

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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A TOPIC which is engrossing a large amount of attention, and occupying much space in the American Spiritual papers, is the election of Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull to the office of President of the American Association of Spiritualists. The chief cause of this is the views Mrs. Woodhull holds, and so boldly expounds, on the Woman's Rights and Free Love questions, and her election to the presidential chair is considered by many to be an endorsement by the Spiritualists of her views on these subjects. Hence, many of the leading Spiritualists in America (including Hudson Tuttle, and Emma Hardinge Britten) have thought fit to repudiate Mrs. Woodhull's teachings, more especially on the Free Love question. Hudson Tuttle is analyzing and criticising Mrs. Woodhull's lectures and writings on the tabooed subjects, and Mrs. W. is criticising the critic. A great deal of this appears to us to be unnecessary, and is calculated to create inharmony and dissension in the Spiritual ranks. As far as we have seen, Mrs. Woodhull does not mix these objectionable subjects with that of Spiritualism, and we think it, to say the least, bad policy on the part of Spiritualists who differ from her, to assume that her opinions on them had anything to do with her election to the presidential chair. As an earnest Spiritualist, a fluent and eloquent speaker, and a woman of undoubted ability and good social position, she was a candidate for the office, and was elected by a small majority to it; and so long as she keeps from associating her opinions on free love, &c., with Spiritualism, she has a perfect right to hold and proclaim them to the world. It will be quite time enough for Spiritualists to repudiate Mrs. Woodhull and her views on social questions when she attempts to father them upon Spiritualism, or present them to the world as the views of Spiritualists as a body. The basis of the prejudice exhibited against Mrs. Woodhull was a lecture delivered by her before a large audience at Steinway Hall, Boston, on "The Principles

of Social Freedom," wherein she entered largely into the subject of free love and the marriage relation, asserting the right of every individual to love when, where, and whom they pleased, irrespective of the marriage contract. Theoretically this may be correct, but it is practically inapplicable to the present condition of society, and would, if recognized, have a most demoralizing effect. Pure platonic or spiritual love, free from sensuality or passion, is, we fear, but little known in the present generation; and the free indulgence of a lower love than this would be apt to degenerate into lust and promiscuousness. But we need not dilate upon this subject further than to point out that it is a social question totally distinct from the religion of Spiritualism, and for which it is not in any way responsible. The opponents of Spiritualism will no doubt try to blend the two, or point to the former as the outcome of the latter; but when a member of an orthodox church propounds any peculiar social opinions, they fail to see the analogy, and trace his opinions to his religion.

Mrs. Woodhull's views on the social relations had not been fully expressed at the time of her election; had they been so it is probable that prejudice against them would have prevented her being elected. From what we have read of her, she appears to be an honorable and straightforward woman, and, therefore, not likely to make use of Spiritualism as a lever to assist the spread of her social opinions. Should she do so we trust that the Spiritualists of America will repudiate the connexion; but, as we said before, it is quite time enough to do this when the event occurs, meantime she is entitled to the respect and support of the association which elected her; and while she conscientiously fulfils the duties of her position, she should receive the countenance and goodwill of Spiritualists generally.

COMMUNICATION.

Progress is the law which governs the whole universe. It is engraven on the human heart; entwined with all intellectual being; In the light of this great truth, all the enigmas of human life become an open page, showing the necessity of the evil and suffering which form the moral chaos in the vortices of which all beauty and goodness appear to be swallowed up and well nigh lost. The records of history tell of nations arising, passing

through circles of crime and suffering, and then ingloriously disappearing, only to leave room for others to arise, apparently but to run the same course, and share the same inglorious fate; and seeing this daily exemplified around you by individuals playing it over in miniature, we can understand your feeling almost hopeless while gazing on the dark and melancholy picture, until you learn to look out in the light of eternal progress. All move in circles; there sometimes appears to be retrogression, but such is impossible; you cannot move round a circle of thought without increasing your intellectual knowledge. Thought and consciousness must progress; you cannot pass through emotions and affections, feelings and passions, without a change. As the red pulpy infant, or light-hearted boy, becomes the stout-hearted, strong-limbed man, so must be the change in the mind. The man of to-day cannot be in anywise the man of yesterday. You must mount slowly and not directly upward: but in spirit circles, each rising above the last, until you gain, at each succeeding step, a wider range of intellectual vision; your horizon widening and expanding. The remembrance of the past, with all its cares, difficulties, and perplexities, will be hallowed, and be treasured in your memory as your ladder to the present; its sorrows and disappointments mellowed by distances, but its joys and its brightness, still more joyful and bright, in accordance with the law of moral gravitation, which attracts all towards its centre of unseen beatitude. You will learn there is no going backward, no standing still; but through all nature there is a principle of order ever moulding it into harmony, bringing forth hopes of inconceivable happiness. You will learn courage to look forward, and the seeming chaos will cease to haunt your soul with its discord; light will banish its darkness, and you will rise and soar, working in faith and without rest to aid the great work of progress in others, never wearying in well-doing, but with the same oft-repeated cry of *onward and upward, for ever and for ever*. Farewell.

12th May.

H. F.

Poetry.

LABOUR AND WAIT.

BY LIZZIE DOTEN.

All green, and bitter, and hard, and sour,
The fruit of the Tree of Life is growing;
But the genial sunshine, with quickening power,
Will sweeten the juices like nectar flowing.
For the full, fair growth of its perfect state
There is only needed the right condition.
Then labor and wait, both early and late,
Till the ripening fruit shall bring fruition.

Far out in the harvest fields of Time,
The grain for the reaper is standing ready,
And they who come to the work sublime
Must toil with a patience calm and steady.
Truth never was subject to Chance or Fate—
Its sickle so sharp cuts clean and even.
Then labor and wait, both early and late,
For the seed-field of Earth yields the harvest of Heaven.

In their quiet graves, on the green hill-side,
The sacred dust of your loved is sleeping;
And the homes where the light of their smile has died
Are filled with the sorrowful sound of weeping.
But over the gloomy clouds of Fate,
The light of the better land is shining.
Then labor and wait, both early and late,
For the cloud of Death has a silver lining.

There are fair sweet faces and gentle eyes,
That look through the mists and shadows above you;

And the fond affection that never dies,
Still speaks from the lips of the blest who love you;
They call you up from your low estate,
To the boundless bliss of the life supernal.
Then labor and wait, both early and late,
For Time is short, but Life is Eternal.

—*Poems of Progress.*

To Correspondents.

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

CO-OPERATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I wish you would take up your able pen, and try to start a co-operative society in connection with the Progressive Spiritists of this colony. I think that all systems of religion, without co-operation, are a mere empty sham, so far as this world is concerned, and must come to grief in the course of time. Therefore, I trust the Spiritists will not make this mistake. Andrew Jackson Davis says—"When distributive justice pervades the social world, virtue and morality will bloom with immortal beauty," showing clearly that co-operation, taken in its widest sense, is the only way to improve the social and moral condition of the people, and to effectually clip the wings of those who live on the working-classes, commonly called the *poor*. I think we might as well expect to see the earth produce crops without rain, or a beautiful temple to stand on a foundation of sand, as to see Spiritism take deep root and prosper without co-operation. Every man that works ought to receive the fruits of his labour, and all capital ought to be in the hands of the workers. My fellow-workmen fill our stores and shops with the luxuries and necessities of life more than enough for all, but still some can hardly get sufficient to keep body and soul together, through the grasping selfishness of those who profess to love their neighbours as themselves. But a change has come over the spirit of the times, and the working-classes are beginning to doubt the old proverb, that God intended rich and poor, and one man to be a gentleman and another man to be his slave. This kind of theological nonsense might go down with the ignorant hordes of past ages, but the working classes cannot swallow it now. I wish the working-classes would read Andrew Jackson Davis's "Voice to Mankind," it would so effectually open their eyes, I think, that all the powers of priestcraft and the rich combined would not be able to shut them again. Eternal progression runs through the book, and that is the mighty power that will level all dogmas, creeds, and error, and open the door for those glorious Spiritual intelligences to visit our globe again, as in days of yore, to teach mankind how to make the best of both worlds, and to spread true religion that every human being can believe.

A WORKING MAN.

