

# THE Harbinger of Light.

MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

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

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

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evidence of many eminent men of all nations. His discourses were free from either egotism or dogmatism, and redolent with the true Christian spirit. When a honest man speaks intuitively, the truths he utters must find a resting place in those minds which are open to the reception of truth, and all are more or less so. The mind crowded with error and bigotry, may yet have some small space for a germ of truth to find a lodgement; and, although from the uncongeniality of the soil its expansion may be slow, it can never be destroyed, but will ultimately have its legitimate influence on the individual. It is a fair presumption that the majority of those who attended Mr. Peebles' lectures were truth-seekers, and consequently in a condition to receive whatever commended itself to their reason as truth. These have found what they sought, whilst many we know of, who were prejudiced against Spiritualism and its exponent, have had their views of both considerably modified. In fact Mr. Peebles has succeeded in removing from many minds the misconceptions with regard to Spiritualism, which, through the misrepresentations of the pulpit and the press, are so prevalent, and proving it a rational system of philosophy according with the teachings of Jesus; in fact that Spiritualists were Christians in the truest sense of the word, believing in and endeavoring to practice the principles and precepts of the Founder of Christianity. The influence of these lectures will be wide-spread, and will doubtless exercise a very salutary influence upon the public mind; whilst the exemplification of the teachings in the life of the pilgrim during his sojourn amongst us, has effectually repudiated all the slanders circulated about him shortly after his arrival. The address presented to him at his last lecture clearly expresses the feelings of the Spiritualists of Victoria, and, not only them, but a large number of free thinkers, who have not yet had sufficient evidence to justify their accepting the facts of Spiritualism, but who fully accord with its philosophy as expounded by Mr. Peebles. Those gentlemen who were instrumental in introducing Mr. Peebles to Victoria have every reason to be satisfied with their action in the matter; the results have been most gratifying and the effect will be lasting. Verbatim reports of the last series of lectures are preserved, and when published will form an interesting record of an important epoch in the progress of Spiritualism in Victoria.

THE "Spiritual Pilgrim" has finished his mission here, and proceeded on his pilgrimage round the world; we may with propriety review the work he has done amongst us, and estimate its probable effect upon society, and the cause of Spiritualism in Victoria. In our December issue we gave an account of Mr. Peebles' doings up to that time, and reviewed the action of the press in regard to him. In our last we were enabled to report a change of attitude on the part of our leading papers and the reaction which had then set in continued until his departure. We do not think that the press are entitled to the gratitude of Spiritualists or free thinkers for their change of tactics. The "Peebles' Committee," feeling satisfied that Mr. Peebles only required to be heard to be appreciated, appealed from the press to the public, and from the first of his lectures in the Prince of Wales Theatre, "The Pilgrim" fully established himself in their favor. The press could not ignore the verdict of such audiences as assembled to hear Mr. Peebles' lectures; although on two occasions the weather was unpropitious the house was invariably crowded, and at the second and last lectures hundreds were unable to obtain admission. In fact, so great and increasing was the public interest in these lectures, that, had Mr. Peebles prolonged his visit, it would have been necessary to have engaged the Town Hall to accommodate the masses who desired to attend them. But what was the secret of this success? what was it that rivetted the attention of these vast audiences, and ensured a growing interest in the lectures? It was not the particular eloquence of the speaker; or the startling novelty of his utterances; but the sincerity of his manner and the rationality of his matter. He spoke the honest convictions of his soul with clearness and lucidity, and supported his positions by his own experiences and the

## COMMUNICATION.

*The work which Spirits hope to do by means of a more open communication with the human race.*

At present, all minds are agitated on the great social questions of Religion and Education; we perceive so much that is false in the first, and of what is deficient to effect the good desired in the latter; that a total revision of the foundations upon which Religion is built, appears to every candid mind, to be absolutely needed, since, through its teachings, Education has hitherto been restricted, in order to maintain the enduring belief of the votaries of Religion in the dogmas taught by the professors of that Religion.

We use the term Religion, here, in the human sense of the word, and attach to it the meaning of Orthodoxy, of right thinking, according to any certain standard, founded upon foregone conclusions.

