

THE

Harbinger of Light.

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DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREETHOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

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



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WITH the lamp of Spiritualism in our hand, we can explore some of the most mysterious recesses of the human mind, and light up many otherwise inscrutable incidents in the lives of men and women in bygone ages, as recorded in their biographies. Take, for example, the phenomenon known as ecstasy, which is admittedly as old as the race of man himself ; so far, that is to say, as we possess any authentic records of it. According to the scientific definition of the word, it means a suspension of the physical senses, during which the soul or spirit sees, hears, and feels, through avenues of perception and sensation quite other than the organs by which it is ordinarily brought into communication with the external world. The priestesses of Apollo were ecstatic, and in that condition they described distant and foretold future events. Plotinus, the founder of the School of Alexandria, speaks of having fallen into an ecstasy three times, and in that state, he says, individuality, time, space, and memory all vanished. Paul was an ecstatic. So was Francis of Assisi ; and so was the Spanish nun, Theresa, who was canonised by the Church of Rome. When in that condition which she calls *el vuelo del espíritu*, or flight of the spirit, she describes herself as having been taught without the medium of words, and familiarised with mysteries which long years of search could not even have surmised. She likens the privilege she enjoyed to an ability to read without having learned letters, or to the obtaining of nutriment from food without eating it. In this state of ecstasy her body was frequently lifted into the air in presence of others ; as was also that of Maria d'Agreda, times out of number, and was seen to be "poised upon nothing." Similar phenomena are recorded of Dominic, of Jesu Maria ; and

Görres, in his *Die Christliche Mystik*, mentions several apparently well-authenticated instances of what is now known as levitation among persons who had given themselves up to a life of meditation and self-denial. Francis de Sales was also no stranger to the condition of ecstasy.

Joan of Arc was an ecstatic ; and so was Isabeau Vincent, one of the persecuted Protestants in the Cevennes ; who used to fall into so deep a lethargy that she could not be wakened out of it. "You might call to her," writes M. Figuier, in his *Histoire du Merveilleux*, "push her, shake her, pinch her, even burn her, without arousing her from that state of sleep. But while appearing to be wrapt in slumber, she could sing psalms with a clear and intelligible voice. The movements of her lips were moderate, exempt from spasms, and her gestures seemly and becoming. After having sung, she would improvise prayers, repeat long passages from the Bible, comment on the Holy Scriptures, and deliver sermons full of power. . . . On coming out of this access, the prophetess remembered nothing whatever of what had taken place, nor of what she had said. She even maintained that she had slept well, although she spoke sometimes for three, four, and five hours at a stretch."

The religionists of that period devised two explanations of these ecstatic phenomena. If they occurred inside the pale of the Church of Rome, they were to be interpreted as signs of Divine interposition, and marks of Divine power. If they were witnessed among "heretics," they originated with the devil, and the ecstatic was "obsessed by an evil spirit." On the other hand, the medical faculty, and materialists generally, solved the question by attributing these abnormal manifestations to hysteria, epilepsy, catalepsy, mental derangement, spasms, etc., etc. ; although how either or all of these could succeed in lifting a person into the air and maintaining him or her in that position, none of these wiseacres condescended to explain. It is one of the disingenuous devices of the pseudo-scientific to ignore facts which refuse to fit in with their theories ; or else to flatly deny the actuality of the facts themselves.

In our own days, the phenomena of mediumship have proved to be identical with those of the ecstatics of former ages. The priestesses of Delphos, and the so-

called "saints" of the Romish Church, were simply mediums who passed into a condition of trance without human agency, and were then brought into communication with the spirit-world from whence they obtained that spiritual knowledge and enlightenment which the Greeks acknowledged to have emanated from "the gods," and the Christians regarded as coming from the celestial hierarchy.

It is one of the most impressive circumstances of the times we live in—times pregnant with changes of momentous importance to the human race, times fruitful of events which appear to prelude the dawn of a new era for the world—that the gift of mediumship is becoming more and more widely distributed in all civilised countries, and that a belief in spirit return, and in spirit communications, is spreading in all directions with unexampled rapidity. This being so, and numbers of persons to whom the phenomena are entirely new, being now brought into circles, or holding private sittings with mediums, a few words of counsel on the subject, from a wise adviser in the higher life, may not be inopportunistically offered at the present moment. What follows was spontaneously given, on the 10th of February, by a spirit purporting to be that of John Henry Newman. But the advice may be allowed to rest on its own intrinsic merits, without owing anything to the prestige of a great name.

"The question arises," observed the speaker, "as to what extent mortals are justified in following spiritual guidance. Spirits are very apt to offer monitions and recommendations, especially when these are sought in reference to the affairs of human life. But no one should relinquish his own individuality and accept the unquestioned guidance of any spirit. For bad, indeed, would the result be very frequently; because it will often happen that the advisers are in no way qualified to see further, or to counsel more discreetly than the persons whom they undertake to guide. They may speak honestly and mean well, so far as their limited knowledge extends, but it is only limited; and they are unqualified to lay down general or particular rules of action. God intends every child of His to use his own reasoning faculties, and to work out his own salvation, even if it be with fear and trembling; although, in the case of a true believer, whose trust is in the Father's never-resting care and love, there is no room for either fear or trembling. And with regard to the general actions of a man's life, the responsibility of ordering them rests upon the shoulders of the individual. But, with respect to the spirits who come to you from the higher planes—from the spheres of Wisdom and of Love, and who are animated by a pure desire and simple intention to assist and instruct you, the case is different. Their counsel and admonitions must rest upon their own merits. Their love and power manifest themselves in a practical form, and with such convincing force as to command the soul's acquiescence and assent. In following their guidance, and in accepting their rebuke—should occasion arise—you cannot very well deviate from the path that leads to the higher life of purity, obedience, truth and spiritual progress. Your spirit will respond to the impulse of their spiritual thought; will acknowledge the justice of

their reproof; and will be conscious of the wisdom of their advice. Therefore it will be wise and well to listen to such heavenly counsellors, for they come in answer to the soul's earnest and sincere prayer; and as these angels are part of God's thought, and work in fulfilment of His plans, they possess and exercise gifts immeasurably superior to anything to be found in the human intellect; and the instruction they impart and the counsel they offer, emanating as they do from pure, lofty, and noble intelligences, is very valuable and worthy of all trust and acceptance."

OUR FOREIGN EXCHANGES.

THE *Revista Espiritista de la Habana*, for August, contains a portrait and memoir of the late Don Manuel Gonzalez Soriano, the talented author of *El Espiritismo es la Filosofia*, who is legitimately the Marquis de Monte; but his democratic sentiments prevented him from adopting the title. In the face of incessant persecution, he promulgated and defended the principles of Spiritualism in priest-ridden Spain; and he has left behind him the record of a life of usefulness and an honoured name.

Among other interesting articles in the current number of this Review, is a very full report of conversations held between the materialised spirit of Lieut. Cesare Podesti and Alessandro Fiezza, a writing medium, at the house of Signor Constantino Ceci, Naples. It is furnished by Signor G. Palazzi, a prominent Spiritualist in that city, and gives many particulars with respect to the objectivity of everything that is apprehensible by the spiritual senses in the other world. "All is fluidic," said Podesti, "that is to say, fluidic for you; compact and tangible for us."

The October number of the *Revista de Estudios Psicologicos*, (Barcelona), publishes an admirable discourse delivered by Dr. Sanz Benito, in the Retiro Theatre, at Tarrasa. It was a luminous exposition of Spiritualism as a philosophy, as a system of ethics, and a synthesis of the most important principles and discoveries of science. As such, he observed, it is eminently worthy of being studied; opening, as it does, new horizons to the human intellect; and offering the sweetest consolations to us in the hour of our bereavement; because it proves to us that there is no death.

La Irradiacion (Madrid), of the 16th of October, shows us the portrait and sketches the life of Mr. N. F. Ravlin, a valiant soldier, who is fighting bravely under the banner of Truth. A native of Essex county, in the State of New York, where he was born in 1831, he became a minister of the Gospel at the age of 22, and preached in Chicago, where he was immensely popular, for fourteen years. From thence he proceeded to San Jose, in California, where he filled a pulpit; and there, as elsewhere, he distinguished himself by his bitter hostility to Spiritualism. One day, however, he chanced to visit the house of Dr. Schlesinger, a Spiritualist and medium, and was spoken to by the spirits of his father and mother under circumstances which rendered their identity indisputable. After prolonged and severe investigations, he became convinced of the reality of spirit-return, and publicly proclaimed his convictions. It exposed him to social and religious ostracism by the denomination to which he belonged; but he has disregarded this, and having returned to the Eastern States, he is now one of the most earnest and eloquent exponents and defenders of Spiritualism.

Our files of the *Constancia* (Buenos Aires), come down to the 8th of October, and it is a gratifying proof of the strength of the movement in the Argentine Republic, that a paper containing eight folio pages is issued every week; seems never at a loss for matter; and can boast of a really brilliant staff of contributors.

In the last number, we meet with an excellent memoir of Dr. Ercole Chiaia, who introduced Spiritualism into

Naples, and was the means of bringing into prominent notice the wonderful mediumistic powers of Eusapia Paladino. Singular to relate, Chiaia was for years a furious materialist and an uncompromising enemy to Spiritualism. By chance he was brought into contact with a medium, and obtained phenomena which aroused his attention and piqued his curiosity. Still he regarded them as the result of trickery or delusion. But applying himself to other scientific investigations, conviction followed, as it always does; and he is now one of the most indefatigable propagandists of the truth in Italy.

The *Revista Espiritista* (Mendoza, Argentine Republic) publishes some of the best of the articles which appear in foreign periodicals devoted to the good cause; and as it is issued gratuitously, it must be doing valuable missionary work in that part of South America.

La Nueva Alianza (Cienfuegos, Cuba), also consists of well selected papers from similar sources, and is freely distributed by the body of which it is the recognised organ. The September number records the disincarnation of Dr. Bonet, of Sagua la Grande, equally distinguished as a physician, a spiritualist, and a philanthropist. We trust the day is not far distant when the two latter will be, as they ought to be, convertible terms.

A contributor to the *Revue Spirite* (Paris), who has just returned from a visit to the United States, furnishes our contemporary with some extremely interesting notes of what he saw and heard there in connection with Spiritualism. In New York he met Dr. Gibier, Director of the Pasteur Institute in that city, and well known on account of his great scientific attainments. Conversing together on the subject of materialisations, the Doctor frankly remarked, "I am compelled to admit the fact." He had a cage constructed and securely immured the medium within it. There issued from it materialised forms on several occasions. "Therefore," said he, "the fact exists beyond all possibility of doubt."

Mr. Henry Newton, an American gentleman, who is president of the first Society of Spiritualists in New York, had two cages constructed, one of timber securely screwed together, and the other, enclosing it, of iron rods, fastened by two padlocks, of which different persons held the keys. He also obtained the presence of a detective; and forms issued from these cages into the room.

At the house of Mrs. E. Williams, a wealthy lady residing in one of the best quarters of New York, the French visitor saw many spirits materialise, and among others that of Henry Ward Beecher, the famous preacher, who approached an old friend of his, General Parsons, who happened to be present, asked that the gas might be turned on more strongly, so as to facilitate his identification, and when standing not more than a couple of paces from the narrator of the incident, spoke these words: "As I have come back, so in like manner every person can return, for there is no death." As the form slowly faded away, sinking towards the floor, the sound of his voice seemed to descend also, and the last word was uttered while nothing but his head remained visible.

Called into the cabinet, which was simply one corner of the room curtained off, this French gentleman found himself confronted by the spirit of General Boulanger, to whom he addressed himself in his own language, and obtained a reply, but the apparition rapidly resolved itself into air.

In Cleveland, and also at Minneapolis, similar manifestations were witnessed by the visitor, who is an artist by profession, and he took care to satisfy himself that there was no fraud or trickery involved. Once he was so near the forms which materialised, that he could witness the whole process. A slightly luminous and inodorous column of light vapour was first observed as if rising from the floor, and this vapour assumed a rotatory and ascensive motion. When it had reached the average height of a man, a human head instantaneously

developed itself, the lips moved, and words were uttered, corresponding with their movements and with those of the head.

On another occasion two forms were simultaneously materialised. At Minneapolis, our authority saw and recognised a friend who had died only a few months before in Spain, and had been a Spiritualist. The writer promises a continuation of this striking narrative of his American experiences.

M. A. Perrier, of Petit-Quevilly, near Rouen, contributes to the *Phare de Normandie*, published in that city, an account of how the spirit of a certain Mlle. F. Lejad wrote through the hand of a medium a reminder that his wife had promised to erect a small stone cross above her grave, and that the absence of this memorial was a source of great grief to her mother who was still in the flesh. Mme. Perrier had entirely forgotten having made the promise thus recalled to mind in so singular a manner, and naturally lost no time in fulfilling it, and in thus solacing the mind of the old lady. The incident furnishes another illustration of the watchful affection for us still entertained by those who have passed into the other world.