[Our correspondent is perhaps not aware that a co-operative association—"The Victorian"—has been started, which, although not under the auspices of the Spiritualists, has some practical Spiritualists among its founders. Though the primary object of this association is the establishment of a co-operative store, it aims to extend its operations to comprehend all labour. The establishment of co-operative associations on A. J. Davis's plan ought not to be hurriedly entered into, the success of them depending upon the harmony of the persons associating, hence, before attempting such a combination men should know each other intimately, and feel assured that they could work together with one accord for the common good; a social and religious communism, implying an abnegation of selfishness, and a realization of true fraternity.—Ed. H. L.]

PHENOMENA AT CASTLEMAINE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—As the subject of Spiritualism appears to be attracting a deal of public attention just now, and as your columns appear to be open to the Spiritualists on the one hand; and to the sceptics both in the spirit theory and the physical phenomena on the other; at the request of some Castlemaine friends I venture to send you the views of one who has seen a great deal of the phenomena, but who is an utter sceptic to the spirit or supernatural theory. I have been investigating this matter for upwards of two years, under conditions that entirely precluded the possibility of trickery or imposture. The medium is a member of my own family, and the phenomena took place in my own house.

I will confine my remarks to an account of a few of the more remarkable phenomena witnessed by myself at various times. On one occasion while sitting in a folding cane chair, I felt the latter vibrate, withdrew my arms from the table and folded them across my breast, at the same time I raised my feet from the floor holding them straight out from me, when the chair at once began to move forward, with my whole weight, for, as near as I can remember four or five feet. At the same time my wife who was sitting at the opposite side of the room drew my attention to the lamp which together with the table cover was moving off the table, I left the chair, took the lamp and placed it on the mantelpiece, when the cover at once moved off the table falling on the floor. My attention was now directed to the chair again which I had just vacated, it was moving towards me until it pushed itself close to my legs. The medium all the time was sitting quite passive on a couch, fully five feet from where I first started, on my left rear, the chair and table cover moved away from the medium towards the fire which was fully lighted, as was also the lamp, no person sat between the table and the fire. There were but three in the room at the time. Immediately after two friends came in, the removal of the table cover again took place and was witnessed by them, I was moved again a few inches but *side-ways*. This was the only night that I was moved in the chair, but I have seen my boys moved several times. What appeared to be hands have grasped both my wife and son several times, I myself have not felt the grasp, though I have wished for it, but I have felt a touch on several occasions both on the feet and legs. While sitting in the centre of the room no person near me I expressed a wish to be grasped by the hand, or touched on the feet, when instead I felt a distinct tap on the back of the head. Table rapping was of frequent occurrence, and knocks or thuds on the floor were frequently heard, the knocks were not only heard but the vibration caused by them was distinctly felt from one end of the room to the other. We have heard loud raps on the wall after retiring to bed. I have witnessed plenty of table tipping, and on two occasions have had a small pine dressing table absolutely floating clear of the floor. The medium sat at one end and I at the other, with the palms of our hands placed lightly on the top, I willed it to rise from the floor, after a series of slight jumps it began to ascend in a swaying motion until it attained a height of, as near as I can recollect, about fifteen or eighteen inches. It remained suspended while I deliberately counted fifty, when it descended in the same swinging manner.

Dr. Carpenter's theory of "unconscious muscular action" will not apply here, as we had to leave our chairs to follow the table, and while we were standing my wife removed the chairs, and examined the space beneath.

Another evening while three of us were quietly sitting with our hands on the table, our attention was drawn to an unusual scraping noise on the carpet, it proved to be my wife's work basket which was moving along the floor, it went under one end of the couch on which the medium sat, emerged at the other, and came under the table on to my feet, we replaced it in the corner from whence it first started, when it at once recommenced its travels observed by the whole of us—it was repeated a third time. Another evening while at tea, my wife, who was sitting away from the table close to the fire, in a jocular

mood expressed a wish that the spirits would bring her a spoon. On the floor at the other end of the room and immediately opposite to where my wife sat, was a knife box, her wish had no sooner been expressed than the knife box moved towards her, in a series of jerks until it reached her, when she took out the spoon. I then requested the spirit to take the box back again, but it obstinately refused, evidently thinking that in responding to my wife's wishes it had done enough for one night. This was a fully lighted room. At several *dark sances* we have had still more remarkable phenomena, the particulars of which I forbear at present to state. This mysterious force, psychic, odic, magnetic or whatever you choose to term it, most undoubtedly manifests itself much stronger in the dark, than it does in the light. If we knew what the force was, then I have no doubt but that the scientists would be able to inform us why the light was to some extent antagonistic. I am not surprised at the poor results obtained by some of our eminent scientific men in London, while trying to investigate this difficult matter. Often when sitting with a desire to witness the phenomena, we have obtained comparatively little beyond a few slight raps, while on other occasions when not particularly anxious for anything, the force has manifested itself in the most remarkable manner. It appears to require a peculiar physical condition of the medium, or the condition of the atmosphere at the time may possibly have something to do with it. I have seen a great deal of the spirit writing (so called) but it does not give me a very exalted opinion of the invisible gentry, in fact I consider most of it sheer twaddle. Certainly I may not have been *en rapport* with the "higher intelligences." Some of the spiritists attribute the physical manifestations, such as table moving &c. to the influence of spirits from the lower spheres.

In conclusion I repeat that, notwithstanding all the phenomena I have witnessed I am utterly opposed to the spirit theory, and for my part I am content to leave it in the hands of such men as Crookes trusting that some day they may be enabled to solve the riddle. As this communication is rather long, I will reserve my remarks on the dark *sances*—the phenomena being of a still more remarkable character—for your next issue; that is should you deem them of sufficient importance for insertion.

J. P.

Castlemaine, 22nd May, 1872.

THREE FACTS, AND INFERENCE THEREFROM.

"We ask Christians, and especially the clergy, to consider these things, and beware how they are found standing on anti-Spiritual or infidel ground. Every blow the clergy aim against Spiritualism must rebound on themselves."

"If psychology, illusion, collusion, electricity, od force, odyle, magnetism, biology, ventriloquism, legerdemain, demonology, the devil, or anything else can account for modern manifestations, may not everything of a similar character recorded in the Bible be accounted for on the same grounds?"

"Are not all the 'Spiritual gifts' and manifestations specified by Paul to be found in our age? 1 Cor. xii, xiii, and xiv chapters. If all modern mediums and believers are deceivers, or under some diabolical or illusive influences, may not the same be conjectured of all ancient seers and saints? 1 Cor. xv. 14."—"U. Clark's Plain Guide to Spiritualism."

"So far as Spiritualism is concerned, 99-100ths of even the educated and intelligent portion of the community reject it scornfully and without enquiry. The time has now arrived, however, when witnessing the amount and quality, and rapid development, and dissemination of testimony, many who a short time ago treated the subject with supercilious contempt, hold their judgments in abeyance, and wait for further evidence and personal experience."

"This is as it should be. No reasonable man should look for the reception of phenomena and theories so extraordinary, and so antagonistic to preconceived notions without overwhelming evidence."—T. P. Barhas.

"The real question must be decided at last by facts and evidence, and we hazard nothing in saying that the facts are so numerous, and the evidence so convincing, that a candid investigation must result in a settled conviction that the real claims of Spiritualism are founded on immutable truth. To evade this conclusion it must be proved that the facts are all *illusions of the senses*, and that human experience is everywhere deceptive. But we submit that the number and the respectability of the witnesses utterly precludes the supposition that they have all mistaken mere *phantasms* for *essential facts*. Hence the attempt to force the acceptance of the theological interpretation of a passage from

some ancient writing, such as the 19th and 20th verses of the 8th chapter of Isaiah, which requires us to close our eyes to the most significant events, and to discard the great lessons of the present, is manifestly calculated to strengthen popular scepticism in such teaching, and to expose the pretensions of the clergy and the stupidity of their followers to the suspicion and derision of mankind."—*Tables Turned: a Brief Review of the Rev. C. M. Butler, D.D. By A. B. Brittan.*—page 29.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—First.—It is a fact that during the ten years between 1848 and 1858 ninety per cent. of the clergy of the British Empire believed that the reported Spiritualistic manifestations had no existence in fact, from any cause, and that it was all a false report.

Second.—It is a fact that during the ten years between 1858 and 1868, ninety per cent. of those clergy changed their minds, and believed that the reported Spiritualistic manifestations existed in truth, and were caused by unknown law, or bad spirits.