We at once perceive man to be met with almost insuperable difficulties at the very outset of his investigation; the Religious denominations are in themselves as numerous as the temperaments of mankind, in each race and nation; and each denomination gives to the world doctrines, multiplied in diversities, in exact proportion to the number of individuals who have written on the subjects held to be of vital importance among the members of these various sects. Each writer, and each preacher gives some diversified view of any popular doctrine that attracts his attention, which accords quite as much with his own individuality as with the truth, to say the least; he thus too often divests these doctrines of all simplicity, clothing them with whatever superstitious attribute may be dominant in his own mind.

All must see in this state of things, too patent to human observation to be disputed, that a Unanimous Belief must be impossible under such circumstances; that, in fact, confusion, worse confounded, must arise out of any attempt to arrive at any Specific Belief, if it have no better authority than such a heterogeneous mass of Truth and Speculative Tradition; as each Dogmatist will affirm his own idea of Truth to be the correct one, and will maintain his position to his last breath, unless convinced of Error, by an authority granted by himself to have some degree of weight, superior to his own; hence spirits foresaw the necessity of some more fully recognised interference from the spheres of progressed souls, in order that man might be taught, by actual and personal experience, how much or how little of dependence may be placed on Revelation as a foundation for so-called Religion.

Just as the Revelations, made through mediums in the present day, are tinged by the natural emotions, and stamped by the degree of intelligence possessed by such mediums; so were the Revelations that were made through the Prophets and Seers of the Old and New Testament times. Any one who reads, with an unprejudiced mind, the Biblical record, will find that the Revelations made through Moses, the great Priestly Legislator and Political Leader of an enslaved race, whose only hope of emancipation was by rebellion, were vastly different to those which moved to action the more Martial Joshua; the mixture of priestly dogmas received during the leadership of Moses, with the cruelties consequent on a state of warfare, necessitated by surrounding circumstances during the generalship of Joshua and his less warlike successors, is everywhere apparent, and the tone so different (in all that does not relate to abstract justice), to the aspirations of the Holy Job and the Ecstatic Isaiah, as to cause the thinking mind to marvel, how an unchanging belief in the Revelations of each, being made directly from one and the same spirit, could ever have survived the opposed doctrines thus brought before the Jewish nation through her prophets, and still less how it could have been received with a like credulity by surrounding peoples, surviving the attacks made upon it by advanced Thought, guided by Science, and accepted by Reason. Yet in spite of all this, Revelation as a Tradition, has survived every obstacle, and by its means Truth and Error have stalked side by side through ancient and modern nations; Truth striving to ameliorate the wrong inflicted by Error, whose deeds are

written in the blood of the myriads crucified, mentally and bodily, for the Truth's sake.

Here we would observe, what is constantly observable in the Spirit manifestations of the present generation, and which is brought as an objection to their validity—"The evident Source of the Inspirations." In Noah and in Abraham, we see the simple worship of the Arab shepherd—Nature, the Great Temple; a Mountain, the Secret and Holy place; a Stone, the Altar on which to offer sacrifice. In Abraham's history, we further see, how (as he became better acquainted with the thoughts and literature of the surrounding nations) his own Revelations, bore the stamp of a more Rational Belief in One God, who communicated with man by means of His Angels.

In Job, the contemporary of Moses, we have the more advanced and polished thought and higher aims, which had gradually arisen during the period of four thousand years, which divides his history from that of Abraham, and which were due rather to the effects produced by a less isolated position, than the result of any marked change in the worship of so simple a people. A borderer on more civilized and consequently less unfriendly communities, his ideas are consequently broader and more liberal as to the attributes of the Deity and his relations to his fellow man.

We might multiply proofs of the influence of surrounding circumstances and Education on the various Prophets and Seers handed down to us by the Old Testament History, repeated in the History of the New Testament Apostles, and confirmed in the phenomena attending more modern media; all of which goes to prove, that just as Revelations from the Spirit-world partake of the thoughts and knowledge, and are tinged by the prejudices of the mediums in a greater or less degree, now, so has it been in all times; and just as it is necessary to "Try the Spirits" now, by the aid of that Reason, which is God's own best gift to man, to guide and to teach him what is Truth; so it is equally necessary to use that Reason, in accepting or rejecting the Revelations, made in a like manner to the mediums of a less cultivated race.

Let each medium raise the highest thoughts to the great source of all being, and then receive in faith and love whatever the Spirits dictate, and rest assured that nothing will appear therein which the Reason of the most holy minds would not accept, as the highest thoughts possible to man in this stage of his development.

