

THE

# Harbinger of Light

A  
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

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

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

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WE have occasionally, but perhaps not so often as the subject deserves, called the attention of Spiritualists and Freethinkers in religion to the Lyceum system of education initiated in January, 1863, by Andrew Jackson Davis, and practically illustrated in the Victorian metropolis for the past twelve years in the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum, which holds its sessions at present every Sunday morning at the Horticultural Hall, Victoria-street.

An observer cannot fail to notice the influence of early impressions in the development of the moral and religious faculties. The plastic mind of the child takes form and direction from the ideas impressed upon it by those it respects or venerates, which only the powerful action of matured reason can obliterate when false, and no power can efface when true. Religions are thus perpetuated and hold the ground with greater tenacity against the assaults of reason on account of the germs of truth which are in them. In the majority of mankind the religious sentiment has been developed in connection with some church system, and when the assaults of reason on the unsound supports of this system have drawn the individual outside its pale, a want is felt for some substitute, at least for the rising generation. We know of many persons in this position, who whilst holding aloof from the church still send their children to the Sunday-school, thinking the moral influence a counterpoise to the defective theology. To such persons, be they Spiritualists, Deists, Theists, or Agnostics, the Lyceum offers all that could be desired, and its principles only require to be clearly shown to them to command their support and co-operation.

Professor Joseph Rodas Buchanan, one of the most advanced educational reformers of the times, says in his recent book on "Moral Education:—

"That the combination of song and labour with oral and visual instruction, social influences, and hygienic amusements or exercises constitutes a thorough and satisfactory system which I have been accustomed to call a 'full-orbed education' is not only clear to the faculty of reason and demonstrated by the success of reformatory schools, but is also most happily demonstrated by the success of kindergartens, in which the appliances of a rational education are utilised to the delight and progress of the children."

All this is to be found in the Lyceum system, which aims at the harmonious cultivation of the physical moral, and intellectual faculties of the child in their due proportion; but the difficulty is to bring this fact prominently under the notice of those most interested in knowing it, and it is with the view of reaching at least a few of them that we now call attention to the system and the local illustration of it, which is accessible at all times to visitors. One thing which has tended to keep the Melbourne Lyceum somewhat in the back ground has been the inability of its officers to rent a central hall adapted to its requirements; and this much felt want induced a former conductor to initiate a building fund, which is slowly accumulating, and will ultimately eventuate in the removal of the difficulty. The principles of the Lyceum are broad; it has no formulated creed, and no dogma, the only qualification for office being a recognition of a Supreme Intelligence and the spiritual nature of man; its text book is based on this idea, but no dogmatic teachings, even on this broad basis are encouraged, the object being rather to educate and cultivate the moral tendencies of the child, preserving its originality, and thereby enriching the world with more spontaneous thought.

Since the establishment of the Melbourne Lyceum in 1882, the attendance of members has averaged from one to two hundred at every session, and several attempts have been made to establish kindred institutions in other localities, most of which have succeeded, as in addition to the Lyceums at Richmond and Castlemaine, in Victoria, there is one at Sydney and another (on a purely Secular basis) at Dunedin, N. Z.

We cannot at present spare space for a full presenta-

tion of the Lyceum curriculum and method. We simply present the principles, but will at some future time enter sufficiently into details to enable energetic Progressionists in the provinces to inaugurate the movement in their several localities; meantime we would advise our readers who have not yet visited the institution to do so at the earliest opportunity, as a single visit and conversation with the officers will make the excellent system of the Institution clear to them.

### SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

THE votaries of physical science, even in their most complacent moods, are terribly slow to yield to the recorded observations of Spiritualistic phenomena that recognition which such observations deserve. This seems to be no less true when the observations have been carefully and guardedly made by a fellow-scientist, a man of their own cloth, who in their opinion is alone competent to investigate the matter. In this latter case, indeed, their reluctance may be intensified by the fact that hitherto any such careful examination, when made with candour, has usually resulted more or less in favour of the manifestations, a result far otherwise, we fear, than they had hoped for. So long as they are thus unwilling to recognise the importance of the phenomena, they are of course equally unwilling to accord an honourable place in the history of the world's progress to those earnest investigators who have spent years in the study of such phenomena, their nature and source, and the conditions under which they do and do not occur, and who are therefore as justly entitled to be regarded as "experts" in that branch of inquiry, and to have their experience and judgment deferred to, as are the physical scientists in their particular fields of exploration.

Occasionally, however, there stands out prominent from this dead level of contemptuous indifference a name the possessor of which, refusing to stultify his reason in obedience to his prejudices, gives credit to the Spiritualist for holding up to the view of the world a great truth. On the other hand, there occasionally stands out one who distinguishes himself above the rest as an obstructionist in the pathway of spiritual science, just as the names of certain moribund ecclesiastics in the past stand out as pigmy obstructionists to the grand march of that knowledge of the physical universe which has for centuries been shining with ever increasing brightness upon mankind. Not unfrequently, too, this obstruction, passing beyond the stage of unreasonable incredulity, actually becomes a dishonourable breaking of solemn obligations. To this type of obstructionist, it would seem, Professor Mendelejew, of the University of St. Petersburg, belongs. Professor Aksakow, who with his confreres Butlerow and Wagner, has long been an unflinching champion of the cause, has recently published a work which contains a "history of the scientific investigation of mediumistic phenomena by the committee of the Physical Society of the University of St. Petersburg," and which, as a writer in *Light* well says, "is another record of the inveterate prejudice and even bad faith so frequently betrayed by the Materialists who speak in the name of science when dealing with facts beyond their intelligence and fatal to their views." It transpires that in May, 1875, the Society just named appointed twelve of its members for the investigation, Messrs. Aksakow, Butlerow, and Wagner, being invited to "assist." This committee met and unanimously agreed to hold forty sances up to May, 1876, before coming to any decision (a very good beginning), and that every report, document, and communication should be imparted to all the sitters. M. Aksakow secured the services of certain mediums for the investigation, and the committee held four sances in November, 1875, and four in January, 1876, at which sances the phenomena, it is stated, were fully exhibited. Nevertheless, on March 5th, 1876, the committee (in which Professor Mendelejew appears to have been the leading spirit), resolved to close its sances, and reports subsequently issued were not communicated

to Messrs. Aksakow, Butlerow, and Wagner, two of the most express conditions to which all were parties being thus violated. Moreover, while the investigation was actually in progress, Herr Mendelejew called a public meeting to denounce Spiritualism and mediumship, and long before the expiry of the period agreed upon for investigation, obtained the signatures of all the committee-men (except Aksakow, Butlerow, and Wagner), to a report which is said to have bristled with errors, and which he published in the *Golos*. This report elicited a protest, which appeared in the *Monteur* of St. Petersburg, signed by 150 persons belonging to the educated classes in the metropolis, against the unwarrantable proceedings of Mendelejew. The latter then published a book, in which he declared "Spiritualism and mediumship to be quite unworthy of study and serious examination;" "terribly stupid humbug," and the like. What a different verdict Zöllner gave! In the work above mentioned M. Aksakow has replied to Herr Mendelejew in a masterly manner, appealing to documents, and demonstrating that the Professor's treatment of the subject is neither scientific nor honourable, is even contrary to truth, and is in fact an attempt to suppress inquiry worthy only of the ecclesiastical intolerance of the past. Undaunted by the scandalous treatment of these unworthy representatives of true science, M. Butlerow (we learn from *Psychische Studien*), at the meeting of Russian men of science, held at Odessa in August last, delivered an address "On the Necessity of an Investigation of Mediumistic Phenomena." More than five hundred persons were present. The address will be published in the report of the Assembly. With the exception of Professor Barrett's paper, read before the British Association at Glasgow, in 1876, this is the first time that an address of this nature has been presented to a formal gathering of scientific men.

With regard to the Seybert investigation to which we have referred from time to time, we learn from the *Philadelphia Press* that the committee, composed of members of the Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania have met and organised, Dr. Pepper, the provost of the University, having been appointed chairman, and the Rev. G. S. Fullerton, secretary, and the method of pursuing the proposed investigation was partly agreed on. The first step is to be the collection of such authoritative and representative literature as will afford a complete history and knowledge of all attempts to scientifically investigate and explain the phenomena of Spiritualism. The Rev. Dr. Fullerton will undertake the preparation of a historical sketch of the movement. The committee will then proceed to the work of investigation, the whole of which will most likely occupy at least three years. They desire it to be distinctly understood that no one of them have any bias or prejudice existing in their minds which would prevent them from joining in a thoroughly impartial examination.

We sincerely hope that this may be the case, and that—whatever the conclusion arrived at—the investigation may be conducted with more fairness than was displayed by the St. Petersburg committee. It is curious how some scientists seem to lose their heads over these matters. To us the term "science" is not limited in its application to the realm of physics merely; it is in its widest and most glorious signification, KNOWLEDGE, embracing all that may be discovered regarding the universe in its varied aspects, man's nature and powers, mental and physical, his origin and destiny as a spiritual being here and hereafter. To this science no truth comes amiss. Let Spiritualists and mediums take courage; let them be earnest and thoughtful, brave and true; let them persevere in putting before their fellows the facts which daily come to light in their midst, until every opposition is swept from the path, and beneath the superincumbent weight, Materialism—in these days of so portentous growth—is crushed. Let them work calmly in the assurance that, although the honorable recognition which they merit is denied them now, it will certainly be awarded them by the verdict of a posterity from whom the prejudices that now blind shall have faded and passed away into the dim distance of the past, a posterity that will recognise to the full the vast and beneficial

modifications in the religion, philosophy, and science of the present day that have been wrought by these facts, a posterity that shall be living in the perfect day of that grand spiritual era towards which mankind has been for tens of thousands of years slowly but steadily progressing.

### SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

FIFTEEN years ago a few thoughtful people who had satisfied themselves of the toxic facts of spiritualism associated together with the view of opening up and maintaining periodic intercourse with the spirit-world, their object being the spiritual development of the circle—the acquisition of knowledge and enlightenment for themselves, and the diffusion of the latter amongst those whose minds were fitted to receive it. A channel of communication was soon opened, principally by automatic writing, both by hand and planchette, and subsequently trance media were developed. Some of the written communications were published in the early numbers of the *Harbinger*, but the trance addresses not being reported for a considerable time were not preserved. Occasionally, however, a reporter's services were available, and a number of M.S. consisting of lectures and discourses on spiritual, moral, and scientific subjects have accumulated, to which it is deemed desirable to give publicity. The series selected for publication were given during the years 1861-2: the first of them professedly by the spirit of the late John Elliottson, M.D. F.R.S., who when in the body was personally known to one of the oldest members of the circle; the identity, however, of the intelligences who dictated the matter which we intend to publish is of little moment; the communications must be judged by their intrinsic merit, which cannot be enhanced by authority.

### BRAIN WEIGHT IN RELATION TO INTELLIGENCE.

Dr. E.—Some of my readers may perhaps have remarked the extent to which each man's particular pursuit tinctures all his ideas, and that different studies cause not only different outlooks upon the phenomena of nature, but influence man's conception of God, and also his ideas of the nature of the soul. The mind fed from some particular source of knowledge becomes as it were a lamp to itself, and, shedding the light of its thoughts upon the obscure problems of nature, imagines it makes them as clear as the noon-day, as if a finite ray could illumine the infinite. The mathematician thinks the Creator not so much a Being as a power governed by mathematical laws; therefore, with the mathematician number is divine, and mathematics the basis of all knowledge. The astronomer scans the heavens with his telescope, and as majestic system after system passes across his field of vision, cries, "If man would know his place in infinity he must understand the wonders of the heavens; astronomy is the basis of all knowledge." The musician sees it in the laws of harmony, and in the waves of melody, which float across his mind. The geologist and the naturalist cry, "Interrogate the earth, and the dead witnesses of the past ages, if you would know whence you come, what you are, and whither you are going." The physicist with his microscope and his chemic tests can see no limit to the properties of matter, its force, its powers, and its energies, and when by the aid of his microscope he finds that a drop of water contains a multitudinous variety of organisms, and that a speck becomes a world of living wonders, can we wonder that he cries, "Matter is the infinite, and force is divine?" "When man knows all the laws of force, he shall have unveiled the secrets of nature; the microscope and the chemic test are the keys which shall unlock the portals of the infinite, and lay bare the mysteries of creation." And thus, so much has human physiology illumined my world of thought that to me the living human organism embodies all the wonders of nature, all the marvels of the universe. For who can describe that marvellous dual apparatus of organs, the brain?—that great human battery to the body, with its hundreds of millions of marrow-cords ramifying to every part, lines of communication which cause definite bodily responses to mental activity, diffused lines of transmission by which the phenomena of nature reach the mind, and upon which the collective forces of the intellect play and produce physical manifestations. Can you wonder that I say the human organism embodies all the marvels of the universe? If there were no nervous system, there were no pleasure and no pain. Were there no organ of vision, there were no light. Were there no organ of smell there were no fragrance in the floral world, no odour in nature. Were there no gustatory organ there were no sweetness and no acidity. Were there no organ of hearing there were no sound. Without the living organism, nature were an

insistent solitude, and eternal silence. And what of that unknown thinking principle, with its varied activities, its endless schemes and devices? Finite though it be, soaring so far through the realms of truth as to approach the portals of the infinite! Ah! were there no mind, there were no external phenomena; were there no mind, nature did not exist.