Third.—It is a fact that if ninety per cent. of those clergy should between the years 1868 and 1878, again change their minds, and believe the Spiritualistic manifestations are caused by good spirit power, in the service of God; this second change in the third period of ten years, would not be greater or more wonderful than their first change in the second period of ten years. Both changes would be the result of previous ignorance, and subsequent knowledge of simple matters of fact. If they could be ignorant of facts during a first ten years, that they were not ignorant of in a second ten years, they may, for the same reasons, be ignorant of facts during a second period of ten years, that they are not ignorant of during a third period of ten years—i. e., from 1868 to 1878.

INFERENCE.

We have a right to infer from the foregoing three facts, that as ninety per cent. of the clergy admit that they were untrustworthy guides during the first half of these thirty years, upon this most important subject, we are not called upon in reason to trust them in preference to our own convictions, during the second half of these eventful thirty years.

From our knowledge of past changes in the minds of clergy, and from our knowledge of the facts of Spiritualistic manifestations at present existing in the world, it is reasonable for us to infer, that ninety per cent. of the clergy who honestly investigate, will, by the year 1878, believe that these Spiritual manifestations are caused by spirit-power in the service of God.

What can be a greater reproach to the intelligence of this highly-educated body of men than the position so many of them take. I allude to those who deny the good or bad Spiritual hypothesis, and rest upon unknown law, notwithstanding such men as Mr. Howitt, and thousands upon thousands of others, declare that they constantly see and handle the spirits at séances. Surely seeing should be believing and feeling the truth. That there should be so large a portion of the clergy who continue to believe that some unknown law of nature, apart from Spiritual influence, can constantly do all that was done on the day of Pentecost, with an infinity of writing, drawing and music, by seen spirit hands, is so great a reproach to clerical anti-Spiritualistic sentiment, as to disentitle the views of the whole body to respectful consideration, notwithstanding the subject is a religious one of the highest importance.

We must hope, and confidently hope, for another change, that we may yield respect where respect is due. The Clergy are for the most part serious, intelligent, God-fearing men. It is found that with the majority of men of such a cast of mind, that if they can be induced to investigate Spiritualism (instead of scornfully rejecting it as simply absurd), ninety per cent. yield to the God-given Spiritual hypothesis, as the only true one.

We have this reason to believe that the clergy of the British Empire will do the same by the year 1878. If they will only investigate, instead of scorning to do so.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"W."

P.S. It just occurs to me that the clergy will probably admit that it would be a reproach to their intelligence if they denied Spiritual influence in the face of

such facts as I have specified; but, say they, "We no more admit those specified facts than we formerly admitted the fact of a table's moving without a good push from flesh and blood."

Here we are driven back to matters of fact, as easy of solution as the movement or non-movement of a table! Why should not enquiry help the clergy in this second instance, of acts of visible spirits, as in the first instance of a table's movements.

There is a branch of literature (Spiritualistic literature) embracing the religious works of men of high culture, deep thought, and eminent piety, with which the clergy are as unacquainted as the Chinese and Japanese, and for the same reasons. They all think that other than that which they have learned and know is not worth learning and knowing, and therefore reject it with scorn.

If they would look into that literature they would find that, provided they allow their minds to be governed by those laws of testimony which govern courts of law, they must yield to the distinct evidence of distinctly visible Spiritual agency, and to the truth of the overwhelming array of facts I have specified, on the evidence of Mr. Howitt, and thousands of others, who see the spirits, and see what they do as they play upon musical instruments, write, or present flowers, with distinctly visible hands. Grant that, like the day of Pentecost, it is extraordinary, it is yet far less extraordinary than that thousands of honorable and highly-educated men of Mr. Howitt's stamp, should tell us a pack of lies about the matter.

Those who think, believe, hold, and maintain, that the testimony, to matters of fact, of sane, honest, clever, reputable men, can constantly and persistently lie, ought not to be argued with, but removed to the nearest lunatic asylum.

THE SHAKER COMMUNITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—Believing that many readers of the *Harbinger* are, like myself, enquirers and seekers after truth, rather than dogmatists or positive asserters, who mistake their own individualisms for universal perception, I have much pleasure in directing attention to the estimate formed by Mr. Peebles, our expected lecturer from America, respecting the Shaker communities in the State of New York, and published in page 39 of the *London Medium* for February 2, 1872. Mr. Peebles thus writes—"The are all (the Shakers) Spiritualists, striving to make practical the divine principles they possess.

2nd. They have among themselves very superior media for trance and clairvoyance, visions and prophecies.

3rd. They have in their midst no rich, no poor; no palaces nor almshouses; but thrift and abundance, holding, as in the Pentecostal day, "All things in common."

4th. They excel in neatness, industry, integrity, and the cultivation of that chief of the Christian graces—charity.

5th. Ignoring asceticism, and utterly unlike monks and nuns, their communities are so many Spiritual families, each living and laboring for the good of all.

6th. Opposing war, they are all the advocates of peace, temperance, of good morals, rigidly practising what they profess.

7th. Considering the fratricide, parricide, child-murder, solitary vice and libertineism stalking abroad in the world, would it not be well for all philanthropists to at least read Malthus, and carefully study these believers' teachings relative to chastity, celibacy, and purity of life?

Horace Greely, in his *Hints towards Reform*, thus writes of them—"When all that can be said against these simple-minded ascetics has been freely admitted, there is yet left enough in their character and history to challenge our admiration.

"They present the sublime and hope-inspiring spectacle of a community founded and built up on the conquest of the most inexorable appetites—lust, avarice, ambition, revenge. These are not merely discounted by the social economy of the Shakers, but this economy is based on their entire crucifixion.

"Nor can I see how any man can rationally conclude, as some have asserted, that all this show of subduing the appetite is hypocrisy and a delusion.

"This uncharitable theory supposes a refinement of absurdity and self-annoyance which never yet possessed for any period the brain of a sane man, much less of a whole community for ages.

"They have solved for us the practicability of a social condition from which the twin curses pauperism and servitude shall be utterly banished. They have shown how pleasant may be the labours, and how abundant the comforts of a community wherein no man aspires to be lord over his brethren. No man grasps for himself, but each is animated by a spirit of devotion to the common good.

"I have stood among the quiet homes of this unassuming people, and marked how they have steadily, surely, advanced from abject poverty to ample competence. I have observed how their patient, but never excessive toil, has transformed rugged barrenness into smiling fertility and beauty," &c., &c.

By your leave, Mr. Editor, I shall recur to this subject in another issue of the *Harbinger*.

Yours in truth, hope, and love,

JOHN.

A MEDITATION.

Wandering a few days since along the banks of the Yarra, depressed by the failure of a recent undertaking, I fell a musing on the story of my life, a story which (like that of every other life) had we but the key to read it aright, might appear as full of law and sequences as it now appears weak and meaningless. Surely thought I, this protracted effort, this sisyphian task of rolling the stone up the hill never to approach any nearer the summit must have a purpose.

The Divine Disposer, the origin and sustainer of all, in whom all things are, and without whom nought could exist that does exist, must have an end in every event, and that end must be attained or the Omnipotent must be a failure, and God a sham. It is evident that the Uncaused Cause must be of itself and therefore must be a necessity that all other causes must have their origin in the ultimate Cause and must therefore also be necessities, necessities by sequence, of the necessity in essence. It follows therefore that every effect (all causes in the second degree being effects) must be the effect of necessity—the necessary outcome of the necessary attributes of necessary essence—and that as there is no possibility of there being anything outside of the absolute of necessity whatever is, must be right.

