the true and pure affections
Of the sky."

In earth-life the memory is clogged by the infirmities of the flesh; there being no such obstacle in the Spirit-world the whole of our past life stands revealed before us. The bad actions we have committed being a constant source of reproach to us, whilst the good we have done affords us pleasure. We are therefore happy or unhappy according to whether, during this life, good or evil deeds have predominated. The memory of wrongs committed by us can only be obliterated by making restitution to those we have injured, and by the doing of good to others, when, in time, they fade away from their having

been, as it were, covered up by good actions. The absurd and fallacious doctrine of instantaneous forgiveness of sins is antagonistic to the eternal and just law of effect following cause. Our only atonement therefore, is that worked out in our own thoughts and lives. In the inner-life it is much easier to acquire knowledge than to make reparation for wrongdoings committed here. There, great intellectual attainments without corresponding moral worth are like the possession in earth-life of a title without the requisite means to support it. A wicked man, however erroneous the standard of falsity which he has formed may be, on entering spirit-life and finding that he has forfeited the good opinion of those friends whose society he desires to enjoy, is unhappy; thus his punishment becomes a necessary consequence of his wrongdoing. The amenities of life are as much regarded in the Spirit-world as they are here. The more refined a man is the more sensitive he feels at his undeveloped condition on entering spirit-life. In the Spirit-world, where there is no distinction through wealth or social position, men are loved solely for the good that is in them, and are judged of, not by what they profess, but by what they really are. There, where all is open, people cannot think one way and speak another, as they could when on Earth. Thoughts unexpressed, or spoken aloud by those in the body, are alike audible to spirits; only those spirits, however, who take an interest in our well-being, unless it be a few of an inquisitive disposition, care to know our thoughts. The road is open to all who have passed through the change called death to return to their friends on Earth, but there are many reasons why only a limited number as yet communicate, of which the following are a few. Many spirits, owing to prejudices instilled into their minds when on Earth, will not do so. Others, owing to a want of knowledge, cannot do so. Some who desire to communicate have not the necessary mediums to communicate through, and even if they had and did communicate, owing to the prejudice of their earthly friends, they would not be believed. When these foolish prejudices against spirit-communication cease to prevail, as will be the case in time, instead of its being confined to the few, as at present, communion between the two worlds will become general, and people will wonder how their ancestors could have been so foolish as to ignore this grand avenue of knowledge. History informs us, however, that in all ages prejudice and ignorance have been the two great barriers to progress, not only in matters religious, but in almost everything else, and mankind can no more be made sensible all at once than they can be made moral in a day.

Spirit-life is an existence of eternal progress leading ever towards, but never up to Infinitude. As in the physical world every atom has its use and purpose, so in the Universe has every spirit, embodied and disembodied, its individual action to pursue and duty to perform; and as in this life some progress rapidly whilst others remain almost stationary, so it is in the Spirit-world. Progression, however, is the destiny of all eventually, for the future life is one of unending progress, one in which man can advance for ever, and as he does so the spiritual light within beams forth with transcendent splendour, illuminating his pathway and revealing the radiant and dazzling beauty by which he is surrounded. It depends, however, on the spiritual development of each individual in spirit-life how much of the Spirit-world and its inhabitants he sees. Through ignorance many spirits are unable to avail themselves of the advantages which their higher condition of life offers. Many of them do not even understand the conditions by which they are surrounded or the laws which govern their own state. With the bigoted and ignorant in spirit-life there is as much misconception and superstition regarding Spiritualism as there is on Earth. Prejudice and credulity, under the specious name of faith, unfortunately do not immediately cease on entrance into spirit-life.

Neglect of those laws by which the physical body is governed causes impoverishment of the spirit, and as the spirit, so long as it is confined within the physical frame, partakes of both our mental and bodily food, we

should neglect neither of these. As already stated there is a spiritual counterpart of all physical objects, including the food which we eat, and it is this spiritual counterpart of which, during earth-life, the spirit partakes. Inattention to the development of the mind also impairs the growth of the spirit. There is, however, no more spiritual benefit to be derived from the study of scriptural lore or attention to ecclesiastical ceremonies than there is from the mercenary pursuit of great wealth. The best way to prepare for the inner-life is by a constant striving after the highest good for all, and thereby making this world better through our presence.

The great spiritual Father of all being infinite in love, the fear of God is evidence of ignorance, whilst the love of God is the beginning of true wisdom, for good actions, which are the outcome of love, are evidences of the highest wisdom. This life being short, and spirit-life endless, we should never neglect an earthly duty for a spiritual one. God requires not the glory of men or angels, for all His works glorify Him. We should pay particular attention to the following,—the preservation of the physical body, which is the temple of the indwelling spirit, the cultivation of purity of thought, word, and deed, in order to attract the higher influences; the acquisition of knowledge, both physical and spiritual; the diffusion thereof among our fellow men, (for the possession of knowledge, like that of worldly wealth, carries with it its responsibilities); and the manifestation of our love to God by the performance of unselfish acts of kindness to all His children.

"And oh! in that future and lovelier sphere,
Where all is made right which so puzzles us here,
Where the glare and the glitter and tinsel of time
Shall fade in the light of that region sublime,
Where the soul, disencumber'd of flesh and its sense,
Unscreened by its trappings, and shows, and pretence,
Must be clothed for the life and the service above,
With purity, truthfulness, meekness, and love."

In this life our surroundings are, to a great extent, governed by circumstances over which we have no control, in the inner-life they correspond to our real state, and consequently are harmonious. Life on the earth-plane of the Spirit-world, however, is in many respects very little different to that with us. Those who have not risen above the earth-plane communicate as we do by word of mouth; those who have progressed beyond this plane by reading the thoughts of each other. The higher or more developed spirits can read the thoughts of those below them, and are not visible to them unless they will that they should be so. The greater the wisdom possessed the more clear is the spirit-vision. Will-power answers the same purpose to the spirit as physical force with us. Through ignorance undeveloped spirits are more limited in their powers of locomotion than the higher spirits. In the inner-life those who have once progressed in spiritual knowledge never retrograde; until, however, they have love for their neighbour they cannot rise. The spirit-counterpart of everything physical is what is material and tangible to spirits, to whom what we look upon as substantial forms no impediment to their movements and is transparent to their vision, just as the spiritual counterpart is to the physical.

It should be borne in mind that spirits, whether angelic or devilish, are merely human beings devoid of their fleshly coating, consequently they are not infallible. We should therefore believe not every spirit, but try them well before attaching importance to what they communicate. Spirits are not, as some people in ignorance suppose, at the beck and call of everyone; although, as free agents, they minister to man's spiritual wants, they are not his servants; neither are they omniscient, but those whose spiritual vision has been opened see more clearly than we do, and those who have had enlarged experience possess far greater knowledge than the most learned of men on Earth. Although spirits are not ubiquitous, when they have acquired the necessary knowledge, they can, by mere will-power, travel as quick as thought, so that space to them is almost annihilated. Except to those who remain on the earth-plane of the Spirit-world, or those who often return

thereto on missions of love or to gain mundane experience, time is unknown, for the spiritual Sun never sets, consequently in the Spirit-world there is eternal day and everlasting spring; hence it has been termed the summer-land—"a world of fadeless beauty with homes of endless joy." In the Spirit-world the scenery is grand beyond description, and to those who are developed enough spiritually to appreciate it, it is transparent and beautiful. Angels are merely highly developed and purified spirits; they are, however, as much finite beings as man, the former being but the progressed condition of the latter. The bright aura by which the higher spirits or angels are surrounded is that which, in superstitious times, suggested the ridiculous idea that angels had wings like birds. Modern artists, owing to knowledge gained through Spiritualism, now leave out these useless appendages in their representations of angels. Another prevalent but erroneous idea is that angels are an entirely different class of beings to the spirits of men and women. All angels, however, from the lowest to the highest have passed through the physical plane of life.

"They saw whatever thou hast seen,
Encountered all that troubles thee;
They were whatever thou hast been;
They are what thou shalt be."

Physical death is the inevitable path which nature has appointed by which all have to pass to a higher state of existence, in which, as in this life, there are various stages of progress. As on Earth, we die to infancy and rise to youth—die to youth and rise to manhood, and as this life is a continual progress from childhood to old age, so in like manner we die physically and rise spiritually—we die to the things of sense and rise to newness of life, ever progressing in knowledge, purity, and love. Physical death, therefore, is but the path that leadeth to the inner-life, the birth-throes of the spirit.

"When from flesh the spirit freed
Hastens homeward to return
Mortals say 'a man is dead,'
Angels say 'a child is born.'"

One of the many benefits, which a knowledge of Spiritualism confers on those who possess it, is that they are to a certain extent prepared for what they will meet on entrance into spirit-life. They know, from the experience of those who have passed through the change called death, and with whom they have held sweet communion, that the Spirit-world is just as natural as this—that although the one differs in conditions and is higher than the other, both are governed by the universal law of cause and effect—and that there lies before them, in the life to come, an endless path of progress in wisdom, love, and purity. Modern Spiritualism is, in fact, the grand revelation of our own day. It presents the basis of a universal truth, and the developments of a glorious science. Despised and rejected as it is at present by the world in general, it is yet destined to become the Spiritual enlightener of all humanity.

As a writer has truly remarked: "It must be admitted by all unprejudiced minds that a religion which best illustrates the supreme fulness of divine benevolence, and which points out that infinite goodness supersedes severity—that justice merges in mercy—that punishment tends to correction and not destruction, proving remedial rather than penal—that love and wisdom have the ascendancy in the issue of divine government—has most the sanction of reason and the support of truth."

"Earthly power doth e'en show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice."

"It must also be admitted that a religion which teaches that the duty we owe our God and the duty we owe our neighbour are the essence of true religion and morality, and that the best way we can evince our regard for the first is by practising the second, is a religion the rationality and simplicity of which should commend itself to all thoughtful minds." Such is the religion that spiritual science demonstrates, and such is the divine religion of Truth which, though now so generally ignored, will eventually make all men better

and happier by causing truth to reign in their hearts and to blossom in their lives.

"Oh God! we thank Thee that the time has come
To melt the shadow of the vast eclipse—
It rolls away—and lo! from those long dumb,
Hosannas rise, and praise is on their lips!
The purple morning breaketh grand and sweet,
And brings a day the earth may not forget:
Its airy screamers flow before the feet
Of that glad Sun which rises not to set."

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE INFINITE.

(From the Spanish of Balmes.)

TRANSLATED BY C. W. ROHNER, M.D., BENALLA.

THIRD CHAPTER.

THE SPIRIT.

INCOMPREHENSIBLY great are the works of God. Figure to yourselves only my spirit submerged and sunk in contemplations of the Infinite, and you will find some difficulty in even comprehending this fact in all its bearings, because your souls are hemmed in by the swaddling-clothes of matter. You know that the spirit exists, but you are unable to represent to yourselves its mode or manner of existence. I intend to remove this difficulty for you in a sufficiently plain and easy way, so as to make it possible to all to understand this important question.