There now remains for us to consider whether brain-weight can be considered a correlate of intelligence. For the benefit of those who know nothing of the structure of the brain, I shall give a brief and simple description. The brain is divided into two hemispheres, the left being found generally to be a little longer than the right at the top of the occipital lobe. Each hemisphere of the brain is in communication with exactly the opposite side of the body; therefore, if there be atrophy or damage to the left hemisphere, the right side of the body will be paralysed; if the right hemisphere of the brain, the left side will be paralysed. Therefore we find that injury or atrophy of the brain is invariably found associated with what is termed uni-lateral paralysis. We may therefore ascertain from that that the nerves are what is called decussated, that is, there is a cross arrangement of the sensory channels, with the exception I may remark of the olfactory nerves, which (with the exception of the fifth) are connected by what are termed the commissural fibres, and these are gathered up, and constitute principally the anterior commissure. I have said, "invariably" associated with uni-lateral paralysis. Now we find generally that if damage to the brain occurs, and paralysis of the opposite side of the body ensues, during the early years of childhood, that the sensory nerves are not altogether destroyed. The hearing, the eye, and the smell and taste remain—certainly very much blunted and lessened, but still remaining in the paralysed side. If damage or atrophy of the brain occurs during or approaching to maturity or afterwards, we find that the whole of the side connected with that hemisphere of the brain—that is the opposite half of the body—is totally paralysed. Now these are facts of great significance, showing the wondrous economy which is exercised in the development and arrangement of the human organism. After the years of puberty, the weaving of the system on certain definite lines has comparatively ceased. Therefore when paralysis occurs after these years, we find that the cross communications, the sensory fibres, become atrophied, whereas if it occurs in the early years of childhood, Nature, with her wonderful provision for and preservation of the human organism, weaves it on lines of communication with the uninjured hemisphere of the brain.

It is most difficult to describe the internal structure of the brain, even with the aid of diagrams or models, but without these it is nearly impossible. Upon removing the thin vascular membrane which encloses the brain, we see before us a mass of grey, reticulated, nucleated substance, extended into many doublings and foldings, and which give the brain a convoluted appearance. This grey substance has a greater convolution over the frontal and parietal regions than the occipital. We find that this is invariably so, but that this grey matter is often found much heavier over the occipital than the frontal, the parietal regions being intermediate in thickness. Next we find a stratum of a reddish grey substance, which is nearly a mass of corpuscles—or, I shall prefer to say, close bodies, nuclei. These nuclei are of many and various shapes—round, pyramidal, oval, oblong, tailed, and star-like or radiated. Within these we find one or more smaller nuclei surrounded by coloured granules of a fatty substance. These are composed principally of an albuminous substance, and within the grey layer of each fold we find a stem of white matter of an albuminous substance, and that there is a divergence of bundles of white fibres in a fanlike manner. They pass first between the nerve-cells of the grey layer, becoming finer and finer as they approach the outer layer. From them arise fine white thread-like cords which ramify to all parts of the body. The white substance whence these nerves take their rise are the great centres; this white substance forms the mass of the brain, and extends as far as the backbone. We have therefore in the brain, first, two elements—the

grey vesicular matter and the white fibres, the blood-vessels and cellular tissues with the membranous covering. The elementary composition of the brain is found to be water, phosphorus, and cerebral fat.

There now remains for us to ascertain whether there exists any relation between the mass which I have just been describing, and the development of intelligence. The same line of criticism which was applied to cranial capacity can well be applied here. I am still on the ground of the positive, and I intend in this matter as in the other to confine myself rigorously to terrestrial data. But the facts known relative to the matter of brain-weight are comparatively small when compared with the ascertained facts of cranial capacity.

This is a subject which requires the utmost care and the greatest nicety, so that we may form correct conclusions from the small amount of data furnished by observation and experiment. The brain cannot be weighed in living persons, because when put to the actual test of weighing brains are found to differ immensely, even when their volumes are equal. Again, we find that the mode of death may greatly increase brain weight. Congestion considerably raises, and atrophy greatly diminishes the weight of the brain; again we find that high brain weights are associated with certain pathological phenomena, such as epilepsy, and certainly dementia. There are many causes which influence the weight of the brain, stature or weight, sex, age, race, and health, but the two principal causes which influence the weight of the brain are the same as those which so powerfully influence cranial development—that of stature and sex. The law for the development of the brain is the same as that for cranial capacity; the ratio of brain-weight diminishes with the increased weight and stature. Therefore the brain is relatively smaller during the period of maturity—that is, from 30 to 41 years of age than at any other period of human life—notably the brain is smaller relatively to the body during the period of maturity, when the mind is in possession of its greatest vigour, than at the other portions of the human life. Sex exercises a very great influence upon weight of brain. The average weight of brain for the adult man ranges from 47 to 49 ounces. We find this variation greater in different races, when it may range again from 45 to 50 or 51oz. In the female adult the average is from 43 to 45oz., the greater variation being in different races from 41 to 47 or 48oz. The lowest weight compatible with human intelligence is average 31oz., although the records of idiot asylums show that there have been idiots whose brain weights were as low as 10oz., in whom there has not been an utter absence of intelligence. But all degrees of brain weight may be found associated with the phenomena of idiocy. These same records show that there have been idiots whose brain weights have been as high as 56, 57, and 58oz., 58oz. being 3oz. higher than the brain of that distinguished naturalist who comes occasionally to your circle, to whom the medium has given the name of "Massive-mind," even in his period of maturity. That is a fact of great significance. The variation in weight of brain is much greater in man than woman. The highest brain-weight on record of a woman is that of a person who died from cerebral ulceration. She did not possess any extraordinary capabilities; her intelligence was not above the ordinary degree of human intelligence, but not below it, though she suffered from a monomania of pride. Her brain was found to be of the enormous weight of nearly 62oz., being very little more than an ounce short of the brain weight of the eminent naturalist Cuvier. The heaviest brain-weight on record of the male is that of a person of the lower classes who died of pyæmia in one of the hospitals in London, his brain having the enormous weight of 68oz.—beyond 67—being almost an ounce greater than the brain of the great Protector of the English Commonwealth, Cromwell. Now, if you ask me were there potentialities in that brain, I answer you, if there were they were destitute of signification, for his acquirements gave no indication of them. He could neither read nor write, and as you often find amongst totally uneducated persons a certain accuracy of calculation in their way, this he was totally devoid of. He was a man who spent much of his time

in the alehouse, a vain, quarrelsome, talkative fellow very much given to discussing politics and predicting political events, which, fortunately for the safety of the country he lived in, never occurred, but unfortunately for the claims of the owner of this gigantic brain to the title of a political prophet. Nothing daunted by his continual failures, he continued his predictions whenever he could find anybody to listen to him. I went to see that brain, during my career in London as a physician. I saw it with my earthly eyes.

Looking at this matter from an ethnological point of view, the question of a degree of *admissibility* if any between brain-weight and the development of the intelligence, the fossil races furnish no answer. We must therefore from the ethnological point of view confine ourselves solely to knowledge derived from a study of the living races. Foremost among European races for the possession of high brain-weight stands the Scotch; following closely upon them we find the Germans; next we find the English, the variation in the Irish being so great that whilst they closely, in certain districts, approach the Scotch, we find again that they fall lower than the English, and on a level with the French, who come next. Foremost among Asiatic nations for the possession of high brain-weight stand the Chinese, and when we consider their great brain-weight and relatively small stature, foremost of all the nations of the earth for superiority in brain-weight stand the Chinese. This is a fact of a certain significance. These facts will be gathered up and referred to later on.

We find that in the crossing of the white with the black races, brain-weight increases with every increase of white blood. This, again, is a fact of great significance.

At our last sitting I spoke of the small cranial development of the Chinese. I now speak of their great superiority in brain-weight. Now each of you may know that weight increases more rapidly than circumference or surface. A weight of 12lbs. is not four times larger than one of 3lbs. Therefore we see that weight increases in a greater degree than surface and circumference.

We have now exhausted all the facts supplied to us from the study of races, and I will pass on to that of animals. The same mode of inquiry pursued relative to cranial capacity might well be pursued here, but I shall simply say that brain-weight is found to be very much greater in all large animals than small ones. Now we know that large animals are not more intelligent than small ones. There are many who consider the complexity of the convoluted development as a sign of great intelligence. Now we find great convoluted development in large animals, and little or none in small ones. There is only one point of view from which you can look at this matter, and that is the physiological one. The convoluted development we find increases with the size of the brain. The volume of a body is always greater than its surface, therefore the convoluted development is only a mode of increasing the surface. There is a certain relation between the convoluted development of the brain and the size of the body. The weight of the brain, though not rigorously defined, is in nearly a constant relation to the various species, therefore, to give a smaller surface of grey matter to the large animal we find that there is a great complexity of convoluted arrangement, whereas in the smaller animal it is found to be unconvoluted.

As to the symmetry or lack of symmetry in the convoluted arrangement, I may tell you that at the head of the herbivorous tribe stands the elephant, with his immense weight of brain, from 8 to 10lbs., with exceeding complexity of convoluted arrangement; at the head of the fish tribe stands the whale, with its 8lbs. weight of brain, and exceeding complexity of convoluted development. At the head of the quadrumanous stands man, with his say 3lbs. weight of brain, and great complexity of convoluted development. We find the larger the brain the greater the complexity of the convolutions. I think now that I must have disabused your minds of any thought that complexity of convoluted arrangement can be considered an index of intelligence.

Now, all these facts considered, there is one conclusion



to be arrived at, and that is that though intelligence can neither be measured nor weighed, yet there is a certain relation between brain-weight and intelligence. We see such a significance in the high brain-weights of many eminent men, also in the increase of brain-weight, and increase of intelligence, with every increase of white blood in the fusion of the two races. But to say that brain-weight is a measure of intelligence is as erroneous as to say that size is a measure of strength; for, other things being equal, size should be a measure of strength; but we know that many men with small lithe wiry frames possess great physical powers, and seemingly inexhaustible energies. But if the muscular apparatus be imperfect, however much the skill behind it may husband its powers, it cannot give the same manifestation which it could if it had a muscular apparatus equal in strength to the skill which could wield it. Now we find amongst the number of eminent men whose brains have been weighed, there are some with comparatively very small brain-weights, who have surpassed in intelligence those who stand higher on the list through their superiority of brain weight. Some of these men we find to have had less than the average weight of the adult brain. We know from cases on record that when paralysis has occurred during childhood, that one hemisphere of the brain has been found to be totally gone, the pia mater forming a cyst in which not a trace of cerebral substance could be found; and yet these persons were noted amongst their contemporaries for their superior intelligence. Still, if the organ be imperfect, can we wonder that the co-ordinating power can only manifest itself in an imperfect manner. I spoke of the skill which could wield the imperfect muscular apparatus, which husbanded its powers, and produced such wonderful manifestations with its incomplete organs. Therefore, if there be what I shall call an equation of evolution and involution, the human being has attained its highest development. But it is as absurd to anatomise the brain to ascertain the degree of intelligence as it would be to dissect the fingers of a musician to find the anthem which is swelling in his mind; as vain to anatomise the eye to find the properties of light; of the olfactory organ to find the properties of odour; of the auditory organ to find the properties of sound. But in a little while we shall have our materialistic friends analysing tears to find the cause of sorrow, and the sound of laughter to find the cause of joy. I have said that when the mind has incompetent or incomplete organs for its manifestations, it can only manifest in an incomplete and incompetent manner. We find that it is at its greatest degree of energy during the third decennial period, the maturity of man's mind and body. Then, as the time passes on, past the 50th year, the brain decreases in weight, and the intelligence becomes weaker. At last, as years pass on, there is a loss of the consciousness of external existence, and then death steps in and closes the scene.

Where have I brought you, oh my friends! to the edge of the grave, to the verge of the tomb; to consign alike to a common grave the physical organism, and the power which directed it? Not so. Let reason and faith combine to show you that the human spirit is immortal, and even in the earthly life exhibits the characteristics of immortality. Reason has proved to man that nature is progressive; faith may well ask, does she develop, then, but to destroy? Reason has proved to man that a belief in the immortality of the soul is a primal instinct. Faith says, that God did not implant an instinct in the human soul but to mock it—a desire for a future life but to disappoint it. For all other instincts there are means of fulfilment. The Creator hath kept his compact with his creatures. Then who dare say in the face of such overwhelming evidence that the noblest, purest, highest instinct of the human soul is a mirage of thought, a dream of mind, a mockery, a shadow, a delusion? There is a force which neither scalpel nor microscope can reveal, which holds the universe in its embrace. In celestial depths, as far as man's aided vision can reach, he finds evidences of molecular motion, a force unseen of which these motions are but the manifestations. So with the hidden force, the spiritual entity. Thought,

reason, volition tell of it, and the phenomena of mind, the intellectual and moral apprehensions, are its highest manifestations. If in gazing into celestial depths the mind becomes bewildered at the power which holds together the stupendous universe, who shall dare then to say that the crowning effort of that power, the soul of man, is not upheld, urged onward, and protected by the same preserving law. Has the soul acquired knowledge, with pain and arduous toil, but to have its career stopped by death? It seems strange that in the face of such overwhelming evidence men of great thought on earth can believe the annihilation of the soul a possibility, real or virtual. No! let death come; it but heralds the dawn, when the soul, refreshed and restored, shall ascend to yet greater heights of knowledge. Withdraw the great hope of immortality from out the human life, despair would supervene, progress be destroyed, disorder and confusion would reign, even as at the Egyptian feasts of old, one would cry to another, "Each for himself; let us drink and enjoy the passing moment, for to-morrow we are not." What of patience under suffering? what of perseverance over difficulties? What of all those efforts and strivings of the soul which make the human life great and noble? No! whilst infinitude and eternity remain, immortality is sure to man. Even if we, the spirits of the inner-life, came not to hold communion with you, the soul whispers it to you, in spite of perverted reason, and Nature repeats it in triumphant tones, and the angel Faith expands its wings, and shelters beneath them the hopes and aspirations of man.