SKETCHES OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGION.

By DR. A. MUELLER.

JESUS CHRIST.

NEVER, perhaps, since man had risen above the animal plane and known the name of religion, had the religious horizon of humanity been as gloomy and overcast as during the time of Rome's greatest splendour under the emperors.

From the very commencement of Roman history, the clouds had been gathering ominously, and like a thick, black pall, intercepting every ray of celestial light, they were now hanging over the vast empire.

In the old religions, merely external, ceremonial worship had displaced the worship of the heart; and even among the Jews, the scribes and pharisees had become the leaders of religious thought, and did their best to smother genuine aspiration with empty ritual and formalism.

It was one of those critical transition periods in the religious evolution of humanity, in which this evolution appears to be not only arrested but actually to become retrogressive, with a fatal tendency to revert to lower and past phases of development. If at such times man were left to himself to work out his own salvation, small indeed would be his chance to arrest the downward course. But, fortunately, when the need is greatest, the help of God is nearest. Even our little dark planet, a mere speck among the galaxy of His worlds, is not without its angel guardians, and it is the best proof we could have of their guiding and directing the spiritual evolution of the human race, that a special "outpouring of the spirit," a special revelation of Divine truth is vouchsafed to us at those critical periods when man has ceased to turn his face to heaven, and is lost entirely in selfish pursuits of the earth. How clearly likewise do we perceive the action and power of spirit in those mighty effects produced by what appear at the outset altogether inadequate causes!

When the great Augustus occupied the throne of the Cæsars, surrounded by his victorious legions, with most of the world then known under his sway, in distant Galilee, at the small village of Nazareth, a mightier empire than that of Augustus was inaugurated by the spirit-world, and an event brought about destined to dispel the gloom then hanging over the world, and change the whole course of religious history.

This event was the birth of Christ, in whom religious truth found an exponent as it never had one before, and in whose teaching and person (though not by his death), the great at-one-ment of God and man, the union of the Divine and the human was revealed and brought to light.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, had no doubt been especially chosen, and from the fact that the choice which

had fallen on her was announced to her by one of the angel-band who was charged with this mission of Divine mercy to man, we may assume that both mother and child, yet unborn, remained under their special care, and that the child more especially was carefully guarded against all those injurious prenatal influences so often, alas, marring the development of that Divine spark, a human soul, even more so perhaps than that of the body it builds around itself. How far spirit-influence can mould and shape the future character of the individual by being brought to bear on the child yet in the womb, we have no means of knowing, but analogy at least justifies us to believe that this influence can be exerted, and that Jesus received much of it. Thus only can the almost superhuman spirituality of character and impressionable receptivity to truth of this, the greatest religious genius of all times, be explained. As the clear, unruffled surface of a mountain sea faithfully reflects the images presented to it, so Christ received the teaching of his exalted guides, made it his own, and gave it, pure and faultless, to the world. It is true that in some of his truths we recognise familiar faces that were presented to us by previous inspired poets and seers, but never were they presented as they were by Jesus, in one compact picture, so warm and so genial; never was the greatest of them all, showing all barriers between God and man to be but fancied ones, as clearly brought home to human understanding. They are truths for all times, ideals set before us, that can never be supplanted by higher ones, though with the increase of religious culture they will receive an ever deeper meaning, an ever more perfect interpretation. Considering the times in which they were revealed, they appear truly stupendous achievements of religious genius, and to attempt explaining them on any other theory than that of inspiration would be a waste of time.

We know but little of Christ's infancy and youth. Even of his birthplace the accounts are not very reliable. Apparently, he was brought up at Nazareth, under the care of his good and highly-intuitive mother. His reputed stay in Egypt in early childhood, if he was taken there at all, could in no way have influenced his religious development. In the village school and the synagogue he could not have received anything but the most commonplace Jewish ideas on religious subjects. They could not have taught him anything of the Vedic poets, of the great Laotse, of Zoroaster, Socrates and Plato, who alone had before him given expression to truths analogous to his and pointing to a common origin in the infinite source of all truth.

Guarded by angel care, even before his birth, Jesus was evidently prepared by it from his earliest childhood for the great work intended for him. His plastic mind was the recipient of Divine truth long before he had attained the age at which ordinary children are capable of any spiritual conceptions. Of the Evangelists, Luke is the only one from whom we get any information about the childhood of Jesus. After recording the prophecy of Simeon and Anna in the Temple of Jerusalem at the time of the young child's presentation, he relates the return of the family to Nazareth, where the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, "filled with wisdom and with the grace of God upon him."

Twelve years have elapsed, when we are once more introduced to Jesus, and again at Jerusalem, whither he had gone with his parents to the Feast of the Passover. On their return journey they missed him, and, thinking him lost, returned to the city; but for three days sought him in vain. At last they went to the temple, and here found him sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. On expostulating with him for leaving them his mother is alleged to have received an answer which, coming from a boy of twelve years, was certainly a remarkable one: "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Filial obedience, however, prevailed. "He went down with them and was subject unto them, but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart; and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." This little episode, fraught with deep meaning, gives us an insight into the early mental

condition and development of Jesus. Already, at the age of twelve years, he was intently bent on spiritual meditation and evidently under spiritual control, which led him into the temple, regardless of his parents, and caused him to remain in it for three days, solely occupied with what even then he already regarded as his Father's business.

That the eighteen years of his life of which we have no record at all were not spent in earthly pursuits, but solely devoted to his Father's business, appears almost a certainty, in view of the spiritual majesty with which he entered on his brilliant but short and tragic career as a public teacher. Jesus appears to have been strangely reticent towards his disciples on this period of his life, and still more so on every thing relating to spirit intercourse, for at the time of his transfiguration he enjoined strict silence on the three disciples who had witnessed it. But there can be no doubt that a great deal of this intercourse was crowded into these mysterious eighteen years, and herein we find the key to explain his exalted religious character. We may assume that he loved solitude and was fond of retiring from the distracting haunts of men to be alone with his God. This has ever been the disposition of those holy ones who were chosen to reveal high spiritual truths to man. The gospels record that he retired for forty days into the wilderness, and that in those days, as Luke writes, he ate nothing and afterwards hungered; whilst Matthew informs us that at such times the angels ministered unto him. But they do not inform us how often during the eighteen years of his probation such periods occurred nor in what the angel-ministry consisted. Judging from its results in Jesus, we may be sure that the forty days' retirement was not a solitary occurrence, and that the angel-ministry resulted with him in powerful spirit control and sublime inspiration, in visions of the spirit world, and those heavenly trances during which the spirit of Jesus was temporarily released from the body and conveyed by his guides to the higher spheres of the spirit world—his Father's house of many mansions, of which he spake so confidently in after years. If others were thus favoured—and we know that they were, even before him—have often been since, and are up to the present day, can we doubt for a moment that he to whom so great a mission was to be entrusted and who had from childhood been prepared for it did not receive these heavenly revelations in a measure proportionate to his worth? Unless we make him an idol, a God incarnate, we can explain his exalted character, his unprecedented religious genius, on no other grounds than that of the freest and most intimate intercourse with the spirit world. When finally his probation was ended and he was impelled in the pride of manhood to come forward and to give to others what had been so freely given to him, he was, to use the gospel expression, "full of the Holy Ghost," spiritualised to an almost superhuman degree, more than man had ever been; already a denizen of the higher world, though still living in a mortal body; with all the heavenly truths that had been instilled into his mind crystallised into those beautiful gems which he had thoroughly made his own and now distributed without stint.

There is yet another feature of this period of the probation of Jesus, of which the gospels contain no record, namely, the interesting relations to John the Baptist. The gospels tell us that Mary and Elizabeth, the mother of John, were blood relations, and that the former visited her cousin Elizabeth to communicate to her the joyful news of the Annunciation. We may be sure that this visit was not the only one, but that intercourse, probably intimate, was kept up between the two families. In that case then, Jesus and John, being of nearly the same age, must have known each other well, and their appearance as preachers of doctrines almost identical was evidently preconcerted. John, impressed with the great superiority of Jesus, the latchet of whose shoes he confessed himself not worthy to unloose, was no doubt a zealous convert of the latter, and undertook to announce his coming. But for his untimely death he would probably have become one of the foremost of the disciples. Fancy only can draw the picture of the two

sitting together as youths and even as men, John at the feet of the Inspired One, enraptured by his words and probably his wondrous accounts of visions, trances, and angel-ministry.

The cardinal truths of the teachings of Jesus that have made Christianity the religion of the civilised world and in which the religious evolution of humanity culminates, namely—

1. The essential oneness of the Divine and the Human, realised in the person of Jesus Christ, and recognised by him in those mighty words: "I and the Father are one."

2. The great Law of Love uniting God and man—the Fatherhood of God; and uniting the whole human race into one harmonious whole—the Brotherhood of Man.

3. The spiritual nature of man and the survival of the soul after the death of the body.

These gems of truth, easily recognised by their lustre, the student of the history of religion has to separate from the rubbish and comparatively valueless material with which they have been mixed up by the gospel writers in their conflicting and frequently erroneous accounts. As he reads the latter he is confronted on almost every page by the evident desire of the writers to prove that Jesus was the Messiah expected by the Jews, and frequently utterances are attributed to him as if he had shared in this particular error. The powerful impression he had made on all who heard him by his inspired and novel teaching, by his unusual gifts of healing and clairvoyance, by that spiritual majesty, in short, which must have surrounded with a halo of super-human glory this pupil and favourite of those exalted spiritual intelligencies whose instrument he was. All these combined to produce in the popular mind the conviction that Jesus was the promised Messiah. This conviction, only temporarily shaken by his death on the Cross, his miraculous re-appearance and apparent ascension confirmed into an absolute certainty. Both easily explainable to the student of the occult, they could not fail to produce the most powerful impression on those who witnessed these strange occurrences. Though Jesus had not accomplished the mission of the Messiah to raise God's chosen people above all the nations of the world, the hope that he would yet do so was by no means abandoned. As he had disappeared mysteriously and apparently ascended to heaven, so they fully expected he would suddenly descend again from the clouds, surrounded by heavenly legions, and establish his kingdom on earth. To this popular belief, that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the gospel-writers necessarily had to give expression, for they evidently shared it. It shows itself more especially in their constant attempts to prove that certain prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah had been fulfilled in Jesus. All their utterances on this subject, even those alleged to have been spoken by Jesus, must be taken with grave reservation. They reasoned somewhat in this way: "Jesus was the Messiah promised to us, and consequently all prophecies concerning the Messiah must have been fulfilled in him." When tradition and the meagre documentary evidence that provided them with the material for their gospels failed to give the proofs of the Messiahships, the writers evidently felt no hesitation to provide these proofs themselves. Genealogies were constructed for this purpose by Matthew and Luke utterly at variance with each other, passages of the Old Testament not referring to the Messiah, such as that of Matthew i. 23, were alleged to apply to Jesus, the journey of Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem on account of an alleged census which did not take place at all at the time, and the alleged birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, the flight to Egypt—these and many other accounts must all be relegated to the domain of mythology. In thus trying to prove by alleged facts what was merely a popular error of their time, namely, that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God, the gospel-writers acted in perfect good faith, fully convinced that this error was a profound and unimpeachable truth, and that all means to establish it as such were perfectly legitimate. It probably never occurred to them that in drawing on their imagination for proofs which tradition failed to supply they might be trespassing against truth. Their firm conviction that Christ was the Messiah made

them certain that all proofs of this Messiahship were in existence and that tradition only was to blame for not having found them. This tradition, moreover, must have been over a hundred years old when it was collected and condensed in the gospels, for we have no historical evidence of their existence before 135 A.D. They are too divergent in their accounts to be the work of eye-witnesses or contemporaries of any of the events they relate, yet there is sufficient agreement to justify the conclusion that the writers drew their information from the same sources, and that these sources were partly oral tradition and floating legends, and partly pre-existing manuscripts of an earlier period principally embodying the teachings of Jesus. Luke in his preface gives us reason to suppose that there were no authentic records written by the apostles themselves in existence at his time, for if there had been, why should he have felt called upon to write his gospel on second-hand evidence? And why should "many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things most surely believed in," if higher and better authorities than they could possibly be had already done so? That many others besides the four gospel-writers essayed the same task is undoubtedly proven by the apocrypha. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable that the apostles are not the authors of the three gospels bearing their names, and that unlike Luke, who honestly gives his name, the other three omitted theirs and wrote under the names of apostles. We might assume that the writer of the gospel, according to Matthew, drew his information from an authentic manuscript written by Matthew, and the other two theirs from manuscripts by Mark and John. In that case, however, there would be that perfect agreement between them which we have a right to expect but unfortunately seek for in vain.

