

# THE Harbinger of Light.

## MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

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

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

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This is a time when the believers in what we must continue to call (in default of a better name,) Spiritualism, should distinctly lay down what is it they do believe in, and what it is they really desire to disseminate a knowledge of. Spiritualism is not merely a belief in the communications of Spirits, whether such communications come by taps through a table, by writing from a planchette, or be obtained in any other mode or manner. It is time that such false and hollow notions as these should be dissipated. Spiritualism means simply a knowledge of Nature's laws, and an understanding of where we came from, why we are here, and whither we are going. It also aims to teach mankind the folly and emptiness of religious worship, in the hundred ridiculous and preposterous forms in which it is carried on throughout what we call civilized society.

Those who believe in Spiritualism believe in one great Creator and ruler of all things, whose love for all His creatures is infinite and unceasing—perfect and universal. They believe consequently that there is no necessity, and that there has never been any necessity—nor was it ever ordained that there should be any need—for an atoning sacrifice to save God's creatures from the punishment of their Creator for doing what their ignorant condition permitted them to do. They do not believe, moreover, that Jesus Christ, whose pure and beautiful teachings would, if followed and not perverted, have been sufficient to make mankind happy and peaceable—they do not imagine that he had a ghost for a father, and that he died to save sinners, and that all who fail to accept these statements as facts will be punished with everlasting torment. They do not recognise as possessing any particle of truth these absurd stories and ridiculous superstitions, any more than they believe that Adam was shaped out of clay, full grown and with his teeth cut, and that Eve was made up from one of the first-man's ribs, taken when he was fast asleep, and never

missed by this heavy sleeper. Neither do the adherents of Spiritualism believe in the sudden manufacture of the sun, moon, and stars; nor that the earth was brought into existence ready cropped with grass and fruit trees and stored with live animals, and all within a week. Spiritualists do not believe for an instant that these old fables can be other than what they were intended to be considered, viz. allegorical accounts of the commencement of Creation, and the advent of man upon the stage of earth-life.

Spiritualists are now realizing the truth that all knowledge is progressive, just as all human advancement is progressive, with a swiftly increasing power. The time is coming when the full truth about man's origin will be given to the world from this land of the South, which has been chosen as the arena for so grand a revelation on account of its being freer from the dominion of kings and priests than any other portion of the civilized globe at present occupied by a stirring and enterprising people. The theory of Darwin, which so lamely hobbles through a confused and incoherent account of the origin of our species, will very shortly be seen to be sadly steeped in error and singularly imperfect; while the simple and beautiful, and true and obvious, and incontestibly real explanation of man's origin and growth will reach human apprehension as the most astonishing knowledge that has been revealed on earth's surface for the last two thousand years. The discoveries of gold, or indeed (to go back a few score years for illustration,) the discoveries of steam and magnetism, will shortly be seen to have little real importance compared with the knowledge which will be given to mankind through the teaching conveyed by the magnetic channel.

The revolutions that will follow these revelations are close at hand in their inception, and the observing readers of news from this part of the world, in Europe and America, will look before long with a far more intensely heightened interest to the discoveries given to the people of the earth through magnetic teaching, than ever they did for accounts of wars and tumults upon which so very recently the fate of nations was depending.

Gerald Massey, in his little book "Concerning Spiritualism," asks:—"What is the upshot of all the spiritual teaching hitherto; Is it such a sense of the other world that the selfish concerns of this are dwarfed and rebuked in its majestic presence? Why, I find the mass of so-called religious people don't want to believe in the

Spirit-world, *save in the abstract*, or otherwise than as an article of their creed. Their first feeling is to draw down the blinds against any light on the subject. They accept a sort of belief in it, on authority—a grim necessity—it's best to believe, in case it does exist after all; but they give the lie to that belief in their lives, and in the presence of such facts as we place before them." It is indeed most marvellous to note the persistent aversion of mankind to unclothe their mental eyesight to the evidence before them.

The doting fondness with which the British people regard their national superstitions is still their most remarkable characteristic. The disreputable saint is revived upon the sovereign; and the debasing stupidities of pulpit-teaching are more carefully conserved than ever. But there are signs of an approaching stir among the nations, and, as Mr. Massey says—"This time the the existence of the Spirit-world is going to be placed on a firmer foothold than ever—not as a mere creed or dogma, but as a verified, enduring, ever-present, familiar fact." Mr. Crookes, of the "Quarterly Journal of Science," has exhaustively disposed of the pedantic coxcomb of the Quarterly Review who undertook to write down Spiritualism at the usual charge per sheet; and Mr. Wallace whose acute paper on miracles (given in another page,) we specially commend for perusal, appears also as a timely champion of the truth, in the conflict that has now commenced.

#### A SPIRIT COMMUNICATION

IN REPLY TO A THEORY OF SPIRIT CONDITIONS PROPOSED  
BY A QUERIST.

"YOUR theory is not entirely correct, for the spirit is surrounded by things just as real as are the things of the material world. The things which are before the spirit are as real as the things which address your bodily senses—they are the same things, and the spirit is engaged in contemplating the same objects which enlist your attention. The only difference is in the manner of viewing the various things in nature. We are able to see the properties and uses of things instead of viewing their outward form. When we look at one who still inhabits the body we see the character of the individual instead of his bodily form—we see the action of the mind instead of the motions of the bodily organs—and the affections of the heart render him comely and attractive, or repulsive and disagreeable, as the case may be. But we are not able, by a flight of the imagination, to bring beauty and harmony to fill the place of discord and deformity. The spirit sees a particular object just where you see it, and were they so disposed they could not, by any power of the will or any flight of the fancy, see it in any other place than the one it occupies.

The things which are presented to the contemplation of spirits are just as real as the rocks and mountains of the earth. The difference between the minds in the body and those out of the body consists in one's viewing the objects in nature through the gross organs of the body, and the other through the more refined medium of spiritual sight or perception. When we look upon any object in Nature we see the property and use of the thing, and not its outward form; we see the position it occupies and its relation to other objects; we see its form and colour as we see its properties; and all that pertains to it is seen by the spirit with much greater precision than by the bodily organs.

The minds of spirits are forced to adjust themselves to the reality of things as perfectly as minds in the body. Were not this the case we should be omnipotent. Should one of you paint to your imagination a thing which had no existence the disappointment of the reality would greatly outweigh the fancied possession; and thus is it in the spirit-world, for the life in the body has laid the foundation upon which the life in the spirit-world is to be reared.

The work of disciplining the mind is one which will be extended through the endless rounds of eternity; and if the mind has been suffered to revel in the fields of fiction and unreal things the consequence will be evil to the spirit in its exalted state. The world is not aware of the vast amount of evil which results from the perversion of the minds of the young byworks of fiction. Every false impression that finds an abiding-place in the human mind is so much poison which must be eradicated before the spirit can move forward in the plane of progression which is open to all. The mind will be brought more easily to feel the evils of fiction in the spirit-world than in this; for the spirit sees the real properties of things, while those in the body are very liable to come to incorrect conclusions: so that the rudimental is the imaginary state to a greater extent than the spiritual. There is no such thing as the mind bringing to itself such objects as are agreeable to its perverted tastes, for the works of a wise and beneficent God are all ordered in wisdom, and the spirit will have to adapt itself to the immutable laws which are everywhere established. When the mind is disencumbered of the clogs of earth, which have so long bound it to the things of time and sense, it takes cognisance of objects which it had been accustomed to contemplate with delight, with a much keener relish than while in the bodily form; for the nature and use of things are now seen through a new medium, and the mind is filled with delight at its increased powers of perception.

When the light which spreads its beams upon the disembodied spirit is brought to view, the spirit is made to rejoice in the great accession of the means of pleasure which its exalted condition affords; and it contemplates with great delight the objects which occupied its attention while in the body. The means of the spirit for studying the works of God, as manifest in nature, are vastly increased, and the powers of mind are enlarged by being freed from the errors incident to a life in the body. The light which is brought to bear upon the mind is less intense in those who have been blind to the beauties which are everywhere visible in God's works. The being who could not perceive the beauties in nature while in the body will not be made sensible of them immediately on entering the spirit-world. But a series of discipline and study will ultimately bring all the beings of earth to a proper appreciation of the works of God."