#### HISTORICAL RESEARCHES ON MAGIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF BARON DU POTET.  
BY C. W. RÖHNER, BENALLA.

It was often a matter of the greatest surprise to me not to find anywhere in the vast literature of Spiritualism, but especially in that of the recently reviv'd Theosophy and Occultism, the slightest notice taken of the numerous works and speculations of M. le Baron Du Potet. And in this respect his book on "Magie Révélée" is a regular mine and storehouse of facts, illustrating the principles of occult science, worthy of the greatest attention and study of those modern thinkers who have made Occultism and Spiritism the principal object of their researches.

This great work of Du Potet, "La Magie Dévoilée," was published by subscription in 1852, and I doubt very much whether there is another copy of the book in Australia, except the one now lying before me, and from the third part of which I intend to place before the readers of the *Harbinger of Light* a few selections, in order to direct the more thoughtful minds of the Australian Spiritualists to a subject which offers a rich harvest of historical facts and psychological data of the utmost importance. With these few prefatory remarks I shall at once plunge in *medias res*.—

Let us now see what is the real cause of the phenomena, the experimental operations of which we have now placed before the student; let us search in the records of antiquity for the opinions formed on this subject by its most eminent thinkers. At the outset, it is certain that all facts of a recondite and elevated order were connected with magic. Let us, therefore, carefully study in what manner they comprehended and dealt with its principle—the active principle of magic.

The word magic, in its most general acceptance, can be taken both in a good and bad sense. It designates an attractive force, a spring which sets in motion either the supernatural (superhuman), the natural, or the inferior realm of spiritual existences; an occult force or power acting upon the spirits or upon the bodies, and consequently also upon all strata of air, from the most ethereal and elastic to the grossest and densest.

Connaisseurs in this department of human knowledge distinguish five kinds of magic, not to reckon the varieties which may be found intervening between the principal divisions.

To begin with, we have the high, holy, and divine magic or attractive force of the *Verbum Deus*, which attracts to itself and adopts all that which in a purified state can

be admitted and received into its divine essence. "When I am taken up from the earth I shall draw all men after me." This divine magic is in close rapport with faith, and its operation is closely allied to pure spirit.

There is also a natural or physical magic; the bodies attract one another mutually in accordance with laws calculated by Newton.

There is a carnal magic whose source is to be found in the appetites, desires, and passion of the lower faculties of man.

There is also an angelic, holy and pure magic, without any admixture of foreign elements.

The ancients distinguished, moreover, a diabolical magic, and this is the kind by means of which large streams of human blood were made to flow.

This expression of magic is derived from the *Magi*, or the ancient sages of Persia and the Orient. These were the *sacants* of those times and countries whose senses and spiritual faculties were more refined than those of the rest, and who consequently were enabled to penetrate more deeply into the mysteries of nature than their contemporaries. This moral and physical superiority supplied them with a higher order of knowledge both natural and spiritual. Such were also the sages of ancient Egypt. These men possessed a profound knowledge of all the phenomena of the universe, and were able to combine and produce their effects *ad libitum*. It is almost incredible what they have seen and what they were able to operate by means of this their profound and extended insight into the working of the universal forces. Zoroaster is believed to have been their chief and principal initiator. It is possible that the Latin word *imago*, our image, is derived from *nagus* or *naggin*, because everything was depicted in the imagination of these magicians—the prophecies, the oracles, etc.

To write on all kinds of magic would make us lose ourselves in darkness and obscurity, for there are more than three hundred different kinds of the magical art and its varieties. Sorcery was one of its branches.

There was a physical, polygraphic and stenographic magic; a holy, oneirocratic magic; an astrological magic; there was pyromancy, erotomancy, hydromancy, geomancy, physiomaney, metoposcopy, chiromancy, capnomancy; there was also a political magic, the vulgar art of the aruspices, of the augurs, sycomancy, the notary art, and theurgy; there were also forms of ceremonial magic, diabolic magic, necromancy, goetic magic, etc., etc.

The most advanced Christian philosophers never rejected the existence of magic; they were too well acquainted with the evidence of its phenomena submitted to their senses and also found detailed in the scriptures. They thought to explain and render it objective in the following manner; admitting the fall of man, they said: "Man, having lost the spirit of God, is blind and obliged to feel his way, so to speak, in the dark; and sighing for the light with an all-absorbing desire, he subverts himself to the influence of his lower soul faculties; he becomes a prey to his diseased imagination, memory, and senses; he feeds on all the lurid lights which his mental faculties can supply him with, as a substitute for God and unity with God, in order to keep himself on a level and in close relation with the things and objects of this earth, and to become a fellow-citizen of this world of passing vanities. Thus the divine light is lost, and in its place appears a fire less pure, less refined, less celestial, from which he derives his heat and new light. This light has been called by profound thinkers the astral light, or fire, in analogy with the lights of the stars; a quiescence of fire allied with the material fire, but very impure and inferior in comparison with the fire and light that emanates from the spirit of God—a spirit which is the sublimest fire, the purest flame, and the most celestial light.

"This astral spirit, or astral fire or light, which represents the highest degree of the light of the spirits, is, however, superior to what is called the spirit of nature, of which it forms the force, the virtue, and relations.

This is the principal agent, the true cause of the facts of magic; it is a fire, a light, a force, which natural science does not acknowledge, and hence springs the powerlessness of that natural science of producing or

imitating the wonderful works of the ancient theosophists and thaumaturgi. Let us take a glance at the opinions of the most enlightened philosophers of these distant times on this mysterious fire and light.

The stoic philosophers admitted the existence of a fire-ether—the basis of our intelligences; from that fire the spirits emanated, to that fire they returned.

The ethereal luminous substance was the foundation of the theology of the Christians, as we shall directly prove.

Pythagoras has designated a portion of the Divinity by the word light, calling God not only the Universal Force which circulates in all parts of the world, but he also joined with it the epithet of Luminous, to characterize the intelligence, as he has designated the principal of life by the same vivifying force which manifests itself in all the bodies of the world. Through this latter part man was connected with the animal; through the former he was united with the gods.

We can see in Cicero that the reason which made the ancients look upon the stars as intelligent and divine beings consisted in the fact that they were composed of the pure and luminous substance which forms the nature of ether. The reason of God was the luminous fire of which the stars contained a larger or smaller portion, a fire which is ordinarily called ether.

St. Augustine, in accordance with the principles of Varro, analyses the universal soul of the Great All, subdividing it into three parts: the animal soul, the sensitive soul, and the intelligent soul. He says of this latter, or intelligent soul, which he calls the third degree of soul, that it is the fire-ether which constitutes the essence of divinity.

What the ancients understood by *spiritus orbis* (world-spirit) was not what we call the element, air; it had nothing in common with it but its name; it was a far more refined and active substance having emanated from the ether, and which caused to flow in its current all the principles of motion and life manifested in animal creation. This was the ethereal fluid which circulates throughout all the stars and all the heavens whence all animals derived the principles of their life, shown in the heat and breath of all animated beings. Thus the fire-principle, eternal and God, enclosed in its substance the *spiritus* and the *logos*, or the universal intelligence of nature and of all its beings.

These ideas are in absolute conformity with the theology of Orpheus, who united in the sole fire-ether, which encloses the world, the three principles of divine nature, or the only divine force, under the names of light, counsel, and life. Such is the *Verbum* amongst the Christians: *vita erat lux, et lux erat vita, et lux erat Verbum*.

"In the beginning," says Orpheus, "the ether was made by the first God. The ether existed in the bosom of the vast chaos, and in the awful night which enveloped it from all sides. From the summit of the ether issued forth a ray of light which illuminated the earth and all nature. This light, the most ancient of all beings, the most Sublime Being, is the Inaccessible God which shrouds him in its substance, and which we call light, counsel, and life."

These three names designate but one substance.

The Gospel of John presents the Great God to us as enclosing within Himself the light and the life, *id est*, the first principle, or the universal principle, which is subdivided into the principle of intelligence, which is light, and into the principle of life, which is what the Christians call *Spiritus*.

The theology of Zoroaster taught that when God arranged and organised the matter of the universe, he despatched His *will* under the form of a bright shining light; and this light assumed the shape of man.

The heresiarch Simon asserted that the Supreme God, the only One and Incomprehensible, is unknown and hidden in His ineffable light, in His inaccessible, infinite, and incorporeal luminosity, which emanates from Him and which is His residence; He is Himself this immensity of light.

The theology of the Phenicians places also into the substance of the light the intelligent part of the universe, and that of our souls, who are emanations thereof.

Its irradiation is regarded as the very act of the pure soul, and its substance as a being as incorporeal as intelligence itself.

Do not be surprised, my readers, if I insist here so much upon the reality of this light, guessed or seen by so many great men, for here lies our secret as well as the secret of every force or power. All the ecstasies, all somnambules, speak, as you know, of a luminous substance of brilliant lights. And do they not all alike see the magnetic fluid by which they are affected under the form of a light? And has Jesus not said, "I am the light of the world!"

Oh blind men, and in consequence of that blindness, unhappy, struck with poverty in the midst of the greatest of wealth; oh barren brains, though surrounded by unspeakable fecundity, when will you at last recognise and learn the infinite treasures in the midst of which you live! When will you perceive the wealth which you possess in yourselves and in your nature? When, for once reflecting on your own selves, will you learn to read by the aid of the eyes of your spirits and hearts in this book, which is yourselves, all that the Supreme Being has placed there in images? When will you be able to run over all these pages on which He has inscribed with His own sacred finger the truth of His being and of His mysteries?

See what the *avants* of our day have accomplished by simply gathering up all the dead forces spread throughout space; they are, however, nothing in comparison with the living and pure forces of which human magnetism is only a feeble ray! Do you see that light discovered by Mesmer flooding the bodies and enlightening the spirit by rousing it from its lethargic sleep? Do you see it also in your magnetised subjects who at certain times are illuminated by it! Breath of life, fire of all genius—Mesmer has discovered its Source!!!

Benalla, 14th February, 1884.

#### SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

The following communication was received, like those which have preceded it, from Bichat:—

THE beginning of wisdom is to know ourselves. How can we understand the works of God save by the reverent study of His masterpiece in the terrestrial creation? Man is the microcosm of nature; he is the sum and epitome of all that he beholds; he includes and represents it; he is its mirror and its compendious summary; all forms of life have their perfected expression in him. What they are he has been; he belongs to, and is the last term in the long progression of terrestrial life. Without a knowledge of himself he cannot comprehend his antecedents, and without a knowledge of these he cannot comprehend his own nature and origin. It is a beautiful study, inexhaustible in character, and always tending to lift man out of himself and to bring him nearer to God, who is the perfection of wisdom. Otherwise humanity is tempted to grovel in the mire of Materialism, and the spiritual element which is latent in it languishes for want of aliment; for, unless a man raises himself into the serene regions of contemplation and reflection, he must needs continue in abasement and ignorance, a mere animal, with animal pursuits and animal enjoyments, never escaping from the trammels of sense, and never ascending to the heights in which he will breathe a purer mental and spiritual atmosphere, and obtain encouraging glimpses of a higher and better life beyond this "dim diurnal sphere."

Man's nature is manifold; its lowest constituent is the animal; its highest the soul. The one connects him with his Heavenly Father, the other links him with the material world. In proportion as the superior element in his nature is cultivated and developed does he separate himself more and more widely from the gross and the material. He looks upward and onward, and not downward and backward. This is in accordance with the divine purpose which works in and through progression—the universal law. There is nothing exempt from it; but man, in the exercise of the freedom bestowed upon him, can retard his own advancement and prolong his association with everything that delays his progress and ob-

structs his development. But, in so doing, he does violence to the germ of divinity within him—to the seed of immortality sown in an earthen vessel—to the principle of eternal life, which is an afflatus from the Sublime Author of All Things, and must return to Him who gave it. As He breathed it out, so it must come back to Him, after the lapse of myriads of eons, which appear incalculable to you, yet are to him but as a second of your earthly time.

O that man would therefore consider what he is, from whence he came, and whither he is going! O that the eyes of his understanding were purged, and his vision purified in order that he might see how glorious a destiny awaits him if he will only be obedient to the will of his Heavenly Father instead of striving to thwart it, and of living in and for the things of sense exclusively! Why should the machine be regarded as of more value and as of greater importance than that which fashions, guides, and directs it? Why should human beings lavish all their thoughts upon their bodies, "what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed," to the neglect of the mind, soul, and spirit, which survive the body and its merely temporary occupants? Why pay so much heed to the perishing casket only, and bestow so little thought upon the imperishable jewel which it enshrines? Health and happiness here are sacrificed to this mischievous devotion of all the faculties of man's nature to the satisfaction and the luxurious pampering of his animal appetites; and in the meantime his intellectual and spiritual nature is starved and impoverished. He was designed for, and is capable of, better things. Around him lie all the materials for the construction of a glorious Eden. Within him are the latent possibilities of a heaven upon earth. If, instead, he creates a hell; if he lacerates the face of this beautiful world with the wounds of war; if he makes his great cities reservoirs of crime and vice, of pauperism and misery; if he encourages epidemic diseases to sweep away tens of thousands of human beings at periodical intervals; if he makes idols of objects which should only be regarded with contempt or aversion; if he worships wealth, artificial rank, and military "greatness;" if he revels in swine-like indulgences; if he deifies what is coarse, material, sensual, and degrading in himself and others; he alone is to blame for setting himself in opposition to the beneficent designs of a living Creator. Perhaps you will say, why should He permit him to do so? Not to have given him this permission would have been to have denied him freedom of choice, will, and action, and to have deprived mankind of the benefits of a disciplinary education.