Parts only, we are dissatisfied because we cannot grasp the whole. Threads in the infinite pattern, we expect to realize the complete design. Points in the infinite arc, we expect to measure the entire circle. Because we suffer we think the universe is wrong. Because we fail, we think the infinite has failed. But do we fail? If my foregoing conclusions are right, we do not fail, we cannot fail—we fail only, in realizing our own desires but not in fulfilling the purpose of our existence. Time cannot be any test of that which is eternal. Failure as applied to man, must include something more than mere temporal failure. It is very evident therefore that social failure may be spiritual success. Thus the crown of thorns may be a wreath of victory and the pilgrims staff the monarch's sceptre. We follow foibles and we find sorrow, and sorrow is the handmaiden to joy. Nature is infinitely wise as well as bountifully good. We chase bubbles—bubbles to which we give the prismatic hues of our own consciousness, and nature takes advantage of our hardihood to stretch our muscles and strengthen our nerves. When she has effected her purpose she disenchant us, and, thereby enlarges our knowledge and elevates our aims. She bursts the bubble, and we think we have failed, but the failure is of the bubble, not of us. The failure of the bubble is necessary to our success. Failure is the postulate of Progress. Nature is prolific of failure, failure is everywhere, in the earth in the air, in the skies, in the herbs, in the tree, in the flower, in the bird, in the beast, in man—decadence,

decay everywhere, retrogression, destruction, death—but the decay is only initial to repair, destruction to reconstruction. The loss of the lower is the gain of the higher. Retrogression is only a stage of progression, out of weakness comes forth strength, out of the bitter comes sweet. "Knowledge by suffering entereth and life is perfected of death." Evolution certainly appears to be the system of nature. Spiritualism asserts it, reason endorses it, science supports it. The past has evolved the present, the present evolves the future. The form the *phenomenon* fails, but the essence, the *noumenon* survives. The tenement decays, but the tenant merely moves on to a new abode. The tenant outlives his home. Thus the Nautilus spirals referred to in the "Autocrat of the breakfast table" lives at first in a little chamber of his shell, while this is sheltering him a second and larger chamber is being added to which (having grown too large for further occupation of the first) he removes, in due time he does the same with the third and again with a fourth chamber until at last he spreads his gauzy sails and floats across the bosom of the ocean. So is it with the living spirit of nature and every form, which for a time she invests. Thus form succeeds form and type succeeds type each fulfilling its mission and passing the eternal one stage farther on its divine way. Thus epoch has followed epoch, organic has followed inorganic, vegetable mineral, animal vegetable, intellectual animal, spiritual intellectual. Thus has the metempsychosis (of Vishnu as the Brahmins called it) the *Natura Naturans* (as Spinoza called it) or whatever other name you like to designate it of the *divine spirit in matter* been perpetually going on. The universe is the scene of the transfiguration "from glory to glory." Thus do all forms grow old as doth a garment, and fade as doth a vesture, they fall (as did the mantle from the shoulders of Elijah) from the divine spirit in nature as it ascends in its sublime apotheosis ever nearer (yet never near to) its divine origin—the soul of its soul—the *natura naturata*—the *esse in esse*—the Absolute—"I go unto my Father"—"I and my Father are one."

Thus the horologue of eternity beats the march of ascension—Thus the end of existence is the education of soul—Time is the term—Experience is the teacher—Space is the schoolhouse—Atoms and worlds have alike their parts to play in the stupendous drama of soul development—Everything works together for our good. Let us be patient therefore—

These divine afflictions
Not from the grave arise
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

"We look through the little lens of personality and are apt to think that the scene we see includes the whole horizon. We live so much in the life physical, that we feel as if every circumstance that tells against that, were another nail driven into the coffin that is to close over our hopes for ever. Perhaps not. Perhaps Time the Restorer is driving at the same moment another nail in the superstructure which is to become the abode of the life spiritual. Death is but the cicerone to Life. Death-in-Life and Life-in-Death are twin brothers. Sorrow is but the complement of joy, as the shadowed part of the moon is the complement of the crescent as night is the counterpart of the day. Sorrow and joy, light and darkness, life and death are necessary to each other—all things die that all may live—the seed dies that the plant may live—the shoot dies that the leaf may live—the blossom dies that the fruit may live. The molusca and the crustacea of primeval seas gave their substance to the limestone rocks—and life (the eternal) translated into higher organizations now rejoices in forest and field, a sphere made possible by the life and death of the ancient molusc. The coral insect has raised the reefs (its own hecatombs) which now rear their resplendent heads above the ocean, the habitat of gorgeous and prolific life. The waters of the Upper Nile overflow and in their tempestuous course carry away portions of the banks and rocks and deposit them again in deltas at its mouth—deltas which are noted for surpassing fertility—deltas which have indeed only to be tickled with the hoe to laugh with the harvest. And this the spiritualization of matter is going on in every river, in every

creek. And may it not be so also with man's nature? The waters of circumstance beat upon the rocks of the life physical, we feel the process of attrition going on, and we think all is lost, but may it not be that every particle that is carried away is deposited again in the spiritual deltas of the soul—deltas that shall one day laugh with golden harvest and rejoice with celestial fruit, when the river of Time shall have opened out into the Ocean of Eternity.

E. L.

WHAT CONSTITUTES TRUE MARRIAGE.

Spiritual consociation, or love, is mental unison, nurtured, and sustained by constant manifestations; or, by an assured faith in the devotion of one to another, through all possible conditions. This is almost impossible to be known, where the lusts of the flesh destroy the spiritual element. A partial congeniality may make a kind of pleasurable bond for a while, but the true spirit bond cannot be broken.

There is an ecstasy of feeling even in thought, though oceans divide the parties, which excels all else, in which the mind may ever participate. A true love relation is an imperishable treasure, a holy contemplation that vivifies, and sheds a halo of such power, that the scintillations, with telegraphic speed, intensifies life in the loved one. A marriage union, for eternity, requires a high spiritual development. The marriage of earth, or, union in the flesh, has its definite use in the perpetuation of the race. Action beyond its use is a drain on the spiritual juices, or the animating constituent in the animal organism. Hence, the reason, and necessity for agitation, and amendment of the present legal bond. This bond is now but a license for prostitution, and the unfolding of natural laws reveal it to be the worst kind of prostitution, because it not only reduces the tone of the participants, but it develops a deteriorated offspring.

The child, animated by the dregs of a prostituted love-life, is depleted of its proper natural force at birth, and enters the arena of life unprepared to wrestle with either physical or mental disorders.

The enunciation of this unwelcome truth should be heard; it should permeate the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere around us, until those whose lives are sacrificed through its neglect shall bear testimony to its purifying effect upon fallen humanity.

One cannot deal with this monstrous evil gently. It is a tree of evil, whose roots must no longer be suffered to distil poison and destroy the true vitalizing principle.

The prostitution which exists under the legal bond, called marriage, should no longer have an abiding place in the appreciation of the enlightened intellect of the nineteenth century.

The individual suffers none the less from the infringement of a natural law, because of the sanction given by authority of either ecclesiastical or civil courts.

I know the rugged coasts into which truth would steer the life-boat. Already I perceive the breakers—symbols of the waves of passion—that rise in seeming majesty and power, but if Truth is at the helm, breaker after breaker will be safely passed, and, growing stronger by resistance, will become mighty to save those who abide in the light of truth.

The Christ, the representative of truth, is made to say: "The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air have each an abiding place, but the Son of Man"—or the representative of truth, the offspring of God—"hath not where to lay his head." Ah! lovers of the truth, will ye not open your hearts to the beloved one? Cherish the truth, and man's regeneration has begun. The Saviour has found a dwelling-place, then will "the seed of the woman bruise the serpent's head." This symbolizes the capacity of the parent; by entertaining truth, which is to give life and activity, to transmit to the offspring the strength to conquer the fascinations of the perverted love life which the serpent symbolizes. This perversion debases and prostrates humanity. Parents think what a high and holy trust is yours, to so live as to transmit qualities and powers that shall give glory to God. On the other hand, the power is with you to mar

and distort the image of the creator. It belongs to true parentage to give the giant intellect, which shall bless the world, the mental force that can easily stem the surging power of evil in the world, and the strength of body that can save from disease and premature death, which, like the plague of Egypt, cuts off our little ones in a night.

Waste not life's vigor in your own lives, so that you may not dwarf your child's capacity or clog his spirit career, whose progression is dependent on the great law of attraction which is governed by the inherent properties of spirit as of matter. Man cannot now apprehend the faintest outline of the effect on the spirit-world attendant on a correct life in the beginning. The beginning is in thought. Thoughts stamp themselves upon the elementary germs which enter into the organism of a new being.—*The American Spiritualist*, March 2, 1872.

REVIEW.

* A LETTER TO THE VERY REV. DEAN MACARTNEY.

WE desire to call particular attention to the above pamphlet, which is a masterly review of that published by the Dean in April last. It should be read by all Spiritualists, and circulated by thousands amongst their friends. It will serve as an eye-opener to many whose eyes have been closed to the truths of Spiritualism. The pamphlet is free from dogmatism, and appeals directly to the reason of the reader. As the profits arising from the sale of the first issue are to be devoted to the Lecturers' Fund of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, we trust our readers will send in their orders freely, and thereby doubly assist in the diffusion of an accurate knowledge of our beautiful philosophy.