#### To Correspondents.

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

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR—It is some time since I wrote you last, detailing the progress of our glorious philosophy in this town. Since then I have no great or startling demonstration to dilate upon but I am pleased to be able to affirm, that the philosophy has taken, and is taking, a firmer and surer hold on the minds of those who were formerly but timid enquirers; and we have sure evidences of that silent but certain progress visible in many places which is most gratifying when we consider the many obstacles raised to stay our progress, and the amount of moral courage it requires to avow and hold one self a spiritualist, and be proof against the ridicule, abuse, and falsehood, of our opponents. Our local papers, like many more in the colony, appear to have exquisite delight in publishing any paragraph they imagine likely to damage the cause. The Editor of one of our papers, poor man, seems to be suffering from monomania, in regard to spiritualism, and it would be difficult to say which predominates most in the minds of his readers; spiritualists, and non-spiritualists, pity or ridicule him for the articles published by him. If his friends have any regard for him, they ought to persuade him if possible to apply his talents to such subjects that his mind can grapple with, and not let him flounder in a slough of falsehood and abuse, which constitute the leading feature of his writings.

All the folks here are delighted to find per "Harbinger of Light," that we are to have a visit from Mr. Peebles, and it is to be hoped that gentleman will bring with him one of the many test mediums of America.



Our talented and respected lecturer G. C. Leech, Esq. continues with unabated earnestness our Sunday evening lectures, which are listened to at all times by a most appreciative audience and demand from their scholarly excellence the attention of many who would not listen to a less gifted preacher.

Several of our circles have been suspended during the hot season in consequence of the heat, and so many of the members being away at the sea side and elsewhere, but they are now beginning to re-organise again. It is much regretted that the Public Circle and Lyceum Sunday School had to be closed through the premises being wanted for other purposes, but it is the intention of Mr. and Mrs. Bamford to start them again so soon as they can obtain suitable premises. The revival in the mining caused a great increase of the population, rendering it difficult to procure a suitable room for the purpose at a reasonable rent.

By your permission I hope occasionally to supply your readers with an account of our progress, in the meantime I remain,

Yours fraternally,  
BETA.

Castlemaine, 18th March, 1872.

### THE HUMAN BODY FLOATING IN THE AIR.

"IRA was seized from his father's side by unseen power, and with as much ease as if his weight were no obstacle whatever. He was placed first upon the table, then floated over the heads of all present all round the room, and, in the twinkling of an eye, with the western end. He floated nine feet clear of the floor; and every person in the room was offered an opportunity of feeling him while thus suspended in mid-air. Suddenly some one cried out—'William is flying also in the air!' and sure enough that boy had joined his brother in his excursion through the room, pillowed on hands unseen by any mortal being.

Again the cry was raised—'as sure as I live Elizabeth has joined her brothers!' It was true; the girl was flitting hither and thither just as her brothers were.

On one of these occasions of levitation the head of Ira came in such violent contact with the plaster and lath of the ceiling as to break clear through it. The fact as all yet related is so well known in Buffalo that perhaps forty persons in that city yet live who witnessed the event."—*Biography and Adventures of the Davenport Brothers.*

The square table was of cherry, with four legs, a large sized tea table. I took my seat in the centre. Two legs of it were raised about six inches from the floor; and then the other two legs were raised to a level of the first, so that the whole table was suspended in the air about six inches above the floor. While thus seated on it I could feel a gently vibratory motion, as if floating in the atmosphere. After being suspended in the air a few moments the table was gently let down again to the floor. . . . "After the writing was completed the lights approached and surrounded myself, grasping me round the waist in the same manner the pen was grasped, taking me from the floor and swaying me backwards and forwards, and several times raised me so that my head nearly touched the ceiling. I felt nothing like a hand or band touching me, but distinctly felt a sensation resembling a mild breeze: I was thus operated with for the space of half or three-quarters of an hour."

—*"Spiritualism," by Edmonds and Dexter.*

"There was in the room one table of huge dimensions, being seven feet by five, and three inches higher than ordinary tables. Davenport placed ten chairs on that table, and ten heavy persons in the chairs; and, yet though it was a dead lift of nearly two thousand pounds, the power floated it a foot clear from the floor, and dandled it about as easily as a child would a toy weighing six ounces; and while that was being done hands, not of embodied human beings, were seen playing the guitars."—*Biography and Adventures of the Davenport Brothers.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR—On the 1st of this month I obtained from your office a copy of "The Harbinger of Light" of that date,

containing "W.'s" letter in reply to the Argus correspondent, signing himself "M. C." A few minutes walk brought me into the office of, and into company with, an esteemed friend, whom (*distinctionis gratia*) we will denominate "Voltaire," for like the Frenchman he had both natural and acquired endowments of a very high order, yet he dearly loved to make fun of serious subjects; indeed it might be said of him—

"The Scripture was his jest book, whence he drew,  
Good jokes to gall the Christian and the Jew."

From our former most friendly discussions, in which we had agreed to differ, I knew him to be a worshipper of philosophy, and its all sufficiency to explain all the phenomena we witness in this world; that is to say, I knew him to be one of those who refuse to bow to the supernatural interposition of the hand of God, as manifested by any designed wonders before the eyes of men, in the present, or in the past. In short, I knew my friend was not altogether like-minded with the Rev. Sydney Smith, whom, when asked, if he could subscribe to the 39 articles—answered—"40 if you please." My "Voltaire's" articles of faith were neither multitudinous, complex, or lengthy. They were very easy to be understood, and he expressed them with as much carelessness as open honesty. They were these—1st. No God. 2nd. No Devil. 3rd. No Heaven. 4th. No Hell. 5th. No Soul. I asked him to look at "W.'s" letter to the Argus correspondent "M. C." thinking the quotations from "scepticism and spiritualism" by which that letter was prefaced, well calculated (if I may use the words of Dr. Young)—

"To give sceptic in his head the lie"

inasmuch as, the exact evidence is there advanced which Lord Byron (and such like sceptics) asked for, to cure their scepticism. That spirits could speak to us from beyond the grave, was certainly very wonderful, and (as a serious thought) a very new idea to myself. However to pile up wonders, and overwhelm Dr. Carpenter's muscular action philosophy (which I knew was my friend's mode of getting rid of apparent wonders.)

I mentioned, that I had just heard on good authority, that without speaking of the innumerable cases in other countries, a lady amongst ourselves here in Victoria, had been seen to float in the air quite lately. I took a paper from my pocket to show him my authority, and finished by assuring him, that neither the lady, or the witness, were strangers to myself, but that I frequently had the pleasure of meeting that lady at séances. He first read over "W.'s" letter about modern miracles, with the design of them so clearly pointed out by the before-mentioned quotations, from an authoress of "good acquirements" and then as it appeared to me for the first time in his life, a ray of wonder seemed to shoot across his mind, as he gravely asked me, 'Are you sure about Miss A.'s levitation?' And then as though to escape from a half painful, half provoking feeling of the possibility of his having been wrong in his "muscular actions," he resumed his business correspondence, but desiring me to stay, and talk with him as he wrote.

It struck me that his real, or affected, easy, careless air of divided attention, was not an unapt emblem of the, sometimes real, and sometimes affected indifference, and careless air of the fashionable world, amidst the rattle of a hailstorm of modern spiritualistic miracles, sent by God as of old, with the design of so clearly demonstrating that man has immortal interests at stake, that he that runs may read.

However as he continued to ply his pen which seemed to bring peace to his troubled soul at the hearing of this new wonder so close to him, he expressed himself as nearly as possible in these words—"O, well, if that is the case, why I don't think the thing is worth talking about—what does it matter?" I observed in him, what I have observed in many others, a sort of feeling with regard to spiritualistic phenomena, viz., that it is right to start with the conviction of the impossibility of spiritual intercourse, and then diminish our attention to, and interest in, contrary evidence, in proportion as that evidence becomes more and more weighty; in short to treat it as the Argus lauded Dr. Carpenter treats the phenomena of the levitation of the human body—which he holds, should be met, "not with elaborate discussion,

but doubt of the fact." Let the reader read over the quotations at the head of this letter, and ask himself if it is right? if it is in consonance with what Dr. Carpenter would call "educated common sense," that such positively innumerable reports of the levitation of the human body, should be met by a sensible man with doubt of the fact?