These are the aims of those Spirits who impress mediums to write; and the result of these aims, they hope will be, the closer Brotherhood of Man, hastened by an emancipation from the superstitious fear that they are bound to believe (however unreasonable, or however derogatory to the attributes of Deity), whatever they are taught to believe has been the actual Revelation of the Spirit; and further, through this Emancipation of Thought, to loose the bonds that would restrict the objects of investigation, and thus retard the Progress and Education of Mankind.

Another object which the Spirits have in view, is the convincing man of a Future Life, together with the certainty of Future Rewards and Punishments lest they should grow Infidel from a want of Faith in the opinions of the Revelers of Moral Laws; since they vary so much with the development of the people to whom they are made; for, though that which should follow from a consideration of such a circumstance ought to be an assurance of the truth of the word spoken by the Great Teacher, "Unto whom much is given, from him much shall be required;" yet such is not generally the case, so blinded has mankind become through a superstitious belief in Traditions. Although angels cannot do more than work on the highest, and so develop the best thoughts of the medium (since you cannot make the leopard's spots white.) Yet they can convince man of a Life to come, by so etherialising his inner soul covering, as to admit him into the presence of the Spirits gone before, and thus show him some of those mysteries which await his full understanding when freed from his earthly body he shall himself dwell entirely in a spiritual body; free to communicate in his turn with the loved ones he has left behind, whose heavenly progress



he would fain assist, and whose earthly trials he would fain assuage by consoling assurances of a Better Life of Eternal Progression beyond the grave.

We would here say, that one great object of the Spirits, in giving the more physical manifestations, has been, in order to convince mankind, that there are pains and penalties attached to sins of omission and commission; let them take heed to themselves, lest dying without having regenerated, or cleansed their souls from sin, they, in like manner, should be drawn to earth, anxiously awaiting an opportunity of undoing the ill deeds of which they have been the primary cause. Each demonstration has its hidden meaning; all could not bear a faithful interpretation thereof. We hope, during the succeeding generations, to produce a higher moral and intellectual tone, and so inaugurate a more beneficial state among men, and of consequence a more profitable and reliable communion between Man on Earth and Man in the Spirit World.

Z.

## Poetry.

### THE SONG OF TRUTH.

From the unseen throne of the Great Unknown,  
From the Soul of All I came;  
Not with the rock of the earthquake's shock,  
And not with the wasting flame.  
But silent and deep is my onward sweep,  
Through the depths of the boundless sky;  
I stand sublime, through the lapse of time,  
And where God is, there am I.

In the early years, when the youthful spheres,  
From the depths of Chaos sprung,  
When the heavens grew bright with the new-born light,  
And the stars in chorus sung—  
To that holy sound, through the space profound,  
'Mid their glittering ranks I trod;  
For I am a part of the Central Heart,  
Co-equal and one with God.

The world is my child. Though wilful and wild,  
Yet I know that she loves me still,  
For she thinks I fled with her holy dead.  
Because of her stubborn will;  
And she weeps at night, when the angels light  
Their watch-fires over the sky,  
Like a maid o'er the grave of her loved and brave;  
But the Truth can never die.

One by one, like sparks from the sun,  
I have counted the souls that came  
From the hand Divine;—all, all are mine,  
And I call them by my name.  
One by one, like sparks to the sun,  
I shall see them all return;  
Though tempest-tost, yet they are not lost,  
And not one shall cease to burn.

I only speak to the lowly and meek,  
To the simple and child-like heart,  
But I leave the proud to their glittering shroud,  
And the tricks of their cunning art.  
Like a white-winged dove from the home of love,  
Through the airy space untrod,  
I come at the cry which is heard on high,—  
"Hear me, O God! my God!"

### THE REV. R. POTTER'S SERMON ON SPIRITUALISM.

The Rev. Robert Potter delivered the first of two lectures on the "Pretensions of Spiritism," last Sunday, at St. Mary's, Hotham; the second is to be delivered to-morrow evening. So far as the rev. gentleman has gone, he displays either ignorance of the subject or something worse, his premises in some instances being absolutely false. We shall review the lectures in next issue.

"RECLAIMED" will be continued next month.