MR. M'LEAN'S CLOSING ADDRESS TO THE STAWELL PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

FRIENDS—It is now about fourteen months since the formation of this Association by a few congenial minds, who, notwithstanding the threatened anathemas of sacerdotalism, dared to resolve upon mutually assisting each other in the investigation of truth, more especially those truths relating to the Spiritual world, and to test if possible, by earnest and careful inquiry, the facts or fallacies of the phenomena known as *Modern Spiritualism*. Since our first meeting, in March of last year, our numbers have considerably increased, and would have continued increasing had not our original object been achieved—viz., that as our sole aim was to investigate and carefully sift evidence, not seeking material profit, we considered it desirable to limit the number of members.

Since our formation, we have held twenty-five general meetings, formed a library of several choice books and periodicals bearing on Spiritism; held many interesting *séances*, and at considerable expense obtained the able services of Messieurs. Naylor and Tyerman, for lecturing purposes, the result of which, I am happy to say, has quite confirmed me and I think many other members composing this Association, of the glorious reality of direct Spirit-communication, or telegraphy, under certain conditions, between those in and those out of the material body; thereby establishing the most important fact in the universe to mankind, viz., that of a future and increasingly happy existence beyond the grave; as also that man is, and ever has been a progressive being, if left untrammelled by soul-crushing creeds and heathenish dogmas. Believing that Mr. Naylor's able and highly-interesting lectures had created a strong desire for more light in the minds of many anxious inquirers in and around Stawell, I resolved upon establishing, if possible, Sunday evening services; and, notwithstanding the openly expressed fears of many kind friends and the sneers of licensed abusers, hundreds of apparently thirsty souls aided my humble efforts by their regular attendance at our temporary place of

* "A letter to the Very Rev. Dean Macartney, being a reply to his recent attack on Spiritualism."—By a Graduate of an University. W. H. TERRY, Publisher.

meeting; and we subsequently formed a permanent branch of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritists. We are now, as you are aware, erecting a substantial Hall, which when completed will be a credit to the cause, and an ornament to the town. I cannot conclude this hasty glance at our onward march from the tangled cobwebs of superstitious ignorance, without referring to the able assistance which the movement has, and is still receiving, from two of the promoters—Messieurs. Walters and Crellin; nor would I now, as your President, have alluded to our Sunday services, were it not for the kindred relationship that still exists between us in membership, and who are, with myself, thoroughly satisfied that the Book of Revelation is not, never will be, closed; that God, our heavenly Father, is ever willing to reveal Himself, and, from time to time, continues to do so, by the angelic ministers of His will, notwithstanding the degrading so-called *orthodox* teachings to the contrary, concerning their primitive Jewish Jehovah, who, it is blasphemously alleged, cursed the earth and the entire race, because the first pair fell, when He must have known beforehand that they had not the ability to stand; who formed the world of one language and one speech, and in a fit of jealousy, lest they should build a tower to heaven, and invade his dominions, cursed them with a thousand different tongues, so that they could not understand each other's speech; who tempted Abraham to murder his own Son, and, when he showed his readiness to commit the infamous crime, He blessed him, and represents him as the best man upon earth, because he was most willing to do the worst deed; who transmuted a woman into a pillar of salt, because she dared to look back upon her burning home, and lingeringly left her friends to perish; who hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he should not let the people of Israel go; and then slew millions of innocent Egyptians, and, according to the Dean of Melbourne's recent silly pamphlet against Spiritism—

"Turned the waters of Egypt into blood. The mighty Nile, from its first cataract, rolled its course, of nearly 800 miles, one volume of blood. The pools and conduits, with the vast artificial lake of Moeris, the streams of commerce, the reservoirs to supply the thirsty lands, the pools prepared to delight the eye and refresh the senses, all were one revolting sea of gore."

Because he (Pharaoh) was so hard-hearted that *he would or could not* let them go; who has sent all mankind into the world with a strong disposition to do evil; allows a Devil and his agents to tempt men, and thus make them worse than they are naturally, and then has so arranged matters, that if they persist in what He calls *evil*, he will plunge them into a den of woe, from which there is no escape, but from which the smoke of their torment is to ascend *for ever and ever*—and we are told by interested preachers that it is our duty to love this primitive Jewish idol! It was the continual contradictory and conflicting doctrines on the soul's immortality I had read and heard from the pulpit during the course of my life, that caused me, as it has millions of other thinking mortals since the overthrow of Messieurs. Thumbscrew, Rack, and Torch, to search for more rational and soul-inspiring truths than can ever be confined within the embossed lids of any man-made book—taking for my guide the beautifully harmonious machinery which permeates our Heavenly Father's universal workshop—Nature, and her immutable laws—and, therefore, in my researches into the Spiritist philosophy, I was satisfied that something more was intended than the gratification of an idle curiosity; something more than the pandering to a diseased appetite for the marvellous; something more than the promulgation of oracular platitudes; something more than upsetting material objects to the admiration of the wonder-lover; something more than telling the age of the living, and the so-called *dead*, &c. for that something I, with yourselves, have industriously searched, notwithstanding the unkind allegations that to search as we have done "constitutes an abandonment of all self-control, and a surrender of the supremacy of reason, as informed and enlightened by the senses."

There was never yet, I venture to say, a religious creed promulgated among men, which so entirely eschewed blind faith, and so fully and always demanded the exercise of judgment and the supremacy of the reason.

Hence it is, we are taught that none of these extraordinary things which are witnessed by so many are miraculous, or flow from any suspension of nature's laws, but are, on the contrary, in strict conformity with, and in execution of those laws; that, like the steam-engine and the magnetic telegraph, they are marvellous only to those who do not understand them, or are not familiar with them, like the King of Siam, when informed by a Dutch ambassador, that in his country, in cold weather, the water was so hard that it would bear an elephant if it were there, replied:—"Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I looked upon you as a sober, fair man, but now I am sure you lie." That those laws, and the means by which they produce such results, are as capable of being found out by human research; that the knowledge is not confined to a few (as is stated in Deut. xxix. 29), but is open to *all*, rich and poor, high or low, wise or ignorant, who will *wisely* and *patiently* search for it, and that when it is attained, it cannot but work in the heart "A closer walk with God," and an intercourse with our fellow men of a more elevated character, void of the real devil, selfishness, and devoted to their absolute advancement in *all* knowledge and goodness both in this world and the world to come. And now, dear friends, let us agree with our co-worker in this great cause, Professor Denton, in declaring that our vessel is afloat, the sails are set, heaven wafts a prosperous gale. Science is our compass, Reason our pilot, and angels point the way. Already the goodly land appears in view. See its sunny slopes. We can even hear its music in faint tones, as it comes wafted over the breakers. There stand the friends that in youth we loved, on whose cold graves we dropped a tear. They beckon to us! No dark cloud obscures our vision; no mist, like a curtain, hides from us the home of the soul. We do not say, "I hope to join you, if God will but help me, for the sake of Jesus;" but we boldly say, "Ye, my brethren, live and love, and we shall live and love also!"

Stawell, 14th May, 1872.

SPIRITUALISM.

HON. J. M. PEEBLES BEFORE THE TROY SPIRITUALISTS.
[From the Troy "Press," Monday February 5, 1872.]

One of the ablest advocates of Spiritualism in the country is with the Spiritualists of this city at present. In our opinion and possibly that of the majority of the Spiritualist congregation, he is really the most sensible speaker we have ever heard in that denomination. His pleasing manners, to say nothing of his literary abilities, make him fairly beloved by all who know him in Troy. He is to remain here during this and next month. At the service yesterday morning, after some good music by the choir and the reading of a poem entitled, "The Land of Forever," Mr. Peebles said he was glad to stand before such an intelligent audience and dispense to it the words of truth and duty; and thoughts fresh from the invisible land of souls.