All these evils—temporary in their duration, but permanent in their beneficial results as instructive agencies and methods—result from the voluntary prolongation in man of the bestial activities by which he was governed and to which he naturally surrendered himself while passing through the lower forms of life. They mark the survival of the animal within him; and if he truly knew himself, if he were thoroughly conversant with his origin and destiny, he would sedulously strive to suppress the inherent animalism of his nature, and to cultivate his higher faculties—the life of the intellect, and of the soul and spirit.

He would find himself strengthened, and not merely strengthened but assisted, by spiritual agencies, in the conflict; for we who watch over those we have left behind us in the flesh, who endeavour to impress you with the knowledge we have gained, and to aid every aspiration on your part towards spiritual things, equally seize upon every opportunity to promote the development of the higher principle in you, and to help forward and accelerate your progress through the birth-world.

We see and know much that is necessarily hidden from you. Many riddles are solved, many dark problems are illuminated, and many new truths are revealed to us. These we could communicate to mankind if they were qualified, by leading more spiritual lives, to receive them. It is our privilege to distribute what we acquire. The more freely we communicate knowledge in love, the more abundantly both are bestowed upon us. Love and knowledge are like water, their purity depends upon their

fluency. Neither must be allowed to stagnate. The source of all knowledge and the fountain of all love flows without ceasing; His bounty is inexhaustible. He is to the boundless creation what the sun is to your system—the never-resting donor of light and heat and vital force to every planet and asteroid within the sphere of His influence. But this is limited; that of God has no limitations, for by Him everything that lives and moves and has its being in the infinite realms of space subsists, consists, and persists. That which was derived from Him constitutes its inner and never-dying principle and its kinship to Him; and thus it is that those in whom the germ of this nature finds its fullest development, and attains its highest and most perfect growth are said to become, like Jesus of Nazareth, sons of God December 2nd, 1883.

## THE PROCESS OF MATERIALISATION, AND SOME SUGGESTIONS ABOUT FRAUD.

By C. REIMERS.

WE have now such an enormous amount of records of Materialisations with and without cabinet, with and without medium in view, that exposures fade away in number and force of argument against these stupendous facts. Still, of the *modus operandi* we know comparatively very little, and perhaps may hope for more knowledge when it shall be possible to watch the growth of a plant by exposing its root in the soil, or, what amounts to the same thing, if the Creator will be outwitted by scientific mortals and surrender His private secrets. The frequent cases of grasping the medium where a "form" was anticipated and even announced by the controlling spirit, arrest my attention, and it matters not if I shift a little hypothesis into the line of confusion about the "building up" of forms. We know that the auras of sitters are to spirits like solid substances in their invigorating or killing qualities. A sensitive recoils from such influences, even at considerable distance. Now, I venture to suggest the possibility that the spirit already in the body of the medium before trying to leave the medium's body on the seat, advances some yards towards the circle to test the influences. If seized in this stage of "tuning conditions" by a truth-grasper, we have an "exposure" of the medium, or as posterity might have it, of the ignorance of fraud-hunters.

I had instances where such suspicious preliminaries ended in the most glorious tests. I venture, therefore, to suggest that the prelude phases of complete materialisation offer a rich harvest for fraud-seekers, whilst the *finale* is reserved for the lovers of truth. Fragments of garments, &c., discovered on the "seized," too, may be simply reduced to proofs of an interrupted multiplication, and in some cases careless mediums be blamed for disguising their secret agreement with the spirit to assist their miracles by-bringing some "stuff" to work with. For me the creation of a twenty yards of muslin, &c., makes me forget the paltry piece of rag carried into the ghost-shop by the medium, and I laugh at the fraud-maniacs who in turn create a big structure of fraud out of a miserable something found about the medium.

All apparent evidences of trickery within time and room of a séance ought to guide fools only to rush into judgment on the medium, whereas sober suspicion begins with discovering dodges about the medium *before* and *after* the séance, and within the sphere of his normal conditions, and after having ascertained that the circle is blockheaded enough to be imposed on. An exposure ought chiefly to disgrace and brand the circle; and this may be the reason that we have scarcely any *bona fide* case on record, where the clear evidence of fraud centres on the medium *exclusively*. Evidences of the reality of phenomena we have perfect and complete, but the fraud stories are void of correct and just handling as a rule, and present pictures similar to those of the kaleidoscope, changing with each shake; and they gain their commanding position only by the deafening cries of the furious mob, excited by saintly scientists.

As long as it cannot be accepted that mediums in

league with diabolic agencies can manufacture phenomena at will, every act of condemnation on the medium, even where only one genuine test of spirit power can be picked from a heap of suspicious rubbish, is a fraud on reason, justice, and humanity. When in London, I frequently urged people to actually reproduce the alleged shams publicly at once after each "exposure." This would do more good than high talk and pious shrugging of shoulders, and reduce expectation and demands of novices to the proper standard, and destroy further success of cunning mediums.

This abuse of scientific and social authority to avoid the fatigue from most tiring, vexing, and troublesome research in finding of facts, by a reckless, heartless, slipshod method in "mounting" a fraud, has for the present crushed that essential stimulant which gave chief nourishment to our knowledge. The poverty of accounts of new experiences in our periodicals, otherwise rich with speculations and sentimentalities, may be looked on with apprehension for the longed-for popularity of the spiritual movement, which shows already signs of a growth of a certain spiritual *aristocracy*, and our cause may be thrown back once more into the waiting-room of history.

I return again to my assertion that suddenly interrupted and upset séances represent usually tokens of fraud apart from the known fact that in materialisations we have to distinguish between transfiguration of the medium and the "separate form," which latter can be seen together with the medium. To pronounce a materialisation as unsatisfactory because the medium could not be seen, is therefore an unworthy suspicion, but still bestowed on honest mediums. This may be due to the weakness of mortals not to be inclined to suspect the acuteness of their own judgment and cover their ignorance as to why things are so and so by the naive demand how they ought to be!

I like to compare the scale of development of spirit-force, from the mere movement or the suspension of a body, with the flight of a big bird. Before it quits the ground it runs and flies half-and-half until we see it overhead. So, before a table is lifted, without and beyond contact, the quarrel between Carpentarian and true theories will have its play and say, and gaping mouths (after emptying themselves of word-stuff) ornamental surprise.

Could I have to say a word to be listened to, I would suggest to encourage honest professional mediumship once more after the lessons we have, and ignore altogether the possibility that "cheating" may sometimes mix with the genuine. Show the mediums that their true interest rests more in the genuine power, without being unaware of shams, and good circles will produce good mediums. As in society at large, frauds and cheating are more or less elegantly and respectably dressed up, constantly dovetailing with righteous dealing, it is not unnatural for a medium to try his wits if the want of it in a circle tempts him.

If my lines should animate some friends of our and humanity's cause to reconsider and re-examine notable "exposures," and help me in putting our mediums on their legs again, I would hold this, my first stroke of pen for our cause in this year, as a gentle push from the spirit world, and conclude my remarks with an observation of two facts which impress me as significant for students of Psychology—the present *superstition* of fraud, and the mental aberration, now so fashionable, *eccectomania*—if I may so baptise the chronic disposition to question everything.

Edithburgh, 4th Jan., 1884.

WE call the particular attention of our readers to the fine discourse on "Brain Weight in Relation to Intelligence," which appears in another column under the heading of "Spiritual Communications." Whether it is as we have reason to believe the emanation of the disembodied human intelligence of Dr. John Elliottson, or was evolved from the brain or mind of the medium, is of little moment. Read simply on its merits, it is in our opinion deeply interesting and instructive.



MR. BRAITHWAITE AND THE DUNEDIN  
FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

FROM a lengthy correspondence in the *Dunedin Morning Herald*, in which Mr. J. Braithwaite, the Hon. C. Stout, and Mr. C. Bright, the lecturer, participate, we understand that the first-named gentleman has tendered his resignation as Vice-President of this Association (an office which he has filled for two years past), for reasons which he gives in *extenso*, but to which our space will only permit us briefly to advert.

"I think," writes Mr. Braithwaite, "that the Association in a constructive religious sense is a failure, the logical result where members' views are so diverse. The compromise on fundamental questions is so complete, that practically nothing positive, however true, can be successfully taught. For instance, many members believe in a higher power than themselves, and in a future state, but through the disbelief again of others, whose convictions deserve equal consideration, and for harmony's sake, they have to be almost completely ignored, or, I should say, avoided, especially in the Children's Lyceum. I see clearly that no Association can accomplish anything positively beneficial unless its members are animated by one common aim and inspiration.

Mr. Stout, while personally thanking Mr. Braithwaite for the help rendered by him in time past, and stating that his resignation was accepted by the committee with regret, thus comments upon the views just expressed: "I am glad that you have placed in the forefront of your letter the diversity of the views of members of the Association. We have, as you know, Atheists, Agnostics, Unitarians, Theists, Pantheists, Spiritualists, in our ranks, and that you, a Theist and a Spiritualist, have been twice elected one of our Vice-Presidents, shows that those who were not Spiritualists could unite with those who were. I also appreciate your statement that in a 'constructive religious sense' the Association is a failure. If it had been a success our very *raison d'être* would have been destroyed. We never united to form a new theology or a new religion. Our aim was and is something different. We believe that truth is the most important thing in this world, and that none of the race can be benefited by falsehood. We have also recognised that the deeper questions of this life will never be solved by all men alike; and we have united to discuss them freed from creeds, and to teach our children their duties to themselves and to their fellows. This we think we can do without appealing to a deity, or invoking the terrors of future punishment, or the pleasures of future glory."

Speaking generally with regard to the attitude of the Association, Mr. Braithwaite says: "My opinion is the more one does his duty here the more he fits himself for the great hereafter. No other incentive can possibly equal this for uplifting the race. We want something to rouse the masses. This will do it; negation never. The value of the church consists in the steadfastness with which she has ever proclaimed a belief in God and immortality. Without these, existence is a mockery and morals a farce. I am fortified in my opinion by Mr. O. Frothingham, one of America's most cultured freethinkers, who has retired from the materialistic propaganda after years of active conscientious work. I am satisfied the Association will never make headway among the people until it can present to them a motive power for good higher than the one they have got already, and to do this it must have a religious basis, or it will never reach their higher aspirations. I have adopted these views after years of serious study and reflection, and a degree of anxiety known only to my most intimate friends. Hence it will be seen that I cannot co-operate any longer with the Association, nor with the Children's Lyceum, which I especially regret. Nevertheless, I shall ever be found standing up for civil and religious liberty, and the completest toleration one to another."

He further says, replying to some remarks of Mr. Stout: "I never at any time asked the Association to accept Theistic Spiritualism, any more than Mr. Stout asked it to accept Agnosticism. I seldom gave an address

knowing my views were unpopular. I never once gave any teaching on God or immortality in the Children's Lyceum. I knew well it would displease the Atheistic party. How could I teach my belief to my class if most of the children belonged to Atheistical parents? Suppose I had, and one little boy said, 'My father does not believe such things,' what would be the effect? The question needs no answer. One was constrained, therefore, to sink what he conceived to be his best thoughts—and in a Free-thought Association.

Like some people who have been connected with similar bodies in Melbourne, Mr. Braithwaite has realised the difficulties in the way of harmonious action between two classes of minds holding diametrically opposed views upon questions continually coming uppermost, of a momentous nature, in the endeavour to liberalise humanity and properly train the young. Clearly, where one has arrived at the conviction—based not upon faith, tradition, or dogma, but upon positive experiences which have turned belief into knowledge—a conviction which, to use Mr. Braithwaite's own words, "modern science in its completest sense will yet substantiate," and is, in fact, fast doing so—of the reality of what is commonly called "the future life" (though in truth it is a *present* life and sphere of action and influence ever with us), and at the further conviction that a knowledge of the reality and true nature of such life is all-important, first, in enabling us to understand its influence upon us here, and secondly, in preparing us in the only common-sense way for entering upon it; when convictions like these have dawned upon the mind, it is clearly distressing to be compelled to keep them, with all the grand and inspiring thoughts arising therefrom, with all their power to afford support in one of the bitterest trials of life—bereavement—with all their influence for good upon our nature, sunk out of sight and repressed, because the giving expression to them, the attempt to give the benefit of them to the young as part of their capital wherewith to make their start upon the rough pathway of life, would excite the disapproval, or even the frown of one's co-workers. On the other hand, it would also be distressing to one who honestly believes the future life to be an empty dream, and the basing of hopes thereon a hurtful illusion, to be compelled to remain silent on this head. The logical outcome of this is summed up in Mr. Braithwaite's own words: "Broadly speaking, there can only be two schools of thought: those who believe in God and immortality, and those who do not. I think I have demonstrated that each would work more effectually apart. However perfect the mutual toleration of each other's views might by self-control become, it is difficult to conceive how there could fail to be also a mutual disapproval, felt if not expressed, which would be a constant secret source of weakness and disunion in the Institution.