God is the perfect Spirit who has formed by His will all things created—the effects no less than the causes. In order to succeed in meeting God and recognising Him in His Almightyness, and in order to comprehend Him in all His ineffable magnificence, it would be necessary not to show to our spirit the existence of matter, but to eternally separate the former from the latter—the spirit from matter. The spirit is purer and more refined than matter, and his purity increases with the intensity of his love and with the degree of goodness to which he has attained; but nevertheless, the human spirit will never be able to reach that radiant illumination which is requisite to see God. All spirits will finally reach the same goal, all existing worlds will at last arrive at their eternal perfection, when all, in close embrace with one another, will have formed an eternal union of charity and mutual affection. Then will all the planets which at present exist in nature, which are distributed throughout infinite space, or what you would call a vacuum, and whose radiating power will exceed that of your largest suns; then, I say, will all the planets and worlds become the one and only mansion of the universal brotherhood of spirits who, in the enjoyment of indescribable happiness, will all unite in blessing the trials they have undergone, looking back upon their past misery and suffering as trifles in comparison with their eternal reward which they have now obtained, namely, infinite grace and true wisdom. But this change will only take place when the human souls have arrived at their utmost possible perfection; then only, I tell you, will the souls comprehend the essence of God adequately, worshipping Him for His infinite wisdom; but still they will not yet have seen God, because then will burst on their astonished gaze a host of other worlds in process of formation vastly superior to any hitherto met by them in space. There will be met with worlds already formed, which are vastly more radiant and luminous than any hitherto discovered by the eye of man; and when those worlds have accomplished their prescribed revolutions and movements through space, they will be used for the formation of another and still more colossal world, whose glory will be immense; and this again will be followed by the calling into existence of more worlds far superior to their predecessors; and these also will in time reach their individual apogee of progressive grandeur, and so on *ad infinitum*, because progress is the principal object of the whole creation, and because God is eternal in His works, and He alone can see to the end of all time, and as sole Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, never gets tired. God only can inform you that all creation represents infinite progress,

that by and by we shall be more contented, more happy, wise, and just, for God only knows the perfection of His works and the realisation of His Divine idea.

The spirit has been created for the express purpose that he should enjoy untold pleasures as soon as he is totally regenerated and has entered upon the legacy of his reward. The spirit is ether, radiant, subtle, sees in truth, believes in truth, and hopes in truth. Look at a flame, and you will have an idea of spirit. The flame is there, you see it, it exists; but can you touch or handle it? No; because it is a spiritual essence, having form but no body. Spirit, however, is far more refined than a flame, and far more beautiful; it traverses thousands of miles without becoming fatigued; it speaks through its will; lights upon anything it desires, and showers its blessings upon all, because it is pervaded by strong love and faith. Such is the spirit who has already been born several times; this his nature, and as such he is superior to some other spirits who have not been so often born again or re-incarnated in human bodies.

God has placed into your yet very material world many similitudes by the analysis of which you may obtain an approximate idea of the nature of life in infinite space. When the moon sheds her light upon your fields; when the sun shines and sends his consoling rays upon your golden harvests; when the lark leaving his nest soars high up into the air; when a butterfly, after its resurrection from the coffin of its chrysalis, flutters over the petals of a flower; when the ocean furnishes you with a picture of infinity by the immensity of its expanse of water—then are you compelled to think of the infinite, and to seek in the light of the moon that light which shines through your spirit, which manifests its existence beyond the furthest limits of your terrestrial horizon. You must analyse the brilliancy of the sun, which in order to supply you with vital vigour, comes to speak to you of a Sovereign God who one day will be able to illumine you with His infinite radiance. When you watch the bird, think how an infinitely good God has placed before your eyes those light-sailing crafts of the air as an evident proof and demonstration that if such gentle wings are attached to mean creatures on your miserable earth plane, other wings, of a superior and far more delicate structure, must be in store for you beyond the limited regions of earth. You must observe that the butterfly rises beautiful from its chrysalis, and why should you not in a similar manner rise from the chrysalis of your mortal body? Has not the knowledge of an uninterrupted progress from low to high been placed before your mental sight, and are you not forced to rise from the plane of nature to the throne of an infinitely good and wise God?

When you have become spirits, *id est*, spirits divested of your present carnal body, each thought of which has possessed your mind, each shock of surprise with which you have met in this your life of material existence whilst trying to comprehend the infinite, each progressive movement you have made, will be one step more made by you, will be a higher rung reached on the ladder of your spiritual advancement. All man's thoughts and reflections have a tendency to lead him to his goal. Without study you will never be able to arrive at the solution of the truth, and without labouring in the vast field of ideas, and without harmonising your mental and physical forces in the grand realisation of self-sacrifice, you will never, or only much more slowly, obtain the reward hoped for by all spirits who by manfully working have rendered themselves capable to receive the eternal glory and truth.

Waking must take the place of sleeping, and we must be constantly on the alert in order to rule over the great brains who desire to move in the direction of progress. The glorious fact of eternal justice calls upon all strong and faithful hearts to enlist themselves as labourers in the supreme enterprise which consists in the liberation and redemption of souls, in the sentiment of the beautiful and good, in the development of the future, which shall be the entire occupation and work directed and guided by those who have responded to the divine call.

The times of happiness are gradually approaching, the prophecies are about to be fulfilled, the true temples are going to be erected, humanity travels rapidly towards its regeneration. The future stands already unveiled, liberty is already hoped for, and the truth begins to be comprehended and appreciated; the religions are at present submitted to scientific analysis in order to unite all in one faith, the faith in God. The gospel is practically carried out, the faithful are investigating the Infinite in order to find its shining glory; temples for the true worship are in the course of construction; the works of charity are hiding themselves in true modesty; the unbelieving and the faithless are beginning to be moved; the deaf erect their ears to hear; the blind are slowly opening their eyes: this comprehensive programme has already been published, and its spirit is on the point of realisation.

Our century is advancing, the epoch of obscurantism is drawing to a close, the times of absolute death and destruction have passed by, retrograde thought has been enlightened, the law of God has begun to operate, and with it the era of human happiness has been initiated. The labourers are busy working, light penetrates into the dark places, offences are buried in silence, anarchy is replaced by love, asceticism is succeeded by liberty, the doors of the penitentiary are closed, and those of the school opened, forgiveness takes the place of the scaffold, doubt is supplanted by faith, and this latter forms the first step to heaven. Oh, only sacred dogma, which by extending itself throughout the whole world, invites man to rejoice in the truth and in the eternal wisdom! Oh, vault of heaven, inviting meditation, and teaching us scientific precision of thought by the regularity of its revolving orbs! Unmeasured space, taking thy rise from the Infinite, holdest in their orbits unerringly all the innumerable worlds upon which the eye of man gazes in astonishment! Oh, ye grand works, which only an incomprehensible Being could have performed! Oh, divine creation, enchanting epic, sung for the King of Kings, for the Lord of Lords, and which encloses you all in the sheepfold of its eternal instruction and pardon, like a humble shepherd, endeavours to bring his sheep into the sheltering enclosure of his fold! Oh, divine space, more subtle than the sigh of the breeze, more vapoury than the shadow of the foam, more immense than the most exalted creations of the poets—my blessing upon thee! My desire is to attract to thee all the souls who thirst for truth; I desire to engrave thy image on the brains and hearts of those who wish to pray in the temple of truth; I desire to speak to the world of matter of thee who art the world of thought; I desire to present thee to their eyes in all the vivid colours with which thou hast penetrated my own soul! Few shall be the praises which I address to you to sing your exquisite beauty; the truth which I attempt to bring to the world in order to advance its progress will be regarded as an illusion of mine; the happiness which thou hast given me will never be well understood; my efforts will be useless; the intellect of present humanity will not be able to grasp the subject, for to magnify thy greatness properly and justly, it would be necessary for me to exchange the harsh and cold words of my speech for something more sublime than musical notes, with something sweeter than honey, with something more marvellous than frigid thoughts. It would be absurd trying to make your greatness appear by using the aid of our littleness to depict it; absurd to represent thee as material whilst thou art eternal. I am not able to reproduce a likeness of thee such as I have seen thee; all I can say is, that I feel so profound a tranquility pervading my soul and whole being in this grand ocean without waves and tempests, in its delightful immensity, in its eternal poetry, that it will be with great sadness and regret that I shall leave it in order to assist a few of those worlds for which I feel so much compassion!

New strength and vigour inspires me now, having slept and dreamt in Eden, my spirit is pervaded by an indescribable ardour. I now know what once I could not comprehend; I now possess full information of what I was formerly ignorant. Oh how beautiful has been this waking up from my dream!

I am free; I enjoy myself immensely; I have conquered myself, and am ruling without thinking of it, for the smallest wishes of my heart have been fulfilled. If I desire to be enlightened, I am enlightened from above; my studies have been rendered so easy for me now. The dimensions of my philosophy have been enormously enlarged; I am a blessed and a happy spirit; I am an intangible being, a winged meteor, a fluid or essence which is able to penetrate all space in accordance with its pleasure; I remember the past and entertain no doubt about the future.

My inquisitive spirit has sought in that celestial mansion the progress necessary for its thoughts, in order to bring before its understanding the intensity of the knowledge which man's moral nature is capable to reach, and to show it what the human soul is; to learn also when and how the soul, deprived of its carnal vestment, rises until it finds itself in the region of things eternal; how it runs through the various periods of its past career on earth, and remembers in each one the progress successively made in it, until at last the soul discovers that its true motto is progress, and progress the only sound basis of happiness. The soul does not remember its former or first life and incarnation, or, more correctly stated, it cannot trace them intelligently to their respective beginnings, because that is forbidden. The soul knows it has gone on rising step by step, and that its starting point was low down in earth's materiality, or in other words, that in its first formation and birth it was purer than the matter in which it was clothed, but nevertheless, still rude and crooked. It will be useful to place this argument upon a firm basis *in limine*, and that it may be properly realised in the future as we proceed, let us take for the basis of our discussion the following heading—"Soul and Matter."

Benalla, Sept. 10th, 1882.

REMINISCENCES.

By H. V. S.

No. IV.

I CLOSED my last communication with the intimation that I would, in my next, record the result of searching the Scriptures with the object of arriving, if possible, at a reasonable conception of the God I had blindly worshipped. I say reasonable, because I had been trained to the belief, and did firmly believe, that knowledge of God and divine things came by special revelation only; and that without this miraculous revelation all the reading and thinking would be profitless. Faith that would not bear investigation had made me a coward, but when I had acquired the courage to reason upon these matters, the doctrine of the Trinity became to me an arithmetical puzzle, the solution of which I was obliged to leave to doctors of divinity. I could not possibly arrive at a reasonable conception of "The Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity." Suppose for the occasion that this doctrine is true, and behold the absurd spectacle, God praying to himself—"If it be possible let this cup pass from me"—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" forsaken himself! I will not dwell upon the many ridiculous aspects of this doctrine, but pass on to consider briefly what brought me to the conviction that Christ, even according to his four biographers, was not God: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me"—"My Father is greater than I"—"The word which ye hear me speak is not mine, but the Father's"—"I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge." These familiar texts should be sufficient to extinguish this triune God.