Spiritualism, said the speaker, is something more than a bundle of dry facts—something more than a sledge-hammer of spiteful forces made to demolish every "old faith" and new theory not openly and officially labelled. Toleration was chief among its graces. Theologically speaking, Spiritualism was a science and a religion—a life and a moral power working in all reforms, and looking steadfastly to human redemption. The speaker had for the past two months been in a Southern city, and coming North he could not help noticing the difference in the aspect of things political and especially spiritual. In this Southern city (New Orleans) the people desired him at nearly every service to give them a lecture on physical manifestations, or something relating to the phenomena. While you, said he, have been surfeited with phenomenal wonders for full twenty years, and now want the philosophy, the practice, the result of the seedling. The world is full of texts, even one was suggested to the speaker's mind on the way to the hall, viz., "What shall I do to be saved?" Mr. Peebles said he had seen accomplished in the South that which he had ever preached for—peace; and yet it was a forced rather than a willing peace. You have conquered the South the

same as Austria conquered Hungary; Russia, Poland; and as England overcame Ireland; but you have not subdued it; the same spirit and former turmoil yet exist. The devil cannot "cast out devils"—war cannot produce peace. No Spiritualist could consistently engage in brutal bloodshed. All were brothers. The speaker found hearts just as warm, true and brave, South as North; and, for one, he knew no North, South, East or West—no nation, no country; but one universal brotherhood and sisterhood of interests. He then made quite an appeal in favor of women voting, stating in vindication of that right that woman was much more moral and spiritual than man, and her influence would in time serve to purify the ballot-box. Mothers and sisters are not to be found in billiard saloons and similar places. Our present lives are but an alphabet of the life hereafter. That life is never-ending, and you will live as long as God exists. As you live this life, so will your future happiness be measured. You should not live simply for yourselves, but strive to help all others around you. Man compares in his structure exactly with the earth beneath him. There are four parts in the life of a man—the physical, the intellectual, the moral and the spiritual. The speaker, while in New Orleans, actually went to see a cock-fight, simply because he wished to see the degraded condition in which men could place themselves. He would not visit another for the world. What we want is more harmony in men, that we can send into the world, where they will feed that one, bless this, give kind words to many others, and who will in future, with all mankind, enter that world where all is harmony forever. Amen.

PROFESSOR WALLACE, F.R.G.S., F.R.Z.S., and
PRES. ETH. SOC., F.E.S., &c., on
SPIRITUALISM AND MESMERISM.

AN interesting discussion has occurred in recent numbers of *Nature*. Professor Wallace, in a review of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* which appeared in *The Academy*, takes exception to certain passages in the chapters on Animism, or the Doctrine of Souls, and says—"we find at times great looseness of statement when Mr. Tylor attempts to account off hand for superstitions." He alludes to the correspondence of testimony as to occurrences taking place at séances, and impugns Mr. Tylor's logic, that whereas something closely related to spiritualistic facts is recorded by classical writers, and occurs now among savage tribes, therefore it is only a "survival of old beliefs," and unworthy of serious attention. Mr. Wallace reminds him that possibly "the uniformity of belief may be due to an uniformity of the underlying facts," and instances the reception Mesmerism and the evidence for the antiquity of man, met with twenty years ago, these being treated just as Mr. Tylor now treats what he calls superstitions; it is therefore, he argues, "unsafe to deny facts which have been vouched for by men of reputation after careful inquiry, merely because they are opposed to our prepossessions."

Mr. Tylor replies in *Nature*, February 29, and suggests as several having a superficial knowledge of the subject have done here, that magnetic or mesmeric influence—to which Professor Wallace had alluded—exercised by the mediums, would account for the correspondence of testimony, and asks was any magnetiser present when Mrs. Guppy made her aërostatic entrance? Is Mr. Home a magnetiser? He concludes by saying that as Mr. Wallace is the most eminent scientific man, who has taken up what are known as modern spiritualistic doctrines, he no doubt has the ear of all who hold them. "I think it may bring about investigation leading to valuable results if Mr. Wallace will inform Spiritualists with the weight of his authority, that he believed in the existence of a class of men who, in his own words, have exceptional power of acting upon certain sensitive individuals, and making them, when so acted upon, believe they see what the mesmeriser pleases, and who use this power for bad purposes"—or plainly that in the presence of mediums the phenomena are all subjective.

Professor Wallace replies—"Five and twenty years ago I was myself a practised mesmeriser, and was able to produce on my own patients almost the whole range

of phenomena which are exhibited in public as mesmeric or electro biological. During the last seven I have had repeated opportunities of examining the phenomena that occur in the presence of so-called mediums, often under such favorable conditions as to render trick or imposition simply impossible. I believe, therefore, I may lay claim to some qualifications for comparing the mesmeric with mediumistic phenomena.

1stly.—The mesmeric patient never has doubts of the reality of what he sees or hears; he is like a dreamer, he has lost his memory. The assistants at the séance of Mr. Home and Mrs. Guppy are not in this state, as I can personally testify, and as the suspicion with which the phenomena are regarded demonstrate. 2ndly.—The mesmeriser has the power of acting on certain sensitive individuals, not on assemblies of people; and all experience shows that the proportion of sensitives is small, and that they require previous manipulations. There is no such limit to the number of persons who simultaneously see the mediumistic phenomena. The two classes of phenomena, therefore, differ fundamentally. It is the mediums, not the assistants, who are sensitives. Mediums are almost always mesmeric subjects. The idea that it is necessary for me to inform Spiritualists that I believe in the power of mesmerists to make their patients believe what they please, and that this information might bring about investigations leading to valuable results is really amusing, considering that such investigations took place twenty years ago, and led to the most important result that almost all the most experienced mesmerists, Professor Gregory, Dr. Elliotson, Reichenbach, and many others, became Spiritualists. If Mr. Tylor's suggestion has any value they are the very men who ought to have demonstrated the subjective nature of mediumistic phenomena; but on the contrary, as soon as they had the opportunity of personally investigating these, they all of them saw and admitted their objective reality." It will be interesting to notice how the scribblers of the press, who write about Spiritualism, being "played out," will account for this opinion publicly expressed by one of the greatest naturalists of the day. They will supply their lack of argument, doubtless, by attacking his judgment; they will reflect on his private character; they will call him names! It will be seen that the Spiritualists of Victoria are in good company, and, having reason and truth on their side, they can afford to despise the sneers of the sciolist, the denunciations of the interested, and the oburgations of the superstitious.

W. L. R.

A NEW SPIRITUAL WORK.

We beg to draw the attention of our readers to a volume that will shortly be published, viz: "*AFFINITY*," (A Revelation from the Spirit-world); written impressionally, by William Bowley.

REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE NO. 2 LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY, ON SPIRITUALISM.

(Concluded.)

- (b.) The phraseology of communications was mostly succinct, redundant words or terms being seldom, if ever, employed.
- (c.) We seldom had superfluous or meaningless raps, the rapping that took place conveying either original communications or answers to our questions.
- (d.) In order as it were to minimise the power or force referred to, the presumed intelligences sometimes preferred to give concise answers, rather than to make sustained communications. For instance, we once asked, somewhat persistently, for an original communication and received such words as "will answer any question;" the same being a compliance with our request, clothed, however, in the form of a reply.

32.—That from such observation of the phenomena, we have occasionally found it desirable as a condition to success, not to stimulate or over-tax the rapping;

while at other times no such precautions appeared to be necessary or were taken.

33.—That from Good Friday, in March, 1869, until the end of the following month of May, the manifestations presented themselves under the conditions assumed to be such throughout this Report at our various meetings, with but few instances of failure.

34.—That during the following months of June and July, we continued our meetings as before; but notwithstanding that we duly observed all the conditions assumed to be necessary, and that the two ladies of our party were present, manifestations took place upon two occasions only, and then of a subdued and apparently weakened character.

35.—That failures and successes alike took place, under the same average condition of health, of weather, and of temperature.

35.—That from August, 1869, to February, 1870, inclusive, your Sub-committee held no meetings and witnessed no phenomena, but that on March, 7th, 1870, the raps returned spontaneously, whilst two members of your Sub-committee and their wives were playing at whist, a third lady (a stranger to the phenomena) being present. At the conclusion of the rubber a *séance* was arranged, when a few questions were answered by the presumed spirit, but no original communications were made.

37.—That, as bearing upon the subject of conditions, we ought, perhaps, to state that a domestic event of what is generally termed an interesting nature, took place with respect to one of the ladies of our party in the month of February, 1870, inasmuch as this may possibly afford some clue to the failure of the manifestations during and after the previous month of June.