It would seem a natural conclusion, that the unseen power which could lift a table with ten people upon it, could as easily lift a mountain, and that it must be superhuman.

I wish to make no remarks upon the little episode of my interview with "Voltaire," but allow it to tell its own story. Yet I would ask, how does he differ from the majority of other anti-spiritualists, except in giving a more natural, easy, open-hearted expression to his feelings? a little in the style of Cowper's military officer,

"My creed is (what e'er some creed-makers mean,  
By Athanasias, nonsense, or nicene),  
My creed is, he is safe who does his best,  
And death's a doom sufficient for the rest."

Then again with regard to his creed of five articles of faith. How did he differ from the *Argus* correspondent "M. C." to whose letter "W." wrote a reply; and in what do either "M. C." or my friend "Voltaire" differ from others, whose names would fill a volume, but who have been ornaments to the literature of every nation in Europe and America.

In this undeniable state of mind, of such a large portion of the enlightened world, who shall presumptuously say, that the Supreme Disposer of events fails to exercise a wise Providence, when He permits the phenomena and manifestations of spiritualism, to laugh at the opposing philosophy of such a Godless, yet enlightened and scientific age?

The incident with which I astonished my friend "Voltaire" on the 1st February, together with those related in the quotations at the head of this letter, combine to ask our wise men, for a share of their devotion to Divine philosophy, and their perfect submission to Divine Power, and Divine teachings vouchsafed therewith.

"Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound,  
In science win one inch of heavenly ground."

I am,

Your obedient servant,  
CALDECOTT.

### PRAYER.

What is Prayer? Montgomery's well-known and beautiful hymn answers this question admirably by telling us that—

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire  
Uttered or unexpressed."

Prayer is in no sense a mere repetition of so many set phrases at a certain given time nor even the extempore stringing together of sentences and giving utterance to them. Prayer is indeed neither of these. Let us then, for a few moments, see if we cannot gain a somewhat clearer idea of what prayer really is, than is commonly entertained, and try and determine how we should pray.

We will first, however, take a glance at a family assembled in their quiet home, most of whom are conversing with, or amusing each other. Let us see what they are doing, and if possible, penetrate beneath the surface and discover the feelings at work within each one of them. First we will look at the most important member of the family and read her thoughts, for she is the mother of the little ones we see before us.

She is just now staying her needle, and with her forehead resting in her hand, is watching the gambols of yon little fellow who has only a short while since, left her arms and begun to run about. She is busily thinking out, or rather picturing to herself, his probable future, and wondering in what way she can best assist to unfold his nature and bring him up with all his good qualities preserved and strengthened, and all his faults eradicated.

An utter impossibility we shall immediately tell her, and we shall no doubt be right. Still, it is for that end

she means to aim, and she intends to fall as little short of it as she possibly can. She is carefully noting every childish action, and discovering as much as she can, of the motives, or inward feelings of her boy. She will then be so much better able to grapple with his faults, and to encourage and foster his good qualities, than if she were content to check him every time he commits error, or is wilful, or disobedient. She will soon know what induced certain actions, and, like a wise and good mother, she will endeavour to direct his feelings and inclinations in a proper channel, that his motives may all be good and the corresponding actions good accordingly.

She knows he is young, and is therefore not harsh with him when he breaks out—as he very often does—in a fit of passion or disobedience, or quarrels with his brother, or any other of the thousand ways of showing his imperfection, and exhibiting the human nature within him.

We will now leave the mother to her kind thoughts, and take a look at the little one she has been so intently engaged upon. His organization is but a medium one. His selfishness is already apparent; and we can see distinct indications of an obstinate doggedness which will not be easily curbed. He has not even any great affection for either his parents or his brothers and sisters. In fact, he is not what you or I would call an amiable, good child. Will he, do you think, find out his imperfections and ask his mother to help him to remove them? Not for many years. He will require great care, great wisdom, and great love from his parents, before that obstinacy of his can be brought into such subjection that it shall not be more powerful than is necessary to give him a proper amount of firmness and determination to push his way in the world, and to bring any work he may undertake to a satisfactory completion. Then we have his selfishness left. Does he discover that he is selfish, and ask for his parents' assistance to make him less so? Not for many years; and probably never, unless by their wise and loving treatment, he has his eyes opened to his unamiable weakness, and a desire created in his bosom to remedy it. Neither are his affections likely to be increased until this end is accomplished.

Let his mother watch over him then while he is growing up, and let her older experience and greater love show where her assistance is required, and where, and in what manner, she may so alter his course that he shall walk nearer to her, and become a more loving and lovable child. She desires no entreaties from him. Her sympathy and affection are his already, and her chief desire is to know how best to manage him, and bring him up, as she would have him, a wise and a good man. She desires no entreaties from him. Shall our Heavenly Father then desire them? Shall we picture Him with less affectionate regard for His children than our earthly parents? She never punished unless it was necessary to show her wilful son some of the consequences of his wrong-doing. Shall our Heavenly Father then punish without that object in view? Shall He require to be entreated of us before He will consent to stay His avenging hand, and punish us, who know no better than her little boy? But we have rather anticipated our intention and must go back to the quiet home we have been looking at, and bestow a little attention upon some of the other members of the family. A glance at the father will then show us what he is thinking of. His thoughts are just now turned upon the daughter by his side, and with a full heart, he is gazing at her innocent and girl-like amusement of dressing her doll. He sees the motherly instinct showing itself even at this early stage of her growth, and he is pleased to think that she is growing up like her mother, and is already showing signs of her gentleness and affectionate disposition. He knows she is not perfect; that many little corners in her nature require to be slightly rounded off; that many little failings require to be outgrown. But, does he not also know that she is but a child; that she has yet very much to learn before he can expect that affection and self-sacrifice from her, which he so much admires and loves in her mother? Yes, he knows all this, but loves her none the less. He does not require to be asked for his love, because she has that already. She does not



need to ask him to help her to be good, and to pardon her if she errs, because she knows that he is always eager to direct her young steps in the right way, and to forgive her before she asks. He only requires, or rather desires, to see her trying to do right, and his better knowledge and greater experience will have taught him that she is not perfect and must err; that it would be unjust, and certainly unloving in him to require a formal request for pardon, when he knows she only erred from want of knowledge. His aim is therefore to direct her aright, and to encourage her to do well. In his great love, he sees it is occasionally necessary to check or caution her, in order to open her eyes to her failings, but, if he is wise and good, he cannot possibly punish her except in the way of reproof, and with the hope of altering and improving her future life.

Shall God be less loving than he? Shall God require us, His children, to beseech him for pardon lest we be eternally punished, when he sees and knows all our weakness and all we have to learn? Shall He be less considerate or show a less love for His children than the earthly father for his? Shall He not rather direct and guide us through our daily lives, that ultimately we may learn by experience—sometimes I grant very bitter experience—what are His ways? That we may obtain, by long and patient observation, a knowledge of His laws, and do them. Yes! this, I venture to think is the kind of prayer our Heavenly Father desires us to offer. This is the way to pray. This is how to grow and to increase our knowledge of Him better far than any words can do for us.

As Mazzini, in his grand letter to the Ecumenical Council, wisely and truly says, "We should do our prayers, not say them." And we may be quite sure that they will be as acceptable to God, as the earnest desire of the children to do right, showing itself in their childish ways, is more acceptable to the earthly parents' heart than all the words or protestations which they could utter.

To live our prayers. To do our very best in all that our hands find for us to do. To be kind and charitable in all our thoughts. To do, in fact, what our Heavenly Father would have us do, just as good children do all in their power to please their earthly parents. This is prayer, and is most acceptable to God.