Mr. Stout takes exception to Mr. Braithwaite's proposition that morals are a farce unless based on Theism, and the belief in a future life, and says: "I take it that you mean that no men can be moral who are not Theists and believers in a future state of existence. If you do, then one exception is sufficient to disprove your proposition, and I need not say that there are hundreds, perhaps millions of Agnostics who are moral men. You complain of the children of the Lyceum not being taught the dogmas of a personal Deity and a future state. Here again let me say that I believe the majority of the teachers are Theists, and as conductor I have never dictated the class-teaching you and other leaders gave; but believing as I do that morality is independent of all dogmas—standing upon an assured human foundation—I do not teach the children any dogmas; and in a second letter writes: 'Again there is a reference to the need of some religious dogma before one can be moral. This is caused, I believe, by a want of appreciation of the position of such men as Bain and Spencer. This I can say, if his position be correct, no Agnostic can be moral.'

In replying, Mr. Braithwaite says: "Mr. Stout wrongly assumes that I think only believers in Theism and a future state can be moral. He uses such words as 'terrors of future punishment, and pleasures of future glory,' in a sense I would not dream of. I did not complain that the children of the Lyceum are not taught the

dogmas of a personal Deity and a future life; I simply pointed out that the essentials of religion could not be taught therein without giving offence. Nor did I use the words 'personal Deity.' I earnestly recommend my friend to study the other side of the question rather than run his mind too much on the lines of Bain and Spencer. Had I not done this I possibly would not enjoy my present views. I see that Herbert Spencer's latest admission is that there is 'an infinite, eternal, creative energy lying behind all phenomena.'

With regard to the contention of Mr. Stout, that if "morals are a farce unless based upon Theism and a future life," then no Agnostic can be moral; this is an argument which, in the compact syllogistic form stated, appears at first sight conclusive. But there is an important factor to be taken into account in the consideration of the proposition, which must not be overlooked if we wish our conclusions to be accurate, and it is this, that the Atheists and Agnostics who are in our midst to-day are the descendants of a hundred generations of men and women who held a fervent belief in God and immortality, and that unquestionably the influence of these beliefs on our ancestors must still survive as a potent force operating upon us in a thousand undreamt-of ways.

Then, as to the teaching of dogma in the Lyceum, to which Mr. Stout objects, he should not forget that to the well-informed Spiritualist the future life has ceased to be a dogma. According to the dictionary, a dogma is "an opinion," an "assertion made without proof." But the conviction of the Spiritualist is based on the firm foundation of personal experiences, which can only (taking their entire range) be satisfactorily interpreted in one way, and the clear testimony of living and capable witnesses, evidences of a character very different from that on which the Christian rests his belief, which is what Mr. Stout doubtless has in mind. On the other hand, it is the Materialist who is teaching, or implying that there is no future life, who is really propagating a dogma, i. e., that which he cannot prove. The yearning of the human mind for something positive to lean upon is illustrated by the strong tendency which that suspensory attitude of mind called Agnosticism exhibits to glide into dogmatic Atheism and Materialism.

Mr. Charles Bright, now in N. Z., criticised Mr. Braithwaite's position in one of his lectures delivered at the Lyceum Institute. A few of his remarks seem to have been unnecessarily caustic. In the course of his lecture he said: "The Freethought Association was simply a body the members of which come together with the view of the propagation of freedom, and not to disseminate any particular 'ism.' He felt strongly on this point, because in taking an active part in forming a similar Association in New South Wales, he had precisely that difficulty to encounter. While large numbers were always ready to help forward organisations which assisted their 'ism—Spiritualism, Atheism, or Theism—there was considerable difficulty in getting a sufficient number of open-minded people to come forward and help liberty wherever it was endangered."

It is singular that just as Mr. Braithwaite has realised the incompatibility of his position as an earnest Spiritualist in the Dundig body, where his convictions have to be suppressed, because apparently unwelcome to many of his co-workers, the Spiritualistic and Lyceum bodies of Sydney have, we understand, consented to incorporation with the Liberal Association and the Secularists under the name of the United Freethought Associations.

#### MR. H. J. BROWNE IN TASMANIA.

Our energetic friend Mr. H. J. Browne, who is always active in the private dissemination of Spiritualism and rational religion, has contrived to utilize a recent holiday tour in Tasmania, by lecturing in the two principal cities, in both of which he has awakened a lively interest on the subject of Spiritualism. Favourable reports of his lectures appear in the *Hobart Town Mercury* and the *Launceston Telegraph*, the latter very lengthy; the former being more appropriate to our space we append:—

"SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.—Mr. H. J. Browne, of Melbourne, delivered a lecture to a good audience last even-

ing in the Tasmanian Hall on 'The Evidences of a Life to Come, or Materialism Refuted.' He pointed out that the subject treated of was by no means a popular one owing to the prevailing ignorance regarding it and the gross misrepresentations made by those whose interests were opposed to it. Spiritual science, or spiritualism as it is commonly called, he said, was not a religion, as is generally supposed, but is in reality the scientific basis of true religion. Without it there is no rational evidence of a future life, and although it is ignored by theologians, as a rule, it is alone through spirit demonstration that the arguments of the materialist can be rationally met. While many professed to believe in ancient spiritual manifestations, without any valid evidence of their truth, they inconsistently denied their occurrence in the present day, or foolishly ascribed the latter day phenomena to a mythical personage, viz., Satan, while they viewed those of former times as of Divine origin. The lecturer further maintained that in olden days there were good and also evil divinations, and true as well as false prophets, so to-day there were good and bad spiritualists, and true and false mediums; and it was unreasonable to reject either the old or the new on that account. From the lecturer's own experience he had found that a religion founded on facts demonstrable to the senses was much superior to one founded merely on blind faith, although he experienced great reluctance in parting with the latter, owing to the endearing associations connected therewith. In the interest of truth and right, however, he had to cast aside even his dearest idol. A religion based on faith alone, he found, failed to give him that consolation which it professed to afford when death entered his family, whereas, the religion whose foundation rested on demonstrable facts, patent to his senses, proved that those who were dear to him and had been taken away by the hand of death still lived, and that the ties of love and affection were not severed thereby, thus truly robbing death of its sting, and the grave of its victory. It was only through ignorance and prejudice that the glorious evangel of truth was as yet despised, rejected, and ridiculed; but as truth is eternal, and error transient, it was only a matter of time when it would be gladly welcomed by all as the grand enlightener of mankind, raising them morally, intellectually, and spiritually, in the scale being. The lecturer was frequently greeted with applause, and at the conclusion answered a number of questions put to him by some of the audience. A vote of thanks brought the proceedings to a close."—*H. T. Mercury*, January 30th, 1884.

#### To Correspondents.

*Communications intended for this Journal should be written legibly, and on one side of the paper only.*

#### RETROSPECT AND DIGEST OF MY LATE

##### "HARBINGER" CORRESPONDENCE.

By ROBERT CALDECOTT.

"To say that one form of spiritual manifestation is better or more wonderful than another when all are true, is not wise.

"One form may be more valuable to us particularly than another. We may be partial to the form of manifestation by which we were convinced of the truth of immortality and spirit- intercourse, or we may think one form less or more liable to be simulated than another.

"Imposition excluded, all modes shown to be true methods of spirit communication are good, and no comparison is admissible from individual preference."—MARY S. NICHOLS. *Spiritual Record*, No. 4, p. 200.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir,—I have been induced to address you on this subject—

First. Partly from seeing one of your unpublished communications from a N. S. Wales correspondent, containing much adverse criticism on my communications recording the manifestations of pelting-spirits in Dorcas-street, city of South Melbourne.

Second. Partly from my lighting upon the well-expressed sentiment contained in my motto, which will be the text upon which I wish to preach to you, or I should rather say, the text upon which I should wish all

my opponents to my argument to preach to themselves

Third. Partly from my lighting upon the equally well-expressed sentiment in a note on the 84th page of the "Religion of the Future," by H. J. Browne, as follows:

"I am aware, however, that in the case of those in whom the ability to appreciate spiritual truth lies dormant, and who consequently do not possess the power of spiritual perception, it is perfectly useless to endeavour to prove the reality of the spirit-world, and of spirit communion.

"To people of this class of mind we may state facts innumerable, and adduce arguments unanswerable, but we cannot give them the understanding to enable them to appreciate spiritual truths. As was said of old, 'spiritual things must be spiritually discerned,' and this cannot be done by those who do not possess the spiritual sense through which alone conviction is rendered possible."

I should here mention parenthetically that I have just quoted from a volume presented to me with the author's compliments, and that a short notice of this kind, of a really useful book, is calculated to do a great deal of good. "The Religion of the Future" is a work than which I know of none more useful, addressing itself to the highest intellect, and by a man of mark in our midst.

The more his work and works are read, the better for the readers.

Fourth. A fourth inducement urging me to write this letter grew out of my just opening a letter from England, from a near relative and correspondent of half a century's standing, who so clearly reveals the false position of the many (including my correspondent) who assume that truthful records of wonderful phenomena are to be noticed, or remain unnoticed, according as we like the look of them or otherwise.

Philosophers of this class claim a right to pronounce upon the wisdom or otherwise of the Supreme Disposer of Events, as indicated to their own minds by certain facts and phenomena of nature, which as facts they do not deny. My correspondent says, "I do not deny such things as Dr. Rohrer's clairaudience at the distance of ten miles;" but thinks those facts convey no useful teaching for the children of men.

I account such apathy, in the face of such wonders, equal to Atheism, for as mortals are not the authors of the wondrous facts and phenomena, then Divinity must be.

Such I held, in my correspondence, was the case with regard to the clairaudience of Dr. Rohrer, who was reported in the *Harbinger*, eight or ten years back (and again eight or ten weeks ago, under his own hand), to have clairvoyantly heard his own name called by a poor woman whom he did not know, but who wanted his assistance.

I need not mention time and place, for I am writing for the readers of the *Harbinger*, who know the facts I am about to use in my argument.

These facts were the subject of my correspondence with my English relative, whom I am about to quote, as the representative of a class, and ask my readers to compare the quotation with my motto, and then join with me in thinking that my relative should have had more reverence for those angelic powers of the soul which are manifested by clairaudience, or that clairvoyance which sees a fellow mortal dying at the distance of from Clunes to Melbourne, or half round the globe as reported by "Veritas" in your last issue.

What, I ask, is the wisdom of acknowledging the truth of these things, and then both slighting and condemning them, which it will be seen my correspondent does. Yet I can vouch for the high culture of that correspondent, and that good-heartedness which includes sincerity.

What I quote, then, is a most instructive sample of the foolish notions of the foolish multitude.

In opposition to my correspondent, my position is that these powers of the soul so freely reported of late in the *Harbinger*, are religion's best aid, inasmuch as they demonstrate that man himself is a spiritual being, even in this life, indicating and proving what his angelic powers will be in the next world.

So much being demonstrated, the question by the poet, Dr. Young—and which should be asked at the Lecture Hall of the Secularists, in Bourke-street—becomes in order, viz.:—

"Shall the blood of heaven  
Set up its hopes on earth, and stifle here  
With brutal acquiescence in the mire?"

These spiritual manifestations, declaring the nature of man's organisation are sent by God to change men from Materialists into Spiritualists.

Such a change is a change for the better, and I am only sorry my English relative cannot see it in that light. Says the relative—"I cannot see why the spice of marvel in the clairaudience manifestation should seem to please you so much. It appears your friend the dignitary (I omit the name) has a little taste for Spiritualism as myself. I always wonder as you are so fond of the subject that you will broach it so much to people who find it only a bore. You do not succeed in making people like it, and you cannot even get up an argument, for one feels only that one does not understand it and you cannot explain it. You know I do not at all share your taste for mysteries and marvels. I am always much more interested in what I can understand. I do not say I DISBELIEVE IT. But one always seems to stand on the outside of these sort of things, and you cannot get any satisfactory solution. Of course such things are quite possible, though unusual. There seemed not to be the slightest use in the poor doctor's rest being disturbed in this way, and it certainly would be very undesirable that such disturbances should be common."

I must correct my correspondent's facts (or supposed facts) as regards the fact of my inability to get people to like Spiritualism. I will mention one good name—Mr. S. Deakin—whom I know he has succeeded in causing to like Spiritualism, and I know he has sent a public voucher to you to that effect.\* I look upon this as a judgment upon my correspondent, as he (Mr. Deakin) could not have known what my English correspondents were going to say to me. I think, Mr. Editor, you will allow that I score here, yet I confess that my want of success in making converts has been marvellous to me, and some of these confessions had reached my correspondent from time to time.

I repeat, Mr. Deakin, the architect of the city of South Melbourne, is a good witness, and from no belief, I was the means of converting him to a belief in the truth of Spiritualism. It will teach me not to be cast down with past or future failures, even in the special case of my correspondent, hitherto obdurate.

I now address myself to my other adverse critic, your N. S. W. correspondent, and I have only to refer him to my quotation from Mr. H. J. Browne's book on the potency of a fact, given in in the early part of my letter.