38.—As further illustrating the foregoing statements, your Committee think it advisable to give a short history of what took place at certain of their sittings, names, however, being for obvious reasons omitted or altered, and the terms "spirit" or "intelligence" being used for the sake of brevity to signify the power or force through which the various phenomena were produced. Our first sitting took place on the evening of Good Friday, in 1869, there being six persons, present, three of whom were members of the committee. After a time, the table at which we had seated ourselves (and which, we had, as a preliminary formality, carefully examined) began to move, at first slowly, but afterwards more quickly. During a pause one of the party exclaimed, "What singular things the raps must be!" immediately upon which we heard as if in response, two or three faint, but perfectly audible sounds, like the ticking of a clock, proceed from the centre of the table. The question was at once asked, "Was a spirit present?" Three raps. "Did three raps mean 'yes'?" Several raps, as if in acquiescence. "If the spirit meant to communicate with us, should three raps mean 'yes,' two 'doubtful,' and one no," "Yes." "Would the spirit tell us his name through the alphabet?" "Yes." The preliminaries being thus settled, one of us was asked to speak aloud the letters. He did so. "A, B, C," up to "W," with which latter letter came one of the promised raps. The next letter was A, then L, and so on, until the word "Walter" had been given. "Has the spirit any other name?" was asked. "Will it tell us what it is?" "Yes." The same method which had produced the name "Walter" now gave us the surname of a gentleman present. "Is the spirit in any way related to Mr A —?" we inquired. "Yes," "Will it state in what degree?" "Yes," More alphabet work, letter by letter, and the result, "Infant grand." "Infant grandfather?" somebody suggested. The ludicrousness of the suggestion caused us to laugh, in which the spirit appeared to join by a number of raps of different degrees of intensity. On again with the alphabet to the completion of the sentence. "Infant grand-uncle." Several questions having been answered by this spirit, we asked it for an original communication. The raps continuing, we expected the letters now taken down would form the message we were to re-

ceive, but, instead of such being the case, the words given were, "a new spirit," and it transpired from what subsequently took place, that a new intelligence was in communication with us. The spirit also answered a number of questions as to its name, and the time when it was in flesh, &c., as, in fact, did also other spirits upon subsequent occasions; but as these replies partook more or less of the same character, and did not present anything peculiarly worthy of note, we have thought it better to confine our Report to a short statement of what took place at certain of our sittings where the most marked manifestations occurred, merely observing for your information, that at the sittings in question not less than two of your Committee were present with their wives, and that the whole party never consisted of less than five, or more than seven persons.

39.—At one of our sittings, organized without premeditation, at the close of a musical evening, on the 7th May, 1869, a spirit came, who in reply to our enquiry stated his name was Henry. As a lady present had lost a relative of that name, she became impressed with the idea that it was his spirit who had visited us, and this so affected her that we found it necessary to bring the sitting to a close. Two days afterward we held a sitting in the dining-room of a member of the Dialectical Society, the party consisting of five persons. For a considerable time no manifestations took place, and we were about to break up the *séance* when two or three peculiarly sharp raps from the centre of the table induced us to continue the sitting. Upon this occasion our hostess was seated in her usual place at the head of the table, having her husband on her right, a lady and gentlemen on her left and a gentlemen opposite to her. The latter gentleman, therefore, occupied the position usually filled by the host at the foot of the table. The raps being heard a question was asked whether the conditions were satisfactory. "No." "Does the spirit wish either of the party to change places?" "Yes." "Perhaps the spirit will state who is to move?" "Yes." The gentleman at the foot of the table, who had been appointed director of this *séance*, now named and pointed at each person present in turn, commencing with his right-hand neighbour. A single rap was given at each name until the host's turn had arrived, when three raps were heard, and ultimately (acting under instructions from the spirit) the host and the gentleman at the foot of the table changed places, an arrangement which at once placed the former in the position he, as master of the house, ordinarily occupied. The effect this alteration had upon the conditions was at once apparent; the raps which had been remarkably clear and decided before, becoming now louder and vibrative, sounding as if the table, an ordinary dining one, had been struck with a small hammer. "Will the spirit tell us its name?" "Yes — H E N R Y." When this name was given, we at once assumed that the spirit which had visited us on the occasion mentioned before had come to us again, and as the lady who caused the *séance* to be broken up then was present now, we feared lest this sitting also might be abruptly terminated. This, however, did not turn out to be the case. All parties remained quiescent, and the spirit was asked to give the surname it had been known by on earth. It did so — "K —." We had all expected that the spirit would have announced itself as the relative of the lady referred to, but it did not do so, the name given being that of a step-brother of our hostess who had died abroad fourteen years previously. This spirit replied in the usual manner to questions put to it by the director (who had never before heard of the existence of Henry K —) stating truly the name of the place and the year in which it had left the flesh, such replies being given sharply and unhesitatingly as if for the purpose of identification. It then, as if satisfied that it had done all that could be required in that direction, persistently declined to answer any more questions, but intimated that it had a communication to make. This communication carefully noted and taken down, letter by letter, was as follows:—"I

love dear M—— (the christian name of our hostess) very much, although I ne." At this point our hostess, remembering, as she informed us, that her brother had been an irregular correspondent, suggested "never wrote." "No." "Perhaps the spirit will proceed," said the director. "Having 'ne' of the last word, we shall be glad to receive the next letter." The interrupted sentence was resumed—"glected her when I was"—"Alive?" somebody suggested. "No." "Living?" "No." A rap clear and distinct, and strangely suggestive of annoyance being experienced at the interruption of his communication. The director repeated the sentence as far as it had gone, and it was at once continued by the raps—"on earth. She ought to have had a L."—"A letter," suggested the hostess, her mind evidently dwelling on her brother's shortcomings as a correspondent. "No." The next letter rapped at was "L." "We have already L" said the director. "The sentence as I have it is, 'I love dear M—— very much, although I neglected her when I was on earth; she ought to have a L.'" This interruption produced a series of sharp and petulant raps from the spirit, as if it were calling the speaker to order. "Then the spirit means double 'L,' and the sentence runs, 'she ought to have had all.'" "My property" was next spelt out. "It was money. X—my executor has it." It can be understood that a message of this personal nature thus communicated surprised all present, the hostess in particular, who became agitated, but without losing her presence of mind. While the name (a peculiar one) of the executor was being rapped out in a clear decisive manner, letter by letter, she evidently strove to recal it to her memory, and in so doing hit upon one or two names similar to, but not quite the same as the name given by the spirit, and which latter name transpired, upon reference to certain letters in the possession of the hostess, to be the correct one. The following conversation then took place with the spirit, the host himself putting the questions:—"Why have you made this communication to us?" "As a proof of spiritual existence, and a token of my love to M——." "Do you wish any steps to be taken to recover the money?" "No; money does not give happiness." "Are you angry with X— for what he has done?" "Animosity does not exist in spiritland." The spirit intimated to us that he was about to depart, and bade us good night in the usual manner, by a series of raps, loud at first, and gradually dying away as if into the distance. Your Committee have since ascertained that Henry K— resided abroad at the place named to us, several years previously to his death, and that shortly after that event happened, Mr. X—, his executor, wrote to the trustees of certain funded property in England forming part of the estate of the deceased, requesting them to send him a portion thereof to enable him to pay certain liabilities, and authorizing them to pay the balance to our hostess (then Miss—) who was the residuary legatee, and who received the same but nothing beyond; the statements of Mr. X— upon the subject of the liabilities referred to passing unchallenged, and no account whatever having been rendered by him of his executorship. Such being the facts of the case, your Committee inquired whether any doubts had arisen in the minds of the lady or her husband as to the trustworthiness of Mr. X—; but they have been informed that so far from having any suspicion upon the subject, the lady was at the time so impressed with the honourable conduct of the gentlemen referred to (whom, it appears, she never saw, and from whom she has not heard since), that she transmitted to him when the matter was settled a sum of money (above £50) wherewith to purchase on her behalf some acceptable article as a present from her to his wife and family. We are also assured by the host that when he first became acquainted with his wife, and she occasionally spoke of Mr. X—, she always did so with great respect, and that nothing whatever had transpired down to the time of the *séance* to cause her to alter her opinion; that with regard to himself he had been perfectly passive upon the subject throughout, and had long

since forgotten the fact that such a person as Mr. X— had been in existence; that he had never, in any way, troubled himself about or investigated the position of his wife under her brother's will, the deceased having lived and died on the other side of the globe, and the whole matter having been entirely closed some considerable time previous to the marriage; and it was only since the communication in question had been made that he had perused certain letters which were in his wife's possession, and which had not been looked at for many years, and ascertained from them the facts as stated.