If it is true that the three are one, and that the one are three (Grammar a little "mixed"), then Christ was and is "The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and yet it has often struck me as strange that his biographers do not state that Christ was ever asked if he was "The Father," or the Holy Ghost, or God. It is recorded that he was frequently asked if he was the Son of God, and on one occasion his answer was, "Ye say that I am; on which, to my mind, means I do not, if it means anything. But even though he may have replied affirm-

actively to this question, he has most distinctly justified himself in so doing on the ground that other men had been called "the Sons of God," and "Gods;" take the following text for example: "Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God." I will restrict myself to one other remark respecting this flagrantly misrepresented man; in the fourth gospel it is stated that he said: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." It is passing strange that Christ, in this summary of his mission, did not say one word about vicarious atonement, "the great work of redemption," which his professed disciples place foremost.

It appeared to me utterly impossible to arrive at a reasonable conception of "Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity," so I turned to the simple "Unity," i. e., to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and a few other people.

Up to the time of which I am writing, what I have read, heard, and thought about this God, was only a partial history, that is to say, I had read, heard, and thought of his infinite power, wisdom, and love, and absorbed whatever sustained these ideas; I had not the courage (as I have said) even to think about those passages in the Bible which seemed to militate against these attributes of my (then) God, but regarded them as passing all understanding. I had all my life been looking on the one side; I must now observe a little on the other, so as to make my knowledge of the history of this God more complete.

I must confess to one foregone conclusion; I remembered 1 Tim., 2, 3, 4, . . . "God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to educate unto the knowledge of the truth;" and that we are told in the 2nd Epistle of Peter, that God "is not willing that any should perish;" if, therefore, one man, woman, or child does perish, the inference that this God is not Almighty is inevitable.

In the very commencement of His history we find this God repenting that He had "made man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air," thereby not only pleading guilty of stupendous blunders as a creative power, but admitting his incapacity to form a correct judgment of the things which He had created; then, after having destroyed all but one human family, and such beasts, creeping things, &c., as were taken into the Ark, He is made to say He will not do so any more, and makes the promise that "while the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest, &c., shall not cease;" and this promise he breaks.

This third systematic reading of the Bible (to say nothing of desultory readings) forced me to the conviction that the word of this God and His promises are utterly untrustworthy. Refer, for example, 1 Sam., ii., 30, 31; Jonab iii., 10; Ezek. xx., 25. Notwithstanding the Ten Commandments, that this God instigated men to commit murder, and approved of human sacrifices, as in the cases of Abraham and Jephthah; that He rewarded lying as in the cases of the midwives in Egypt, of Rahab and of Jehu; that He prompted the Israelites to steal from the Egyptians; Exod. xii., 35, 36; that He sanctioned fornication in its worst form: Num. xxi., 18; commanded the consummation of adultery, as in the case of Hosea; that He commanded the most revolting wholesale murder, as in the case of the Amalekites—the command being, "Slay both man and woman, infant and suckling;" He sanctions slavery: Lev. xxv., 45, 46; He gives men His statutes that are not good, and judgments that they should not live; He deceives men, prevents them from obeying His command, and then punishes them for disobedience; He mocks at their calamities; He makes men believe lies, lest if left to themselves they should do so much better than He would have no pretext for damning them: John xii., 40, and 2nd Thess. ii., 11, 12; the fire of his anger like that of hell, shall burn for ever: Jer. xvii., 4; He tortured Job, whom He declared to be "a perfect and an upright

man," and so far as I could see His object in so doing was solely to prove that the devil formed a wrong judgment of the man. Bishop Moorhouse, in his recent lectures on the "Problem of the Book of Job," referred to these tortures as calculated to awaken Job's sympathy with human suffering. It may be true that "sweet are the uses of adversity" to some, but surely useless to a perfect man. I have a son old enough to reason; just for a moment consider the consequences of my teaching him to worship this God, and to take the Bible for his guide, he may read (Mat. v., 48), "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect;" then we cannot avoid the logical inference that he may instigate murder, lying, stealing, adultery, &c., &c., and be nearly as perfect as His Father in heaven.

Having been indoctrinated with a terrible and incredible creed, and taught to reverence a hideous idol before I was capable of reasoning, and having long retained my belief in them in spite of reason, groaning under consciousness of the misery and degradation which credulity had entailed upon me, the kindly reader will censure me but lightly if I confess that when the powers which a beneficent Creator had designed for my guidance gained the ascendancy I abused them; I must confess that my anxiety to avoid being too credulous, carried me to the opposite extreme, "avoiding Scylla, I fell into Charybdis." I now believed only that which I could not doubt; religion, in all its forms, appeared to me to be useful only for the regulation of human society, and to hide from man the miserable extinction which I believed to be his destiny. I had not the faintest hope of a future life. I believed that Solomon was very near the truth when he said, "The dead know not anything," and "a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." I regarded the provision for this cloud (religion) to obscure from man the end of all his hopes and aspirations, as crowning all the presumed beneficence of the Creator. Annihilation, if true, would be simply nothing to such as retain their belief in a future life to the end; their hopes and aspirations have been a solace to them during this life, and they will have no knowledge of the *ultimus thule*. I should have been an Atheist but for the fact that to my mind it was less difficult to believe in the existence of an intelligent creative Power, than to believe in the existence of the visible universe without such a Power.

In my case, unreasoning scepticism was the inevitable fruit of unreasoning faith.

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

THE late W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., the distinguished Examiner in Logic and Moral Philosophy, in London University, and Professor of Political Economy in University College, was a Unitarian. Dr. Jevons's attitude towards Spiritualism also is interesting to note. In a private letter to a gentleman resident in the colony, he writes: "I know of no movement within the present century that makes such vast pretensions, that is supported by such accumulated evidence, both heterogeneous and homogeneous, and yet that is so vitiated by fraud and imposture. Interesting, absorbing, enthralling, in some of its aspects, in others it is absolutely repulsive. Though in my own experience of the subject it has not presented itself in a very favourable light, still I know of nothing in the nature of things that should oppose its claims or deny it a just and great validity."

Lovers of rational Christianity will rejoice at the Rev. Charles Strong's return to Melbourne after a six-months' leave of absence. It is to be hoped that this eloquent and liberal-minded minister will not again be subjected to the "vain janglings" of Presbyteries or the spiteful bigotry of sectarian quacks. It is a matter of regret that Mr. Strong is about to lose his very accomplished and able coadjutor, the Rev. James Lambie, M.A., who will shortly return to Scotland.

SIR HENRY TYLER's prosecution of Messrs. Charles Bradlaugh, A. J. Ramsey, and G. W. Foote for blas-

pheny, is attracting some attention from Freethinkers. Mr. Foote writes: "The real fighting will commence in November; until then we shall be often skirmishing. Mr. Ramsey will be defended by counsel; Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Foote will conduct their own case."

In a very eloquent discourse on "The Future Life," by the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, B.A., forming part of an admirable series of lectures on *Unitarian Christianity*, the following suggestive paragraph occurs:—"Thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-creatures have borne testimony, and testimony that in any ordinary case would have been deemed by every one sufficient—that they had seen, and had speech of, friends who had in the body died away from this earth. I cannot, according to any modest or philosophical estimate of these facts, refuse to receive them as phenomenal, and possessing their own appropriate weight in any large and just estimate of the presumptive evidences connected with this subject."

THE REV. MINST J. SAVAGE, of Boston, one of America's most promising preachers, in his volume of sermons entitled "Belief about Man," makes the remark that "there is a great body of testimony stretching back into the distance of antiquity; testimony not confined to any religion, to any nation, to any race; testimony, not only of the poorest and most ignorant, but equally of the wisest men of all ages and times, to the belief that there have been at least occasional breakings through from some other sphere, or glimpses on this side of that other sphere. There is an amount of testimony so respectable that, were it given in evidence of anything else in the world, we should never dream of doubting it. Yet concerning so stupendous a fact as that, we do doubt, and perhaps as yet, for a time, we must. I have no sympathy with those who speak of these great matters with contempt."

TO THE "ORTHODOX" ALL OVER THE WORLD, OF ALL CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS.

BRETHREN,—When apostle Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, was brought before the Jewish Council by the Roman Centurion, as you will read in the twenty-third chapter of the Acts, perceiving that part of the Sanhedrin were composed of Pharisees and the other part of Sadducees, he cried out in the Council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, (and) concerning the hope and raising up of the dead, I am being judged." On his saying this a dispute began between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided; for the Sadducees said that there is no raising up of the dead, neither angel nor spirit, but the Pharisees admitted both. You will read further that "there arose a great uproar, and some of the Scribes on the side of the Pharisees stood up and strove, saying, we find no evil in this man, but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him let us not contend against God."

Now, men and brethren, listen to me; I earnestly entreat you all to do so: That which happened in the case of Paul is happening again in these days. We Spiritualists of the nineteenth century claim that God is again speaking to men in these days as He has done often before to the men of old, by the ministry of spirits and angels. I, for one, solemnly declare to you all that I know this is so. I affirm that an angel-ministry has once more returned to earth to prove to man by scientific facts the great truth now carped at, sneered at, and everywhere denied, even by you, that Death is simply a new birth, a raising up of the spirit body from the material form to life continued under changed conditions. We claim that these spirits and angels are often seen by us and communicate with us now precisely as they did in the days of old. Now, in all this there is no evil, except what springs from man's own stupid obstinacy, folly, and antagonism to God. If man chooses to misrepresent and misuse God's best spiritual light and truth and spirit-gifts to him, that is his own look out, not ours. If he makes light of, and contemptuously scorns these spiritual and holy things, why he does so at

his peril. Now, if these things be indeed so, if in these days ministering spirits and angels are speaking once more to many among us—and I testify with great delight and joy that such is indeed the case, for I know full well that these beloved beings, inhabitants of a bright and glorious world (how glorious you little know) have often spoken and still speak to me when, where, and how they please—then, brethren, let me just say to you all, take my advice, follow the wise example of those Scribes and Pharisees of old, and do not continue your perverse and foolish antagonism to the Great Father Spirit. A contest, believe me, in which you and those ministers who are herein leading you on to engage in it, in utter ignorance of its true nature, will most assuredly get the worst of it, if you and they, to bolster up your own irrational, man-invented prince-of-this-world dogmas and creeds, put yourselves into antagonism to the true glad tidings of Jesus of Nazareth, which we, earth's angels, and celestial angels are resolutely determined to restore to the world in the name of the Great Father Spirit, the only true and ever living God, and in the name also of the mighty Archangel who is our Leader, Him who was known of old time on earth by the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

THE "THEOSOPHIST."

THE September number of the *Theosophist*, recently received, completes the third volume of that unique and interesting journal, the contents of the present number being fully up to the standard. Two letters on "Esoteric Theosophy," by an Anglo-Indian, present and explain a portion of the Occult Philosophy in an easy and comprehensive manner, though they fail to carry conviction to us from the fact of their being opposed to our personal experiences in the realm of spirit. A letter from a Theosophist taking exception to a portion of Col. Olcott's address wherein he alludes to Electricity as "matter" is ably replied to by another Theosophist, who brings some cogent arguments in support of the Colonel's definition.

No. 3. "Fragments of Occult Truth," also appears in this issue, and will doubtless be read with considerable interest by Spiritualists, but being a party to the friendly controversy which appears under this heading, we think it undesirable to comment upon at present. Volume 4 commences with October number, and country friends who desire to subscribe can, by forwarding annual subscriptions to the office of this paper, have the *Theosophist* sent direct from India.