Now the peltings of the pelting spirits are facts, and just as bothersome in a Secularist lecture hall as the facts of people seen from Victoria to die in England, or seen from Clunes to die in Melbourne. I ask the Secularist to review these facts, and let me know what kind of a digest he can make of them. Take, for instance, a Bible falling upon my head, and which your correspondent thought so very insignificant. I say it was very significant, owing to the intelligent grasp of the premises indicated, inasmuch as I had just before been preaching a little sermon (not my won't, or in my line), yet few sermon preachers get such immediate recognition of their services from the world of invisible intelligences as I got on that occasion from the pelting spirits." It will be remembered that shortly after offering that prayer, the Bible fell upon my head, in a very good light, before many witnesses.

If your correspondent could see no significance therein, neither would he in what struck me as the same kind of intelligent significance, when just now I found it on the 207th page of *Spiritual Record* for Sept., 1883: "Miss D— R— and Mr. Jencken were talking about Spiritualism, and he got rather excited, and was saying something to the effect that he lost his patience when people said it was all trickery and conjuring, and that instead of that it was a great and real blessing and dispensation vouchsafed to us by God for our comfort."

Approving raps occurred at this, and he said, "is it not to show us without doubt that it is so?"

Assent was signified to that remark so emphatically that it made me laugh."

\* This is correct: Ed. H. of L.

Now, Mr. Editor, I regard this as a parallel passage. The intelligence came in both instances from the world of spiritual intelligences; and further than that, I admit my English correspondent is right in saying that I cannot explain it.

But, Mr. Editor, neither is your correspondent nor mine right in saying that we can find no religious interest in the discovery of the intelligent watchfulness of spiritual beings in close relationship with us; this intelligence gives that explanation of itself, and no other, all the world over, in all ages and nations, and has built itself so far into the religions of the world as to claim the consistent support of the devotees of all religions.

Take again another variety of occult phenomena, to be found in my late letters to the *Harbinger*: how was it that a young lady could tell me in a moment, upon interrogation, what had fallen upon my head by unseen agency, viz., a Bible?

The parents testified, and I testify, to her having no ordinary means of knowing what it was, as the phenomenon had only been witnessed very late the night before, and she revealed the article early the next morning, without ever being in the same house with any of us, or seeing any of us who witnessed that phenomena. This seems to me equally wonderful with looking from Victoria upon a brother's dying bed in England.

My letters have asked for the contemplation of these things, and comparing one form of manifestation of the powers of the soul with another, I say (imposition excluded) all modes of manifestation of these powers are equally good, and as no comparison is inadmissible from individual preference, my objects are out of court.

It is not in the nature of the fact, but in the nature of the minds it comes in contact with, that we must look, expecting the fact to take root and bear fruit.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

ROBERT CALDECOTT.

Raglan-street, Sandridge,

19th Jan 1884.

#### UNDEVELOPED MEDIUMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Another painful experience, which has recently come under my notice of the *mangled individual* character of mediums, set at large, as it were, after each séance, or tap of their power, induces me to suggest a few points to fellow investigators regarding the serious responsibility of aiding spiritual agencies in confusing, corrupting, and destroying the development of the inborn individuality by indiscriminate use of and play with abnormal gifts. Still I will not philosophise on the subtle subject of crossing influences, and only draw a sketch of a wild-grown medium as a kind of key to the queer antics of a certain class of sensitives. If we accept non-mediumistic organisms as reliable fellow-creatures with whom we can do business, because no superhuman connections interpose between them and their obligations towards us, then the medium unwatched offers the very reverse in our dealings with them. The former carries our demands home, whilst the latter slips them on first chance of agitation. The non-medium is bound to its own self, or, to speak more to the point, has his own body as its only medium, the latter being a vessel tossed on the ocean of life, good and evil spirits using them for opposite purposes. I may liken the one to earth-fixed creatures, the other to animals of the waters with provision to exist in a manner also on *terra firma*. Now, as everything represents development, we discover in every species demarcations of degrees, and so we may safely provide for a division *semi-mediums* amphibia-like, moving along the edges of two elements; or we call them mediumistic persons, the most dangerous in society when left unwatched. These very often appear the contrary of what we presume to hold as characteristics of mediums.

No abnormal phenomena, no so-called psychic force, symptom, or miracle is directly evolving from their presence, but by longer observation we find their conduct as what we term in the ordinary run of society, totally void of principles and the very personification of false-

hood: to-day appearing as holy angels, glorifying the claims of Spiritualism, to-morrow serving with the same zeal, and perhaps with momentary personal conviction, a band of truth-persecutors, as I may term those who abuse the divine right of freethinking proper.

These semi-mediums tax the acuteness of observers in no small degree, for their trances themselves often partake of the double nature, and suggest the streak of smoke over a town which is often mistaken for a layer of clouds coming from above. But the real danger of these "sneaks" lies in their deceiving sentimental, good natured Spiritualists in private concerns; and some of these sham individuals, when they learn of Diogenes looking out with his lantern for an honest man, may sincerely believe that honesty and truthfulness are indeed only phantoms, and they take persecutions for dishonesty, as shams too. This may explain the perplexing fact that these creatures are able to repeat their dodges after having been thoroughly shown up by simply changing place and name. A true Spiritualist will never deny help to a suffering fellow creature when in real need, but aiding such dangerously gifted *unconditionally*, amounts almost to crime, for it feeds the lusts of the evil demons attending their pet.

I, or we, had a bitter lesson with a Spiritualist of the purest inspiration when on the platform, who turned out as one who abused the confidence of his trusting friends. Escaping from an obligation by a sudden departure, followed by a letter of some explanation, admits of a measure of forbearance; but slipping out without any sign of regret, turns naturally the freshly gained converts into rank enemies; and, therefore, I believe it is time, if we have to extend our teachings beyond the margin and confines of spiritual periodicals, to caution the public against these objectionable characters in our movement. I feel bound to repeat what I some years ago expressed in a book—"False Lights and Dark Spots in Spiritualism"—"When we open by a powerful medium the gates of heaven, as it were suddenly, the violent current flings open the trap-door of hell, too, and larking demons rush in plentifully."

I received through my medium, Mrs. Henry Firman, sublime manifestations, and in a twinkling of the eye she would rush at me like a dragon if I doubted one whom she had confidence in, though he was the greatest villain in human clothing. Such physical mediums, when in full development of power, fascinate our attention *on-sidedly*, and the defects disappear in the splendour of phenomena at hand and those to come; but these semi-mediums, who are scattered among society in alarming numbers, ought to engage our strictest scrutiny and watch, as our personal inconveniences are nothing in comparison with the damage they effect on the spread and popularising of the truth.—Yours, etc.,

O. REIMERS.

Edinburgh, 2nd February, 1884.

We notice with pleasure that Mrs. M. S. E. Moore, a lady residing in the Wanganui District, North Island of New Zealand, has recently joined the ranks of advanced thought lecturers. The *Review*, in commenting on her lecture before the Wanganui Freethought Association says:—"On the 16th, Mrs. Moore gave us a lecture on 'Woman's Influence,' the announcement of which brought us a crowded house, with a very large proportion of the fair sex. Mrs. Moore is a spiritualist, and a lady of remarkable ability. She has the happy knack of bringing out her arguments in a clear and telling way, in a few words, thus enabling the most untutored to grasp her meaning. She held that as women had more to do with children than men, it was of the utmost importance, and absolutely necessary to the well-being of the children, that women should be well educated and trained themselves, thus being in a position to show their children, the paths of duty, so that they might grow up honest and useful members of society, men and women capable, by virtue of this early training, to occupy any honorable position in the world. A lecture so intensely interesting is very seldom heard in Wanganui; and I believe it is intended to print it in pamphlet form, so that it may be read by every one."



## SYDNEY LETTER.

THE reign of the Summer God is at its zenith, old "Sol" shines down upon us in all his glory, the country and minor creeks are parched and dry, some of the rivers are but a chain of waterholes, and rain is much needed. The Wesleyans, recognising this fact, set apart Sunday the 17th as a day of prayer for rain. Strange to relate, it rained on the eve preceding the supplication day, and then ceased; the sky cleared, and scarcely a cloud has crossed the horizon since. Evidently the Methodists are not in favour at the court of Jupiter Pluvius. When will these good people learn that "the prayers of the righteous availeth much" only when they are of a decidedly practical nature. It is indeed interesting to find that old beliefs still linger on under new guises; for the same spirit that prompted the Samoan rainmakers with their sacred stone, which they wet when they wanted rain, and put to the fire to dry when they wanted to dry the weather; or the Lapland wizards with the winds they used to sell to our sea captains in a knotted cord to be let out by untying it knot for knot, bids the Minister of the Gospel pray for rain, and the congregation to cry "amen."

Most of your readers will, I am sure, regret to hear of Mr. George Lacy's departure for London, he having left our shores in the Parramatta, with the intention, I believe, of residing permanently "at home." He may justly claim to rank as one of our best champions of Unfettered Thought, and it will be some time before the void caused by his departure can be filled up.

*The Liberal*, which owes its existence and success to his labours, is still to the fore. *The Rainbow*, I am sorry to say, has ceased publication for the present, although I sincerely hope it will make its second appearance ere long. The constant ebb and flow of religious thought, and the periods of excitement and quiescence that succeed each other in the world theological have somewhat affected our Lyceum, but as the spiritual tides ebb quickly, so do they flow with equal rapidity. Hence we may soon look for a return of the old enthusiasm and heartiness.

Within the next month we shall be blessed or cursed (which you will) by an Anglican Bishop and a Romish Cardinal. The former gentleman intends devoting much of his time to the delivery of lectures upon ethical and theologio-scientific subjects, and doubtless he has many good things in store for us. The churches are slowly but surely widening their pulpits—they will discard them for platforms by and bye. Some day we shall awaken to find that Protestantism has ceased to be, and that the armies called to battle fly the standards of Progress, and Bigotry of Unfettered Thought, and Roman Catholicism. The Spiritualistic world is very quiet at present, but the work is still going forward, for I hear of many interesting items from private seances, and many recruits to the ranks of the believers in our Harmonical Philosophy, and so the truth moves on.

The Rev. Mr. Osborne, who was expelled the Wesleyan Church some time ago, is now incumbent of a non-sectarian body who succeeded from the old faith with him. Let them act up to their title, and they have the support of all lovers of the truth. The Rev. Mr. Camm, our most advanced of advanced Unitarians, who has returned from a visit to your city, is again scattering his truth gems on Sunday mornings, and the Christian Young Men are indulging in moonlight excursions on the Harbor, and awaiting anxiously the completion of their new Hall. Then with the assistance of the Salvation Army the whole of Australasia is to "find Jesus." At the present time, the "Christians" are collecting money for missionaries to enlighten the poor heathen of New Guinea—strange they never help the "poor heathen" at their very doors. Alas how many shillings are turned into Bibles instead of food and clothing. Better to save one starving body by a good meal, or a warm coat, than the souls of a hundred savages by teaching them a religion oftentimes inferior to their own in simplicity and truthfulness.

BETA.

## ATTEMPTS AT TRUTH.\*

Mr. Stock's book, though published some eighteen months since, has only recently come under our notice. The title is an attractive one to the truthseeker, and possibly such will receive assistance by a careful separate study of the various chapters, but if he starts their consecutive perusal without a clear idea of the road he is travelling he will probably find himself more confused at the end than at the beginning. This is due to the preponderance of metaphysics, which, though fascinating to the few is most confusing and unsatisfactory to the many, being the reverse of positive in its conclusions, and leaving them as a rule no nearer a solution at the end than at the beginning. The author probes into many subjects, and exhibits their contents, drawing here and there conclusions which commend themselves to reason and intuition. He sets out by dividing humanism into two schools of thinkers, viz., those who look *within* for truth, and those who look *without*; or, broadly speaking, the Spiritualistic and Materialistic schools of thought and action. Carefully examining and comparing these two he comes to the conclusion that the emotional is the source of all moral action and that for the individual the standard as well as the sanction of morality is to be found in intuition rather than experience, whilst for the race the standard is, and can only be—utility.

In the inquiry, Why must I do what is right? the motors are shown to be self-interest, and moral feelings. The former would often lead us on a path different to that indicated by the latter, and it is only through the education of the moral feelings our author concludes that self-interest can be brought into harmony with the higher motives. The handling of the important question, "What is right?" is to our mind rather disappointing. The conclusion may be summed up in one word, viz.—utility.

Under the heading of a "positive view of Spiritualism" the author severely criticises Dr. Sexton, whose sin appears to be the attempt to logically prove the existence of God and spirit, and the harmony of science and religion, and in his work on "Scientific Materialism," whilst we admit Mr. Stock's proposition that "it is a great mistake to fancy that religion can be established by argument," it seems to us that the Doctor has only been using the metaphysical tools his critic handles so dexterously. In some parts of the book before us, Mr. Gillespie comes in for a castigation in the same direction, for his attempt to present an *a priori* argument for the existence of a God. There are some good parts in the chapter "Theism," and we heartily coincide with the theorem that man makes his own God, or rather that the conception of God held by man is as a rule in accordance with his state of Spiritual and intellectual development. From the next chapter we may infer that the author, if not a Spiritualist, has at least examined and become favorably impressed with its importance. He points out its superior adaptability over other religions to present requirements, that its message is, "The dead are still alive!" and that it stands out as an uncompromising fact not to be scowled out of existence. He examines the bearings of Spiritualism, and asserts that persons who have encountered its facts never again reject assertions that admit of verification, on the ground of their intrinsic incredibility; commenting at the same time on the apparent incapacity of students of physical science to escape from a particular groove of thought. "The science," he says, "which would elucidate the deeper mysteries of Nature must be a science which will investigate instead of denying, a science which is ready to learn as well as eager to teach, a science which will shirk no acts because the conclusions they point at are distasteful." In a subsequent chapter on Materialism and Modern Spiritualism he charges Spiritualism with intolerance towards Materialists. That there are intolerant and bigoted Spiritualists cannot be denied, but our experience indicates that the preponderance of intolerance is on the other side. This, however, is a matter of little moment. Intolerance is the result of ignorance

\* Attempts at Truth. By St. George Stock. Trubner & Co. London, 1882.

and defective mental development, and is not peculiar to any form of belief *per se*. The chapters which follow this—What is reality? and Berkeley and positivism—are intensely metaphysical, and a review of Bray's "Illusion and Delusion" brings us no light, but the short concluding chapter, "Where is Heaven?" is an interesting one, and compensates to some extent for the unprofitable labour of perusing those immediately preceding it. The author's conclusions are that heaven is not a locality, but a condition, and that the path to it leads through humility and kindness, self-sacrifice, purity, tenderness, and love. Each chapter of the book is complete in itself, and we think prospective readers of it would derive more satisfaction from its perusal by reading those chapters we have more particularly indicated in connection, and leaving the metaphysical ones for separate study.