## To Correspondents.

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

### LETTER FROM CASTLEMAINE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Since last writing you, several seances for physical manifestation have been held at the house of Mr. J. P.—n, Mrs. P. and her eldest son acting as the mediums. I have been present at three of them. At one sitting we had a large branch of a cherry tree with a quantity of fruit on it thrown on the table. We found it had been broken off a tree growing in the garden in front of the house. Another evening a lady present had her bonnet placed at her feet, and a little while afterwards it was taken from the room, and though there was a thorough search made no trace could be found. In about a quarter of an hour it was placed on the table in the same mysterious manner it came and went before. At another sitting a flat-iron was thrown on the table so heated that it was impossible to handle it. This had been taken from an outside kitchen fireplace. At another sitting Mrs. P.—n's younger son—a boy about 9 or 10 years old—was lifted bodily off the chair he was sitting on and carried over the table, and quietly placed with his knees on the shoulders and his hands resting on the head of a gentleman visitor. This boy is frequently lifted about and acted upon in various ways whilst sitting in the room. At all these seances the number and variety of the articles brought is most astonishing, and they come so gently, never in any case touching or hurting any of the sitters, though many of the articles brought in are heavy and cumbersome. Whilst the sittings are held the raps on the table are very loud and distinct; also on the floor and walls. One evening we heard a noise going over the floor like a tread or footstep of some heavy animal.

I must state that most of the seances are held in the dark, the doors being closed and locked, the manifestations being found much stronger and more certain than in the light.

Many thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs. P. for their kindness in giving so many people an opportunity of seeing these wonderful manifestations, for all who are acquainted with seances well know the sacrifice of time and the encroachments on one's home they entail upon the givers.

During the holidays—on Christmas Day—the Sunday School of the Castlemaine Universalists had their first picnic at a very pretty spot near the butts, the youngsters enjoying themselves to their heart's content, though I think the ladies must have had a hard day's work in their attendance upon the wants of the children. On New Year's Day a few of the Spiritualists made up a picnic at the same place, numbering about 60 to 70 people, who had a most enjoyable day of it.

There is much regret with many here at not having another opportunity of hearing Mr. Peebles before his departure.

BETA.

Castlemaine,  
14th January, 1873.

### REFLECTIONS ON THE SANDHURST AND CASTLEMAINE SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

"About five-eighths of the Protestant clergy are, in the secret consciousness of their own minds, perfect materialists with regard to faith in spiritual existence; and yet they preach life and immortality, because preaching is their occupation, and they do not know anything better to proclaim to the people. In truth almost every Christian would like to see, in order to believe in those miracles which the sacred historians have recorded. In fact there are comparatively very few minds who enjoy undisturbed confidence in the validity of those accounts. The unanimous voice of all christendom is—"We will believe in miracles when we see them; show us spirits, and we will believe in their existence." "I say that to supply the want of the age there are miracles, and spiritual manifestations developed and demonstrated." "I would notice still another miracle—a 'Jacob's ladder' composed of

magnetism and electricity, erected in this age, planted on earth and reaching to heaven, upon which angels descend and ascend bringing "tidings of great joy" to man, and imparting to him a knowledge of those great truths which belong to an immortal and progressive existence"—Philosophy of spiritual intercourse.—By A. J. Davis, pages 19 and 20. "Does not evidence like everything else, wear out, and require renewing? Are not miracles quite as necessary now to restore faith as they were once to give it."—"Howitt's History of the Supernatural," vol. 2, page 159.

"It demonstrates anew, and re-affirms with life quickening power all the divine precepts of Christ, and those who have gone before, making them the living truths of to-day." Nothing is so mighty and so magical on the human heart as consciousness of spiritual intercourse, the great fact that heaven is open, its guardianship is constant, and inspirations are direct. Spiritualism has already redeemed thousands, once darkened and buried in materialism, hardened in heart, but now lifting songs heavenward." \* \* \* Those who realise these things cannot feel otherwise than inspired with the holiest and loftiest purposes."—Plain Guide to Spiritualism, by U. Clark, page 98 and 99.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR—In each succeeding number of the *Harbinger of Light* during the six months past, reports have appeared of the most astounding manifestations of supernatural power at Sandhurst and Castlemaine. Beyond the mere report little notice seems to have been taken of them by your own or other journals. Many anti-spiritualists, who hear of these strange things, will "want" to know what they are to think about them.