But all this is really immaterial. If the historic Jesus could be proven to be a purely mythical person, the sublime truths he revealed, the divine spirit of his teaching, would still be left to us, and these fortunately, though mixed with error, have been handed down to us in the gospels. However much they differ in the records of events, in those of Christ's teaching they are in substantial agreement on all vital questions. The truths that fell from his lips had sank deeply into the hearts of his followers, and in that safest of all depositories they had been treasured up for more than a century to be finally embodied in the gospels and transmitted as an invaluable heritage to all future generations.

To appreciate their priceless value and historical importance, to measure the immense advance, the leap, which religious culture made in them, we need but to glance at what this culture was at the time of Jesus throughout the vast Roman Empire. Nineteen centuries have elapsed since they were enunciated, and they are still the religious ideals of humanity to be striven for by all, still distant to the majority of mankind, approached by some, realised by few, but by none as they were by Jesus. But to make them our own, to understand them fully, and become the happy possessors "of the truth that will make us free," we must separate them from the errors of scribes and translators, from the unavoidable misconceptions of the times in which the manuscripts embodying them were written; we must grasp the spirit and abstract from the letter of these writings—a letter that had to go through all the changes and alterations to which manuscripts in being copied over and over again and translated by different individuals are so very liable. It is a matter of surprise and of deep thankfulness that the divine spirit of Christ's teachings has been preserved so well in the gospels, and that its enduring truths have lost none of their lustre by their transcription.

(To be continued.)

"THE poor ye have always." The poor and women are given to man to prevent his becoming a beast. Without the evil-doer charity would die; without woman man would be a savage.

HE who has a knowledge of God knows all men and all things. He knows himself.

SPIRITUALISM IN RELATION TO RELIGION.

THE following is the report of a lecture delivered by Mr. James Smith to the Religious Science Club, established in connection with the Australian Church, and which is sufficiently catholic in its character and objects to offer an open platform even to an avowed believer in primitive Christianity:—

I take it for granted that most of those whom I have the honour to address, are conscious of the possession of a principle within them which is immaterial and imperishable. For if, as science assures us, mere matter is indestructible, what less than immortality can be predicated of the soul or spirit, which subsists and persists in each of us, notwithstanding its material envelope, our body, is in a state of perpetual flux—is incessantly being demolished and rebuilt? In the words of the wisest of the ancient people, "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Being immortal, the spirit which is in man, and which

"Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;"

must pass, after the transition called death, and which is a mere change of apparel—the putting off of a natural body, and the being "clothed upon" with a spiritual body—it must pass, I say, into another place of habitation, another condition of existence. For, in the words of him, who spake as never man spake, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him;" and there is therefore no suspension of existence, but a never-ending continuity of individual life.

Accordingly, there must be two worlds; the one visible and tangible to our physical senses, and the other unseen by us, so long as

"This muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close us in."

Now Spiritualism proclaims the solidarity of these two worlds. It affirms, on the testimony of those who declare that they are the denizens of what the Greeks and Romans called the Land of Shadows, that we are immersed in the spiritual world, and that it surrounds us as the atmosphere surrounds the earth. It asserts—or rather, they assert—that the unseen world is the realm of realities; and that this, which appears to be so real to our senses, is a mere *simulacrum*, a dim presentment and a faint "shadow of things to come." It is the nursery of beings destined for a higher and a perpetually progressive state of existence hereafter; our present life being a school of experience and a place of discipline; and, just as Judaism, with its typical sacrifices, its obligations to personal cleanliness, and its rites of purification, was a schoolmaster to bring a particular race to Christ, with his supreme self-sacrifice, his moral cleanliness and purity of life; so it is contended should we, following his example, prepare ourselves for the purely spiritual existence which awaits us in the next world—the word "next" implying contiguity in space, as well as in time.

Spiritualism claims to furnish us with "the *substance* of things hoped for, and the *evidence* of things unseen." It substitutes certainty for belief, and assurance for expectation. It dissipates all doubts, and takes away the sting from death. It offers us the proofs of the life beyond the grave, and convinces us that the ties of friendship and affection, formed on earth, are not even interrupted, much less obliterated, by the transition from one life to the other. It shows us that those whom we seem to have lost, can and do visit us continually; that their interest in our moral and spiritual welfare is greater than ever, and far more disinterested; that they rejoice in whatever contributes to, and are grieved by whatever impedes or frustrates, our moral and spiritual advancement. Hence, if it were generally accepted—and this is merely a question of time and opportunity—it would operate as a powerful restraint upon evil conduct, and as an active stimulant to virtue. Even those who have unhappily discarded the belief that we are "ever in the great Task-master's eye," as Milton expresses it, would, if convinced of the nearness and the watchful oversight of some beloved relative, or venerated

teacher, who has passed into the next life, shape both their words and their actions very differently to what they do; by reason of their conviction that these are closely scrutinised by unseen observers, to whom they communicate pain or pleasure, just according as our conduct occasions them the one or the other.

Spiritualism confirms and sustains the doctrine of guardian-angels taught by the Roman Catholic Church, and originally announced by Christ, when, calling a child unto him and setting him in the midst of his disciples, he said: "take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven *their angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." And the great Teacher had an excellent reason for connecting these tutelary beings with childhood, because "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," in more senses than one. The thoughts and the life of a child, brought up in a sweet and wholesome domestic atmosphere, are generally pure and blameless, and its guardian angels can therefore approach it very closely, can impress its plastic mind with beautiful thoughts, and inspire it with delightful dreams. Sometimes, indeed, as has been the case with children who have been endowed with exquisitely delicate and susceptible nervous organisations, these friendly and affectionate guardians can so impress, influence, and instruct those who are entrusted to their care, as that a Linneus will begin to study the book of Nature before he has learned his letters; a Pico della Mirandola will be acclaimed at the age of ten as one of the best poets and most famous orators of his epoch; a Mozart will compose minuets of irreproachable melody and elegance, when he is only five; a James Crichton, when not more than fifteen, will challenge all the learned men in Paris to dispute with him on any science, either in prose or in verse, in twelve different languages; a Metastasio, at the age of ten, will be one of the most wonderful improvisatori in Rome; and a Titian, when a mere child, will paint a Madonna on the walls of his father's house with juices expressed from the wild flowers growing around Cadore.

There is another and a correlative explanation of precocious genius; but I need not touch upon it here.

But if, when grown to youth or manhood, the ward of these angelic beings yields to the allurements of vice, or begins to indulge in a career of utter selfishness, his guardians—being of "too pure eyes to behold evil,"—are alienated from his side, and can only stand afar off, surveying their charge with eyes of divine sorrow and tenderest compassion, and patiently waiting until sickness, or remorse, or affliction, or reverse of fortune softens the profligate or worldly heart, and opens a way for the eager return of the affectionate guides appointed to accompany the human pilgrim in his chequered journey through the wilderness of life.

Unhappily, the same causes which serve to detach our guardian angels from our side, facilitate the approach of those evil spirits which are referred to in the New Testament, as "powers of the air." These are people who have lived unnatural, that is to say, unholy lives on the earth; are still drawn to it by earthly desires and propensities; are attracted towards human beings who are like-minded with themselves; and can and do influence and impel them towards wrong-doing; in which the evil impressors appear to feel a sinister delight. If those whom they impress are mediumistic, they not unfrequently succeed in obsessing them; and thus great crimes are frequently committed by men and women who appear to be incapable, in their normal state of mind, of perpetrating atrocities from which their better nature will recoil; so that it is a by no means uncommon occurrence for a murderer to exclaim, when the period of delirious passion has passed over, "I know not what devil possessed me to do this."

Concerning the after-life, Spiritualism defines heaven, hell, and purgatory, to be not places, but mental conditions. And herein it is perfectly in accord with the words of Christ, who said: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which *is* heaven." He was in heaven at that moment, because he was doing the will of his Heavenly Father; and wheresoever that will is done, the

doer is in heaven, for in him the Kingdom of God has come. It is not a distant realm, posited in some undetermined region of space, but a condition of implicit obedience to, and absolute trust in God; so that he who has attained to it—if any such there be—can exclaim with perfect truth, as Christ did, “I and my Father are one;” for he has “received the at-one-ment.” And there is no other, we are assured. As a man sows, so we are told, will he surely reap. All evil must be expiated, either in this world or the next. No death-bed repentance, no purchase of masses for the repose of the soul; no belief in the “redeeming blood,” will avert from us the consequences of our own acts. God is inflexibly just as well as infinitely loving; and the punishment is exactly proportioned to the offence, and is, at the same time, of a temporary character. Neither is it attended with physical suffering. The anguish is mental. Every man becomes his own judge. His past life is unrolled before him, like a living panorama, and his conscience—God’s still small voice within him—is his own accuser. Nor is this all; for he perceives the present consequences of his own misdeeds upon the earth; and he recognises the impressive truth of the solemn words, “The evil which men do lives after them.” Appalling, indeed, are the mental tortures of a gigantic homicide like Napoleon Bonaparte. The millions of men he has led to the shambles, the women he has widowed, the children he has orphaned, the peaceful husbandmen whose smiling homes he has devastated, and all the victims of his measureless ambition and rapacity, assail and overwhelm him with reproaches, so that he would fain find refuge in annihilation, but cannot. This is the true and only hell; and who shall challenge the justice of the retribution; especially as it terminates sooner or later in those remorseful feelings, and in that vehement desire to atone for the crimes and follies of the past, which are the turning point in his spiritual career?

On the other hand, many an obscure, ignorant, insignificant and perhaps despised man or woman, Christian or Buddhist, Jew or Gentile, Mohammedan or Pagan, whose life has been spent in utter self-forgetfulness, devoted to the welfare and happiness of his or her fellow creatures, intent only on lavishing affection and sympathy on others, even if requited with ingratitude; and reverently fulfilling every duty laid upon such an one, is met, on passing out of the mortal body, by angels; is crowned with honour, and admitted into such a state of happiness that the new comer exclaims in simple sincerity and with unaffected humility, “What have I done to deserve all this weight of joy and glory?” And the answer comes, “Forasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these,”—pointing to spirits who had been succoured in their earth lives,—“ye have done it unto Me;” and was it not said by one of the disciples, “he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him?” For love is the fulfilling of the law.

Supernaturalism finds no place in the vocabulary of the Spiritualist, who holds that all the phenomena which are commonly considered as falling within that category, occur in obedience to laws which are at present unknown or misunderstood. There can be nothing above or outside of Nature, because there can be nothing above or outside of the Supreme First Cause; and Nature is but the Mind of God in visible operation—*Natura Naturans*.

With respect to the Old and New Testament, the students of the higher Spiritualism accept those books as containing a great deal that is obviously inspired; not a little that is purely allegorical; and much that has been rendered perplexing and contradictory, by the admixture of human error with angelic or spiritual inspiration or impression. It was unavoidable that it should be so. The prophets, scribes, and seers were unquestionably what would be called sensitives, or mediums, in our own days. They were so many instruments in the hands of the higher intelligences who are entrusted with the instruction and guardianship of the human race. There have been many such in all parts of the world. Zoroaster, Buddha, Plato, Socrates, Confucius, Numa Pompilius, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, and most of the great lawgivers of the ancient nations of the earth.

But the Hebrew scribes were only human, after all. They had the defects of their qualities. Their conceptions of the Most High were too frequently those which were widely prevalent in Asiatic countries, at that time. They did not rise above the idea of a tribal god, more powerful, it is true, than the gods of other nations, but still peculiar to themselves, and favouring them above all the other families of the earth. Hence the inspired messages, lessons, and prophecies which they received, were coloured and distorted by the channels through which they flowed, just as the waters of a river will be tinged by the chalky, clayey, or ferruginous character of the soil it passes over in its course; and the result has been the spilling of an ocean of ink, and the piling up of mountains of foolish, not to say pernicious, controversy over doubtful texts and merely human doctrines.

In Jesus, the Son of Man, Christ, the Son of God, found the most beautiful and perfect instrument of the human race has ever seen; and under the divine afflatus, he proclaimed the grandest of truths in language of sublime simplicity: “God is love;” “God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth;” “a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. As I have loved you, that ye also love one another; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

The higher Spiritualism, as I understand it, recognises the humanity of Jesus, the instrument; and the divinity—not the Godhead—of Christ, his control. The former was the temple entered into by the latter; just as a sensitive is now taken possession of and used to speak through, by a spirit. The Christ, it is stated, first took up his abode in the “vessel” prepared for him at the baptism of Jesus by John; he quitted him for forty days, during the temptation in the wilderness, at the end of which the Nazarene hungered for the bread of life; and he withdrew from him before the Crucifixion, when the agonising sense of the loss of power—the power which had previously sustained him—wrung from the afflicted martyr, whose ignominious death was the final crowning testimony of his obedience, the prophetic wail of anguish, “My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” It was uttered in a momentary spasm of human agony; and doubtless he was ministered to by angels: for another of the apostles assures us that his last words were those of trust and resignation—“Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit.”