40.—At another *séance* held in the evening of the 2nd July last, six persons were present, four of whom were members of your Committee. During a considerable period no manifestation of any phenomena took place, and it was only after a long interval, and when one of the party had left, that some raps came of a character different to any we had previously heard. We several times asked this spirit whether it would tell us its name, and received in reply two dull thuds from the table, and it was only after much perseverance that we at last obtained an affirmative answer, followed up by heavy lumpish raps at the following letters. "J E M C L A R K E." "Would Jem Clarke tell us why he has visited us?", we asked. "No." "Would he make any communication to us?" "No." "Would he answer any questions?" "Doubtful." We were discussing the question we, should next put, when the lady in whose house we were assembled, exclaimed "Clarke! Clarke! why that is the name of my housemaid, who is about to leave me. Perhaps the spirit is some relative of hers." Three thuds from the table. "Have you come to see her?" "Yes." "She appears unhappy. Do you know why she is going away?" No response. "Are you her guardian spirit?" "Yes." "Perhaps an ancestor of hers?" Three more thuds given as with difficulty, and Mr. James Clarke had evidently left us.

41.—Before concluding this our report, we deem it to be right to state for your information that when we commenced our investigation your Committee consisted of three members only, all of whom were totally unacquainted with the phenomena except by rumor, and that a fourth member was subsequently added who had had a previous acquaintance with the subject, but who did not join our party until the last of our successful meetings in May.

In our next issue we shall publish abstracts of some of the lectures recently delivered in Melbourne by Mr. Tyerman.

THE CONVERSAZIONE AT THE TURN VEREIN HALL.

THE soiree in connection with the half-yearly meeting of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists was held in the Turn Verein Hall, Latrobe Street, on the evening of the 24th. About three hundred persons attended, the most of whom were present at tea. The hall was tastefully decorated with flowers, evergreens, and flags, and wore a very pleasant appearance. We noticed several nice bouquets on the president's table. Three long tables stretched the entire length of the hall, on which the good things, provided by the Ladies' Committee, were placed in abundance. At half-past six o'clock the proceedings commenced in good earnest, the tables being quite filled. When the tables had been removed, the PRESIDENT of the association (Mr. John Ross), addressed the meeting. He apologised for any delays that occurred during the tea, as the committee had not prepared for such an extensive gathering, and this afforded him the opportunity to congratulate the members of the Association on the highly successful issue to which the experiment had been brought. The unanimity of feeling that prevailed was most praiseworthy, and he attributed it to the sympathy that exists for free thought. Of the many meetings held that day, this was the most significant—it was unmistakably a sign of the times. After allusion to the importance of the education question, and the unjustness of harshly treating those who, for want of a

proper knowledge, had allowed their evil passions the mastery; he urged increased perseverance with the great movements of social and scientific societies; he heartily congratulated the association. To the ladies he would tender much praise, as he considered no small amount of the success was due to their exertions.

The SECRETARY (Mr. Manns) read the report for the past half-year:—

HALF-YEARLY REPORT OF THE VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Your committee have the honor to present to the members of this Association their report for the past six months, and in doing so feel gratified in being able to announce considerable progress during that time. The number of members on the books at the present are over one hundred.

In reviewing this brief period the committee have reason to believe that the change from the Masonic Hall to the present place of meeting has, on the whole, been attended with beneficial results, for since the meetings have been held here the average attendance has largely increased. Although the hall is not so convenient to those who come by train, it is more central for a large portion of the attendants who reside in the northern suburbs. Efforts have, however, since been made to secure St. George's Hall to hold the Sunday meetings in, but the step has not been decided upon.

The action of the committee in engaging Mr. Tyerman for a period of six months they feel sure is an important one, but they hope that results will fully justify them in having taken such a step.

They would, however, wish it to be distinctly understood that they do not desire to monopolize that gentleman's services unless the members of the Association wish it, for your committee think it would be productive of much more good to the cause generally for him to lecture occasionally in other places, and in this one, by varying the speakers from time to time.

The committee appointed to secure the services of Mr. Peebles, from America, for a short time, report that money to the amount of £75 was forwarded to him by the April mail, and that his arrival may be looked for in the ensuing spring.

Your committee desire also to call attention to the working of the voluntary system, which has been in operation for six months.

The Treasurer's report will also be put before you, which will place you in possession of the results, by which they hope you will be able to express an opinion as to whether it is advisable to continue that system, or substitute another by which more funds for the working of the association shall be raised.

Your committee also desire you to express an opinion as to the advisability of holding quarterly meetings of the association, when questions of importance connected with the association may be discussed by the members, instead of leaving it entirely in the hands of the committee.

The TREASURER (Mr. Terry) then gave the heads of various expenditures and receipts for the past half-year, from which it appeared that there was a balance in favor of the association of £18 5s. 7d.

Mr. McLean, PRESIDENT of the Stawell Association, expressed great pleasure in meeting so large an assemblage, and assured his hearers that such meetings must inevitably be attended with good results; he urged the frequency of such gatherings. Speaking of free religion he believed that the Infinite Father and Author of Nature had not rested the work on any single individual, but to the whole brotherhood of humanity belonged the right of development and progress; he saw a bright future beyond the dark clouds of religious dissatisfaction that at present existed. The Stawell Association, he said, was in a very promising condition, they had two hundred members and were building a Hall that would cost £500. Many circles existed in and around Stawell, as also at Castlemaine, Sandhurst, and the Western district. Many prejudiced opponents of Spiritualism have been convinced of its reality, and he frankly admitted that at the commencement of his inquiries he was a steadfast opponent to what he thought a heresy, but came out thoroughly convinced of its truthfulness. After some further remarks on the great strides free thought was making, he concluded by expres-

sing his gratification at meeting such a large number of sympathisers with the cause.

Mr. TYERMAN congratulated the members of the Association on their success, and referred to the gratifying facts Mr. McLean had given them in reference to the Stawell Association. They occupy the same ground as ourselves—in fact they are identical—having braved the position such enunciation of religious views bring with it. Spiritualism, wherever it appears naturally provokes opposition, and painful prejudices exist against not only Spiritualism itself, but against Spiritualists. The best way to combat such prejudices was to have meetings such as this, often, that people may see what Spiritualists really are and learn what Spiritualism is. People are too often told what it is not, and he regretted that so much malicious representation was made on the subject. To those, not members of the Association, attending this evening, he would give an outline of what Spiritualism was. The generality of the public know little of what Spiritualism is. What is seen at seances—such as table-turning, planchette writing, &c., &c., is considered the first and last of Spiritualism. The phenomenal is explained, not the philosophy. Philosophy and religion are combined in Spiritualism, and these two will blend in the future to an extent never yet dreamt of. Spiritualists hold that communion with the so-called dead is possible and rational; they differ from the churches on many important points, such as the trinity and atonement. Could there be a more momentous question than the future state? it is indeed a profound question, that affects us in many ways. We often think of departed friends, what has become of them, whether they lie rotting in the grave or whether they live in another sphere, we also will soon pass away; do we die in reality? do we resolve ourselves into the primary elements? or do we take a conscientious being in another world. Society has no answer for these questions; even those believing in the immortality of the soul differ much as to the condition of the future existence. Spiritualism alone satisfactorily answers the question; he did not take upon himself to say the belief was modern, it was ancient as regards the essential principle; he considered we were indebted to Spiritualism for the only reasonable evidence of the immortality of the soul. Certain manifestations of a spiritual character have undeniably proved that spirits have communed with those yet in the flesh—lifted the veil, and permitted a glimpse of the summer-land.

There were two divisions in the ranks of orthodoxy—the division of the saints and the division of the hellish. They recognized some power which will arbitrarily consign one portion of humanity to one place and others to another. Now Spiritualism teaches that precisely as a man leaves this state so he enters the other; it denies the existence of a hell, and the theory of every continuing torment, or of any punishment as everlasting. God our Father has given us certain immutable laws, which we shall use as a stepping stone to a career of progress endless in duration. The influence of spirit teaching is beneficial to society. The rationalistic and ritualistic movements, are signs of the times, two forces on foot each working for itself; it showed the public spirit exhibiting itself—too liberal—too progressive; and one section of orthodoxy sought a safety in returning to dogmas of the Church of Rome, where the right of judgment is denied, and where the people are not allowed to think for themselves.

Votes of thanks to the President, the Ladies' committee, and those kindly assisting in the entertainment, were carried amidst great applause.

Several choruses were very creditably performed, the proceedings throughout being interspersed with music. The programme was concluded about ten o'clock. A few of the members of the Association availed themselves of the opportunity to get up a quadrille party, and having procured the services of an efficient band and M.C., a large number of the audience remained and participated in the dance, which was kept up till a little after midnight.

Thus ended the first soirée in connection with this Association; and we unhesitatingly affirm it to be one of the most enjoyable and successful gatherings that has taken place under spiritual auspices in the colony.

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