We must now see what relation prayer like this, and viewed from this standpoint, has to the prayers of those who believe they are truly pious people and that they are living to the best of their ability. Can we, do you think, agree with them in the course they have adopted to make their wants known? Can we recognise any similarity between the prayers regularly read or spoken in churches, to the prayer of the publican who could only smite his breast and call upon God to be merciful to him? Or shall we be compelled, however reluctantly, to compare them with the long and useless prayer of the Pharisee, who "thanked God he was not as other men are?" "Verily I say unto you whosoever is least among men, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven."

These long, formal prayers will not do, then. We must turn over a new leaf and show our prayers, in our every word and every action. It will not do for us to content ourselves by living selfish and uncharitable, much less dishonest, lives, and every morning and evening, or perhaps only one day in the week, offer up long strings of sentences addressed to Almighty God, asking him to forgive us our trespasses, as we have forgiven them that trespass against us, when we know that the old grudge we have against our neighbour is still in existence. Asking Him to give success to our enterprises, to fight with us in our battles, to give us rain or to withhold it, according to our individual requirements. To go through any of these set forms on any or even on every day, and not to alter our lives in accordance with what we know to be the right. All this, I repeat, will not avail us one iota, will not blind or deceive God, nor advance us in his eyes. We must first "learn to do the will of our Father who is in Heaven" before we can expect to make much spiritual progress, and then with respect to all necessary blessings, we may confidently rely upon it that "All these things shall be added to us." We must first learn the last and greatest of all the commandments, "to

love one another." "To do unto others as we would they should do unto us." We may then expect to have our prayers answered, although perhaps, even then, not in the precise way we would at present desire.

I would not, however, wish to prevent in any way, the outpourings of a full heart to its Father; on the contrary, I would earnestly desire to encourage it. But, I would never attempt to force prayer; it should be spontaneous, and if our lives are actuated by good and pure motives, it will force its way out in prayer for strength to persevere in the right course, for light to show us the way, and for love to brighten and cheer our own path and to help us to cheer and encourage our neighbours.

By and by; perhaps months, perhaps years hence, we shall have our prayers changed to praise. We shall then be obliged, in the fulness of our love and our joy, to thank our Heavenly Father for the great wisdom of all His laws, for the wonderful love he has shown for us in making everything so good, and so well adapted to our condition here, that we may be well prepared for the life hereafter. We shall then begin to understand what at present seems to us unmeaning jargon, "that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord." And all this love, and all this knowledge, is within the reach of every one of us if we only try for it; if only, throughout our lives, by everything we think, by every word we utter, and by every action we perform, we keep that last commandment constantly in view.

When, therefore, we begin to feel at all downcast, and to despair of making ourselves heard by God, let us try and picture anew to ourselves the earthly home we were looking at a few minutes ago, and let us comfort ourselves with the reflection that the children were being well loved and well cared for, that they were never absent from their parents' thoughts. That, without waiting for a special appeal for anything necessary to their children's happiness or well-being, they were supplied and tenderly watched and cared for and directed aright, by encouragement when they did well, and loving correction when they did ill. And all this, as we have previously said, without any more being required of them than that they should look to their parents for guidance, and try to do well.

Before we close, however, we must just for one moment institute a comparison between these two cases, so that we may not be confused by the difference between the two kinds of parents.

If then we saw, as we may frequently see, earthly parents bestowing so much care and attention upon their children, shall we for a moment suppose that our Heavenly Father is less considerate? If we see their love poured out without, or almost without any reference to the good or bad conduct of the child, when they cannot know with any degree of certainty its trials, or its natural impulses in consequence of its peculiar organization, shall we believe that God, who knows all things, and who instituted all things, shall show less love or less consideration? That He shall require more entreaties than our earthly parents? We cannot suppose any such thing, and I for one, am compelled to believe that whatever difficulties or trials we may have here, are necessary to strengthen us; just as storms and rain are necessary to the strong growth and ultimate perfection of the trees and plants.

Bearing this in mind then, let us habituate ourselves to think of Him as really, and in truth, a loving Father, and above all, let us fulfil another command and "pray without ceasing," in the kind words and loving actions of our every day lives.

#### MR. W. CROOKES AND SERGEANT COX IN DEFENCE.

The celebrated "Quarterly Review Article" has drawn out Mr. W. Crookes, and Sergeant Cox, in defence of their scientific positions and the reliability of their experiments in what they are pleased to call "Psychic Force." Mr. Crooke's pamphlet, "Psychic Force and Modern Spiritualism" is a complete refutation of the article in question, which he proves to be not only unsound, but positively untruthful. His account of an

interview he had with Dr. Carpenter (the presumed author of the *Quarterly* article) is very amusing, and illustrative of the extreme dogmatism of the writer (Dr. Carpenter). Sergeant Cox, in his book, "Spiritualism answered by Science," while giving the most unanswerable evidence of the reality of the physical phenomena accompanied by intelligence, instead of holding as "Mr. Crookes does," his opinion of the cause in abeyance, he hits out right and left at Dr. Carpenter and others who have disparaged his testimony, and then rather than be considered a spiritualist adopts and elaborates Dr. Carpenter's theory of "unconscious cerebration!" This is certainly an error of judgment on his own part, his investigations of the subject so far have brought upon him all the opprobrium that Spiritualists are accustomed to bear, and it does not seem to set comfortably on his shoulders. As he is determined to pursue his experiments there can be no doubt of the result, and when he has to withdraw his untenable theory in favour of the true cause, he will have to go through the ordeal which he is evidently now smarting from, again.

#### TO OUR FRIENDS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

FROM the numerous encomiums received from all parts of the country, we have reason to know that the "Harbinger" is pretty generally appreciated by its readers, but we are sorry to say that the subscription list does not increase as it should do. We would urge upon our friends, and all who are interested in the cause of Spiritualism and the dissemination of liberal religious ideas, to further these objects by doing what they can to increase our circulation. There is scarcely one who could not, by bringing the paper under the notice of their friends, get at least one subscriber; and, as soon as the circulation will admit, we will enlarge the paper. A specimen copy will be sent to any part of the world on receipt of postage. We take this opportunity of informing our subscribers that the reception of their paper in a coloured wrapper is an intimation that their subscription is due, and request that they will take an early opportunity of forwarding the same.

#### THE REV. MR. WOLLASTON ON SPIRITUALISM.

BY W.

"It was pretty generally admitted that there was a peculiar nerve force or power residing in certain individuals capable of producing very remarkable, physical, and psychological results, of an exceedingly interesting character to the philosopher and man of science. Men otherwise intelligent, and to a certain degree educated, but not sufficiently cultivated to explain the phenomena they witnessed, cried out—'a miracle! a miracle!' 'a spirit! a spirit!'"—*Mr. Wollaston's Sermon at East Melbourne Church on Christmas day as reported in the "Argus."*

"Popular delusions have been at all times considered remarkable; and one of the most singular of that class is the perfect faith with which the gross misrepresentations of the brothers Davenport have been received." . . . The conjurers must not attempt to challenge anything like a close inspection and comparison with the brothers Davenport, whose performances must candidly be allowed to remain as inexplicable as ever: no spectator has ever yet offered any explanation of them except sarcasm. . . . Finally, I have read and listened to every explanation of them hitherto placed before the English public, and, believe me, if anything would make me take the tremendous jump from matter to spirit it is the utter and complete unreason of the reasons with which the manifestations are explained.—*Correspondents in the London papers quoted in the Biography and Adventures of the Davenport Brothers.*

THE rev. gentleman immodestly assurance that his superior intelligence and cultivation enable him to explain certain phenomena correctly, which others blunder over owing to their want of education and cultivation.

In comparing the extent of cultivation and reach of thought of his own mind, with the minds of others with whom he differs, he credits himself with great advantage. Question—do facts justify him so far? I have reason to think not; and that it will be found, upon enquiry, that those believing in spiritual agency are of equal and superior cultivation to the clergyman in question. His argument demonstrates his own immodesty and nothing more, and proves only that his assumption of ability to explain the phenomena is evidently baseless, and that all that he can do is to beg the question.

He informs us that the force and power by which inert matter is moved, and sound produced, comes from men's nerves. Would he beg the question more directly, or to any greater extent, if he had said (which he might have done with equal facility) that the force came from the arteries, the bones, the heart, or the brains, of some individuals.