A SPIRITUAL IMPRESSION.

SOME years ago, in the early days of settlement at Port Lincoln, James C— remained at the hut of Mr. Telford, to prepare supper. He made a fire, rolled the paste with a piece of iron, put it in the camp oven, and walked to meet a friend. Almost immediately an unusual feeling came over him; he felt that something was the matter, or that he was going to be seriously ill. The further he walked away the worse he felt, so retraced his steps, but on returning to the hut he felt as well as ever; then he suddenly remembered that the pie crust had been rolled with a bar which had been used the day before by Mr. Telford to powder strychnine, and had not been wiped. The pie was quickly buried in the earth; but what unseen agency impressed him thus and really forced him to return? What or whoever it was, saved his own and Mr. Telford's life.

"THERE is no belief at once more sober, reasonable, probable, and natural, than that death is the passing out of the spirit, with spirit senses, into the spirit-world, where all things will be made manifest, and where that which has been sown will be reaped."—Rev. J. Pags Hopps.

THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.

BY WILLIAM DENTON.

SHIPS are we on the ocean of life sailing; the port we wish to gain is happiness. For this we spread our sails, and some pray heaven for prosperous gales. The desire for happiness is to humanity what the sun is to the solar system—the impeller of every motion, the grand controller of every body. Obedient to its influence every human being moves in his orbit, as obedient to the sun the planets swing in theirs. To gain happiness the sailor rides the rolling billow, faces the gale, and mounts the giddy mast when his bark dances over the waves. The traveller visits many lands, climbs rugged mountain peaks, that he may behold her; wades through snow-drifts, fights with giant icebergs in their frozen domain, or wades through burning sands of the south, that he may discover the print of her tiny foot. For happiness the miner delves in sunless caves, the aeronaut skims the clouds, the robber walks with stealthy tread, the murderer whets his knife, the politician harangues, the lawyer pleads, the lecturer speaks, the parson prays.

Though all vessels start for the port, how few gain it; false charts are numerous, sunken reefs abound. What wrecks strew the shore! Of the many travellers, who start for the city of bliss how few arrive there and dwell. Numbers are torn by wild beasts; many turn into thorny bye paths; some perish in quagmires and pitfalls, while others, lured by enemies in the guise of friends, are drugged, robbed, and perish by the way.

I purpose to make a beacon light for those vessels, to erect a guide-board here and there for these travellers, that may direct them on their course. In the pursuit of happiness, notwithstanding the many failures, we may have a reasonable prospect of success. The world is evidently constructed and governed on the principle of the greatest amount of happiness to the greatest number. Watch the clouds as drifted by the upper currents of the air they sail; they might have been all of the same shape, all the same dull grey; but what endless forms! What diversity of colour! they float along like proud vessels of all lands, whose flags are of every hue, careering over the ocean blue. See the heavens when night comes down, and the bright stars look into our souls with their beaming eyes. Listen to earth's myriad voices: "Man was made to be happy."

The rivers chant it as they flow,
The flowers breathe it as they blow,
The wild waves tell it to the shore,
The gay birds sing it evermore.

Destitute of flowers, the earth might have rushed through space, bearing its mighty burden, and all the machinery of the globe have worked harmoniously. Why this addition to the meadow's emerald green? Why this added glory to the earth? Mrs. Howitt says:—

"Then wherefore, wherefore were they made,
All dyed in rainbow light,
All fashioned with supremest grace,
Crisping day and night?
To comfort man, to whisper hope
When'er his faith grows dim,
That he who careth for the flowers
Will much more care for him."

It is certain that sources of pure enjoyment exist everywhere, fountains of which all may drink and happy be, and escape the misery that is so often at the present time their sad lot.

Much of our unhappiness is the result of mistakes, and one of the greatest mistakes made on this subject is to suppose that any one thing can make us permanently happy. We live by eating, but we do not live by eating alone; we live by breathing, by drinking, by sunlight, by sleep; and the man who should attend to one of these, regarding that as all-important, and neglecting the others, would pay the penalty of his folly. So is it with the acquisition of happiness; many things are necessary, and the neglect of one may be an effectual barrier to our enjoyment. A poor man looks out and sees Mr. Shoddy riding in his chariot drawn by

prancing horses, his wife in satin, lolling on a crimson cushion by his side. "If I could only be rich," says he, as he looks at the splendid vision; "if I could only be rich, then I should be happy." Henceforth his nights are spent in planning for this and his days in executing his plans. He denies himself all but the necessities of existence, and allows no moment to pass unimproved. Then riches flow in as rivers flow to the greedy sea; for almost anybody can be rich who will pay the price; a shilling becomes the seed for a hundred, and a hundred for a thousand; he buys land and he builds houses, watches his tenants as closely as a good man's conscience watches his actions; he adds shilling to shilling, pound to pound; his lands link hands with his neighbours; he is rich, but is he happy? he has the fifty thousand that he desired, but now happiness has doubled her price and can only be bought for a hundred thousand, and when the hundred thousand is obtained she demands a million. Avarice, like an insatiable devil, gnaws at his heart; age but tightens his grip on his money bags, till death clutches him by the throat and loosens his hold; when, with a yell of despair, he dies a miserable millionaire.

Many people make a similar mistake with regard to what they call religion. This they call the one thing needful. They hear it said—

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live!
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die."

They must then "get religion." To this end they besiege heaven with sighs, and groans, and prayers. They believe themselves deserving of eternal hell for their sins, and when they think themselves forgiven, they are happy; an artificial and unnatural excitement is produced, which they are taught to regard as religion; they are on the mountain top of enjoyment; they sing:

"My God is mine, and I am His,
What can I want besides?"

This to-day, but in a few days, since strong excitement cannot last long, and is invariably followed by depression, they are down in the valley of sadness and sorrow, only to be happy when aroused to shouting excitement again. Such persons are pendulums, swinging continually between the heaven of their hopes and the hell of their fears, God being praised for the one, and the devil and themselves blamed for the other.

There is no pill, potion, or powder that may cure our maladies; no magical incantation which we may utter, and our troubles fly; we need to attend practically to the various means that are necessary to secure what all so much desire.

First—*Be healthy.* Why, say some, "health is a matter over which we have no control; when we are healthy it is because our Heavenly Father sees that it is best we should be so, and when we are sick He is chastening us according to his own good pleasure and for our benefit." But we have learned that health has its laws; that obedience to those laws secure it, and disobedience is followed by disease, and that as a rule our health is in our own hands. Health is that condition of the body in which this wonderful harp of a thousand strings is in tune. To the sick man music comes and tunes her harp, but tunes in vain; her sweetest strain is torture to his throbbing brain. Nature woo him out to join the general dance by the murmur and sheen of bright waters, the hum of insects on the wing, the song of frolicking birds; but he has no feet for the exercise. The kindly light of day must be shut out with a thick curtain, and even the voice of affection must be hushed in his presence; torturing pains rack his body and becloud his mind; wearisome days and nights are given unto him; in the morning he says, "would God it were evening," and in the evening "would God it were morning;" he is unhappy himself, and a cause of unhappiness to others. Then, to be happy we need to be healthy, and to be healthy we must so live that all the organs of the body can perform their appropriate functions without disturbance, and obedience to a few simple rules will generally enable us to do this.

We need to breathe pure air, not once or twice a-day, but constantly. Around us is a great ocean of air, sixty miles deep, and enveloping the globe; what a shame it is that any human being should be put on short allowance; that our children should sicken and die, and our old people totter under the burden of diseases produced by the absence of that which crowds itself upon us and whose entrance can with difficulty be prevented. The heart, that mighty engine, is pumping with unwearied strokes and forcing into the lungs continually a river of poisoned blood, there to be purified by the oxygen of the air and return to supply the continual waste of the body. When the air is impure it is unable to purify the poisonous current, and it returns to the heart thick with disease and poisons at once the springs of life. Physiologists calculate that eight pounds of blood pass through the lungs of a full-grown person every minute, and that to purify this ten cubic feet of air are necessary. Everybody has heard of the Black Hole of Calcutta—a room fifteen feet square, with only two small windows on the same side to admit air; into this were crowded one hundred and forty-six Englishmen, and in ten hours only twenty-three were left alive. Schools and churches should be well ventilated, and especially bed-rooms, where we must spend nearly if not quite one-third of our time. Some people talk of night air being dangerous; it would be more dangerous to do without it. Since we must breathe by night, let the air be pure; up with the windows, or down with them; you cannot be healthy long if you live in a room where the air is poison. The air of a bed-room should be as pure when we leave it in the morning as it was in the evening when we entered it.

Light is also necessary for the health of human beings, as necessary as it is for the growth of cabbages. Who could raise a crop of corn in a cellar or a fashionable parlour? As far as the influence of the sunbeam is felt, life is possible, and where it is greatest the most numerous and highly developed forms of life are found. Botanists have long noticed that the vegetation on the southern slopes of hills and mountains is more highly developed than on the northern slopes. A potato growing in a cellar sends its pale stem direct for the nearest window, and if need be will travel twenty feet to get there. Our fashionable ladies who sit in darkened parlours, and look like blanched stalks of celery, ought to be as wise as the potato, and make for the light. Tadpoles excluded from the sunshine never become frogs; they simply grow to be large tadpoles. An eminent physician in New Orleans reports eight cases of yellow fever on the shady side of a street to one on the sunny side; and Dr. Lewis says, when the cholera ravaged Buffalo in '49 and '51, there were five cases on the shady side of the street and houses to one on the sunny side. It has long been noticed that persons living in caves, cellars, narrow dark streets, or deep valleys, are apt to produce deformed children. Sir A. Wylie affirms that the cases of disease on the dark side of an extensive barrack at St. Petersburg was uniformly for many years in the proportion of three to one to the side exposed to a strong light. Throw back the shutters, roll up the curtains, and let the sunlight in; shut it out no longer as an enemy, but welcome it as a dear friend.

Exercise is as needful as air and light. Man needs to labour for more reasons than one, and to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, is no curse and never was. The curse is in shirking a fair share of the world's work, and placing it on the shoulders of another. Labour gives vigour to the brain and strength to the muscle; it pulls down the old particles of the body, and then it is built up with new and elastic material, life flows through the veins with every pulsation of the heart, and happiness along with it.

Every human being who is able should spend two hours a-day in exercise in the open air; women by no means excepted. Never mind your lily cheeks, ladies, or your chalky hands; be willing to forego the fashion of being pale and interesting in order to be ruddy and healthy. You had better be brown as a berry and be

healthy, than be the poor etiolated things many of you are now. Remember the lines:

"Girls who rise early to walk apace
Steal roses from Aurora's face;
But when they yaw in bed till ten,
Aurora steals them back again."