It is to satisfy this "want" I offer the following reflections. I shall have already helped them much if they have carefully read over the quotations at the head of my letter. I am sure, Mr. Editor, that you will agree with me, that such miracles in our midst are too important to be past over without comment, or attempt to gather instruction therefrom.

It is only reasonable to presume that the Supreme Disposer of events has a wise design in events like these, springing up all over the world in a manner unparalleled in the days of our fathers; what that wise design is, I judge, to be truly pointed out by the authors I have quoted. 99 out of 100 whom we chance to meet, educated or uneducated, will regard the reported sight of a spirit hand and arm at Sandhurst bringing money to a little girl, too improbable a story to be worth enquiring into the truth of. If one in a hundred can be got to listen to the story, and you show him that by the laws of evidence and human testimony the fact is as clearly proved as a fact would be before a judge who sentenced a man to death for murder; when I say you have shown this to the satisfaction of one jurymen, he will then, instead of thanking you for the information, very probably exclaim 'how shocking! what is the good of it?' and is inclined to blame those who saw it, or possibly regard with feelings of aversion, all mediumship in the production thereof. The motives for this feeling I could describe if anyone would describe to me the motive for that feeling which caused the prophets to be stoned.

"The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." But, "if there are divinations," the awkward sequiter crops up—"there must be Gods." Demonstrations of the supernatural overthrow the philosophy of such fools, and you bring to them the information they did not want to receive, because it humbles their proud philosophy, or cheeks thoughtless selfish gaiety, and Godless worldly-mindedness. However, giving credit to the anti-spiritualist for better motives, and supposing him to be pained at the thought of evil spiritual agency being so unfortunately rife in our midst, and supposing, further, that he is right in his conjecture of the cause of the supernatural, when we have granted all this, we unearth a large amount of anti-spiritual folly, for what shall we say of the folly of the ninety-nine, who would not listen to the story, or believe in the truth of the fact of supernatural power being, or having been, in operation at Sandhurst or Castlemaine. If the facts are true they must be important to a very large section of society, just as they were important to Miss Emily Wesley, the sister of the Rev. John Wesley. In speaking of the well-known supernatural manifestations at her father's rectory at Epworth, she writes in a letter to her brother Samuel—"I am so far from being superstitious that I was too much inclined to infidelity, so that I heartily rejoice at having such an opportunity of

convincing myself past doubt or scruple of the existence of some beings besides those we see."

That fact which was important to Miss Wesley, may be important to many of the ninety-nine, who neither believe the facts reported at Sandhurst, nor pause to enquire into the truth of them. They agree concerning the matter, as I heard a gentleman argue concerning the spirit-hand presented to the Emperor and Empress of the French, through the mediumship of Mr. Home. The gentleman in question said—"If the spirit-hand was presented to such great personages it would have been reported, and would be discussed, in the leading journals: we see nothing about it, it therefore cannot be true."

One would naturally and reasonably suppose that a person (once arriving at a conviction of the facts under consideration being true from eye witness, or from the laws of evidence) would hasten to roll away the clouds of error from the minds of the aforesaid ignorant or sceptical ninety-nine, in order that they might benefit as did Miss Emily Wesley, or the early Christians at the sight of miracles.

It is lamentable that so few become animated with this disposition, and where this spirit of the love of truth does manifest itself, and the advocate of truth makes the slightest attempt to benefit his friends, he is met with the polite salutation—"I am surprised that a man of your intelligence should believe such stuff." Irritated and wearied with the repetitions of these compliments, he begins to murmur within himself—"stupid fools they are, let them find out the truth for themselves." I have shown that these manifestations are important, and that good results would flow from a knowledge of them, even viewing them in their worst aspect, presuming always that any large section of our society have minds akin to that of Miss E. Wesley, who also regarded the manifestations as of evil origin.