What reason, what evidence, what facts, what theory, favours the supposition of nerves causing such effects that would not equally favour the supposition of the force coming from the other mentioned parts of the body. Not to mention the names of those of the highest education in England or Victoria, the Rev. Mr. Wollaston should remember that his Dean is one of those whose degrees of education and cultivation do not save them from belief in such spiritual agency.

Does the Rev. Mr. Wollaston think that his Dean's blindness to the power of nerve force is owing to his education only having advanced to a "certain degree" and to his cultivation being "insufficient." If he does think this all that I can do is to repeat that I fear he is a very immodest man.

It is all as simple as a b c to Mr. Wollaston, there is no uncertainty about the matter, but I would further say to Mr. Wollaston—"If you suppose that the thinking portion of your congregation will believe you your folly is equal to your immodesty."

Did it never occur to the Rev. Mr. Wollaston that the "nerve force" of which he speaks, or the "force unknown to science" which he holds to be sufficient to account for modern spiritualistic miracles, and sufficient to deprive them of all claim to divine origin, must, of necessity, be equally sufficient to deprive the Scripture miracles of their claim to divine origin. The Davenport Brothers have changed water into wine. Mr. Home shows the harmlessness of fire to burn him; for one record in scripture, of the movement of inert matter without seen agency, the anti-gravitation of ponderous bodies, or of the levitation of the human body, modern history gives one thousand records, almost in every locality of every country.

Mr. Wollaston therefore does not seem to be aware that he is in the position of the carpenter upon the house-top in Hogarth's picture, who is engaged in sawing off the end of a beam, without observing that he has placed himself upon the wrong and very dangerous side of his cut, so that when his work is accomplished he falls hopelessly.

The same may be said of those theorists who believe in the universality of evil spirits appearing forcibly, and duping the world in the garb of the angels of light, from the God of the Bible. If with false and evil designs they now appear to perpetuate this revelation, might they not formerly with false and evil designs have appeared to introduce the very same revelation, and dupe the world then, as they are said to be duping it now.

These theorists must surely be classed with the unob-servant carpenter. Mr. Wollaston thinks time and science will reveal a new light, which will dispense with any necessity for any supposition of spirit influence.

I read the future in the light of the past, and I judge the effect of time will be to drive the believers in the law of nature, unknown to science, also the believers in evil spirits to change their minds one by one, and join that class which a very few years back constituted 90 per cent. of those who had thought or heard anything about the matter. This 90 per cent. belonged to the deeply learned school of—"you pushed it"—Anti-spiritualists.

I say they have nearly all changed their minds but without being in the least ashamed of their former error, or feeling any disposition to apologise for any calumnies that may have fallen from their lips. The effects of time (if we read the future by the light of the past) it appears far more probable will be just this, viz.:—The minds and the present theories of Anti-spiritualists will again be changed, and their theories will again give way (just as the—"you pushed it"—theory has given way) before the irresistible force of those facts which time and investigation bring to light. This I say is far more probable than that time will reveal Mr. Wollas-



ton's unknown law of nature apart from any spiritual influence; an unknown law, which he would have his congregation patiently wait for, and for the present be content with their ignorance, and not make themselves disagreeable by talking about the matter.

This change in the minds of the people will take place in spite of the injunctions of mama, and the clergyman, that the eccentric movements of the tables are not to be looked at, in order to learn what events it pleases the Supreme disposer of events to bring about in these modern days, and in spite of their charge to their dear ones, that they are above all things to avoid reading those "naughty newspapers" which record the works of God bearing upon the subject. It will be found as the world grows older, there has been no credulity so wild as incredulity, and that the gross misrepresentation of Spiritualism, like the gross misrepresentation of the Davenport Brothers, has been one of the most gigantic of popular delusions, a delusion equal, and similar in all respects, to that which the Jews were under when Jesus appeared on earth.

It pleased Divine Providence to unanswerably demonstrate through Spiritualism generally, and, though the Davenport Brothers particularly (in a sceptically philosophic age of the world's history) the littleness of the philosopher's knowledge, as compared with the greatness of *Spirit Power*, a power, which Jesus,

"Came unexpected in that humble guise,"

and was therefore despised, though he could not be gainsaid, and the Anti-spiritualists of that day, as in the present day,

"Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue  
Blasphemed the authority from whence it sprung."

Surely if anything could make the thinking portion of Mr. Wollaston's congregation, take the tremendous jump from matter to spirit, it would be, "the utter and complete unreason, of the NERVE FORCE reasons, with which the Rev. gentleman explains the manifestations of of spiritualism."

SPIRITUALISM seems to be gaining ground in New Zealand. The (Dunedin) "Echo," of March 2nd contains an interesting account of the presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Meers, of an illuminated address, and a silver salver, as a memento and token of regard to them personally, and as spiritualists, on the occasion of their leaving Dunedin for Canterbury. Upwards of one hundred ladies and gentlemen sat down to tea, after which the presentation was made by Mr. R. Stout, who in a short speech feelingly alluded to Mr. and Mrs. Meers' kind efforts to aid investigators of Spiritualism in their researches. He spoke warmly on the subject of Spiritualism, and commended Mr. Meers for the bold stand he had made and his fearless advocacy of the cause. Mr. Meers' reply is appropriate and interesting but too long for us to report, though well worthy of perusal.

## REPORTS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL SUB-COMMITTEES.

### SUB-COMMITTEE NO. I.

Since their appointment on the 16th of February, 1869, your Sub-committee have held *forty* meetings for the purpose of experiment and test.

All of these meetings were held at the private residences of members of the Committee, purposely to preclude the possibility of pre-arranged mechanism or contrivance.

The furniture of the room in which the experiments were conducted was on every occasion its accustomed furniture.

The tables were in all cases heavy dining tables, requiring a strong effort to move them. The smallest of them was 5ft. 9in. long by 4ft. wide, and the largest, 2ft. 3in. long and 4½ft. wide, and of proportionate weight.

The rooms, tables, and furniture generally were repeatedly subjected to careful examination before, during, and after the experiments, to ascertain that no concealed machinery, instrument, or other contrivance existed by

means of which the sounds or movements hereinafter mentioned could be caused.

The experiments were conducted in the light of gas, except on the few occasions specially noted in the minutes.

Your Committee have avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums, the mediumship being that of members of your Sub-committee, persons of good social position and of unimpeachable integrity, having no pecuniary object to serve, and nothing to gain by deception.

Your Committee have held some meetings without the presence of a medium (it being understood that throughout this report the word "medium" is used simply to designate an individual without whose presence the phenomena described either do not occur at all, or with greatly diminished force and frequency), purposely to try if they could produce, by any efforts, effects similar to those witnessed when a medium was present. By no endeavours were they enabled to produce anything at all resembling the manifestations which took place in the presence of a medium.

Every test that the combined intelligence of your Committee could devise has been tried with patience and perseverance. The experiments were conducted under a great variety of conditions, and ingenuity has been exerted in devising plans by which your Committee might verify their observations and preclude the possibility of imposture or of delusion.

Your Committee have confined their report to *facts* witnessed by them in their collective capacity, which facts were *palpable to the senses, and their reality capable of demonstrative proof.*

Of the members of your Sub-committee about *four-fifths* entered upon the investigation wholly sceptical as to the reality of the alleged phenomena, firmly believing them to be the result either of *imposture* or of *delusion*, or of *involuntary muscular action*. It was only by irresistible evidence, under conditions that precluded the possibility of either of these solutions, and after trial and test many times repeated, that the most sceptical of your Sub-committee were slowly and reluctantly convinced that the phenomena exhibited in the course of their protracted inquiry were veritable facts.

The result of their long-continued and carefully-conducted experiments, after trial by every detective test they could devise, has been to establish conclusively:

First: That under certain bodily or mental conditions of one or more of the persons present, a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances, and the body of any person present.

Second: That this force can cause sounds to proceed, distinctly audible to all present, from solid substances not in contact with, nor having any visible or material connection with, the body of any person present, and which sounds are proved to proceed from such substances by the vibrations which are distinctly felt when they are touched.

Third: That this force is frequently directed by intelligence.

At *thirty-four* out of the forty meetings of your Committee some of these phenomena occurred.