(*To be concluded*).

MUSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

WE are indebted to the *Vessillo Spiritista*, of Vercelli, for the following account of a séance in Paris, held on the evening of the 14th of September, with Mr. Jesse Shepard, by eight persons, including Prince Adam Wiszniewsky, President of a private circle composed of students of psychic phenomena, which meets regularly in that city; and of which M. Waldemar Tonner is the honorary secretary. The particulars are furnished by the Prince himself.

Mr. Shepard having seated himself at the piano, strains of oriental music were heard, as if from instruments of bronze and wood, and the compositions executed are described as having been such as were inimitable by any composer. Then Mr. Shepard, who was in a trance, began to sing, and the register of his voice seemed to comprehend the lowest notes of Lablache, and the highest of Malibran. Palestrina, Pergolesi, Donizetti, Meyerbeer, Mercadante, and Wagner, intimated their presence. A small harp was placed upon the pianoforte, and some unseen musician played some lovely airs upon it; the music appearing to wander through space, growing and diminishing in volume and distinctness according to its position in the air.

Then came a spirit purporting to be that of Sappho, the famous Greek poetess, who sang a melody of surprising tenderness, sadness, and despair, which Mr. Shepard accompanied on the pianoforte. When she had finished, she struck the harp three times, and placed it on the knees of Lady D.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SOME local "religious" journals have been speculating as to what caused the death of that brave old Freethought paper, Bradlaugh's *National Reformer*. The *Southern Cross*, once a rather brilliant though somewhat unscrupulous organ of Evangelicism, but now an exceedingly mediocre concern, says, "It was its own uncompromising atheism, put forward in season and out of season, that has reformed the *National Reformer* out of existence." This view is not accepted by the *Church of England Messenger*, now, as ever, one of the dullest and heaviest of denominational prints. "The *National Reformer*, with the class to whom it spoke," says the *Messenger*, "has done its work only too well. The working-men who read it have come to take atheism for granted, and have no care to hear it preached to them weekly. Since there is no God, let there be an end to the subject. Religion is folly—that is agreed; then what more is to be said about the matter? The disappearance of the organ of aggressive atheism, so far from being a sign that atheism is on the wane, is rather a sign that the atheism of the people has got beyond the stage of argument and discussion, and has become the settled habit of the masses."

Now, Mr. Bradlaugh's friends will doubtless accept the *Messenger's* statement as testimony to the success of his iconoclastic propaganda; but to anyone that knows aught of the religious condition of the masses in England, and the progress of Freethought literature there, the *ipse dixit* of the *Southern Cross* must appear as the most consummate of arrant—well, *putrefaction!* Mr. G. W. Foote's *Freethinker*, a far more aggressively atheistic paper than the *Reformer*, not only thrives, but flourishes increasingly. The real reason why the latter had to succumb is that it was essentially a personal organ, and when its author, Mr. Bradlaugh, died, its fate was practically sealed.

"THE Rationalist cause had never a brighter outlook than it has to-day. As far as numbers are concerned, the progress during recent years has exceeded the most optimistic forecast." So says an English exchange, just to hand; and there is reason to believe that this report is true, not only as regards Rationalism in general, but as to that not altogether lovable phase of it known as "Secularism"—of the materialistic stamp. Yet, said "Secularism," in its organised, concrete expression, is in rather a bad way in these colonies. Mr. Joseph Symes, president of the Australasian Secular Association, after some nine years' iconoclastic effort in this city, has been compelled to start on a lecturing tour through New Zealand, in consequence of "the cause" not being anything like adequately supported in Victoria, where the Association is said to be almost dead. As regards New Zealand, the beautiful Freethought Hall at Dunedin long since passed into the hands of "the enemy." In New South Wales, something similar seems to be happening at Newcastle; and now comes the news that the Sydney Freethought Hall has been "let" to outsiders for a long period, in consequence of the apathy and niggardliness of "the Freethought party." Why this thushness? Is it that "the masses" are satisfied and do not need any external expression of their dissidence—such as associations, halls, and paid lecturers; or are they wearied of empty negations and Bible-smashing, and long to "lay hold on immortality?"

MR. ISAAC SELBY, at one time a Secularist lecturer in these colonies but who a few years since "verted" to Christianity (so-called), has just been challenged to a public debate in Melbourne on theological subjects, with Mr. Wallace Nelson, a well-known Freethought lecturer stationed in Queensland. The reply made by Mr. Selby's friends is significant:—"Mr. Selby is prepared to meet Mr. Nelson in Brisbane, but we consider that there is no necessity for a discussion in Melbourne just now. *The Freethought movement here is practically defunct*, and there is but little interest in Infidelity manifest in our community."

X.

NOTES AND QUERIES ON THE TENETS OF THEOSOPHY.

BY PLOTINUS.

"THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH." Such is the proud motto inscribed on the banner of Theosophy; let us, therefore, reverently open this *sanctum sanctorum* called the "Key to Theosophy," in order to receive the answer that Christ did not give to Pilate.

1.—"Theosophy is not a Religion," p. 1. "Theosophy is the WISDOM RELIGION," p. 13 (capitals not ours.) "Being the last word of possible human knowledge, it was, therefore, carefully preserved. It preceded by long ages the Alexandrian Theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive every other religion and philosophy," p. 7. "It is as old as the world in its teaching and ethics," p. 11. "How," asks a correspondent of *Light*, "do Theosophists know that they are on the right track, in adopting a system to which experimental tests cannot be or have not been applied?" It will never do to claim all ideal philosophy as Theosophy. What can Theosophy claim except that which forms its distinguishing peculiarities? and these seem to be reincarnation and a theory of cosmo-genesis. All the other philosophy a man may study without consulting a single Theosophic authority; and even reincarnation may be learned from the Spiritualists who followed Allan Kardec long before H. P. B. had made up her mind to accept it.

2.—"Theosophists prefer to follow the proven natural law of the tradition of the Sacred Science," p. 23. To this statement the same writer answers: "All attempts to bind us to the dead past will fail; for our age is distinctly an age of enquiry. We shall soon sink in barbarism if we begin to take our theories and ideas from men who lived 2500 years ago, and forget that our duty lies in using our own powers of interpretation and investigation fearlessly, as past ages did; but with the added experience of those 24 centuries. All Nature is fluid, ever changing and never returning to what it was. Man is part of this great river, always advancing; and it is as fatal for him to look back as it was for Lot's wife."

3.—"Theosophy is not Buddhism." The mistake has arisen from the title of Mr. Sinnett's work, "Esoteric Buddhism," which last word ought to have been spelt with one instead of two d's, p. 12. Max Müller, in the *Nineteenth Century* for August observes: "Mme. Blavatsky preferred to write Esoteric Buddhism with one *d* instead of two; this only shows that she was ignorant of Sanscrit grammar. In the past participles, the final *ah* of *budhi* followed by *t* becomes *ddh*."

4.—"The ethics of Theosophy are identical with those taught by Buddha. The school of the Northern Buddhist Church, established in those centuries to which his initiated adepts retired after the Master's death, teaches all that is (*sic*) now called Theosophical doctrines," p. 14. These two statements contradict point blank the one contained in the preceding paragraph, "that Theosophy is not Buddhism," while both cosmo-geneses are nearly identical. In a letter to her sister, H. P. B. writes: "Yes, I am a renegade; yes, I am a Buddhist, an atheist."—*La Nouvelle Revue*, Oct., 192, p. 780.

5.—"You are a Theosophist provided you are in sympathy and ready to carry out one or more of the three objects of the Association." From their context, p. 39, it follows that if a man has a liking for the Aryan language, he may be a misanthrope, or man-hater, and still remain a Theosophist. Theosophy is indeed "the broadest and most catholic system among all," p. 11.

6.—"Are we to understand that the inner group of the T. S. claim to learn what it does from real initiates or masters of esoteric wisdom?" "The personal presence of such Masters is not required. Suffice it if they give instructions to some of those under their guidance for years, and devote their whole lives to their service. Then, in turn, those can give out the knowledge so imparted to others, who had no such opportunity," p. 22. We live in an age of inquiry; we have outgrown second-hand evidence and teaching, and an intelligent mind feels the necessity of inquiring directly into Nature and finding out for himself to what end she or he exist, so far as it is attainable, so as "to prove all things and hold fast that which is good."

Since Theosophy teaches, in common with every school of philosophy, "that we must devote our whole life to the relieving of suffering humanity; that this devotion is the true goal," p. 24, have not those who have devoted their whole lives to the science of the Masters, failed to accomplish the greatest of duties—and the only one worth living for—"the relieving of suffering humanity."

7.—"There are mystics who have made great discoveries in chemistry and physical sciences," p. 23. Who has ever heard of them?

8.—"When our opponents are able to prove that any solitary student of Occultism throughout the ages has become a saintly adept like Ammonius Saccas, or even a Plotinus, or a Theurgist like Iamblichus; or achieved facts such as are claimed to have been done by St. Germain, without any master to guide him, and all this without being a medium, a self-deluded psychist, or a charlatan—then shall we confess ourselves mistaken. Theosophists prefer to follow the proven natural law of the tradition of the Sacred Science," p. 23. If H. P. B.'s faith in Theosophy is based upon the facts "claimed to have been done by Cagliostro, Iamblichus, etc." it is a pitiable one. What evidence has she that these occultists, as she calls them, were not "mediums, self-deluded psychics, or charlatans?" And besides, how can a tradition be proven? Are all natural laws, which do not reach us through tradition, to be disregarded? It is tradition, which, up to these days, has fostered human credulity and ignorance. H. P. B. believed in the Theurgist Iamblichus, who lived in the third century, but ignored Daniel Home, by whom she was 'converted to Spiritualism' in 1858. The power of levitation of Home was equal to that of any Eastern occultist, and has been witnessed by hundreds—H. P. B. very likely included; for her close and intimate association with Spiritualists of every country, during twenty-five years of her life, must have brought her into contact with the most prominent mediums of the age; herself being a "powerful medium," according to her sister's experience.—See *La Nouvelle Revue*, Oct., 192, p. 512.

9.—"The key to all sciences, past, present, and future, is to be found in the symbolical, mystical, and parabolical Aryan language, only thoroughly known by the masters." Which science do we owe to the masters? Are Newton, Watt, Tyndall, Edison, Pasteur, etc., indebted to the Aryan language for their discoveries? Not one discovery has ever reached us from Thibet or from India—the widow-burning countries—where the densest ignorance and superstition reign supreme; where women, the crown of creation, the superior of man in perception, intuition, and the moral faculty, are denied a soul and treated accordingly.

10.—"If by 'Spiritualism' you mean the explanation which Spiritualists give of some abnormal phenomena, then decidedly we do not believe in it. They maintain that the manifestations are all produced by the 'spirits' of departed mortals, generally their relatives, who return to earth, they say, to communicate with those they have loved or to whom they are attached. WE DENY THIS POINT BLANK. We assert that the spirits of the dead cannot return to earth, neither do they communicate with men except by entirely subjective means. That which appears objectively, is only the phantom of the ex-physical man," p. 27. "The 'deus ex machina' of the so-called 'materialisations,' is usually the astral body or 'double' of the medium or of some one present. This astral body is also the producer, or operating force in the manifestation of slate-writing, Davenport-like manifestations," and so on, p. 28.

Spiritualism is distinctly an experimental science, not based, like Theosophy, "on the proven natural law of the tradition of the Secret Science." Its cardinal maxim is, that every one must find out the truth for himself. It makes no claim to be received, like Theosophy, on hearsay evidence. Spiritualists see no reason why anything whatever should be believed which cannot be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the enquirers; and they claim that the reality of the life beyond the grave can, by patient, honest, and fearless inquiry, be as absolutely proved as any facts in mathematics.

After years of observation and much cautious reflection, investigators have come to the conclusion that the phenomena are produced, for the most part, by disembodied intelligences of various grades and different degrees of development and powers; the majority of whom, if not all, have passed through their preliminary stages in this life. Amongst the reasons which have influenced inquirers in arriving at this conclusion are the following:—

1.—Whatever the agent, they unanimously affirm that they are beings who have passed the portal of the tomb, and are now living in various stages of spiritual exaltation or degradation.

2.—The phenomena produced are not such as can be obtained under similar circumstances by any natural appliances.

3.—The phenomena manifest considerable intelligence, and are therefore produced by intelligent agents.