Then comes the question—is there any considerable section of society like-minded with that lady, that is to say, inclined to infidelity. Without advancing an opinion of my own, I quote from the sixty-fourth page of Communications from Another World, by E. Sargent—"Ludwig Feuerbach," born in the year 1804, has the following remark:—

"No one who has eyes to see can fail to remark, that the belief in the immortality of the soul has long been effaced from ordinary life, and that it only exists in the subjective imaginations of individuals still very numerous." That belief in immortality has been largely effaced from the ordinary life of many educated persons is, we fear, but too true; but this is owing in a great degree to the circumstance that the class of facts which modern Spiritualism has re-verified has been excluded by false theories, and an imperious ignorance, from scientific consideration. Belief in immortality was more general in ancient times than now, if we except the rapidly increasing body of Spiritualists. Even so good a catholic as Frederick Schlegel admits this." If the sentiments here put forth are coupled with those of A. J. Davis, which I have also quoted, it would appear that reason and common sense, instead of deploring the recurrence of such manifestations as beneficially influenced Miss Wesley, ought rather to hail them as a boon from heaven. Granting (which I certainly think we do) that both Ludwig Feuerbach and A. J. Davis have exaggerated existing scepticism, their observations serve to show and make manifest a wide-spread existing frame of mind, by no means peculiar to Miss Wesley before she became a Spiritualist. I repeat, in all earnestness, that reason and common sense, for the above mentioned reasons, should not deplore these manifestations, nor should the pulpit silently ignore evident and wide-spread supernatural facts. Such silence betrays fear and perplexity. The blind eye of the pulpit, can no more stop the recurrence of these facts and manifestations than the blind eye of Lord Nelson could remove the signal flag, which he did not like. The pulpit should follow the example of the Rev. John Wesley by utilising, instead of ignoring, the most evident manifestations of spirit power amongst us.

The last reflection upon the Castlemaine and Sandhurst spiritual manifestations to which I wish to draw



attention is suggested by the sameness of anti-spiritual objections "now" and infidel objections at "all times" to spiritual manifestations recorded in the Scriptures 1800 years back. "They cannot be from God," say the objectors to the ancient and modern manifestations, "because they are not sufficiently dignified." If the objection is valid, with certainty, it equally bars the acceptance of the ancient or modern miracles. If we take up infidel books we almost fancy we are reading a morning paper, ridiculing modern spiritual phenomena, the language and sentiment are so exactly the same in both cases. Let us suppose for an instant that the Sandhurst little girl (to whom the spirits brought so many coins at different times in presence of witnesses of the highest respectability) should have received spiritual direction to go and fish, and that she was instructed that she would find a coin in the mouth of the first fish she caught. Let us further suppose that by the laws of evidence and human testimony the witnesses sufficiently proved the accomplished fact. In that case, would not those who had disbelieved the similar Scripture narrative be induced to believe that passage and such passages in Scripture.

Then again, with regard to those who do, and always did, believe in the Scripture narrative, but who do not believe in Dr. Richardson's almost similar narrative (see his letter in the *Harbinger of Light*) of the little girl, who, as in the Scripture, first received the spiritual intimation of the forthcoming coin, and then the supernaturally provided coin, in exact verification of the intimation.

Can the Bible-believing anti-spiritualist explain to himself why, in the one case, the old evidence is good and the fact dignified, and, in the other case, the modern evidence is bad, and the feat undignified. I maintain the narratives are the same as regards dignity, the same as regards designed effect of manifestation of supernatural power, but not quite the same as regards the nature of the evidence of the fact, in as much as the modern evidence is infinitely the better. I obtained my information by word of mouth from an eye witness, who saw the coin fall into the little girl's hand, unexpectedly on that occasion, and as he, unexpectedly, stood by her side in conversation with the chairman of the Sandhurst circle of Spiritualists. I feel certain that there is no gentleman in Melbourne whose word would be preferred in the Supreme Court to that of my informant, and, remember, eye witness—word of mouth informant. To bring my letter to a conclusion I sum up the reflections I have drawn as follows:—

*First Reflection.*—It is wonderful that 99 out of 100 should be ignorant of supernatural occurrences at Sandhurst and Castlemaine, and that so many should consider the truth of the matter not worth inquiring into.

*Second Reflection.*—It is wonderful that when a man has been convinced by the laws of evidence and human testimony of the truth of all the facts that he should yet remain blind to the utility of such facts, and unimpressed with their importance as pointed out by the authors I have quoted. *Third Reflection.*—That the recurrence of modern miracles of the same class as those recorded in the Scriptures ought to remove doubt from the minds of the sceptic and the infidel. *Fourth Reflection.*—That the godliness and dignity of the nature of modern manifestations is vindicated by their resemblance to Scripture miracles.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
W.