Five-sixths of our diseases, some one remarks, are connected either by highways or byways with our stomachs. If so, and there is good reason for believing it true, it is high time that we paid more attention to our eating and drinking than we do. What shall we eat, and what shall we drink? become important questions, that we cannot, without detriment to ourselves, neglect. As a general rule the simpler our food is the better. We set on our tables too many dishes, which provoke the appetite, and intemperance in eating is the result. David prayed that the table of his enemies might be a trap. We might suppose his dreadful prayer was answered, and we were all his enemies. There are few men that have not been caught in this very trap. No pack-horse in creation is so overloaded, overworked, and abused as our stomachs. What wonder that they grumble! A man who has satisfied his appetite on beef and potatoes or bread, has had enough for one meal, and all pies, preserves, and cakes after it are to most persons quite detrimental. I suggest as a grace before meals, "From all pies, pickles, and preserves, good Lord deliver us." If those who spread our tables would see that this prayer is answered, I know of none that would be more immediately beneficial. We need, most sorely need, a reform in diet. Our women are roasting, boiling, stewing, frying machines, the great business of whose lives is to get up three intemperate meals a day, the eating of which poisons the well-springs of health, and consequently of enjoyment. Men labour intemperately to provide the means to obtain them, and then suffer the consequences of their intemperance. We eat too much flesh and too little fruit, too much hog and too little hominy. The poor Scot who lives on oatmeal cakes and skim milk is hardly as the granite hills of his fatherland, and dyspepsia is a thing he never heard of; it would puzzle him to tell where his stomach lies, for the lucky fellow never felt it in his life. The Irish peat-cutter and the English peasant, who live on the simplest fare, and do not see flesh oftener than once a-week, are rugged and hearty, their children pictures of blooming health, and it would be well if intelligent choice led us to live somewhat as poverty compels them.

How should we eat? Slowly, thoroughly; masticating the food and mixing it with saliva, that it may be prepared for the action of the gastric juice in the stomach. The way in which we hurry our food into the stomach, rafting it down with floods of coloured water in the shape of tea and coffee, is sadly destructive of health.

Abstain from all intoxicating drinks, and all else that wars with the healthy working of the system. Give your soul a good habitation to dwell in, one of which it will not be ashamed, for some men's souls are ashamed of their bodies, and leave them long before the lease has expired. Abandon tobacco in every form; let the soul's habitation be clean. Give the spirit a good instrument on which to play, and the music of joy may circle round you wherever you wander.

But a man may be healthy as the untamed steed that roams the prairie, yet every breath be drawn in sorrow and spent in sighs. Something more, then, is necessary than health of body. The mind must be healthy as well as the body; and, as from the harmonious action of the body a pleasurable thrill pervades the frame, so from the health of the soul flows bliss unspeakable. To be healthy it must also breathe; the air it needs is Freedom. Give a devil freedom, and there is no throne in heaven so high that he may not mount; make an angel a slave, and heaven itself becomes an intolerable hell. Cage an eagle, and though his bars be golden and his food choicest dainties, how he chafes! how mean and spiritless he looks! Where is the bird of the thunder? Close mewed, he pines for his native air. Break his bars, and away he goes screaming his joy to heaven. Freedom has glorified him; he is himself

again. Coop up the rill, leaping from its mountain source, and you have a stagnant pool for your pains. But give it freedom, let it have a continent to ramble over, and receiving accessions from a thousand sources, it rolls its waters to the ocean, a majestic river. An oak in a flower pot, in a lady's parlour, is but a small sickly affair, but set it out, though on a moor land, bleak and barren, though winter's rudest blasts may shake it to its finest roots, and lightning scar it indelibly, yet shall it grow to be a tower of strength, a model of beauty, and a country's pride.

Man enslaved is man a baby, as long as his slavery lasts, too often playing with his chains and boasting of the badges of his servitude.

First, man needs physical freedom: the possession of his own body and soul; the right to go where he pleases and do as he pleases, so that he injures not another. The right to myself, which necessarily carries with it the right of every other being to himself, is the primal right of all; destitute of which, human beings could have no rights at all. Take from me my right to myself and to take root, so that I may grow into manhood, is impossible. I am a fleecy cloud, on the airy ocean, at the mercy of every breeze that blows. If I may take away a man's right to himself because his skin is black, he may take away mine because mine is white; for who shall decide whether rights go with black or white skins? Make me the slave of another, and his law becomes my will; I must labour for his happiness regardless of my own. The charter of freedom that contains my name, contains, I find, the name of every human soul.

Man needs mental freedom to secure happiness. Tell him that for the free exercise of his thoughts, hell gapes to receive him; that to cherish a doubt is to earn damnation, and if he believes you how can he be happy? Doubts will arise, and the busy soul is unwilling, as it is unable, to sit idly with open mouth and receive unquestioned the dogmas presented to it. Then comes war between reason and blind faith, and while it continues unhappiness dwells within. Our churches abound with miserable members who are constantly saying to the sceptical soul within them that will rise and question, "down, busy devil, down." But it only sits down, again to rise and repeat its questions that demand an answer; and until that answer is given, disquietude alone is theirs. Lull the soul to sleep with opiates, asphyxiate it with brimstone, it will still awaken and lash with fury those who deal with it so madly.

To be a happy man you must be mentally free to range from deepest hell to highest heaven; free to test Bibles and interrogate gods. The idea that man's freedom only extends so far; that there are subjects too sacred for investigation, has palmed upon the world gods, in whose presence States-prison criminals may be written saints, and dogmas that shock the reason of a savage.

Fear is a slave-holder, whose serfs may be numbered by millions. They crawl in the dust, nor dare to lift their trembling eyelids and take one manly look at the scare-crows that terrify them.

Man cannot be delivered from these curses till they are free; when they are, the curtain that has been hung before them, which must not be drawn on one side lest the gods destroy them, will be riven, and the light of a joyous morning dawn on benighted millions.

Tell a man that to eat when he is hungry and drink when he is thirsty is a deadly sin, and if he believes you how can he be happy? These are natural desires, and if they are not gratified, misery must follow, and if they are gratified, the man's false faith makes him miserable on account of their gratification. The soul hungers and thirsts for knowledge; it naturally accepts, when enlightened, what is reasonable and rejects what is otherwise; and if for this acceptance it is thought that eternal torments await it, what happiness can there be for the doomed wretch who sees hell at every step gaping to receive him? If, on the other hand, he resolutely checks these instincts of the soul, he does violence to his nature, and terribly does that nature revenge itself on the unhappy man. Snap the chains, then, O soul, whether imposed by president, pope, or priest,

conference or creed, in the name of constitution, Bible, or God. The highest thing to man in the universe is the soul within, and to be happy that must be free first and last, let what will be destroyed to achieve that freedom.

The soul to be healthy, and consequently happy, must be fed. Not more do men's bodies need food than their souls. Knowledge is the food of the soul; therefore my brother, "get knowledge, and in all thy getting, get understanding." We need it, first, to increase our capacity for happiness. Every creature possesses a capacity for enjoyment in proportion to the range of its faculties. The blind polyp, that has no sense but feeling, is circumscribed in its capacity for happiness by the boundary of this sense, and loses all that enjoyment that might come by sight and sound. The snail that crawls on the pathway takes in pleasure with its eyes; it enjoys more, for its intellectual range is wider. The dog's is wider still; the savage enjoys more, and the philosopher most of all. A Hottentot being asked what was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen, replied, "pots full of meat." For him the sun shone in vain, save to make grass grow for his cattle; and the bliss that nature pours out like a fountain, he had no vessel to receive. Alas! we are Hottentots all. For us a thousand voices sing in vain; a thousand streams of enjoyment are flowing; but, like Tantalus, though dying of thirst, we may not drink.

How many sources of enjoyment are closed to the blind. The sun shines, the stars twinkle, the rainbow spans the sky with its beauteous arch, Spring inweaves earth's carpet with a myriad flowers; but through those darkened windows comes no ray of all this glory. We pity their fate, but more pitiable is the fate of the intellectually and spiritually blind, who "seeing see not, hearing they hear not, and perceiving they do not understand." A man sees through every organ of his brain, and he sees clearly and happily in proportion to the thorough and harmonious cultivation of those organs. If we had no organ of colour, it would be impossible to view the tints of the rose, or the glory of the rainbow; a dreary monotony would weary the eye and wrap the world in gloom. Destitute of the organs of tune and time, "Rule Britannia" and the "Old Hundred" would be undistinguishable from each other, and the squeaking of an ungreased axle would be as sweet music as the voice of a Jenny Lind. In proportion to the perfection of these organs is the clearness of our perception and the happiness that we derive from their use. There is all possible difference in the enjoyment derived by different persons from the same concert, picture gallery, or landscape, depending principally upon the difference in their mental culture. There are gardeners who enjoy the grounds they cultivate more by far than the owners; and who own them therefore in a higher sense than the mere possessors of the title deeds. We learn to read, and reading becomes a source of happiness; learn to play on musical instruments, and they give joy to us and to others. Learn Astronomy, and the heaven's ray into our souls delight. Become familiar with Geology, and the rude stones by the wayside administer to our pleasure. Study botany, and the very plants become ministers of bliss, and the cup of every flower is brimful of enjoyment for you.

Every faculty hungers, and all need their appropriate food; and if this is not supplied, disquietude or misery is the consequence. Some are more imperative in their demands than others, and if not fed, the consequences are disastrous. If we cultivate tune she introduces us to a troop of angels; cultivate benevolence, and her kindly face is ever smiling upon us, and in trouble her soothing hand bids sorrow cease. Cultivate Spirituality and death is dead, and a heaven of radiant delight appears beyond the gloomy grave.

Be at peace with yourself, having at all times the approbation of your own soul. What matters it if the king calls you brother, and all the world throws up its cap and cries "well done," if your soul smites you on the cheek and writes villain in burning letters on your brain? Who can be happy when his evil deeds haunt him like arming ghosts that cannot be laid, and give him rest neither day nor night? A good conscience,

says some one, is the best night-cap. So it is; and the best day-cap too. Buy it whatever the price, and wear it be the fashion what it may.

Conscience has been called the God within us. Here He sits enthroned; His all-seeing eye beholds every deed. Is it dark? His eye can pierce the midnight gloom; no sound, though loud as thunder, can baffle His ears; go to the Poles or farthest Indies, still moves along the faithful, all-recording Scribe who never wearies and never forgets.

The approbation of the soul can only be secured by doing at all times what it commands. True, it may from false education or hereditary bias desire us to do what Nature forbids, and we may, obeying it, wander in the bye-ways of wrong; but what then? It is better for us to go wrong, obeying the voice within, than to go right, obeying the voice without, that is contrary to it. If we do wrong, pains and penalties overtake us—Nature's messengers sent to declare the truth to us; our road is beset with thorns and briars; pitfalls and precipices abound, and the farther we go the more numerous they become, till we are compelled to see that the road we have chosen is wrong, and the soul says, "return," as freely as it once said, "forward." Such an experience instructs us; we never forget what we thus learn. Obey the law of another, and disobey your own sense of right, and you are at war with yourself, and if in obeying another you discover that he is right and you wrong, you are led habitually to disregard the suggestions of the soul within, are shorn of your manhood, become an imbecile, having no inherent power, a thistle-down on the breeze, rising, falling, floated higher and thither as the winds around may happen to blow.