4.—The phenomena are not only physical but psychological, and mediums under control exhibit knowledge of a quality such as they certainly do not possess in their normal state.

5.—The human forms which frequently manifest themselves at séances where materialisations occur, appear to possess the ordinary characteristics of living human beings; they speak, they walk, and write in a manner which would be impossible to a mere automaton, and they appear and disappear in the midst of a circle of critical observers.

6.—Not only is invisible matter rendered visible and apparently living, but solid matter, such as iron, wood, cord, etc., appears to be decomposed and recomposed instantaneously, and apparently at the will of some invisible agent.

The only theory which appears adequate to account for those and other analogous facts, which would be tedious to enumerate, is that the phenomena are of spiritual or supramundane origin. We are quite familiar with the record of all alleged exposures which have taken place; and notwithstanding some actual and many supposititious exposures, based upon presumption and hasty judgment, have been made, there yet remains a large body of incontrovertible facts, for which no theory short of that which recognises the interposition of invisible intelligences, at all satisfactorily accounts.

The age of opinion is passed, and a man's individual views no longer satisfy the demand of another mind. It is every man's birthright to have facts, with full liberty to decide their import to his own satisfaction. And in providing this glorious privilege the Spiritualists establish their claim to be at the head of all varieties and degrees of reformers and teachers, and the foremost advocates of human liberty and progress.

(To be continued.)

AN IMPRESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.

"SINCE time began, there has always been strife between the flesh and the spirit, because the former, appertaining to matter, is of necessity material, while the latter owing its origin to heavenly powers and places is superior and hostile to what is terrestrial and transitory. The flesh is animal by nature, tendency, and sympathies; closely allied with all that is temporary and fugitive. The spirit is intimately related, on the other hand, to that which is enduring and eternal. By the one, man's thoughts and aspirations are lifted heavenward; by the other, they are drawn earthward. His animal nature is necessary to his mundane existence, because so long as he is clothed upon with the garments of humanity, so long must he take the needful means of sustaining in a condition of healthful activity, the machine by and through which he is connected with the medium in which he is placed. But that machine should be subject to the higher principle within him. It should be his servant, and, as such, it is entitled to consideration and to careful treatment. But he allows it to become his master; he subordinates what is spiritual and divine to what is of the earth earthy. And then he wonders at the enormous and innumerable evils which are the natural and the

inevitable consequence of this reversal of the natural order of things.

"There is confusion in the principality of man; there is discord, and there is unhappiness. What else could arise under such untoward circumstances? Consider what would happen to every household, if the master or mistress were subject to the control and caprice of those whom they have engaged as dependents. Consider what would take place in the kingdom of the individual man, if all the animal faculties of his nature were allowed to exercise dominion—as they too often do—over the intelligence, over that which should be authoritative and supreme—the mind seated in and giving its directions from the brain!

"From the disorders entailed upon the individual and upon the community by this subversion of the spiritual power, and this usurpation of its supremacy by the animal faculties, passions, and propensities, spring a whole Iliad of calamities. Man's spiritual nature was designed to reflect the Divine nature of Him from whom it is an emanation. If it did so, a perfect harmony would subsist between it and Him. It would move in submission to His will, and His will is love; His will is the happiness of all His creatures; His will is the fulfilment of Supreme Wisdom, guided, in its every operation, by Almighty Power, and conducing towards universal and everlasting felicity.

"Now, reflect, for a moment, upon the condition of affairs in your own planet, supposing every will to be working harmoniously with His. Each human being would be the brother, friend, guardian, protector, and minister of all other human beings. The strong would labour for the weak; the wise would instruct the ignorant; want, there could be none, because superfluity and scarcity would be alike unknown; wrong-doing, there could be none, because no man would experience the motives to transgression; envy, jealousy and uncharitableness, there could be none, because as each would prefer the other in honour and respect, all the incentives to these evil feelings would be wanting; pillage and violence, there would be none, because the temptations to rapine and personal cruelties and injuries would have no existence whatever; murder and war—which is merely murder nationalised and multiplied a hundred-fold—there could be none, because individual or racial, or religious antipathies and hatreds would be incompatible with the reign of love, which is only a synonym for the reign of God; or, in other words, for the Kingdom of Heaven. Neither could there be disease, because this is the result of disobedience to natural laws; and this disobedience would be precluded under the conditions just spoken of.

"Thus, then, the predominance of the spiritual element in man would be tantamount to the elimination of evil from human conduct and human history. It would be the fulfilment of the Divine purpose, and the accomplishment of the will of God manward. Nor would it clash with or restrict human freedom; for it has been in the exercise of that very freedom that man has ostentatiously exclaimed, 'Evil, be thou my good.' But inasmuch as evil is perishable and good is eternal, the reign of evil is drawing to a close—slowly but surely—and that of good will be certainly and for ever established. It was necessary that having embraced evil, having acquired the knowledge of it, having revelled in its practice, man should discover for himself what a Dead Sea fruit it is, and should ultimately turn from it with loathing and disgust. And the very experience of evil is an education and a discipline; so that it is perfectly true that God maketh the very devils to praise Him; not by His compulsion, but by their conviction and confession that they have been prodigal sons, and would fain become even as the hired servants in their Father's house rather than continue to herd among swine, as heretofore.

"And He is so gracious that when they turn their eyes and hearts homeward, He goeth forth to meet them, and He clothes them with royal apparel, and forgives them. And when they have been restored to obedience, the beauty of holiness becomes still more lovely in their eyes by the recollection of the thorns and briars which lacerated their feet as they walked in the rough and cruel

paths of disobedience. There are no reproaches from the Divine and forgiving Father. The past is wiped out of remembrance by Him, and it is indeed most true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just men, who need no repentance. It is the prodigal for whom the fatted calf is killed and the feast is spread.

"Neither is there room in the whole of the stupendous universe for such a place as hell. All disobedience produces sooner or later remorse; otherwise there could be no expiation. But that remorse endures no longer than the season of expiation, which may be long or short, according to the depth and sincerity of the contrition experienced. For each soul 'works out its own salvation;' it may be 'with fear and trembling;' or it may be with that child-like trust in the mercy and goodness of God, which bears fruit in the unconditional surrender of every thought and feeling, impulse and movement, to His divine will. Vicarious atonement there is none. As men sow, so will they reap. The Christ-like life of Jesus of Nazareth, and his fidelity to death, was a sublime example of self-devotion and self-sacrifice, not an act of atonement for others. In the all-wise plans of Infinite Justice, the innocent do not suffer for the guilty. Each must bear the burden of his own sins; each must 'Dree his own dole;' but each may learn from that beautiful life of the great Exemplar, how divine a thing the merely human existence may become, when the prayer of man, sincerely uttered and genuinely heartfelt, is expressed in these words, 'Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.' And wheresoever that will is done—on whatsoever planet, and by whatsoever people—there is heaven, for the at-one-ment has been effected. He who prays and lives as he prays, is at one with the Father, and therefore he is in heaven; because in his inmost soul he experiences 'the peace which passeth all understanding,' and he can truly say with the Nazarene, 'My Father and I are one.' And this is the one-ness which must be established throughout the entire universe, and will be so; because the Most High hath so ordained it from the beginning."—THOMAS HOOD.

It may be interesting to mention what led up to the foregoing. In a conversation with what purported to be the spirit of Thomas Hood, between whom and the writer there existed the closest sympathy during the lifetime of the former, he expresses himself to the following effect:—

"What is Spiritualism? It is a question which may well be asked, for I see Spiritualists—who are so called—seeking merely for physical manifestations, signs and wonders, and who are ready to throw themselves at the feet of any impostor, and to fling away their money upon any necromancer. Upon the life and daily conduct of such persons, I am afraid Spiritualism exercises no perceptible influence. But, inasmuch as it enables men to see and converse with the spirits of the departed, and even with angels; to receive the assurance of the after-life, and to be taught of God, how beautiful should be the lives of all true Spiritualists! "How pure of heart and sound of head," as my brother Tennyson has said, should they be who would hold this communion!

"Spiritualism is at once a science and a religion, a faith and a philosophy; but among many of those who profess it, I look in vain for that charity which is still "such a rarity under the sun." Men neglect the poet during his lifetime, through whom inspired truths are uttered, and build a monument to his memory after his death. (Speaking of his poems, the writer said, "I think Shakespeare—when you met him—must have smiled approval on that lovely "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," which you wrote." "Ah!" he rejoined, "it was not written by me, but through me, by the angels, when I was in a receptive frame of mind.")

Expressing a wish to communicate his thoughts more fully, the writer cheerfully consented to sit on the following Sunday, and the result was the message given above.

MATERIAL knowledge is the experience of the senses. Spiritual knowledge is the actual living the experience. All else is speculation.

INFLUENCE OF THE PSYCHIC FACTOR IN OCCULTISM,

BY DR. CARL DU PREL,

Translated from "Sphinx" by Dr. A. Müller.

(Concluded from our last).

When Dupotet made his experiments at the Hotel Dieu, in presence of a medical assembly, few in all probability of those who witnessed them had brought with them any faith; but that they rendered the experiments possible at all, proves their not having been adversely disposed and counteracting psychically. The result was the important fact of magnetic telepathy without the knowledge of the patients, *i. e.*, without suggestion, being demonstrated to the satisfaction of all present. None the less, however, our present day doctors attempt to dissolve all magnetic phenomena into suggestion, as if nothing had occurred at the Hotel Dieu. They are so much more apt to do this, since experiments made in their presence frequently are failures on account of their paralysing both the magnetiser and the somnambulist—a magnetic phenomenon in itself, though not understood by them.

The psychological quandary of these investigators is shown most plainly when thought transference is to be demonstrated. Here failure is almost unavoidable, for either this transference is a fact, when sceptical judges prevent it by their presence, or there is no such transference, when failure is a matter of course.

In the experiments of the Psychological Society of London, it has been shown that the experiments were more successful when made alone with the somnambulist, but that the adverse thoughts of any other person present made the supersensuous thought-transference more difficult if not impossible. The same experiments successful in the one case were failures in the other one, in the presence of antagonistic and prejudiced witnesses.

On the one hand, therefore, it is quite certain that adverse commissions of inquiry will never get satisfactory results; and on the other hand it is equally certain that the general public will not acknowledge the reality of somnambulism, until the "coryphaei" of science have done so. We are, therefore, moving in a vicious circle. The public will not believe until our sceptical savants have shown a good example, and the latter withhold their acquiescence, because, even if they investigate, their adverse disposition prevents their getting satisfactory results.

To increase the difficulties we have now also Spiritualism in addition to magnetism and somnambulism to deal with, and more urgent than ever is the necessity of investigations to clear up these mysteries. If somnambulism and Spiritualism are really facts, they are beyond all question the most important discoveries that were ever made. If they are errors, it is nothing short of a great public calamity, that millions of human beings believe in them and sink more deeply into superstition. In either case, the perfect indifference shown by the authorities is absolutely incomprehensible and unjustifiable.

The subject, therefore, must be investigated, and it will never do to let it quietly take its own course. If it is founded on facts, the public, paying taxes for educational and scientific purposes, has a just claim for all the information obtainable; if founded on error it has an equal right to demand that this pernicious pandemic is put an end to, and that persons like myself receive their quietus.

But since I have shown that this indispensable investigation is in a *circulus viciosus*, it is incumbent on me to get out of this logical dilemma by pointing out how we may traverse the circle. Commissions composed of opponents are not likely to get any noteworthy results; commissions of advocates and declared adherents will be refused credence, as blinded by faith, and whose opinion is not worth having; whilst mixed commissions are not likely to impart to their final summing up the decision and certainty necessary to settle the matter once for all.

Under these circumstances, one course only suggests itself: *Opponents and advocates must meet alternately, and endeavour to carry out a perfectly identical program with the same psychic or medium, and under as nearly as*

possible the same external conditions, including temperature and weather. It would not be a difficult task for them to agree amicably on such a program, and under this double control it would soon become evident, on a larger scale, what innumerable séances have already taught us, namely, that the experiments of the opponents fail, whilst those of the advocates succeed. No valid objections that I can see could then be raised against the latter.

But supposing that, for reasons unexplainable, even this impartial proposal or its results, if carried out, should be rejected, there yet remains one more to be considered, which would have the advantage of bringing to an issue one of the crassest elements of our alleged superstition, although it would be applicable to it only.

This is the thorough investigation of so-called haunted houses by a mixed commission. The physics of Spiritualism appear to have been withdrawn from the influence of the psychic factor; and I believe that even a commission of the most decided opponents would have no reason to complain of want of experiences; that the desired phenomena would take place in spite of the scepticism and the deep learning of the commissioners; and that the invisible agents probably would show but scant respect for the learned gentlemen. Such a commission would have the collateral advantage of doing away with certain unpleasant accusations to which our authorities are now exposed. There are, for example, many Spiritualists now in Germany, and probably out of it, firmly convinced that in the legal investigation into the hauntings at Presan, the boy Walter was unjustly and innocently convicted. But be this as it may, the danger of unjust convictions will continue to exist as long as the problem of haunted houses remain unsolved.