#### DESTRUCTION OF THE "BANNER OF LIGHT" OFFICE.

By the last Californian mail we have the sad intelligence of the total destruction in the late great conflagration at Boston, U.S.A., of the publishing house of Messrs. Wm. White & Co., and "Banner of Light" Office. From the information to hand by telegram, we had reason to hope that this great fountain of spiritualistic

literature had escaped, but the present news dispels all doubt on the subject. It appears that up to a late period of the fire no danger was apprehended, but the conflagration suddenly changing its direction overtook their premises before the stock or plant could be removed. Everything was lost, except the stereotypes and business records. The "Boston Herald" mentions Messrs. White and Co.'s loss at \$50,000. Under these circumstances they appeal to spiritualists and liberalists in all parts of the world to aid them in re-establishing the Banner and spiritual publishing house. We trust the appeal will be nobly responded to, and that ere long the stream of spiritual literature which has flowed from this source over the whole of the civilized world may resume its course with increased volume. We shall be happy to receive and forward any subscriptions towards this object.

#### PRESENTATION TO MR. E. W. COOK.

This presentation, which it was intended should have been made at the New Year's Eve soiree, came off at the Lyceum on Sunday, January 5th. The testimonial consisted of a handsome gold lever watch, bearing the following inscription:—"Presented to Mr. E. W. Cook by Members of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, in acknowledgment of his valuable services. December 31st, 1872."

The President, Mr. John Ross, expressed the great pleasure he felt in the task he had to perform. Most who were present were aware of the arduous duties Mr. Cook had had to perform in the selection, adaptation, and preparation of music for the hymns, besides the time for practice, which was considerable. Mr. Cook had done all this in a quiet, disinterested manner since the Association was first commenced, and it was a source of particular satisfaction to him to see Mr. Cook's efforts so suitably recognized.

Mr. Cook, in reply, said:—I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and through you all those ladies and gentlemen who have so kindly given this practical expression of their good feeling and appreciation of my endeavours to aid the cause we all have so much at heart. That I should be the recipient of the first testimonial presented by the first Association of Progressive Spiritualists in Victoria is indeed an honour as great as it was unexpected, and as great, I fear, as it is undeserved. I therefore sincerely hope my future efforts may really deserve the commendations you have bestowed on those of the past. The course I have pursued being a somewhat novel one, it has necessitated a great deal of labour which would have been avoided if a more beaten path had been followed. Instead of taking the old orthodox tunes, appropriate music has been selected from every available source,—from masses, operas, favourite songs, European anthems, &c. This course rendered it necessary to write out all the music required, thus causing a great deal of labour, more especially in the early stages of the work; but now we have a collection that needs only an occasional addition. In the work of copying I have been greatly assisted by my friend Mr. Manns, to whom the thanks of the Association are especially due. While I shall always be happy to render any assistance that lays in my power, I hope the time is not far distant when my place will be filled by a thorough musician,—one who will be able to make an attractive feature of the musical portion of our services. I again thank you for your very handsome present, and hope for a long continuance of the good feeling of which it is the expression.

Mr. Terry, as treasurer for the testimonial, desired to inform Mr. Cook and the friends present that the testimonial did not represent the feelings or appreciation of a few, but had been contributed to by all classes in the Association, the subscriptions ranging from sixpence to a pound. The knowledge of this fact would doubtless enhance the value of the testimonial in Mr. Cook's estimation.

This concluded the ceremony, and the Lyceum exercises were resumed.

## MR PEEBLES AT THE PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE.

(From the "Argus," January 13th, 1873.)

Mr. Peebles delivered the fifth and last of the series of Sunday evening lectures on Spiritualism at the Prince of Wales Theatre last night. The audience was as large as the building would accommodate. The lecturer was listened to with attention, and an attempt at disturbance on the part of one or two persons in the galleries was promptly suppressed. The chair was taken by Mr Charles Bright.