### CLAIRVOYANCE.\*

At the present time when Clairvoyance and its concomitants is exciting considerable attention in the "great metropolis," the pamphlet before us is an opportune publication. Dr. Wyld's experience in Psychological subjects goes back upwards of forty years, and a personal acquaintance with the late Dr. Gregory and other eminent practical investigators of Mesmeric Phenomena eminently qualify him for the task he has undertaken. In his preliminary remarks the author objects to the word Clairvoyance (or clear seeing) as inadequate to convey a true idea of inner vision, as it might without impropriety be applied to the perfect action of the physical eye, and suggests Auto-noetia as more definite. After a brief reference to Mr. Dove, Robert Chambers, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Jas. Simpson, and other men of note in the literary and scientific world who were believers in Mesmerism, Dr. Wyld proceeds to classify various phases of Clairvoyance, thought-reading, brain-reading, seeing bodily disease, Psychometry, seeing objects hidden in boxes, etc.; prevision and entrancement, accompanied by Clairvoyance produced by anaesthetics, giving interesting instances of each, all demonstrative of the fact.

"If," says the author, "one single instance of Clairvoyance is demonstrated, it will prove there is a faculty or auto-noetic power in man as yet unrecognised by science, and there can be only three ways of disposing of these records, viz.: falsehood, coincidence, or facts. The untenability of the first two propositions is clearly shown, and the Doctor follows with some examples of the stolid and unreasoning skepticism exhibited by otherwise intelligent men towards the subject referred to; they are on a par with many objections put forward against Spiritualism, and only require to be looked at straight by any person of mediocre intelligence to make manifest their absurdity.

"For instance, one skeptic, being forced by the evidence to admit the possibility of Clairvoyance, said to me, 'At least, let us be thankful so little of it is to be found.'

"Another skeptic, when a perfectly blindfolded clairvoyant read a sentence from a book, as held to his forehead, replied, 'Well, it would have been more satisfactory if he had read with the back of his head.'

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"But my sixth skeptic was the worst of all: for although he is popularly believed to be one of the

greatest philosophers of the day, he yet, when I assured him I was as certain of my occult facts as I was of the existence of my right hand, replied, 'I am not bound to admit the existence of your right hand, and as to your occult facts, if they were true, they would upset the laws of the universe.'

"In the face of objectors of this quality, may one not say—There are none so blind as those who won't see, and no credulity is so childish or so pedantic as some specimens of incredulity."

Arguing from the evidence presented, the author shows the unity of the soul of man and its independence of physical conditions. He concludes as follows:

"Thus the highest entranced soul knows, as an absolute fact, that Materialism is false. It beholds its immortal life, and in the innermost secret of its own essence it listens to the still small voice of the eternal God."

### RECOLLECTION AND PERSONALITY.

The following article which appears in the *Revue Spirite*, now in its 26th year, published in Clermont, in France, is one of a remarkable series originally contributed to the *Messenger* by M. B. Bussereau. It deals with a question which has excited, and continues to excite, an immense amount of interest among French Spiritualists, namely, the plurality of existences. :—

Spiritualism teaches—and it is one of its fundamental points—the plurality of the existences (incarnations) of the soul; the only doctrine, it affirms, which can explain the inequality of conditions, physical as well as moral, in which each of us enters on the present existence. And it adds:

"The soul, moreover, in a state of erraticity, instructed by the experience of its previous lives chooses the kind of life which it believes best adapted to promote its advancement in the path of moral progress it deserves, and, in a general way, the probation it has to go through, the obstacles it must encounter, and so forth.

"And the resolutions thus taken in the interval of incarnation must be regarded as one of the principal causes of the first movements by which we are actuated, without any apparent motive, without any reasonable determination, to take such and such a decision, in preference to such and such another one, and sometimes even—although this happens more rarely—to our being actuated by innate dispositions and almost instinctively, to adopt such and such a course of action.

"For example, I am conscious of a repulsion for a certain person of my acquaintance, and nevertheless I can assign no rational motive for my antipathy; and as there is no apparent reason why I should not live on affectionate, or at any rate, on friendly terms with him, I make advances for that purpose.

"Why does this happen?"

"Spiritualism makes answer: you have had, perhaps, in one of your previous existences somewhat antagonistic relations with that person, from which has arisen this repulsion, which more or less voluntarily entertained, has led to an incompatibility of humour and fluid.

"But your soul, during its state of disincarnation, when it is disengaged from material interests, having recognised that there has been on your part a veritable fault, has formed the resolution to react against that blameable tendency.

"And this is why, from the action of this two-fold cause your experience, on the one hand, an instinctive repulsion, and on the other you are impelled to make advances without any adequate reason, but from which, on the contrary, that instinctive antipathy would appear to restrain you.

This explanation of that which passes so often under our eyes, furnished by Spiritualism, will appear sufficiently clear to you, I hope, to obviate the necessity of my dwelling upon it more at length.

"Now what is the judgment pronounced upon this explication by so-called positive philosophy?"

"It replies: First, that the soul preserving no memory of these anterior existences, such a thing can be nothing better than a purely gratuitous hypothesis, since that

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absence of recollection would constitute in itself a decisive argument against the reality of those existences. But that, in any case, the solution of continuity in the consciousness of the Ego, implies the destruction of the personality itself in its essence. Secondly, that it is absurd and immoral to suppose that resolutions formed in a pretended condition of erraticity, of which we have no remembrance, could have any influence over acts performed 20, 30, 40, or 50 years afterwards, or even longer than that.

"Now are these objections irrefragable? I think not. And may we not find, even in what is passing under our eyes, reasons tending to compel us to admit, if not the actual existence, at least the non-impossibility, the non-absurdity, and better still, a certain probability sufficiently strong to entitle it to our serious attention? I believe so, and I venture to affirm it. And I shall proceed to prove it, not by metaphysical arguments which would not be admitted by all, nor even comprehended by some, but by material facts.

(To be concluded in our next.)

### AMONG THE GHOSTS.

From "The World."

By AN INVESTIGATOR.

Having heard of the occurrence of some extraordinary phenomena at the house of a private gentleman residing in one of the suburbs of this city, and being interested in the study of the occult sciences, I asked and obtained his permission to be present at what is called a materializing séance a few evenings since. There were seven other persons present, one of whom, a gentleman of distinguished scientific attainments, occupying a high position in a neighbouring colony, had been attracted by curiosity, like myself. We sat in a semi-circle in the dining-room of our host. There was a recess between the fire-place and the north wall, sufficiently deep to contain a chair for the use of the medium, and two curtains were drawn over the recess. There was no door, window, or other aperture behind the curtain communicating with the garden outside, from which the room was separated by a thick blue stone wall. Having built the house myself, I am very well acquainted with its structure. There was no wearing apparel in the recess, and no place for concealing any. The medium is between five feet seven, and five feet eight inches in height; and rather full proportioned than slender. At the commencement of the proceedings he was somewhat convulsed, and then passed into a state of trance, at which stage of the proceedings, it was alleged, he was taken possession of by a "controlling spirit," who spoke with a decidedly foreign accent. Addressing the scientific visitor, he said: "Standing beside you are two spirits," and on being asked to name them, he did so. The names were those of two gentlemen formerly resident in the capital of a neighbouring colony, but now deceased; and they said the object of their coming was to mention to the visitor the fact that one of them wished to communicate with the surviving members of his family; that he had discovered that his younger son, whom he named, was mediumistic, and that he wished his old friend to make known that fact on his return to—, so that advantage might be taken of it in the manner desired. Shortly afterwards the medium retired behind the curtain, and after some music had been played, in order, it was said, to "harmonise the conditions," a shadowy, wavering figure emerged into the room, clad in a white robe, but so fluctuating in height, and so vague in form as to produce a weird and uneasy impression on the mind of a spectator witnessing the phenomenon—as I did—for the first time. Two or three voices were heard behind the curtain, and from one of these the statement came that this "spirit" could not materialise himself, and he seemed to fade out of sight. But the next apparition was that of a slender and graceful girl, representing herself as having been an Egyptian. She was about five feet five inches in height, lithe and sinuous in her movements, and she wore a semi-diaphanous garment that resembled white cashmere in its texture. The feet and ankles were

bare and wore of exquisite smallness and beauty, and she was fond of displaying them. When she lifted her slight thin arm and hand, the substance and colour of the curtains were visible through the limb, and through its enveloping drapery. She re-appeared half-a-dozen times, retiring it was explained, to gather fresh vital force from the medium. This process, as also that of "dematerialization," was always accompanied by a peculiar wheezy sound. This apparition, the outlines of whose figure were clearly visible through her robe, was about half the bulk of the medium, while her feet were certainly as diminutive as they were beautiful. During another interval, in which the wheezy sound went on, some one behind the curtain, speaking in a voice resembling that of a boy with a provincial accent, offered an explanation, in reply to a question put by the scientist, of the *modus operandi* of materialization. It was plausible, certainly, but it was directly opposed to all our received notions of matter. To another query, propounded by another visitor, with respect to the objective presentation of ghosts, when no medium is present, he also replied to the apparent satisfaction of the querist. I whispered a sceptical comment to a neighbour, and before I had completed my sentence, which was inaudible to any other person present, a responsive comment came from a voice behind the curtain, about eight feet distant. Another visitor remarked jestingly, "The theosophists say you are no spirits at all, but only shells." "Are we?" was the reply. "If you were as we are, you would know that there is an oyster inside the shell." Presently a third figure came out into the room. It was that of a swarthy dark-bearded man, with high square shoulders, and a spare habit of body, clothed in a Hindoo costume, composed of a material that looked like Indian cotton. He had a turban round his head. He was seen with remarkable distinctness, and shook hands with one of the gentlemen present. He also lifted a heavy chair, and removed it from where it was standing to another part of the room. The next "spirit," who presented herself was that of a female child, apparently about eleven years of age, and not more than four feet in height. She was not visible for more than a few minutes, and seemed rather to fade away into the curtain than to withdraw behind it. The last was a sinewy, stalwart figure, about five feet ten in height, with a thick black beard and a manly stride. He was furnished, at his own request, with writing materials, on a small round table conveniently placed for that purpose, and wrote a sentence on a few sheets of paper, which he handed to as many persons present. Walking across the room to where the writer was sitting, he gave him one and held out his hand, which the writer clasped. It was soft but scarcely warm, substantial to the touch, but somewhat weak in the grasp. Upon the paper was written, in a firm, bold upright character, "I am pleased to meet you to-night, Georgie." I was told that 'Georgie' is a frequent visitor to the 'circle.'

By this time the séance had lasted for two hours, and the "controlling spirit," in a voice altogether unlike that of the medium, declared that he was becoming exhausted, and that the proceedings must be brought to a close. I find, however, that I have forgotten to mention that in the course of the proceedings one of the "spirits" who was outside the curtain, drew it aside and showed us the medium in a comatose condition, and I must add that he had no companion or confederate behind it. When he came forth at the end of the séance he was still in a state of trance or magnetic sleep, and the voice with the strongly marked foreign accent continued to speak out of him for some minutes. Then the "control" bade us all good night, and intimated his intention of quitting the body of the medium, who was subject to the same convulsive movements as at first, with a violent spasmodic motion of the hands as though struggling with, and repelling some hostile influence, and the contrast between the tone of voice in which he said "Why, it is ten o'clock," and that in which he, or his possessor, had previously spoken, was very striking.

I have endeavoured to describe with scrupulous accuracy the phenomena which I witnessed on the occasion referred to, and I venture upon no theories to explain or to account for them. There was no room for trickery or fraud, and

and defective mental development, and is not peculiar to any form of belief *per se*. The chapters which follow this—What is reality? and Berkeley and positivism—are intensely metaphysical, and a review of Bray's "Illusion and Delusion" brings us no light, but the short concluding chapter, "Where is Heaven?" is an interesting one, and compensates to some extent for the unprofitable labour of perusing those immediately preceding it. The author's conclusions are that heaven is not a locality, but a condition, and that the path to it leads through humility and kindness, self-sacrifice, purity, tenderness, and love. Each chapter of the book is complete in itself, and we think prospective readers of it would derive more satisfaction from its perusal by reading those chapters we have more particularly indicated in connection, and leaving the metaphysical ones for separate study.