Referring to the further elements of Spiritualism we find the influence of the psychic factor increasingly important. To the sensitiveness of the medium other reasons are added here that make a favourable circle of spectators most indispensable. The logical hypothesis to be worked out and decided in one way or the other, is the presence and agency of invisible, intelligent entities in the production of the phenomena. If these entities, as they allege, are deceased human beings, thought-transference with them would be a normal phenomenon, not abnormal, as with somnambulists. The psychic factor would therefore play a much more important rôle here than in somnambulism.

Professor Hare, when yet a sceptic, and explaining the raps as produced by muscular action of the medium, found invariably that his presence paralysed the phenomena. As soon as he entered a séance-room, the raps, however strong they had been previously, ceased at once. But when he had divested himself of his prejudice, the phenomena were not interrupted any more by his presence. He writes: "Persons will find it difficult to get manifestations if they seek them with an ill-will towards Spiritualism and the desire to make it appear ridiculous and perverse."

Even the first Christians knew this already. "Why," asks Tertullian, "does the presence of a single one of us Christians at once paralyse the oracles? Why, to the amazement of their priests are they unable to speak a word in our presence, if it is not for the reason that we prevent them?" The other side fully acknowledged the truth of this singular phenomenon, but alleged that it arose, not from any special power possessed by the Christians, but from the great aversion the gods had towards them.

Bishop Maigrot, writing of the superstitions of the Chinese, cites the words of the Chinese savant, Kong Chay: "If you sincerely desire the spirits to be present, they will come." But irrespective of the psychic factor, there is a certain physical condition that, on the part of the spectators may hinder the phenomena.

Professor Hare writes:—"Besides this difficulty, we have sometimes to contend against a peculiar constitutional, inborn disposition of one or more persons present. It is a condition exactly the reverse of what constitutes a medium. The atmosphere (or rather aura) of such persons seems to neutralise that of the media. There are evidently media and anti-media."

Spiritualists are reproached by their opponents with moving in a faulty circle, by demanding the acknowledgment of the truth of Spiritualism on the strength of its facts, and at the same time making faith the condition of the occurrence of these facts. But this objection would only then hold good, if faith as a purely intellectual act was necessary. It is not faith *per se* that is required—blind and unreasoning—but merely a moral disposition, which may be called good faith, together with the frank acknowledgment that there may be things of which even our savants know nothing, and the good-will to accept the results of the experiment, whatever they may turn out to be. All this may amount to perfect indifference, but must not go beyond it, for if it does this in an adverse direction, the phenomena are paralysed by the psychic factor.

As we possess, strictly speaking, no science of Spiritualism yet, not knowing the exact condition of the phenomena, it is manifestly illogical to insist on certain conditions under which the phenomena must take place. But, on the other hand, science is perfectly justified in taking every precaution against fraud, and this it can do only by insisting on test-conditions. It can, however, not demand that the phenomena must take place under these conditions, but it has a right to declare, "under these conditions only is the experiment valid and fraud excluded."

The measures that may be taken for a scientific demonstration of our facts and for the exclusion of all fraud, can be carried to any extent. But in this one thing must be clearly understood, that the conditions imposed by scepticism are not also the conditions of the experiment, and that therefore a long series of failures does not decide anything. The conditions imposed by science will often make the experiment difficult or impossible, simply because we are still groping in the dark and do not know all the right conditions, and because the measures taken as a concession to scepticism are not identical with those that facilitate the experiment. On the other hand, just because we are groping in the dark, it may happen that these measures do not hinder the experiment, but rather further it. Everything else, however, depends on the psychic factor.

Crookes did not enter on his experiments with blind faith, but with psychic indifference. He wanted to get at the truth at any price. His experiments were made with the greatest possible scientific exactitude. He did everything he possibly could to make them decisive ones, and excluded every possibility of fraud. But all these precautions notwithstanding, it was he who obtained by great perseverance the richest phenomena. Another person, even when letting them have their free course, might have failed if he had hindered them psychically.

Not blind, confiding faith, therefore, is demanded, but only the good-will to "capitulate" eventually, and to give in to the logic of the facts; and this good-will is perfectly compatible with great scientific scepticism. If the spectators meet the medium distrustfully, and regard and even treat him or her as a cheat, failure is almost certain. The suspicious spectator, therefore, stands in his own light, whilst a confiding one brings a favourable condition along with him. He may be deceived if he extends his confiding disposition too far, but he has also a chance of seeing phenomena that would convert even a sceptic.

Spiritualists are apt to be a little fanatical at first and too anxious to proselytise. They usually select the most hardened unbelievers; but failing with them, as a rule, they do more harm than good to their cause. The sceptic remains unconverted; they are apt to be themselves thrown back into doubt, and the medium may be injured.

To produce the objective phenomena, faith is a favourable preliminary and an actual factor. Our opponents, however, only speak of the faith that disposes to subjective deception. Bible critics, like Strauss and Renan, and historians, like Lecky, know nothing of occultism. They are concerned with the history of enlightenment only, and the decline of so-called superstition, the dark side of faith. They look all the time on one face of the medal, but never turn it to look at the other side. Miracles, spirits, and apparitions, sorcerers, witches, *et*

hoc genus omne—so these gentlemen assure us—exist only as long as they are believed in, and disappear as soon as this belief ceases.

In part this is certainly true, for what holds good for a single spiritualistic séance, applies also to historical periods. The fountain does not flow as freely, or dries up altogether, when faith has been lost. Unbelief paralyses occult phenomena; but belief actually produces them objectively, and not merely a subjective mirage of them. In occultism, therefore, it may be stated as an axiom: faith in something occult happening is the cause of the event. In hypnotism this is already acknowledged. Organic changes take place through the conception of them. This conception—dominant and even isolated in the mind of the patient, not infringed on or interfered with by any other one—is for this very reason capable of producing such important results.

Into the wall of prejudice, that in all these phenomena the psychic factor plays no part, a breach has now been battered, and hypnotism forms the mystic entrance gate. Because it shows that thought can become a powerful force, its importance goes much further than medical empiricism (*Klysterspritzologie*) dreams of. But the science of the future will extend the axiom, that faith produces the phenomena, from the somnambulist to the agent and the spectators, and apply it to all occult phenomena of any kind.

Goethe has said: "He who hopes for miracles must strengthen his faith." This is not merely true in the sense of modern enlightenment, but applies to the objective phenomena, to the patient, the agent, and the spectators. If then thought can become a force, and we extend this over all natural forces, we have arrived at the paradox opening sentence of this paper: "The primateship of mind before matter."

ON THE WING—NOTES OF TRAVEL.

BY W. H. TERRY.

I LEFT San Francisco by the evening train, on the Santa Fé route, arriving at the Los Angeles Junction early in the morning. From this point eastward, the country is uninteresting, four or five hundred miles of desert, the air warm, and the sand and dust finding its way into the carriages, covering everything. The next five hundred miles, through Arizona and New Mexico, a poor country, rocks, sand, and scrub, no trees of any size, and very little grass. From Albuquerque, which was reached on the third night, the country improved—more water, more trees, and more settlement—reaching Kansas city on Saturday morning. I was glad to get a "stopover" till Sunday, and hastening to an hotel, got a warm bath, which I never needed more in my life; the desert dust had permeated the whole of my clothing, and made almost a "coloured man" of me.

Kansas city is what would be called in American parlance a *live* place; it is full of life; there are signs of energy and activity in all directions; the shops are smart and well stocked; there is a good car service and overhead railway, some fine parks, one easy of access by rail or road from the city is called "Fairmount;" this I spent some pleasant hours in. Walnuts lay strewn about the ground in bushels, stones were convenient for cracking them. Having occupied myself in this direction for half an hour, and enjoyed the kernels, I found I was again a coloured man as far as the hands were concerned. The colour was fast, and remained with me till after I reached Chicago. I saw and heard nothing of Spiritualism here, though doubtless there are some Spiritualists in the city if I had time to find them; the hotel people knew nothing about it.

Left Kansas on Sunday evening, and reached Chicago Monday afternoon. On Tuesday, called on B. F. Underwood, of the "Religio Philosophical Journal," and had a couple of hours pleasant conversation with him. Mr. Underwood was for many years a leader of the advanced Freethought party, and a prominent writer and speaker on subjects pertaining to the advancement of humanity. His attention of late has been strongly directed to

psychical matters principally through the development of automatic writing through Mrs. Underwood's hand, much of which seems to be directed to him, and indeed his presence seems to be essential to the reception of most of it. Mrs. Underwood, (who is a lady of literary and forensic ability), read a paper on her experiences at the Congress of Religions, which was listened to with great interest.

Mr. Underwood has not quite accepted the spiritual hypothesis yet, but apparently sees no other to cover the facts.

On Wednesday, had the pleasure of meeting my old friend and correspondent, Hudson Tuttle, who with Mrs. Tuttle had come to see the "Fair." Thither we went, and spent the day looking at some of its wonders; but, after two hours' tramping, my injured leg gave out, and I had to come to a standstill. Fortunately we were near the water, and getting into an electric launch, were conveyed all round the inner circle of the buildings. The trip occupied nearly an hour, and was very enjoyable.

Spent the following evening with J. R. Francis, editor and proprietor of "The Progressive Thinker." This paper is quite a popular one, and under the able management of Mr. F., has attained a circulation of 13,000 weekly, though published at a low subscription rate (one dollar yearly). I was pleased to hear that it is a financial success. Mr. F. is an intelligent, energetic man, and an earnest Spiritualist. Mrs. Francis is heart and soul in her husband's work, and manages a book depot for spiritualistic and kindred literature, in the same premises where the journal is published, Loomis-street, West Chicago.

Hearing that Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond was in Chicago, and speaking in the Rooms of the American Patriotic Society, I attended there on Sunday morning. Having some difficulty in finding my way, I arrived rather late, just as Mrs. R. was concluding her preliminary address. The room, which would hold about 400 people, was well filled, very few seats being vacant; the audience seemed intelligent, well dressed people, and listened with close attention to the speaker. The subject was, as near as I could gather, "In search of a word." The idea being that numbers were seeking for Spiritualism who would not accept it under that name. As mesmerism had been rejected as such, but accepted as hypnotism, so was a new name necessary to enable the masses to accept Spiritualism. People were stretching out their hands and grasping at Psychism and Theosophy, but these were not an equivalent for Spiritualism, and they wanted a name to lay hold of that by; but Spiritualism had borne the brunt of the battle, and was entitled to the honours. The Psychic research people wanted to reduce Spiritualism to a science, to lay down methods by which similar results would always be obtained; but this was impossible, because spiritual volition was a factor—Spiritualism itself was more important than science. Mrs. Richmond spoke reverently of Christ and Buddha, as avatars of advanced religious ideas.

At the conclusion of her address the audience were asked to give subjects for an inspirational poem. The one chosen was "Our Pets in Heaven." Calling a lady (Mrs. Davis) from the audience, Mrs. Richmond took her hand and gave one verse of a reply; then Mrs. Davis took up the theme for another verse, and so on alternately till about twelve verses had been given; the last verse was spoken in unison. The tenor of the poem was that everything that had a soul lived after the destruction of the body; that so long as the love for the animal or thing was sustained, it would maintain its integrity, then it would merge itself into new forms. The idea was beautifully expressed, the rhythm and rhyme good, and the effect very striking. Exchanged a few words with Mrs. R. after the service, but as numbers were seeking her, had no opportunity of conversing.

Dined with Mr. and Mrs. Francis, and met a veteran Spiritualist, T. O. Barrett, of Minnesota, who will be remembered by Australian Spiritualists as the author of "The Spiritual Pilgrim," a biography of J. M. Peebles, also as one of the compilers of "The Lyceum Guide," used for a long time in the Melbourne Lyceum. Met

also his nephew, H. D. Barrett, who has just been elected President of the American National Organisation of Spiritualists.

To-morrow I expect to see our old friend, Mrs. Ada Foye, who is on the way back from Milwaukie, where she officiates and gives tests every Sunday.

Had another interview with B. F. Underwood this morning; he is a sterling man, and we drew very close together in sentiment and objects. I count him amongst my friends, and feel pleasure in being able to do so. Went to the Fair in the afternoon, and called on J. O. Barrett, who is in charge of the Minnesota Forestry department. He, like Peebles and Tuttle, is a pioneer worker, and we were soon in harmonious relations with each other.