The man who lacks the approbation of himself, goes skulking through the world a miserable coward, afraid of his shadow, ever looking over his shoulder and seeing in every bush an enemy ready to strike him to the heart. He may become a gloomy Caligula, or a mad Nero—sometimes a monster, but never a true man. Napoleon the little, by lying, treachery, and wholesale murder, climbed into a throne and received the homage of a gaping crowd; but a monument of infamy is reared to him in the hearts of all who remember his villainous deeds, and the least in the kingdom of right is greater than he. Henry the Eighth, "that lump of besotted beastliness," while seated on the throne, was His most gracious Majesty, surrounded with sycophantic crowds, who hailed him God's anointed and defender of the faith; but where is the beggar that would change places with him now, and bear the load that this wretch is doomed to carry?

Let the soul say "well done," and what are the exactions of a multitude? Idle wind; they cry crucify him! crucify him! but the peans of the exultant spirit reduce that cry to the faintest whisper. Let the dungeon open its ponderous jaws, the conscientious captive can smile, and the blazing fagots on which the martyr lies become a bed of roses. The God that rewards you dwells within; no manly deed escapes unnoticed; the devil who torments you dwells within, too, and through the fires of his hell the guilty soul must pass.

Be busy. Somebody has said, "an idle man tempts the very devil, but an industrious man runs so fast the devil cannot overtake him." Have an object in life worthy of you, and labour for its accomplishment, and this will save you from a multitude of temptations and preserve you from follies and crimes into which the unoccupied are continually falling.

See Galileo shaping his glasses and fixing his first rude telescopic tube; how his heart throbs and his pulses beat with joy as he points it to the sky and beholds Jupiter's attendant moons revolving around their parent orb. Compare the happiness of an Arkwright, a Watt, a Fulton, scheming, contriving, planning, labouring by day and thinking by night, to accomplish some end worthy of them, because beneficial to humanity, with the feeling of a lazy loafer, who thinks it the greatest of privileges to do nothing, and barters for it health and bliss.

Thousands are living miserable, objectless lives that might know the bliss of angels if they would but listen and learn and live this sensible gospel: "find thy work

and do it." There's joy in the earth and the miner digs it out; there's bliss in the soil and the farmer ploughs it out; happiness in the iron, and the blacksmith beats it out with his ponderous sledge, while the village resounds with the song his anvil sings; it beams from the waves, and is reflected into the soul of the adventurous mariner; it lurks in books, it babbles in the brooks, it sleeps in the sparry caves, it breathes from the orchard in spring; it is every where for the true lover of Nature who seeks it aright. Better scrape up dirt on the streets in a cold day than rust in idleness and eat out your soul with the care that idleness breeds.

Obtain, if possible, congenial companionship. We are social beings, and our social faculties, like so many mouths, demand to be fed. A man cannot be happy when hunger has him in his clutches and his body demands nourishment that he cannot obtain. Neither can the soul when its hungers are ungratified. How necessary to the child is the mother; what joy it drinks from her presence and her tones! How necessary to the girl the friend into whose ear she can pour her artless tale, and receive her friend's in return; and how necessary to the man the woman; to their complete happiness, the wife, the husband. You remember the lament put into the mouth of Robinson Crusoe by Cowper:

"I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
Oh Solitude, where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
Than reign in this horrible place."

The man who attempts to go through life alone is doubling his difficulties, increasing his sorrows, souring his temper, and shortening his life. Death hastens to rid the earth of his presence, that some more congenial man may take his place.

But you who are married remember that your wife needs freedom no less than you; you have no more right to decide what she shall eat, drink, or wear, than she has to decide for you. Her right to herself, in every sense, is no less sacred than yours to yourself, and if you play the tyrant your wife will be unhappy, and her unhappiness will distil in bitter drops into the cup that you must drink.

Aim to make others happy. There is no better recipe for happiness than this,

"Hence to some work of high and holy lore
If thou an Angel's happiness would know."

Our happiness is bound up with the happiness of those who are around us; we cannot increase theirs without adding to our own. "Give and it shall be given unto you, bestow and ye shall receive." We are so constituted that it is next to impossible for us to be happy alone. We cannot make a fire with one stick. The man who lights his neighbor's lamp does not dim the lustre of his own; and the man who instructs his fellows deepens the impression on his own mind. He, who buttons the great coat of his selfishness around him, will go shivering through the world unclad by all; while he who lights the fire of benevolence will be blessed by its warmth even more than those for whom it was lit.

Obtain rational views of religion and future life. How can a man be happy who believes in a god that is no better than a devil, who believes that he can behold unmoved the unutterable woe of millions? How can that mother be happy who believes her child has gone to "that place where hope never comes?" The person who believes death to be an eternal sleep may be much happier, though he lacks what sheds a halo of bliss around the lives of those to whom future life and future bliss is an assured fact. Give us absolute assurance that existence is guaranteed us; where future advancement is not only possible, but most probable, because conditions are more favourable than they are here, and what need we fear? Come want or woe, floods, fires, pestilences, enemies as numerous as the stars, we will still rejoice. Death that may come to us as the result, comes, if we are true to ourselves, only to unite us with the host of friends who have left us; to give us a wider field from which to glean happiness, and enlarge continually our capacity for knowledge and bliss.

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, when 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.]

Good morning, sir,—I have often wished to visit Melbourne again, having spent a happy time during my brief stay in the city. What a change since then! I have realised, and now know beyond all doubt, the spirit-world and all its beauties. When I was in this city, I occupied the pulpit of the Independent Church in Collins Street. On passing into the spirit-world, I could soon see that I had blinded my eyes to some of the grandest and greatest truths in God's universe. I felt sorry that I had not made better use of my powers, that I had not stopped to find out whether this thing was true or not. I remember while staying in this city a lady who was, I presume, a Spiritualist, who claimed acquaintance with me, having lived in South Wales. However, the opportunity passed, and having other important business in hand, I was not able to acquiesce in the lady's wishes. I am sorry now, because it might have been the turning point of my life. Passing over a great deal of my life, during the latter part of it I felt my physical organisation becoming weaker, and I appeared to see visions of the spiritual world. As soon as I passed into the spirit-world and became conscious of my existence I saw trees and mountains, and scenery so gorgeous that it would be utterly impossible to describe it. I remember when I visited your city I went to a place called Fernshaw. I thought it one of the grandest sights I had ever beheld, yet—though not forgetting how beautiful the earth is—I must acknowledge that the scenery of the spirit-world is very far beyond it. Many friends whom I had known in London and in South Wales came forward to greet me, and seemed to be delighted, and indeed they could not have given me a more hearty welcome. They wished me at once to commence, and give them a long account of my travels on earth, but I found to my astonishment I was not able. I could not talk much, for my strength would not allow me. This surprised me, because I had always understood that in the next life we should never get weary or tired, but I found it was different, and things appear much the same in spirit-life as they do on earth, only we are working in a more harmonious condition. I am pleased that I can come this morning. It is a pleasure for me that I can add my testimony to others in the work of the spirit. It may appear strange to some to know that I have visited your circle, but strange as it may appear I know it is allowed, and we can come back and speak to you, with God's blessing resting upon us. And when the world once sees this then they will become better fitted to enter into the spiritual condition. Farewell.

THOMAS JONES.

Good morning, friends,—I have great pleasure in meeting you both this morning. I have been very much interested in my experience in spirit-life, and I promised to come and speak to you on the subject of Materialisation. During my earth-life I devoted much of my time to the phenomena of Spiritualism, and I can safely say that it kept me from travelling into the dark crevices of materialism. This I have found has been a great blessing to my spiritual development. I have of late been trying to understand more of the laws that govern the manifestations. I agree that to the scientific mind it seems impossible, but so do the more simple phases, such as direct slate-writing. I find there are two most essential conditions in a circle held for materialisation. First, a circle must be in a state of harmony, and leave impure thoughts outside. Second, the medium is required to be in a similar condition, and to feel at perfect ease and at home

with the circle. Then come the spiritual conditions that are required by the controlling spirits. They must be in harmony with the medium and circle, and if they are in advance of the circle they are bound for the time to come down to the condition, development, and aspirations of the medium and sitters. I see, before it can be understood, the circles must be put on a higher footing than that of a show, and spirits must have purer motives than just manifesting themselves to enable their mediums to make a few dollars. As soon as the circles become purified, manifestations will come more spontaneously, and a more intelligent class of spirits will manifest themselves. Now, concerning the laws I have much to say. It is necessary for all to understand that in spirit-life we have bodies perfect and symmetrical the same as on the earth, and to us they are substantial, and I am obliged to exclaim as many have done before, that the spirit-life is the substantial and real life, while the earth-life is in comparison only shadowy and a dream. The spirit-friends come within the radius of the circle. As soon as they enter they partake more or less of the elements or mediumistic forces emanating from the circle. I advocate, and experience teaches me it is necessary for the completion of materialisation, that the medium should be secluded from the gaze of the circle. But first be assured of the honesty of the medium, the honesty of the circle, and of the spirit-friends. Then you can rely upon the manifestations, and allow the spirit-friends, who are the factors, to prove, as they always do, their truthfulness and genuineness. I was with you and the circle when you each went and grasped hold of the hand of the medium. I can see that the medium could not be exposed to the light without pain or suffering to himself or the spirit-friends. To the investigator who has gone on and worked up the path of progression, full-form materialisation is one of the grandest phenomena in the universe. This being so, then I consider you cannot be too careful as to the conditions, and the mental capacity of those you admit into the circle. I shall speak further on this.

EPES SARGENT.

SYDNEY LETTER.

Tempus fugit cito pede—really it is surprising how quickly the months fly by—how soon the twilight follows upon the day dawn, and summer ere we have fully realised the departure of the winter. All life is transient, and all our pleasures and sorrows "here to-day and gone to-morrow."

Since I last wrote you, Mrs. Bamford has returned to your city, the revival that her energetic presence caused amongst us has subsided, and once more we are working as we did before—slowly, silently, surely. But the stimulus the good lady has given to the Spiritualistic cause has given a healthier tone and infused more vitality into that "ism" which must eventually become universal. It is sapping the foundations of modern mythology or theology, though I prefer the former as being a more appropriate application. Yet with all we have much of the old still present. Human nature is strangely conservative, and always loves best whatever is sanctified by age and custom. Ministers of the Gospel are not all as liberal and advanced as your worthy Anglican Bishop—I wish they were. So we have had a day set apart for rain praying, but, contra to the prognostications of the professional "rain makers," without any results. This rain praying business always savors to me of consummate egotism. It seems almost analogous to a want of confidence meeting where the following resolution is passed,—“That we, not having sufficient confidence in the wisdom of the All Father, would respectfully bring under his notice the fact that his rain laws are very defective, and that in our opinion they should be remodelled in accordance with our plans.” I do not suppose it ever presents itself thusly to these ecclesiastics. In all probability they conceive the Jehovah as somewhat absent-minded, and

that it is only right they should play the taskmaster by recalling to his memory the fact that his children are dying of thirst. This would be quite unnecessary towards an earthly father, but then the Lord is so different, "he marks each sparrow's fall." Still this may be the reason why he neglects his youngest offspring; but he never does, he gives us laws, and if we disobey them the guilt is on our own heads, not his. Another triumph for Freethought—the Art Gallery is open on Sundays. Ministers of God's Gospel are trembling in their shoes. The men who have Truth (*sic*) on their side—an infallible Book, an infallible God—are actually afraid, and are mud throwing and slander slinging from their "coward's castles" with a fervor that reminds one strongly of the "larrikin" who they say signed the petition and would frequent the Art Temple. The Gallery was opened on the 15th inst. for the first time, the attendance for the afternoon being nearly 1,200 per hour, or 3,500 for three hours. The audience was most orderly and intellectual, while a working man was heard to say as he came out, "It has taken a very long time to get it open, but it will be a very long time before it is closed again."