A description of one experiment, and the manner of conducting it, will best show the care and caution with which your Committee have pursued their investigations.

So long as there was contact—or even the possibility of contact, by the hands or feet, or even by the clothes of any person in the room, with the substance moved or sounded, there could be no perfect assurance that the motions and sounds were not produced by the person so in contact. The following experiment was therefore tried:

On an occasion when eleven members of your Sub-committee had been sitting round one of the dining-tables above described, for forty minutes, and various motions and sounds had occurred, they, by way of test, turned the backs of their chairs to the table, at about nine inches from it. They all then knelt upon their chairs, placing their arms upon the backs thereof. In this position, their feet were of course turned away

from the table, and by no possibility could be placed under it or touch the floor. The hands of each person were extended over the table at about four inches from the surface. Contact, therefore, with any part of the table could not take place without detection.

In less than a minute the table, untouched, moved four times; at first about five inches to one side, then about twelve inches to the opposite side, and then, in like manner, four inches and six inches respectively.

The hands of all present were next placed on the backs of their chairs, and about a foot from the table, which again moved, as before, five times, over spaces varying from four to six inches. Then all the chairs were removed twelve inches from the table, and each person knelt on his chair as before, this time however folding his hands behind his back, his body being thus about eighteen inches from the table. The table again moved four times, in various directions. In the course of this conclusive experiment, and in less than half-an-hour, the table thus moved, without contact or possibility of contact with any person present, thirteen times, the movements being in different directions, and some of them according to the request of various members of your Sub-committee.

The table was then carefully examined, turned upside down and taken to pieces, but nothing was discovered to account for the phenomena. The experiment was conducted throughout in the full light of gas above the table.

Altogether, your Sub-committee have witnessed upwards of fifty similar motions without contact on eight different evenings, in the houses of members of your Sub-committee, the most careful tests being applied on each occasion. In all similar experiments the possibility of mechanical or other contrivance was further negated by the fact that the movements were in various directions, now to one side, then to the other; now up the room, now down the room—motions that would have required the co-operation of many hands or feet; and these, from the great size and weight of the tables, could not have been so used without the visible exercise of muscular force. Every hand and foot was plainly to be seen and could not have been moved without instant detection.

Delusion was out of the question. The motions were in various directions, and were witnessed simultaneously by all present. They were matters of measurement, and not of opinion or of fancy.

And they occurred so often, under so many and such various conditions, with such safeguards against error or deception, and with such invariable results, as to satisfy the members of your Sub-committee by whom the experiments were tried, wholly sceptical as most of them were when they entered upon the investigation, that *there is a force capable of moving heavy bodies without material contact, and which force is in some unknown manner dependent upon the presence of human beings.*

Your Sub-committee have not, collectively, obtained any evidence as to the nature and source of this force, but simply as to the fact of its existence.

There appears to your Committee to be no ground for the popular belief that the presence of sceptics interferes in any manner with the production or action of the force.

In conclusion, your Committee express their unanimous opinion that the one important physical fact thus proved to exist, that *motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact, by some hitherto unrecognised force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action*, should be subjected to further scientific examination, with a view to ascertain its true source, nature, and power.

The notes of the experiments made at each meeting of your Sub-committee are appended to this Report.

*Extract from a Paper read before the Dialectical Society, on Arguments against the possibility or probability of Miracles.*

#### MODERN OBJECTIONS TO MIRACLES.

We will now proceed to some of the more modern arguments against miracles. One of the most popular modern objections consists of making a supposition and

drawing an inference, which looks like a dilemma, but which is really none at all.

This argument has been put in several forms. One is, "If a man tells me he came from York by the telegraph wire, I do not believe him. If fifty men tell me they came from York by telegraph wires, I do not believe them. If any number of men tell me the same, I do not believe them. Therefore Mr. Home did not float in the air, notwithstanding any amount of testimony you may bring to prove it."

Another is, "If a man tells me that he saw the lion on Northumberland house descend into Trafalgar-square and drink water from the fountains, I should not believe him. I fifty men, or any number of men, informed me of the same thing, I should still not believe them."

Hence it is inferred that there are certain things so absurd and so incredible, that no amount of testimony could possibly make a sane man believe them.

Now, these illustrations look like arguments, and at first sight it is not easy to see the proper way to answer them; but the fact is that they are utter fallacies, because their whole force depends upon an assumed proposition which has never been proved, and which I challenge anyone to prove. The proposition is, that a large number of independent, honest, sane, and sensible witnesses can testify to a plain matter of fact which never occurred at all.

Now, no evidence has ever been adduced to show, that this ever has happened or ever could happen. But the assumption is rendered still more monstrous when we consider the circumstances attending such cases as those of the cures at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, and the cases of modern scientific men being converted to a belief in the reality of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism; for we must assume that, being fully warned that the alleged facts are impossible and are therefore delusions, and having the source of the supposed delusion pointed out, and all the prejudices of the age and the whole tone of educated thought being against the reality of such facts, yet numbers of educated men, including physicians and men of science, are convinced of the reality of the facts after the most searching investigation. Yet, the assumption that such an amount and quality of independent converging evidence can be all false, must be proved to be a fact if the argument is to have the slightest value, otherwise it is merely begging the question. It must be remembered that we have to consider, not absurd beliefs or false inferences, but plain matters of fact; and it cannot be proved, and never has been proved, that any large amount of cumulative testimony of disinterested and sensible men, was ever obtained for any absolute and entire delusion. To put the matter in a simple form, the asserted fact is either possible or not possible. If possible, such evidence as we have been considering would prove it; if not possible, such evidence could not exist. The argument is, therefore, an absolute fallacy, since its fundamental assumption cannot be proved. If it is intended merely to enunciate the proposition, that the more strange and unusual a thing is the more and the better evidence we require for it, that we all admit; but I maintain that human testimony increases in value in such an enormous ratio with each additional independent and honest witness, that no fact ought to be rejected when attested by such a body of evidence as exists for many of the events termed miraculous or supernatural, and which occur now daily among us. The burden of proof lies on those who maintain that such evidence can possibly be fallacious; let them point out one case in which such cumulative evidence existed, and which yet proved to be false; let them give not supposition, but proof.

Another modern argument is used more especially against the reality of the so-called spiritual phenomena. It is said, "These phenomena are so uncertain, you have no control over them, they follow no law; prove to us that they follow definite laws like other groups of natural phenomena, and we will believe them." This argument appears to have weight with some persons, and yet it is really an absurdity. The essence of the alleged phenomena (whether they be real or not is of no importance) is, that they seem to be the



the result of the action of independent intelligences, and are therefore deemed to be spiritual or superhuman. If they had been found to follow strict law and not independent will, no one would have ever supposed them to be spiritual. The argument, therefore, is merely the statement of a foregone conclusion, namely, "As long as your facts go to prove the existence of unknown intelligences, we will not believe them." This argument appears to me to be childish, and yet it is used by some persons who claim to be philosophical.

Another objection which I have heard stated in public, and received with applause is, that it requires immense scientific knowledge to decide on the reality of any uncommon or incredible facts, and that till scientific men investigate and prove them they are not worthy of credit. Now I venture to say, that a greater fallacy than this was never put forth. The subject is a very important one, and the error is a very common one, but the truth is the exact opposite of what is stated; for I assert that, whenever the scientific men of any age have denied the facts of investigators on *a priori* grounds, they have always been wrong.

It is not necessary to do more than refer to the world-known names of Galileo, Harvey, and Jenner; the great discoveries they made were, as we all know, violently opposed by their scientific contemporaries, to whom they appeared absurd and incredible; but we have equally striking examples much nearer to our own day. When Benjamin Franklin brought the subject of lightning conductors before the Royal Society, he was laughed at as a dreamer, and his paper was not admitted to the *Philosophical Transactions*. When Young put forth his wonderful proofs of the undulatory theory of light, he was equally hooted at as absurd by the popular scientific writers of the day. The *Edinburgh Review* called upon the public to put Thomas Gray into a straight jacket for maintaining the practicability of railroads. Sir Humphry Davy laughed at the idea of London ever being lighted with gas. When Stephenson proposed to use locomotives on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, learned men gave evidence that it was impossible that they could go even twelve miles an hour. Another great scientific authority declared it to be equally impossible for ocean steamers ever to cross the Atlantic. The French Academy of Sciences ridiculed the great astronomer Arago, when he wanted even to discuss the subject of the electric telegraph. Medical men ridiculed the stethoscope when it was first discovered. Painless operations during the mesmeric coma were pronounced impossible, and therefore impostures.