Exhibition seeing is tiring work for a lame man, especially when he has to ride to and fro on a strap; there are about forty of these hanging from the roof of every car, and it has been my misfortune to occupy one of these in lieu of a seat on most occasions. I forbear to attempt any description of The World's Fair. My limited opportunities for observation would not justify me in doing so. It is a stupendous affair; the general effect of it imposing and impressive. I hear that the man who planned and designed the buildings is dead, and I do not wonder at it. The work involved was that of a lifetime crowded into one short year

Chicago, October 16th, 1893.

Melbourne readers of *The Harbinger* will remember Mrs. Ada Foye, who visited that city in 1881, and created quite a sensation by the numerous public tests of spirit identity she gave in the Masonic and Temperance Halls. A full account of these was given in the issue for December, 1881. I had the pleasure of an interview with Mrs. Foye at her residence, West Chicago, the day before I left the city. She has altered very little, appears to be in excellent health, and looks as young as she did when I last saw her. I spoke to her about paying us another visit. She is inclined to do so, but there are several impediments in the way; first, the calls for her services are so great, that she is usually engaged six or more months ahead; second, Mr. Foye is averse to her going so far away from home, and other minor reasons were mentioned. Still, Mrs. F. thinks she will visit Australia again. She cherishes pleasant memories of her short sojourn there, and desired kindly remembrances to many she had met with in Melbourne. Mrs. Foye's daughter, a bright, intelligent young lady to whom I was introduced, takes the responsibilities of the household during her mother's necessary absences from home.

I mentioned in my last, my projected séance with Mr. A. Campbell, the artist medium. My appointment with him was for 7 p.m., but I arrived at his rooms twenty minutes before time, just as he was coming in from the city. His dinner was reported ready, but he preferred to sit for me at once, and we retired into an inner room, in the centre of which was a small oblong table about 50 x 30 inches, over which an ordinary gasburner was turned full-on. Mr. C. brought four apparently new slates and a piece of porcelain about 6 x 7 from the adjoining room, and, closing the door after him, laid them on the table. I held the porcelain up to the gaslight, and having satisfied myself that it was free from blemish, laid it down on the table by my left hand. Mr. C. washed the slates with a sponge, and I dried them with a towel. I then marked all four slates on the corners with pencil, and on the wood with colored pencil. Mr. C. took up the porcelain and laid it on one of the slates, and, putting a second one over it, asked me to hold them whilst he put bands round. I held them in both my hands under the gaslight whilst he passed two strong rubber bands over them at right angles; the other two slates were placed over and under these, and two more bands put on. Prior to this, I tried to insert my finger between the two slates, but found it necessary to use both hands to do so. When the four slates were together, with the porcelain in the middle, the whole were laid in the centre of the table, with my two hands resting on one end, and Mr. C.'s on the other. He passed into a trance and spoke an impressive prayer, then a

childish voice, professing to be the spirit of a girl named Alice, spoke through him for awhile, after which he awoke. He suggested that the slates should be held under the table for a little time. I held them there, retaining firm hold with both hands, whilst he held the other end of the bundle as before. There was no appreciable movement of his hands during this time. In about three minutes he said it was sufficient. I restored the slates to the table and removed the outer bands. There was nothing on either of the slates but my marks. Taking off the second pair of bands, I discovered on the porcelain a picture in oils of a lake, with water-lilies and bullrushes in the foreground and an island in the background. Over the lilies was a beautiful colored bird on the wing descending, and several others in the distance. Delicately mottled clouds completed the picture, the paint on which was wet. On one of the slates was a group of pansies in pencil, with crayon tints in the centre, and on the other a communication signed "Azur," who is supposed to be the guide of the medium; there was nothing, however, in this that fitted my case, it seemed rather to refer to a third person who was to be impressed by the result of the experiment. The sitting occupied only twenty-five minutes, and from the time the slates and porcelain were brought into the room till I opened the bundle and discovered the picture, &c., either my eye or my hands had been upon them, and during far the largest portion of it both eyes and hands. There was a good light all the time, and no one else entered the room. I am not a good subject for hypnotism, having submitted myself for experiments many years ago without success, therefore the hypnotic theory will not fit in this case, and I am constrained to accept this experience as a genuine phenomenon produced by unseen agents. Have had the porcelain picture carefully packed, and hope to bring it safely to Victoria on my return.

On the morning after the sitting, I joined Mr. and Mrs. Tuttle at the depôt, and after a somewhat tedious railway journey, reached Ceylon, Ohio, about 10 p.m. Here we found a buggy and pair waiting to convey us to Berlin Heights. It was a cold moonlight night, and the drive of about four miles through green lanes was most enjoyable and refreshing to me. The drive terminated at the hospitable home of Hudson Tuttle, and after a kindly welcome from Miss Tuttle, and a light supper, I retired for the night, and fell into a deep and refreshing sleep.

To Correspondents.

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

"THEOSOPHIST'S" letter unavoidably left over.

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A correspondent having stigmatised as "cowardly" and "inhuman" the report of a séance where H. P. B. is said to have used "strong language," I copy the following lines from the *Theosophist* for May, 192, p. 456. They are written by Col. Olcott—her *fidus Achates* for seventeen years—and who knew her failings and qualities better than anybody else. He relates how H. P. B. had her saloon ticket exchanged for a steerage birth in order to enable a poor woman and her children to cross over to N. Y., and adds: "Many 'proper' and 'respectable' people have often expressed horror at H. P. B.'s coarse eccentricities, including profanity, yet I think that a generous deed like this would cause whole pages of wounded solecisms in society-manners to be washed away from the book of human accounts."

The above plainly shows that H. P. B. was partial to "profanity," and "coarse eccentricities," and that you did not "defame" her when you published a strict narrative of facts in your issue of November last.

Yours, etc.,

X.

ARE PRAYERS ANSWERED?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A recent experience leads me to give an affirmative answer to the above question. I will state my experience as briefly as possible:—

Some months back, I was oppressed with a dreadful feeling of soul-loneliness. So unbearable did this feeling become, that one evening, when out for a quiet walk, I was moved to pray with deep earnestness that my fearful burden of spiritual solitude might be lifted from my soul. I am not quite sure of the precise time that elapsed, but I think it was between two and three months after the date of my prayer, that I received a letter, full of tender sympathy, from a lady residing in Auckland, New Zealand; an old and very dear friend, from whom I had not heard for sixteen or seventeen years. She told me she had become interested in Theosophy and Spiritualism, and got automatic writing, by which means she was told to write to her old friend, C. N. R. She now writes me regularly every week. Her letters, which are overflowing with true womanly consideration and delicate sympathy, are having a remarkable effect upon me. Already they have revived in me an almost dead faith in genuine friendships. They have raised my aspirations, quickened my appreciation of all things beautiful and true, and have lifted me to a height of mental purity to which I had hitherto been a stranger.

Is not this inflow of compassion from my dear and faithful friend a direct answer to my prayer? Because, after all, if we examine our minds, and speak candidly, we must admit that it is not the sympathy of angels, whom we have never seen, that our desolate hearts really yearn for. It is the purer and higher love of our fellow creatures.

Yours, etc.,

Dec. 2nd, 1893.

C. N. R.

TELEPATHY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Will you be so good as to say if you know of any injurious effects of a physical character likely to arise from the practice of telepathy, or thought-transference, at long distances? I, of course, refer to instances where perfect harmony and sympathy exist between the persons communicating, and where honour precludes the possibility of inquisitive or improper questions being put.

Yours, etc.,

INQUIRER.

[We should think that injurious effects of any kind were all but impossible.—Ed. H. of L.]

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

An important meeting was held in the Hall of the Spiritualists, 165 Collins-street, on Monday evening, 18th December.

Mr. George Spriggs, who was voted into the chair, stated that this was the first meeting of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists since the large accession to its numbers from the Rational Sunday Club; that 95 members of the Rational Sunday Club had been members of the V. A. S., and the total number of members was now 135; that a sub-committee from each of the Societies had met and revised the Rules carefully, and the copy of the Revised Rules was read clause by clause by Mr. D. Kennedy; and, after making a few alterations, these were adopted as the Rules of the V. A. S.

It was also stated that the Office-bearers of the two Societies had all resigned their positions; and the meeting then proceeded to elect a new set of Office-bearers. These are as follows:—President, Mr. George Spriggs; two Vice-presidents, Mrs. Andrew, Mr. Bradley; Secretary, Mr. Robert Williams; Treasurer, Mrs. Campbell; Librarian, Miss Alice Lane; ten members of Committee: Mr. Debney, Mrs. Finlay, Mr. Freedman, Miss Hinge, Mr. Knight, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Redfern, Miss Samuel, Mr. F. Stewart, Mr. Robert Williams.

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

OUR correspondent, "Spiritist," returns to the subject of this lady having appeared at a séance in Melbourne; and throws considerable doubt upon the reality of her presence. We can only state in reply that we never saw a more conclusive case of identification established—

- (1.) By the description of a clairvoyant who was present.
- (2.) By the language, voice, and demeanour of the controlling spirit. And (3), by collateral testimony since received.

We entirely agree with what Dr. Buchanan has written, and our correspondent quotes, on the subject of real and supposed messages, but upwards of twenty years' experience in connection with these phenomena, has enabled us, we hope, to discriminate between genuine communications *ab extra*, and the operations of the medium's own mind.

KOOT HOOMI THE MAHATMA.

A CLERICAL contributor in England sends us the following, avowedly founded on Mary Howitt's "The Water Coot":—

O, Koot! not "bold adventurous Coot,"
I pray you tell to me
The reason why you set not foot
'Twixt mountain heights and sea?
We view thee not in rivers fair,
Not e'en the holy Ganges;
But timorous, you lurk in lair
Amid Thibetian ranges
You say: because you are so good,
You dwell alone with brothers,
Consuming vegetable food,—
This even Sinnett bothers.
Yet, where are you, the Hoomi dark?
I cry in thoughtful mood;
Can "brothers" find your earthly ark!
I doubt much if they could.
Dwell you in the flesh, as oft you say?
That's the important query.
Are your epistles—yea or nay?
Fresh from your lofty eyrie?
And does its querists e'er content
In *parte* or in *toto*,
Or quite convince them what is meant
By sending them your photo?
Where are you, O, embodied Koot?
Just show us for a minute;
And can your soul abruptly shoot
To Olcott and to Sinnett?
Tell us but this, you fitful spark,
To calm our wond'ring mood;
Can you be seen, unless it's dark?
I doubt much if you could.
Is it because you are so pure
To see you might demean you?
Why, for my part, I'm not so sure
I've not already seen you.
And surely very strange it seems
That you should England reach,
As people travel swift in dreams,
And use our English speech.
Where did you get your accent pure?
Whatever be the fountains,
Your English tongue ne'er came, I'm sure,
From Himalaya's mountains.
O, Koot! you strange, you ghostly fly!
These thoughts my brain beshrew;
I guess the why you are so shy:
No soul in flesh are you.
And musing thus I freely laugh
At this strange, mystic riddle,
And read your borrowed paragraph
From the ingenuous Kiddle.*

W. R. TOMLIMSON.

* A paragraph from an essay by an American gentleman, named Kiddle, was said to have been adopted by Mme. Blavatsky, as original matter from Koot Hoomi.

POETRY.

A MINISTERING SPIRIT.

When I was dead one year, I came
Unto mine own,—it was so sweet
To see their faces and to hear
The voices that I could not greet:—
Within the old familiar home,
They talked and laughed with youthful zest,
Brave brothers and fair sisters dear—
But little dreamed who was their guest.
They measured out the morrow's plans,
And counted joys that filled to-day,
Their eager eyes sought present good,—
I was a being passed away:—
The world was with them and did lure,
With throng of happy, living things
They could not feel my spirit touch,
Nor hear the rustle of my wings!

And all went forth, save one alone
Who to the window casement stole
Where erst, we two were wont to sit,—
And in the anguish of her soul,
Wept long and sore, with trembling hands
Upon her tear-washed face, and cried:
"God pity me this woful day,—
This was the day my brother died!"

Then, with a spirit's subtle ken
God-given,—did I minister
Sweet comfort, such as God gave me
Unmeasured,—gave I unto her.
Till, sad with pleasure's surfeit,—they
Who went, returning, found no trace
Of woe in her, and whispered low:—
"She wears God's glory on her face!"

—ZITELLA COOKE.

MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTIC LYCEUM.

MORE than half of the six months' session of the above Institution has now passed, and we think that on the whole it has been marked by great improvement, in various ways, and has run along comparatively smoothly. We are sorry to say that the Lyceum is losing some of its active members, business calling them away to other parts; but we hope that wherever they may go they will be the means of opening up other spheres of labour in the interest of truth, and that they will continue to work for the cause of Spiritualism.