The weather of late has been abnormally hot and severe. I am glad of it. Nature is always kind. The hot burning winds, disagreeable as they are, dry up our fever beds and destroy the germs of pestilential disease. Joseph Cook has gone, and this is why I bless the hot winds and the prolonged drought. Of course you well know he only came to recoup his health, not his pocket; but if his friends would insist upon paying his expenses and presenting him with £40 for two hours' gas we must not blame him. It was quite an oversight on his part that the Christian Young Men did not receive any donation in return for their valuable services.

Some time ago, when he was crossing from Tasmania to Melbourne, the day being Sunday he was asked as a favor to officiate. This he declined to do, saying "It is not my custom to preach unless my services are well paid for." If memory serves me it is the Devil who must always be paid in full for his services, at least so the Rev. Joseph says, and he ought to know. But let us be charitable, for we are not free from blemish, the great difference being that we expose fraud, while they too often foster it. Listen! At a meeting of the Liberal Association, N.S.W., the question of the desirability of engaging a lecturer was brought up, when Mr. Walker's name was mentioned. The chairman thereupon arose, and a resolution having been put was carried unanimously that his name be not mentioned in this committee, "For he may turn out as false and deceitful to us as he has done to the Spiritualists." Two-thirds of this committee are Freethinkers and Materialists. Pills, even sugar-coated, are not very palatable, but then the person in question has a large and convenient swallow. Speaking of lecturers reminds me of an indefatigable worker—whose name I am not sure whether I am at liberty to give—who has been one of the leading spirits in our Progressive Lyceum (which by the way has entered upon a new and auspicious career in a new hall, which is a decided improvement upon the old one), and who has successfully inaugurated Sunday evening Services in the City Hall. The platform is designated a free one, and truly it is, for all shades of opinion find expression on it, and as long as it is presided over by the gentleman in question I have little doubt of its success.

In accordance with an old and much revered saying—"Troubles never come singly," to my thinking it applies equally to pleasures; for no sooner has one visitor left us than another appears upon the scene, Mr. Veevers, an old and well-known worker in the Lyceum movement, almost as favorably known in Sydney as with you. I like these interchanges, I wish they could be oftener. We cannot calculate their good, for I am sure they bind us closer together, and help to foster that good fellowship and harmony of thought and action that should always be ours. For let us remember our lives are our religion, and it is God-like and noble just in proportion as we ourselves make it.

BETA.

THE MATERIALISATION CIRCLE.

THESE séances have been continued during the past month with success, and satisfaction to a number of visitors, although there have been so far no fresh developments to chronicle. The last sitting was the best of the month's series, with three visitors present. The voice of Peter was clear and strong; he conversed upon a variety of topics. Zion manifested with great vigour, swinging a heavy wooden chair high over his head in one hand, and was then very distinctly visible, standing in the angle formed by the walls across which the curtain stretches. While in this position he several times drew the curtain back to show the medium. Geordie presented himself, remaining in the materialised form for an unusually long time, during which he exhibited great vigour and activity; he shook hands with all the sitters, bent forward to each of the visitors in turn so as to bring his face within an inch of their eyes, his features being thus distinctly visible to them, and lifted their hands to his face. After each time of doing this he stood upright for an instant and passed his hand across his eyes as though to steady and recover himself. He then stood for several minutes immediately in front of the sitters, separating a bunch of flowers and handing them round. He repeatedly pushed back the curtain, and showed the medium. He stood at the desk and wrote a message, which he handed to one of the visitors, and then returning fetched from the window-sill the 14-lb. stone and placed it in the hands of the same gentleman. He sat down in the chair beside Mr. Carson for a short time, and then rising advanced to the window, which he opened and allowed the moonlight to stream in upon him; after which he bade farewell. He was followed by Mrs. Cobham, who also came out strongly; by Peter, and by "Charity"—whose slender form and small feminine foot presented an excellent contrast to the muscular form of Geordie, as did her graceful movements to his masculine bearing. The drapery in which she is enveloped is distinguishable for its beautiful semi-transparency, which is the case with the female forms generally, while that pertaining to the male forms seems of thicker texture. The child "Lily" made an attempt to show herself, but without success. Skiwauckie followed, giving some advice, in his broken English, to two mediums present.

The *Banner of Light*, for Sept. 2nd, republishes in *extenso* our July summary of the phenomena. The *Revue Spirite*, published in Paris, has a translation of some portions of the weighing and measuring experiments; and "M. A. (Oxon.)," in *Light*, quotes from the summary at length, pronounces it "one of the best records of prolonged investigation he has met with;" and further states, "I have submitted it to impartial criticism, with the full belief that it will stand it."

With reference to the signed address mentioned in our last, Mr. Spriggs, while thanking his friends for their expressions of friendship, considers that its publication would be inconsistent with the fact that he has never courted publicity, though always gratified to see the phenomena occurring through his mediumship placed on record.

The *Pall Mall Budget* of July 28 relates a remarkable coincidence mentioned by the Press Association correspondent at Plymouth. "On Tuesday evening in the previous week a young man residing at Davenport called upon the editor of the *Western Daily Mercury* and asked if any telegrams had been received giving the names of Englishmen killed during that day in Alexandria. He said that during the afternoon the mother and wife of a petty officer named Revington, serving in Alexandria, had what they regarded as 'a token of his death.' They were sitting together in their house when they heard, or thought they heard, the voice of the absent son and husband say 'Mother!' three times. Nothing had been heard about Revington! at the newspaper office, but on Wednesday the relatives received a telegram from the Admiralty stating that he was shot in the streets of Alexandria on Tuesday while serving on police duty.—*Argus*, Sept. 18.

APPROACHING INTERNATIONAL ANTI-VACCINATION CONGRESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

It will interest some of your readers to learn that arrangements are in active progress for holding the Third International Anti-Vaccination Congress at Berlin in the month of November, when many distinguished professors of medicine and hygiene, statisticians, publicists and jurists have already promised to be present to take part in the proceedings, and the executive committee are anxious that Victoria and South Australia should be represented. Amongst those who are interested in this international movement against compulsory disease are Mr. Herbert Spencer; Prof. F. W. Newman, Emeritus Professor; Prof. Mayor of Cambridge University; Dr. Fabius, Professor of Jurisprudence, Amsterdam; Dr. G. F. Kolb, Member Extraordinary of the Royal Statistical Commission of Bavaria; Dr. Emory J. Coderre, Professor of Materia Medica, Victoria University, Montreal; Prof. Moses Coit Tyler, of Cornell University, New York; Dr. Robert Collyer, of New York; Rektor P. A. Siljeström of Sweden, P. A. Taylor Esq., M.P.; C. H. Hopwood Esq., M.P.; etc. etc. The grounds for this opposition are the accumulation of unimpeachable evidence that while on the one hand the municipal and national statistical returns from all European States demonstrate that vaccination, both humanized and bovine, as practised for eighty years, has had no influence in either arresting or diminishing small-pox, it has, on the other hand been the means of inducing a variety of frightful disorders, thereby increasing infant mortality, and deteriorating the public health. A bill is now before the House of Commons for the repeal of the Compulsory Clauses of the Vaccination Acts, which has passed the first reading by a majority of forty on a division, including the Prime Minister, Mr. W. Gladstone, Mr. John Bright, Mr. W. E. Forster, Sir William Harcourt, Lord Hartington, Sir Chas. Dilke, Mr P. A. Taylor, and the leading members of the liberal party; the opponents being chiefly Home Rulers and Obstructionists. The second reading is announced for the 9th August but it is not expected to come off before the Autumn Session, owing to obstruction to ordinary legislation, caused by the calamitous state of affairs in Ireland, and Egypt.

A few weeks ago Mr. C. H. Hopwood called attention to the tragedy in Algiers, fifty-eight young recruits of the French Regiment of Zouaves having been inoculated with the most terrible of all diseases by vaccination, as reported by certain Algerian French and English journals. The President of the Local Government Board stated that he had directed another application to be addressed to the Foreign Office for further details as to this painful disaster.

I am, sir, yours faithfully,

WILLIAM TEBB.

7 Albert Road, Regent's Park, London,
July 24th, 1882

SOUL READING.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

Sir—With delight I hail an advertisement in your recent issue of the *Harbinger* announcing the Psychometrical powers of Mrs. Severance, White Water, U.S., to the Australian public. When such powers are developed, as in the instance of this lady, then they are truly astounding, and confer fertile blessings on all such as may avail themselves of her services.

When the soul goes forth into the realm of causes to search and enquire for the spiritual causes, that may lead to physical or spiritual effects which prove to be either benefits or penalties, according to the weal or woe that is experienced in our being—this is what may be called Psychometry. This spiritual gift may be existent in an individual merely in a physical plane, which would be the mere viewing of distant or remote persons, subjects, and things, their motions and physical surroundings, without the cognizance of the spiritual causes from which such phenomena have their source.

But when the psychometrist is moving on a higher plane, having perceptions of spiritual phenomena, seeing deep into the workings of nature how spiritual causes are underlying physical effects, then the correlations, actions, and reactions of all influences are perceived and understood, and we behold one of those few minds of this sphere having reached unfoldment which not many with the organisations of our present state of psychological development have as yet attained.

From personal experience I can testify to Mrs. Severance's development, which is of a high order on this plane. The sensing of the hidden gifts, both spiritual and intellectual, the advice how to awaken, and counsel how to cultivate them, show that her psychometric powers are true and correct, and subsequently proven to be so when the person has lived according to her guidance. The law of individual being, which is different in each person, having been correctly laid down for our guidance, to heighten the physical health invigorate the intellect, and develop our spiritual nature, is most decidedly and most surely a step towards harmonising ourselves. Our attention is directed to defects, if there are any, how to eradicate them, also to the affectional part of our nature, the cultivation of our social faculties, how we should direct our thoughts, what should compose our diet, how and when to eat, and what not.

We have a goal to which we aspire, and in our ignorance try to accomplish our object by going a circuitous path, leading not seldom through an entanglement of obstructions, which we do not rightly comprehend, and remain therein, like being lost in a fog, or spiritual darkness, and a mass of complications; but when a light is held up before our eyes, the entanglement of obstructions unravels, and our path mapped out, how to surmount or avoid them, then this fog is dissipated, and where there was spiritual darkness before, is now spiritual illumination. In this state, then, one may travel onward and progress towards the soul's highest aspiration joyously and in peace.

I will not, as I have drawn out my letter to a considerable length already, enlarge upon the delineation of character or peculiarities thereof; but merely call attention to the advertisement I alluded to in the beginning of my letter, and remain yours, &c.

JOHN TRENT.

SPIRITUALISTIC CAMP MEETINGS.