But one of the most striking, because one of the most recent cases of this opposition to, or rather disbelief in facts opposed to the current belief of the day, among men who are generally charged with going too far in the other direction, is that of the doctrine of the "Antiquity of Man." Boué, an experienced French geologist, in 1823, discovered a human skeleton eighty feet deep in the loess or hardened mud of the Rhine. It was sent to the great anatomist Cuvier, who so utterly discredited the fact that he threw aside this invaluable fossil as worthless, and it was lost. Sir C. Lyell, from personal investigation on the spot, now believes that the statements of the original observer were quite accurate. So early as 1715 flint weapons were found with the skeleton of an elephant in an excavation in Gray's-in-lane, in the presence of Mr. Conyers, who placed them in the British Museum, where they remained utterly unnoticed till quite recently. In 1800, Mr. Frere found flint weapons along with the remains of extinct animals at Hoxne, in Suffolk. From 1841 to 1846, the celebrated French geologist, Boucher de Perthes, discovered great quantities of flint weapons in the drift gravels of the North of France, but for many years he could convince none of his fellow scientific men that they were works of art, or worthy of the slightest attention. At length, however, in 1853, he began to make converts. In 1859-60, some of our most eminent geologists visited the spot, and fully affirmed the truth of his observations and deductions.

Another branch of the subject was, if possible, still

worse treated. In 1825, Mr. McEnery, of Torquay, discovered worked flints along with the remains of extinct animals in the celebrated Kent's Hole Cavern, but his account of his discoveries was simply laughed at. In 1840, one of our first geologists, Mr. Godwin Austen, brought this matter before the Geological Society, and Mr. Vivian, of Torquay, sent in a paper fully confirming McEnery's discoveries, but it was thought too improbable to be published. Fourteen years later, the Torquay Natural History Society made further observations, entirely confirming the previous ones, and sent an account of them to the Geological Society of London, but the paper was rejected as too improbable for publication. Now, however, for five years past, the cave has been systematically explored under the superintendence of a Committee of the British Association, and all the previous reports for forty years have been confirmed, and been shown to be even less wonderful than the reality. It may be said that "this was proper scientific caution." Perhaps it was; but at all events it proves this important fact, that in this, as in every other case, the observers have been right, those who rejected their observations have been wrong.

Now, are the modern observers of some phenomena, usually termed supernatural and incredible, less worthy of attention than these already quoted? Let us take, first, the reality of what is called clairvoyance. The men who have observed this phenomenon, who have carefully tested it through long years or through their whole lives, will rank in scientific knowledge, and in intellectual ability, as quite equal to any observers in any other branch of discovery. We have no less than seven eminent medical men, Drs. Elliotson, Gregory, Ashburner, Lee, Herbert Mayo, Esdaile, and Haddock, besides persons of such high ability as Miss Martineau, Mr. H. G. Atkinson, Mr. Charles Bray, and Baron Reichenbach. With the history of previous discoverers before us, is it more likely that these eleven educated persons, knowing all the arguments against the facts, and investigating them carefully, should be all wrong, and those who say *a priori* that the thing is impossible should be all right, on the contrary? If we are to learn anything by history and experience, then we may safely prognosticate that, in this case, as in so many others, the disbelievers in other men's observations will be found to be in the wrong.

A. R. WALLACE.

## Poetry.

### NON-ETERNITY OF PUNISHMENT.

I cannot think of Life apart from Him  
Who is the life, from cell to Seraphim;  
And, if Hell flame unquenchably, must be  
The life of hell to all eternity!  
A God of love must expiate the stain  
Of Sin Himself, by suffering endless pain;  
Sit with eternal desolation round  
His feet; his head with happy heavens crowned.

From Him the strength immortal must be sent,  
By which the soul could bear the punishment.  
I cannot think He gave us power to wring  
From one brief life eternal suffering:  
If this were so, the Heavens must surely weep,  
Till Hell were drown'd in one salt vast, sea-deep.  
Forgive me, Lord, if wrongly I divine;  
I dare not think Thy pity less than mine.

God save me from that Heaven of the Elect,  
Who half rejoice to count the number wreckt,  
Because, such full-weight to the balance given,  
Sends up the scale that lands them sure in heaven;  
Who some fall'n Angel would devoutly greet,  
And praise the Lord for another vacant seat;  
And the proud Saved, exulting, soar the higher,  
The lower that the Lost sank in hell-fire.

## MIRACLES AND MODERN SCIENCE.

THE *apriori* EVIDENCE.

(Continued.)

It is a law of nature that all bodies shall gravitate toward the earth's centre, and if I drop a stone from my hand it falls until reaching the earth's surface. It must be pre-supposed, however, that no opposing force intervenes. If an adequate support is placed beneath the stone it will not fall even although the hand is removed altogether; and this occurs, not because the law of gravitation has been suspended, but because another and equally potent law of nature has been brought to bear in opposition to the former one. Similarly a fever, by the laws of nature, might prove fatal, but a few grains of quinine, a substance acting also in strict accordance with natural law, may stop the course of the disorder although the natural law ruling fevers remains altogether as it was. Or again, I am bitten by a poisonous serpent, and according to the observations, made in thousands of like cases, I must die; but a little ammonia is applied to the wound and I recover, not because the poison is one whit less virulent than before but because an antidote has been resorted to.

In each of these cases, however, the means made use of have been something tangible. Take, therefore, another instance, in which the agency employed is not a ponderable one. I drop a small piece of copper wire into a glass containing nitric acid. The two no sooner come together than violent effervescence ensues; a red gas is given off; the copper disappears; the nitric acid is tinged with a blue color; and if evaporated crystals of nitrate of copper will be deposited. Now all this is the result of the very strong affinity which the copper has for the acid, so that a union takes place between the two and there is formed an entirely new compound. This same affinity exists in all parts of the world, probably has so existed in all time and will exist in all time to come. It is a law, in fact, a great deal more unchangeable than ever was decree of the Medes and Persians. Yet, I repeat the experiment, exactly as before, only that I connect the copper with the pole of a galvanic battery, and I make the nitric acid complete the circuit with the other pole of the battery. What happens? The copper is as before, the acid is as before, yet no action now takes place between them. The two do not unite. Nay, if I use the nitrate of copper, formed in the previous experiment, the copper then dissolved will be again deposited. I break the circuit and, instantly, all is changed. The acid and the copper act upon each other at once. I renew the connection and all action ceases just as suddenly as it commenced. The same law exists still, but it is neutralized by the electric current passing through the substances made use of.

So far then it seems easy enough to make one law of nature destroy the action of another. But it would appear possible to go a great deal farther and to imagine—at least—a law not only neutralized but, so far as our limited knowledge goes, actually given to or taken from any given mass of matter.

Take gravitation. It is that law, previously alluded to, which makes a body fall towards the ground. It acts everywhere upon the earth, but it acts in all space besides. It causes the moon to fall towards its primary. It causes every planet to fall towards the sun. It is the manifestation of an attractive force which every atom of matter in the universe, to all appearance, exercises toward every other atom. Save the Supreme Being it is difficult to conceive of anything more universal than this; and, therefore, many philosophers fancy, whilst some actually assert, that gravitation and matter are strictly inseparable. The assertion, however, is altogether a gratuitous

one. We may have never seen any kind of matter that does not manifest this peculiarity, but we can discern another force, singularly analagous, which, in a limited degree, can be added to or taken from a body at the pleasure of the experimenter.