### CLAIRVOYANCE\*

At the present time when Clairvoyance and its concomitants is exciting considerable attention in the "great metropolis," the pamphlet before us is an opportune publication. Dr. Wyld's experience in Psychological subjects goes back upwards of forty years, and a personal acquaintance with the late Dr. Gregory and other eminent practical investigators of Mesmeric Phenomena eminently qualify him for the task he has undertaken. In his preliminary remarks the author objects to the word Clairvoyance (or clear seeing) as inadequate to convey a true idea of inner vision, as it might without impropriety be applied to the perfect action of the physical eye, and suggests Auto-noeticy as more definite. After a brief reference to Mr. Dove, Robert Chambers, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Jas. Simpson, and other men of note in the literary and scientific world who were believers in Mesmerism, Dr. Wyld proceeds to classify various phases of Clairvoyance, thought-reading, brain-reading, seeing bodily disease, Psychometry, seeing objects hidden in boxes, etc.; prevision and entrancement, accompanied by Clairvoyance produced by anaesthetics, giving interesting instances of each, all demonstrative of the fact.

"If," says the author, "one single instance of Clairvoyance is demonstrated, it will prove there is a faculty or auto-noetic power in man as yet unrecognised by science, and there can be only three ways of disposing of these records, viz.: falsehood, coincidence, or facts. The untenability of the first two propositions is clearly shown, and the Doctor follows with some examples of the stolid and unreasoning skepticism exhibited by otherwise intelligent men towards the subject referred to; they are on a par with many objections put forward against Spiritualism, and only require to be looked at straight by any person of mediocre intelligence to make manifest their absurdity.

"For instance, one skeptic, being forced by the evidence to admit the possibility of Clairvoyance, said to me, 'At least, let us be thankful so little of it is to be found.'

"Another skeptic, when a perfectly blindfolded clairvoyant read a sentence from a book, as held to his forehead, replied, 'Well, it would have been more satisfactory if he had read with the back of his head.'

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By this time the séance had lasted for two hours, and the "controlling spirit," in a voice altogether unlike that of the medium, declared that he was becoming exhausted, and that the proceedings must be brought to a close. I find, however, that I have forgotten to mention that in the course of the proceedings one of the "spirits" who was outside the curtain, drew it aside and showed us the medium in a comatose condition, and I must add that he had no companion or confederate behind it. When he came forth at the end of the séance he was still in a state of trance or magnetic sleep, and the voice with the strongly marked foreign accent continued to speak out of him for some minutes. Then the "control" bade us all good night, and intimated his intention of quitting the body of the medium, who was subject to the same convulsive movements as at first, with a violent spasmodic motion of the hands as though struggling with, and repelling some hostile influence, and the contrast between the tone of voice in which he said "Why, it is ten o'clock," and that in which he, or his possessor, had previously spoken, was very striking.

I have endeavoured to describe with scrupulous accuracy the phenomena which I witnessed on the occasion referred to, and I venture upon no theories to explain or to account for them. There was no room for trickery or fraud, and

it seems scarcely possible that ten persons were simultaneously the victims of a series of optical delusions. As I left the house in which those proceedings occurred, I could not help quoting to one of the visitors, who appeared to be much impressed by them, the exclamation of Horatio, "O, day and night, but this is wondrous strange," to which he replied, in the words of Hamlet:

And, therefore, as a stranger give it welcome,  
There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horatio  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

WITH the January number of *The Theosophist* is published as a supplement the first number of the *Journal of the Theosophical Society*, consisting of twenty-six pages. It contains an introductory memorandum of particular interest to present and prospective members of the Association, calculated to disabuse their minds of a very prevalent idea that the Society is a short cut to the attainment of occult knowledge and occult power, defining at the same time its central objects, which appear to centre in co-operative effort for the moral and spiritual welfare of humanity. This is followed by a series of reports of the president's work in the provinces, which seems to have been both extensive and successful.

The eighth Anniversary of the Society held at Adyar Madras, on the 27th, 28th, and 29th December, is fully reported, together with the credentials of delegates, and letters from branches of the Society not personally represented.

The meeting was a most successful affair, about 500 delegates and members being present. From the report it appears that the Society is rapidly extending its operations and influence, no less than fifty-two new branches having been formed during the past year. It was decided amongst other matters that steps should be taken to establish a permanent fund for carrying on the public work of the Association, and that to meet the annual anniversary expenses of the Society, a subscription of one rupee (or 2/- English) should be contributed by every member. The "Headquarters" property at Adyar has been generously donated to the Society, and steps are being taken for its being vested in trustees. We gather also from a circular since received that the indefatigable President Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, is about to visit Europe on Society business.

Whilst differing in some very important points with the conclusions of the Occultists regarding the future state of man, we are in hearty accord with the general work of the Society, and hope as occasion offers to further its work in Australia.

#### COMMUNICATIONS FROM WM. DENTON.

ON the 29th October last we wrote a letter to the late William Denton, enclosed it carefully in a stout envelope, tied it securely with narrow ribbon, sealing the ends to the back of the envelope with wax, taking also special precaution to ensure detection if the letter were opened or tampered with. It was addressed, "William Denton, Spirit-world," and enclosed to Mr. J. V. Mansfield, New York, with a request that he would endeavour to obtain a reply. By the last Californian mail we received back the letter intact, the three persons who had examined it before its departure being satisfied that it had never been opened. With it came a reply, professedly from our friend Denton, the preamble being the same he was accustomed to use when addressing us, and the signature bearing a strong resemblance to his earthly autograph. It is an answer to all the queries in the letter, and as such, a positive proof of clairvoyance, but as it does not go outside of this it does not amount to a demonstration of his identity.

We hear of Mr. Denton having manifested his presence, and communicated, in various probable and improbable quarters, and have reason to think he has done so on two occasions in our presence, but as the medium was not a test medium, through whom positive proof of identity could be given, we refrain from making

public what was received. Mr. W. B. Shepherdson, of Malmesbury, an earnest and intelligent Spiritualist, writes to inform us and our readers that Mr. Denton has both communicated and materialised there through the mediumship of Mr. Robert Brown, but for the same reason we decline to publish, as what is evidence to them is not the same to outsiders.

#### MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

THERE was a good attendance of members and visitors at the above Lyceum on "Nomination Sunday," February 17th. Previous to the nominations Mr. J. G. Hoogklimmer, the conductor, presented prizes to members of the six junior groups for the best recitations during the past session. Other prizes were also presented for regularity of attendance and attention to group duties.

Mr. Lang, Mrs. Tulloch, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Roper, were severally nominated for Conductor, but the three latter withdrew in favour of Mr. Thomas Lang, who with Mr. J. White as Vice-Conductor will commence the winter session on Sunday next. The following officers were also elected:—Guardians—Messrs. H. Moore, J. G. Hoogklimmer, and J. Veevers; Secretary, Mr. E. Dickens; Treasurer, Mr. W. H. Terry; Librarian, Mr. R. Bamford; Watchman, Mr. F. W. Delaney; Musical Director, Mr. I. Bowley; Leaders—Messrs. Spriggs, Rutherford, Thompson, Roper, White, Veevers, and Crellin, and Mesdames Moore, Fryer, and Johnston, Miss F. Flynn, and Miss F. Samuels.

#### MRS. WATSON IN SAN FRANCISCO.

IN a recent number of the *San Francisco Daily Report*, under the heading of "Inspiration," appears a report of one of Mrs. E. L. Watson's lectures—"Nature as a Pattern in Dress, Manners, and Morality," delivered at the Metropolitan Temple.

The lecture is directed against the artificial and unnatural methods of clothing the female form, and urges upon the sex to copy nature rather than fashion. "A dress," says the lecturer, "should be regarded as respectable which fits properly, and is clean and neat; if to these qualifications it adds appropriateness it becomes beautiful \* \* \* \* Originality and individuality should be striven for; each person has his own peculiarities, which require a particular style of adornment, and a style which, if it be appropriate, will be beautiful as far as that particular wearer is concerned, but cannot be imitated by any one else. It is for this reason that women should not obey the dictates of fashion, which tries to make one pattern for all to follow."

In his comments on the lecture the reporter says: "Whether Mrs. Watson be inspired or not it must certainly be conceded that she is a most eloquent and fluent speaker, and must be admired both for her grace of carriage and her manner of delivery. The lecture which she delivered lasted about an hour and a quarter and was full of wholesome and forcibly stated truths."

It is evident this paper gives the Spiritualists fair-play.

At a private circle in Queensland a short time since a spirit giving the name of Lamont Young controlled the medium, and stated that he and others had been lost in a quicksand. Some of our readers may remember the mysterious disappearance of a surveyor of that name and his party of five, in New South Wales, not very long ago. As far as we are aware no traces of the missing men have been discovered, and if this communication is correct, it would sufficiently account for this, as the quicksand would swallow all their paraphernalia. Previous to the name being given, the medium enacted the process of drowning and suffocation in a painfully realistic manner.

"FREARSON'S WEEKLY" (Adelaide), of February 9th, publishes an article from the pen of Mr. Christian Reimers, entitled "Spiritualism of To-Day;" it gives a brief digest of the Spiritualistic position, and a list of the leading journals which represent the subject, giving *The Harbinger* a very prominent position amongst them.

## OUR FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

BY EMMA TUTTLE.

Since it is known that angels come  
At pleasure o'er death's silent seas;  
Since it is known they are not dumb,  
But counsel us, at will, with ease,  
And love us, love us as of yore,  
When sun and shadow round us played,  
Why shakes your heart from rim to core  
And whispers, "Oh, I am afraid!"

You wist not of the yearning loves  
You shut off by a shield of snow:  
Why not take in the heavenly doves  
Who fly, for love of you, so low?  
Why look upon the burial sod,  
To see them sitting by the stones?  
What care they for the senseless clod  
Which veils with green their crumbling bones

They wait not by their monument  
To daze you when you go that way;  
The low grave-grasses are not bent  
By sweeping of their robes of gray.  
They live not idly with the dead;  
They love not cold, secluded rooms;  
Why go you in with halting tread,  
Trembling and pale as lily blooms?

They are not there! they are not there  
To startle you with moon-like eyes,  
But in the parlors, still and fair,  
And redolent of Paradise;  
Touching your brow like waving wings,  
Dropping a bright thought in your mind,  
Uplifting you from grovelling things  
To thoughts and feelings more refined.

When you have crossed the silent sea,  
Leaving most tender eyes in tears,  
And fain an angel's ministry  
Would do, but cannot, for their fears;  
When those you love draw back agnast  
In passing where your form is laid,  
And each red globe hurries fast  
For fear of ghosts in ambuscade;

When you awake in heaven yourself,  
And see your image pictured out  
Unreal as a lace-winged elf,  
Stalking or skulking dumb about  
In darksome places, you will cry  
"O Faith! where art thou? Love is dead!  
It was not half so hard to die  
As turn to phantoms in Love's head."

Most beautiful it is indeed  
To meet the angels friend as friend;  
To feel in hours of greatest need  
Their holy benisons descend.  
Reach up your hands, oh mortals, here,  
With all the confidence of yore!  
Have grave-clothes made your friends less dear  
And must you fear them evermore?

No! bid them float about your masts  
However roughly roll the seas;  
God speeds them, and their power is vast,  
So welcome them and breathe at ease.  
Come out, angels that are to be,  
And meet them in their white arrayed.  
Come out! what cause is there to flee?  
They are not ghosts in ambuscade.

"BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE" for January contains another beautiful tale by Mrs. Oliphant, entitled "Old Lady Mary: a Story of the Seen and Unseen." It is an essentially Spiritualistic story, illustrating the trouble of a soul over a sin of omission here, which it tries to rectify under great difficulties from the spiritual side.

The contents of *Light* are usually good, but the last number just to hand (January 19th) is exceptionally interesting. M.A. (Oxon.) comments upon the Bishop of Carlisle's recent article on apparitions are particularly good. Mr. S. C. Hall contributes the first of a series of messages from his late wife, with an appropriate introduction, showing the utility of Spiritualism and pointing strongly to spirit identity. Mr. Penny's extracts from Bohme, which appear in the same number, affirm the objective nature of the future life. An article on Spiritualism and the Belgian Newspapers, indicating Spiritualistic progress in that country; and another by Baron Spedaliere, giving an account of the transmission of Mesmeric curative agency, resulting in a cure of severe

St. Vitus' dance. A letter to Koot Hoomi, and last, but not least, a chapter of "Phases of Materialisation," by M.A. (Oxon.), make up the number with the exception of the advertisements; but even these are interesting, for they inform us, first, that a Free Public Reading-room has been opened at the office of *Light*, and arrangements made for the free distribution of elementary spiritual literature.

THE *Liberal* (Sydney) is giving more space to Spiritualistic matters than heretofore. Besides "a Dialogue" between a Freethinker and Spiritualist, running through several numbers, and a Comparison of Secularism and Spiritualism; a number of interesting selections from *The Religio Philosophical Journal*, *Spiritual Record*, &c., have appeared in its pages.

In a letter recently received from Captain Armit, he says, referring to the late Professor Denton, "Yes, poor Mr. Denton was a great loss to me; a more genial or kind-hearted companion I never travelled with. He succumbed to his peculiar dietetic ideas, not touching food from the 19th to 26th August, on which day he passed away as peacefully as an infant. No pain, no twitching of the facial muscles. He literally went to sleep with a smile on his face."

ADVICES from Calcutta inform us of the death of Babu Peary Chand Mittra, probably the oldest and most consistent Spiritualist in India. He was a scholar, having graduated in the Hindoo College, and the author of several works on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, and a reformer in every sense of the word.

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