CAMP meetings have become an institution amongst the Spiritualists of America, and appear to exercise a powerful influence in the dissemination of the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism there. A tract of land is engaged in some picturesque spot on which central buildings are erected, and annually a convocation of speakers and mediums assemble and inaugurate a meeting lasting from one to four weeks. The ground is let out in lots for those who bring their own tents, and numbers are erected by the committee and let at reasonable rates for the term. Several hundred families usually avail themselves of these facilities, and every thing is done by the committee to make the meeting pleasant and enjoyable as well as instructive. A fine band gives two concerts daily, and another furnishes music for dancing six days in the week. Every day a public lecture is given by some talented speaker often followed by an exhibition of test mediumship from the platform, and many well known mediums give sances both day and night. On Sundays the camp is visited by great numbers of people from the surrounding districts, and it is no uncommon thing for a speaker to address an audience of from Five to Ten Thousand people. The following account of last year's meeting from the *Saratoga Sun* will give a good idea of the extent and importance of these gatherings:—

"Lake Pleasant is in the State of Massachusetts, on the line of the Fitchburg railroad, about thirty miles east of the Hoosac Tunnel. The lake proper is a beautiful little sheet of water, about two miles in circumference, with bold and well wooded banks. It lies near the railroad, its waters lapping its embankments. Immediately bordering upon this lake are about one hundred acres of land devoted to the purpose of camp meeting grounds, and for this peculiar use they are certainly admirably adapted, being well-

wooded, and of that sandy nature that prevents the accumulation of any surface water. The outlet of the lake is in the midst of the camp grounds, making a perfect drainage.

The camp ground contains now more than five hundred cottages and tents. All these are very tasty, and many of them large and homelike. It is estimated that yesterday there were four thousand people here. On the grounds is a spacious laundry, a steam engine for power, a post office, printing office, a telegraph office, stores, markets, carpenters and painters at work, and all the trades and occupations necessary to provide for the temporary wants of so many people. And it is seldom you see so many happy and contented people together. And then there is a splendid large dancing pavilion, covered and decorated, with a floor as large and perfect as that of Congress Hall ball room. This is open every afternoon and evening for dancing, the music being furnished by the orchestra instruments of Russell's famous Fitchburg band; and this splendid band, of twenty-five pieces, gives free concerts—morning, afternoon and evening—to the real delight of thousands of admiring and applauding listeners.

In August each year these grounds are for the holding of the Annual Camp Meeting of the New England Spiritualists, who are very numerous and intelligent and prosperous and increasing. They are now holding their eighth annual camp meeting, and under the most encouraging auspices. For the purpose, the accommodations are ample and very inviting. The grand stand, for speaking, is near the shore of the lake, at the foot of a well-shaded side-hill, and which is covered with rows and rows of seats in half circle, with comfortable backs, and sufficiently numerous to accommodate from two to three thousand people. At this grand stand there is speaking every day by the most distinguished and able and eloquent men and women Spiritualists in the country. There is also a conference tent in which meetings are held daily, and these meetings are of a very elevating and impressive character, in which is taught the Religion of Good Deeds, with Christ as inspiring exemplar and God as the creator and friend of man. Upon this basis each worshipper strives for progress, and for the possession of those spiritual gifts which prepare the soul for the largest enjoyment of its home beyond the grave.

DEATH OF MR. JAMES SHAW.

MR. JAMES SHAW, long and favourably known as one of the pioneer Spiritualists of Castlemaine, left his earthly tenement after a short illness, and passed on to the summer land on Wednesday last.

Mr. Shaw commenced the investigation of Spiritualism about fourteen years since, and as soon as he became satisfied of its facts, went energetically into the work of disseminating the knowledge which he had found so valuable. Although a working tradesman of frugal habits, he was liberal, generous, and self-sacrificing, not only in the cause he had espoused, but in charitable consideration for the poor and needy. The Lyceum is indebted to him for books to the value of five pounds, and the Public Library for upwards of fifty volumes of standard Spiritualistic works. During the existence of the Castlemaine Lyceum, Mr. Shaw not only gave material assistance to its maintenance, but gave an annual picnic to the children at his own expense. Few men have worked so assiduously and unobtrusively for the advancement of Spiritualism and reforms connected with it as our friend, who was a good man in every sense of the word, and whose departure from this side will be regretted by all who knew him. His body, which was buried in the Campbell's Creek Cemetery, was followed by a large number of friends, including a detachment of the Oddfellows, of which order he was a member, and the coffin, which was literally covered with beautiful flowers, having been deposited over the grave, Judge Leech delivered a feeling and appropriate address, showing wherein Spiritualism harmonised with Christianity in the belief of the Spiritual nature of man and his future existence; but Spiritualists professed to have a knowledge of the latter by intercourse with their friends in the spirit-world. He spoke of his friend, Mr. Shaw, as a good and noble man when in the orthodox faith, but that his character had become more beautiful as evidenced in his life and actions since he had become a Spiritualist. A short service was read by his brother oddfellows, and the assemblage departed.

By Mr. Shaw's will, which was read subsequently, it appears that he has left all his property in trust for the advancement of Spiritualism; but through his having become security for a friend, the estate is somewhat involved, and one of the executors positively refused to act. It is to be hoped, however, that this difficulty will be overcome.

JESSE SHEPARD.

WE observe that Jesse Shepard, the celebrated Musical Medium who visited Australia some three years since, is giving successful Séances in California, and recently gave a very extensive free Séance at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, San Francisco, in aid of the Mediums' Relief Fund; Mr. Kallcock, the minister, announcing it from his pulpit on the previous Sunday. This is as it should be—the preaching and the proofs of a future life under the same roof. When will some of our Victorian clergy follow suite?

A PHILOSOPHY OF IMMORTALITY.*

THE HON. RODEN NOEL is a comparatively recent addition to the galaxy of literary stars whose light illumines the Spiritualistic firmament, and the apparent object of this latest product of his mind and pen which we have now before us is to prove, as far as logic and induction will do, the spiritual nature of man and the permanent reality of human personality. In his opening chapter the author states that he has recently obtained personal proof of the genuineness of certain Spiritual Phenomena, but at the same time expresses an opinion that the accumulation of proof published by other competent and independent witnesses in different quarters of the world is of more weight and value to him. Whilst philosophising on the subject of Spiritual Phenomena and its alleged insufficiency to satisfy the demands of sceptical objectors, he incidentally presents a suggestion which is in entire harmony with our experience, namely, that when spirits take on earthly conditions they are as it were in a dream, their material envelope deadening and obscuring their spiritual perceptions, and preventing them for the time from expressing their individuality with sufficient force and completeness to convince friends of their identity.

Analyzing the Phenomena of Life, the author comes to the conclusion that its essence and source must be energy, and that energy can be only spiritual. He ably combats and shows the absurdity of the rather prevalent theory amongst modern scientists of a universally diffused life (mind or soul), stuff; also the unphilosophical aspects of the Re-incarnation theory, asserting that we are forming our future souls and bodies now, and determining their functions. The system of molecular motion, suggested by Stewart and Tait, can never explain thought or memory, for they are essential to explain it. In trance, the spiritual Control dominates the physical body, even as the mind of the Mesmerist dominates that of the subject; the body ceases in both instances to express its proper soul.

In the fourth chapter, dealing on psychic force, &c., Mr. Noel asserts, and we think truly, that *forces* has no meaning apart from spirit, for all forces are invisible and intangible, and we only cognise them by their physical effects. The spiritual theory of separate individual spiritual action in the production of abnormal phenomena is clearly more logical than that it is the result of our own unconscious action; and why Protestants should be shocked at a belief in spiritual communications it is difficult to know, seeing that Oberlin, Luther, Melancthon, Baxter, Augustine, Tertullian, Wesley, and many others believed what Spiritualists believe. That materialised forms, representing and professing to be departed spirits, do appear, the author assumes to be sufficiently well attested, and the only theory outside of the fraudulent one, that of their being but the "shells" of the departed "Ego," he considers grotesque and lamentably deficient in substance. It is clear also that the truthfulness or otherwise of the utterances or professions of the spirit has no bearing upon the phenomenal fact.

In the latter part of this chapter the insufficiency of physiology to explain the ordinary phenomena of memory is very clearly presented, and in the two final ones, after demonstrating the inadequacy of the Cartesian theory of Unconscious Cerebration to cover even a section of the facts, he very appropriately says,

* A Philosophy of Immortality, by the Hon. Roden Noel. London. W. H. Harrison. 1882.

"The true man, like all nature, is a Proteus, who if you press him too hard simply eludes you by changing his form." His conclusion is that Love is the *summum bonum* of existence.

The volume is an able and timely one, somewhat aggravating at times from the number of interrogative propositions which pull the reader short up and start him off in a tangent, from which he struggles back on to the main line of argument, feeling in many instances that the way must be travelled again before all its by-paths can be traced into the central road, ultimately making that road more plain and its destination clearer.

Immortality, or at least a future conscious existence, is a question of pressing import in the present day, and Mr. Noel has at least loosened the Gordian knot which many are vainly seeking to untie.

OUR energetic correspondent, agent, and co-worker in the cause of Spiritualism and Free Religious Thought, Mr. George Smith, has for some time past been looking for more commodious premises where he could establish appropriate headquarters for the important work he is engaged in, and we are advised that he has at last secured an edifice in the centre of the city of Brisbane eminently adapted for the purpose, having not only ample shop accommodation for the exhibition and sale of literature, but a large room adapted for library, reading-room, and meetings, for which purpose it is his intention to immediately utilise it. The *Harbinger of Light*, and the numerous Spiritualistic and Freethought works sold at the Melbourne office, may be obtained of Mr. Smith at Melbourne prices, which should be a great advantage to many of our Queensland customers. We hope the Spiritualists and Liberals of Brisbane and adjacent towns will do their level best to help and encourage our enterprising brother by sending him all the business they can, and donating books to the proposed library.

THE following passage occurs in the speech made by Lord Derby at the Cobden Club:—"There is nothing more certain than this, that the great preventive of war is trade. Religion has not served to check wars; they were never more frequent, or more barbarously carried on than in the ages when faith was unshaken, and when every man was a believer.

SOME men take a delight in arguing. They are of a combative temperament, and argue, not for the purpose of eliciting truth, but for the unproductive but to them inestimable pleasure of defeating their adversaries. It is to be feared many of the opponents of Spiritualism are of this class, because of the utter futility of all endeavours to persuade them to take the one rational course, namely, to investigate. They will with pleasure debate the subject with you from year's end to year's end. Of debate they never weary; but to adopt the only means by which it is possible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion is the last of all ideas to enter their breasts.

MRS. E. L. WATSON.

THE above talented impressionable speaker is now en route for Melbourne under engagement to the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, to succeed Mr. Denton. Mrs. Watson is a lady of culture as well as a good orator, and has attained considerable popularity as a public speaker in San Francisco of late.

MR. DENTON'S Sunday evening lectures, at the Academy of Music, have been largely attended during the last month, "standing room only" being the rule after seven p.m. His two lectures—*Has Man a Soul?* and *Is Man's Soul Immortal?*—were eloquent and logical affirmations of both questions. We publish in another part of this paper an instructive practical lecture, and in our next shall give one on Spiritualism or Theology. Mr. Denton commences a course of popular Scientific lectures, at the Temperance Hall, this evening.

R. Caldecott and C. R.'s contributions, with other matter, are unavoidably held over.

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