Everyone understands what is meant by a magnet. It is a piece of iron which has the property of attracting other pieces of iron towards itself. Now suppose we lived in a globe composed altogether of iron and that our bodies were formed of the same substance. It would follow that we should be attracted towards this imaginary globe, as we are toward the present earth, but by the force of magnetism and not of gravitation. As nothing would be found on this globe, save such bodies as the magnetic force attracted, so should we naturally enough conclude that no substance existed but what was subject to this kind of attraction. We should also conclude that this force was inseparable from all kinds of matter. Existing where they exist, co-eternal with them, never to be destroyed. And yet a piece of iron may have no magnetic power during one second and the next it may have that power imparted to it by a very simple process. This power once imparted, it may with equal ease be taken away. It is simply an application of this principle which enables us to send messages by the telegraph; and the experiment is repeated millions of times a day.

I have not the slightest intention of regarding the miracles of Scripture as merely natural occurrences. To do so would, perhaps, be presumption equal to that which denies them altogether. Science and philosophy, however, have lately taken up new ground with respect to these matters. That signs and wonders have occurred is denied, on the ground that laws are unchangeable and that these must be broken or violated in order that such signs may be made manifest. The answer to this appears to be: That very many of them, if not actually proved, cannot be denied by any natural law at present known to us; whilst the accounts of many seem to be strikingly confirmed by phenomena of every day occurrence.

I select a few facts by way of illustration:—

Some years ago a French chemist astonished the members of the British Association by an exhibition of water in what is known as the spheroidal state. Let me briefly explain what this state is:—

If you heat water to 212 deg. it boils and passes away as steam. If you heat a metal vessel to, say, 230 deg., and place in it a small quantity of water, the vessel at once gives off its heat to the water and, if the quantity of metal is large enough, boiling of the water will ensue.

If you place cold water in a cold vessel, and set the whole over a fire, the water will gradually attract heat, and being raised to 212 deg. will boil also. But if you first make the vessel red hot, and then pour into it a small quantity of water, strange to say, it will not boil. I have often kept water in a red hot vessel for twenty minutes, and, until the temperature of the containing vessel came to be lowered, there was no sign of boiling. Under these circumstances the water gathers itself into a spheroidal mass, but it does not even reach the boiling point.

Further, if you make a piece of iron nearly red hot and touch it, it will burn your fingers; but a piece of iron raised to a white heat can be brushed over with the hand, even be licked by the tongue, without danger. Nay more, it is possible to ladle out molten lead in the palm of the hand, or even to cut, with the finger, a stream of fused iron as it runs out of the furnace, and that without the sensation of heat being felt at all.

I need hardly remind you that there is one miracle mentioned in Scripture wherein the recorded event seems analagous to the experiment referred to. I am alluding to the case of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the burning fiery furnace. The furnace was seven times heated. Yet those therein walked through the flames uninjured, and one walked with them whose face was like unto the Son of God.



The last fact is, of course, the key to the whole. We are not considering an experiment performed by chemists but a miracle wrought by God. But sceptics deny the truth of the history. They say "a man in such position would, by the natural law of fire, be inevitably burned to ashes." Fifty years ago such an objection would have had more force than at present. We have, thanks to science grown wiser. We know a little more about the law of fire than we did, and knowing that little we are modest enough to say that, possibly, a good deal of that law may still be undreamed of by us.

Or again, Christ at the marriage supper of Cana changes the water into wine. A sceptical chemist will object as follows:—"Chemists have divided the entire material world into about sixty elements. Every substance is composed of one or more of these elements, either separate or in union. Where two or more of these are united together in like proportions we get like results, like products. Well water is made up of two elements, oxygen and hydrogen. This is water all over the world. But wine contains one more element, namely, carbon. If the water was changed into wine the carbon must have been added," and here the objector to the miracle rests fancying, and no doubt, that he has given utterance to a poser.

Now it is somewhat unfortunate, for such an argument, that we are not quite certain what an element really is. Not a hundred years ago, several bodies were pronounced elements which are now proved to be made up of several much more simple substances, so that when we say water is composed of two elements we are not quite sure whether what we call elements may not in the end prove to be compound bodies, which makes a great deal of difference to the argument.

But the union of certain elements does not always result in the same product. Strychnine and quinine contain exactly the same elements. Yet one is a deadly poison, the other a useful tonic. Lampblack or soot is black, is opaque, and very soft, and it is carbon and nothing else. The diamond is white, transparent, and the hardest known gem; yet it is pure carbon also, and nothing else. Sulphur is an element. In one form it is exceedingly brittle, yet it may be changed into another, remaining sulphur still, and in the second state it can be bent easily with the fingers. Phosphorus, another element, may have its form completely changed, yet remain phosphorus as before. Oxygen is a gas without taste or odour; but in one of its forms—in which the substance remains oxygen still—it has a strong odour and acts, chemically, upon certain bodies and in quite a different way from what it did in its odourless condition. May we not learn from these facts the wisdom of reserving a judgment?

Lastly there are the miracles of Christ wherein the paralytic were strengthened, the blind were made to see, the lame to walk, and even the dead to live again. With respect to the first of these, the paralytic, the objection is not very strongly put forth; simply that imagination sometimes cures paralysis, and, as blindness is not seldom a species of paralysis, many sceptics believe it might possibly be cured without the aid of a miracle at all.

But there are miracles mentioned in scripture, in which a limb or an organ has been actually lost and restored again. Just before the Crucifixion, Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, and upon Christ touching the injured person, the ear was made whole as the other. A sceptic reading this laughs at the absurdity of the story, on the ground that, although natural forces will heal a wounded skin, join a fractured bone, or reinvigorate a palsied nerve, still there is no known power in nature capable of restoring a member that has been removed.

That is the assertion. Let us see—

There is a species of animals commonly known as Sea Anemones, naturalists call them actinidæ. Cut one of these animals in two, and each piece will grow into a separate animal, perfect as was the original. Now here

is something very like a reproduction of organs by natural forces. It may be objected that these animals are organisms of the simplest kind. Let us try again. In some of the seas hereabout is found a class of animals called Holothuridæ, commonly sea cucumbers. They are not so complexly formed as a man, a horse, or a lion, but then they are much more so than are the sea anemones. Now, what do you suppose they do at times? Simply throw up the whole of their internal organs, stomach, intestines, heart, everything, remaining a sort of empty sack. But they do not die. They do not even go on living without these castaway organs. They set about growing a new set, perfect as were the last. Here then is positive reproduction, and that in an animal tolerably highly organised. But the next case is rather more wonderful. Take a lobster. It is an animal perfect enough. It has legs, and something very like hands. It is covered with an exquisitely-formed armour. Its mouth and jaws are rather complicated, but beautifully arranged contrivances. It can hear, see, taste, feel, smell, and some naturalists say it has a sense which man has not. It has instincts. It is so far like man that it loves and hates, defends its offspring, and fights with its adversaries in deadly conflict. Sometimes in these conflicts it loses a leg, a claw, or an eye, going about like a Chelsea pensioner with a limb deficient. But this does not last long, since a new limb begins to grow out in place of the old one.

I mention these things, not to show that all the wonders wrought by Christ and his apostles contained in them nothing which is supernatural, but as proving how utterly unsafe it is, in the present state of our knowledge, to declare that science, even judging by its own laws, goes to demonstrate that miracles are impossibilities. It would seem, therefore, that the *a priori* argument against the so-called supernatural is not supported very strongly by proved scientific propositions. If science lets it fall on what other ground is it to stand?

RÜBEZAH.

#### MR. DAVID BLAIR and SPIRITUALISM.

MR. DAVID BLAIR has been lecturing on Spiritualism at Sandhurst, his argument being that spiritual intercourse was a fact known and recognized from the earliest ages, but that intercourse with spirits was distinctly forbidden. He lamented the decay of faith in Christianity (which he attributed to Spiritualism), and wanted to know what the ministers of the Gospel were about when the Christian fabric was crumbling around them and the spirit of unbelief riding on the whirlwind. His concluding remarks are so much in accord with our own ideas that we give them verbatim:—"This falling away from Christianity was the darkest hour before a glorious dawn. The night was far spent, and the glorious light was at hand, bringing life, and light, and happiness, for which immortal souls were panting." The report of the lecture was copied into the *Pleasant Creek Chronicle* of February 16th, and was fully and ably reviewed in a letter signed "Onward" in the *Chronicle* of the 27th February."

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