On Nov. 26th, Recitation Sunday, a good programme was gone through, and was apparently greatly enjoyed by the large audience present.

Dec. 2nd, Mr. Thomas Lang, one of the oldest members of the Lyceum and Victorian Association of Spiritualists, gave an address: subject, "Spiritualism for the Children." It proved very interesting, being an account of some communications received from old Lyceum workers who had passed on.

Dec. 9th, Mr. Debney, the former conductor, gave a useful address on "Habit." His remarks were plain, unvarnished truths, pointedly put, and showing glaring inconsistencies in our mode of life in general; and we hope the members will not only agree with Mr. Debney in his views, but adopt them.

Dec. 16th, Mr. Wm. Brown gave an address on "Culture," treating his subject in a masterly manner, clearly showing to the Lyceum how they might improve themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually, pure bodily habits being essential to a sound reasoning mind, whereby we might develop the spirit within.

We have great pleasure in announcing that the Lyceum has taken the Hall in Victoria Parade (near Cyclorama), lately occupied by the Secularists' Association, which is being thoroughly renovated previous to the opening, which will take place on Sunday, 31st Dec. On this day two sessions will be held, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. A full account of the opening Sunday will appear in our next issue. We think that in taking this step the Lyceum has made a move in the right direction, as the

Hall has seating accommodation for 1000 people, and has also splendid acoustic properties. As by removing they have considerably increased their expenditure, we trust they will receive the cordial and substantial support of every person interested in their good work. The Hall, in future, will be known by the name of The Lyceum, which we think is very appropriate; and, in conclusion, we can only wish the Institution a prosperous career in its new quarters, and all the members and friends A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

A PROFESSION OF FAITH.

M. Jules Bois, a French writer who has been very much *en evidencee* of late, thus proclaims his belief, in one of the Paris papers:—

“At the close of the nineteenth century, I venture to affirm that, outside of men, individual wills exist which guide the world. I believe in angels, demons, and spirits, because I have felt their presence around me, because I have seen them, because they have talked to me. I am as sure of the reality of my soul as the experimenter is sure of the residue in the retort which he sees before Him. I have touched God as the humblest have touched him when they have prayed on bent knees with fervor, and I have enough simplicity to believe with all the prophets, with all the Messiahs, with all those who have sounded the earth and the heavens, that there is a conscious force to guide the universe.

“No: our true apostles are not the pontiffs or the hierophants of the interior of the Temple, but the initiators will be women. The Gnosis claims that the Paraclete (or the Holy Spirit) is to be incarnated not in a new Adam but in a new Eve regenerated. This is symbolical. Humanity is great enough to no more endure the ferule of Jules Simon or of this Berengaria of a Republic of Yvetot. The reign of law is ended, that of love commences.

“You see this restlessness which reigns in the tribe of women—*clan des femmes*—it is because they feel that the expected renovation is coming from them.

“Man is hard, whatever he may do; woman has inspiration, tenderness which go beyond the heart of man. Our earth, which is disturbed enough, requires a little rest, it is going to take itself into retirement, as old men whom life has too much afflicted with its painful experiences and there the mild hand and the zeal of sisters and mothers of charity will be required. . . . Believe me The Invisible manifests Himself to us when the laws of Providence permit it. . . . The only practical magic which does not deceive is prayer; not that which comes from the end of the lips but that which wells up from the bottom of the soul. Prayer multiplies by a hundred fold the forces of him who prays and puts in his hand a mysterious sceptre which makes submissive, without their knowing why, those who surround him. Formulas render more intense the will as a concentrated battery of electric fluids. Orthodoxy resides in some inspired persons, not yet in union, but who will, in the day of spiritual encounters, edify the Eternal Church.”

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

“The Application of the Magnet to the Treatment of the Sick,” is the title of a *brochure* translated into Spanish from the fourth French edition of the treatise by Professor Henry Durville, and illustrated by ten wood cuts.

It briefly relates the history of magnetism, explains the polarity of human beings, and describes the nature and use of magnetic plates and bars, as also of the sensitivo-meter; besides pointing out how to apply magnets therapeutically for the cure or relief of a large proportion of the ills that flesh is heir to. So useful a manual should be translated from Spanish into English. It is published at the office of the *Irradiacion*, 59 Jacometrezo, Madrid.

From the same office we have received a lecture by M. Durville, entitled “The Physical Laws of Magnetism,” setting forth in a compendious form the principles of human polarity, as well as the physical and psychical causes of human polarity.

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

A BOY'S OWN CREED.

BY ROBERT RICHARDSON, B.A.

A MERRY heart, as Shakespeare sings,
Goes merry all the live-long day;
Takes heart of cheer from little things,
In drear December thinks of May.
Then never yield to vain regret,
Send vapours to the right-about;
Work cannot kill like fume and fret—
Think cheerful thoughts and live them out.

Be gentle, lad, in act and speech,
And with the aged doubly so;
Youth hath a power old hearts to reach,
And lighten as nought else can do.
Be courteous with all lowly folk,
Who tread life's path love's joy without;
Kind words can ease their leaden yoke—
Think gentle thoughts and live them out.

Be straight and honest as the day,
Keep heart and hands like sunshine clean;
Dread every dark and double way,
Scorn every sordid thought and mean.
Ware the fine-reasoning casuist,
Truth's naked edge his schemes will rout;
The first short “step that costs” resist—
Think honest thoughts and live them out.

Be simple, boy, in all thy ways,
Simple in bearing, act, and word;
Copy no trick of look or phrase
That makes the mincing fop absurd.
Be modest in thine own conceit
Others will find thy merit out;
Tread duty's path with faithful feet—
Think modest thoughts and live them out.

Strive a high standard to maintain,
A high ideal of faith and deed;
E'en though again and yet again
You fall beneath your written creed.
Narrow your soul and it must be
Your life shall narrow, past all doubt.
Worth is the best nobility—
Think noble thoughts and live them out.

LITTLE JOE THE NEWSBOY.

Little Joe first appeared on the streets of New York two years ago. He was small and slight, with great brown eyes and pinched lips that always wore a smile. Where he came from, nobody knew and few cared. His parents, he said, were dead, and he had no friends. It was a hard life. Up at 4 o'clock in the morning after sleeping in a dry-goods box or in an alley, he worked steadily till late at night. He was misused at first. Big boys stole his papers or crowded him out of a warm place at night, but he never complained. The tears would well up in his eyes, but were quickly brushed away and a new start bravely made. Such conduct won him friends, and after a little, no other boy dared to play tricks on Little Joe. His friends he remembered and his enemies he forgave. Some days he had especially good luck. Kind-hearted people pitied the little fellow and bought papers whether they wanted them or not. But he was too generous to save money enough even for a night's lodging. Every boy who got “stuck,” knew he was sure to get enough to buy a supper as long as Joe had a penny.

But the hard work and exposure began to tell on his weak constitution. He kept growing thinner and thinner, till there was scarcely an ounce of flesh on his little body. The skin on his face was drawn closer and closer, but the pleasant look never faded away. He was uncomplaining to the last. Two weeks ago he awoke one morning after working hard selling “extras” to find himself too weak to move. He tried his best to get upon his feet, but it was a vain effort. The vital force was gone. “Where is little Joe?” was the universal inquiry. Finally he was found in a secluded corner, and a good-natured hackman was persuaded to take him to the

hospital at Flatbush, where he said he once lived. Every day one of the boys went to see him. On Saturday, a newsboy who had abused him at first, and who learned to love him afterwards, found him sitting up in his cot, his little blue-veined hands stretched out upon the coverlet.

"I was afraid you wasn't coming, Jerry," he said with some difficulty, "and I wanted to see you once more so much. I guess it will be the last time, Jerry, for I feel awful weak to-day. Now, Jerry, when I die I want you to be good for my sake. Tell the boys—"

But his message never was completed.

Little Joe was dead. His sleep was calm and beautiful. The trouble and anxiety on his wan face had disappeared. But the expression was still there. Even in death he smiled.

It was sad news that Jerry bore back to his friends on that day. They feared the end was near, and were waiting for him with anxious hearts. When they saw his tear-stained face, they knew that Little Joe was dead. Not a word was said. They felt as if they were in the presence of death itself. Their hearts were too full to speak.

That night 100 boys met in front of the City Hall. They felt that they must express this sense of loss in some way, but how they did not know. Finally, in accordance with the suggestion of one of the larger boys, they passed a resolution which read as follows:—

"Resolved that we all liked Little Joe, who was the best newsboy in New York. Everybody is sorry that he has died."

A collection was taken up to send delegates to the funeral, and the same hackman who bore Little Joe to the hospital, again kindly offered the use of his carriage.

The funeral took place yesterday. On the coffin was a plate, purchased by the boys, whose language was expressive from its very simplicity.

This was the inscription:

"Little Joe,
Aged 14,
The best Newsboy in New York,
We all liked him.

There were no services, but each boy sent a flower to be placed on the coffin of his friend. After all what did it matter that Little Joe was dead?

He was only a newsboy.

This is not a fancy sketch. Every word of the above story is true.

Selection.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

(Written in 1867.)

GREAT and untold blessings are in store for all who live uprightly.

WHEN your spirits are passive, or rather in harmony with ours, the material part of your nature corresponds with the power we possess, like the gradations in music; it produces a harmony, the system is in *rappor*t, the nervous structure is open to the nervous correspondence of our improved or less gross organisation. We possess more nervous ability than you, as there is less of matter in our structures, and therefore we are bound by fewer impediments. Our magnetic power is increased, and the spirit communication is more direct and distinct.

'Tis hard to give man's thoughts to a child's brain, or outward light to an infant in the womb; so hard is it to give to mortal man definite conceptions of immortal life.

THE Spiritual Congress is always in session. There is always a quorum sitting, and the work never stops. The president of the association attends frequently, and names the reports, etc.—the acting delegates. The spirits of the 5th sphere have a committee; both receive their instructions from our deputy, and they work earnestly in the cause. The spirits of the 6th sphere

are the great directing minds; all beneath them work cheerfully and harmoniously in the good work. They know their wisdom is greater, and the instruction of higher spirits always commends itself to their reason. The whole plan is like a vast machine. The spirit congress is the great *lever* and controlling power; and the lower circles represent the wheels locking one within the other, and gradually and surely accomplishing the work. The spiritual spheres are drawing nearer to the earth; the committee becomes closer every day, and ere very many years, man will see them in their daily walks; he will know of their proximity, and open his eyes to their wisdom and beauty. The world will then be but the nursery of angels; for with a thorough knowledge of the *hereafter*, man will live for it and not for the material. He will be a spirit, and not an animal. He will be a god in wisdom and a child in simplicity. Verily I say unto you, the time is not long before these things come to pass. We see them looming in the future, and their accomplishment is not far off. Few generations shall pass away before the commencement of the spirit-era. It will not be general at first, but it will eventually spread over the whole world.

THE DEV DHARM MISSION.

WE have received from Mohan Dev, Superintendent of the Dev Dharm Mission, Lahore, Punjab, a brief history of that Mission, and a synopsis of its principles; with a request that we would give publicity to the letter. The more important of these appear to be following:—

I.—That Man is conscious of his existence and of other existences besides himself.

II.—That Man has no existence independent of other existences, and that he is only a part of the stupendous whole or universe.

III.—That Man being a part or connected link in the Infinite Cosmos cannot escape partaking either consciously or unconsciously good or evil, useful or injurious influences thereof.

IV.—That the first and foremost duty of Man is to adjust all parts of his own organism in relation to each other and his whole being in relation to every other existence related to him.

V.—That the true way of Man's adjustment or union *ekta* of different parts of his own being, and of his being with other existences related to him, lies in his attainment of the *knowledge* of the principles that can affect the adjustment and the necessary *Love* or *Power* for their application.

In the principles which follow, or rather in their definition, there appears to be a good deal of mysticism. But divested of this, we take it that they lay down the following propositions:—

- (a) That self-surrender is the only path that can lead man to the higher life, through perfect trust in, and implicit obedience to, the Author of all Good; and
- (b) That by continuing in subjection to our lower nature, or what Paul calls "the carnal mind," we yield ourselves to the dominion of evil in all its forms, and become false, unjust, and ignoble; pain, misery, and discord being the necessary result.

THE SOURCE OF WISDOM.—"But I will not conceal from you the simple child-like way which I walk in Christ Jesus; for I can write nothing of myself, but as of a child, which neither knoweth nor understandeth anything: neither hath ever been learned, but only that which the Lord vouchsafeth to know in me; according to the measure, as he manifests Himself in me, the gate was opened unto me, that in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had spent a lifetime at an university; at which I did exceedingly admire, and I knew not how it happened to me; and thereupon I turned my heart to praise God for it."—*Jacob Boehme*.

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