The CHAIRMAN said that one of the principal reasons why he and others on that platform were anxious to disseminate the spiritual philosophy was, because they believed that it would, if adopted, at once and for ever free the rising generation from the fearful teaching relative to hell flames, a personal devil, and an angry wrathful God, which most of the men now living had had to pass through. Few full-grown thoughtful men of this day believed in these dogmas. Why, then, should they condemn their children to be taught what they themselves despised? It had been alleged that spiritualists disbelieved in the inspiration of the Bible. To answer that, it was necessary to know what was meant by the words used. Spiritualists, certainly, as a rule, did not believe that every word of those collected writings, voted sacred by a council of priests presided over by the Emperor Constantine, came direct from God in a different sense to the words of other good books, but they regard them as inspired so far as they contained eternal truth. To immolate the reason before these scriptures was to turn the Bible into an idol, a fetish of more importance to the world than God's truth which was being revealed century by century. Such a course might suit dogmatists, but could not be acceptable to free reasoning men. All dogmatism was hateful to rational men, no matter whether it took the shape of an iron-bound creed, born of past superstition, or a foolish prophecy arising out of existing mental confusion and unconscious egotism. Men who studied their highest good would seek to discern, by the help of science and the investigation of natural law, the operations of the Infinite Spirit in past ages, and thence deduce the probabilities of the continued manifestations of the same beneficent power for unnumbered cycles of ages yet to come. The world was only just beginning to discern its marvellous possibilities. As Tennyson taught—

"We are Ancients of the earth,  
And in the morning of the times."

He warned his hearers also against that other dogmatism which asserted dictatorially what had been, what is, and what could not possibly be. In a beautiful little child's story of Canon Kingsley's occurred the following passage, which would not be lost on children of a larger growth:—"You must not talk about 'ain't' and 'can't' when you speak of this great, wonderful world around you, of which the wisest man knows only the very smallest corner, and is, as the great Newton said, only a child, picking up pebbles on the shore of a boundless ocean. You must not say that this cannot be, or that it is contrary to nature. You do not know what nature is, or what she can do; and nobody knows, not even Sir Roderick Murchison, or Professor Owen, or Professor Sedgwick, or Professor Huxley, or Mr. Darwin, or Professor Faraday, or any other of the great men whom little boys are taught to respect. They are very wise men, and you must listen respectfully to all they say; but even if they should say, which I am sure they never would, 'That cannot exist; that is contrary to nature,' you must wait a little and see, for perhaps even they may be wrong. Wise men are afraid to say that there is anything contrary to nature, except what is contrary to mathematical truth and the wiser men are, the less they talk about 'cannot.' That is a very rash, dangerous word, that 'cannot.'" The worst of all dogmatism, however, was that which presumed to interpret God's eternal purpose, and dealt out damnation or annihilation, others wholesale. God was the father of all

humanity, and every soul which existed had a title to his paternal care. Out of sin and consequent suffering would come redemption for all. Each must seek to act up to his highest ideal of right. The essence of the spiritual philosophy was wrapped up in that oft-quoted couplet of Pope's—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

Mr. Peebles took for his text the following passages of Scripture:—"Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost"—John vi. 12; "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death"—Rev. xxi. 4. Fragments, as parts, he remarked constituted the whole; and wholeness, or unity of purpose, seemed to characterise the boundless universe. As drops made up the fathomless ocean, and stars those astral systems that occupy all interstellar space, so facts, or rather series of facts, rightly grouped by the laws of induction, formed the bases of rational doctrines. This being the last time he (Mr. Peebles) would have the honor of appearing before a Melbourne audience, he deemed it appropriate to allude briefly to his previous discourses before entering upon the main subject announced for the evening's lecture. The three first lectures of the series in the Temperance-hall were devoted almost exclusively to the *rationale* of the physical phenomena connected with spiritual truth, and the subsequent lectures to the philosophy and practical outcome of the movement—that was to say, the moving of material objects without apparent contact, electric sounds conveying intelligence, the visible appearance of spirit forms, the speaking under influence in different tongues, mechanical writing, unconscious trance, healing gifts, and the methods of developing genuine mediumship. Characterising the prophet Daniel, as a superior medium, he quoted what the Scriptures recorded to be the method by which Daniel became such—Dan. i. 12 and 13—"Give me pulse to eat, and water to drink . . . then will my face appear fairer than those who eat the king's meat." And then, previous to witnessing his great vision, Daniel said, "I was mourning"—that is passive and serious—"three full week. I ate no pleasant bread; neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth. . . . There remained no strength in me. And when I heard the voice of the words of the man clothed in white linen I was in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground; and behold a hand touched me." The lecturer further recommended persons forming circles to do so in a candid, religious manner in private homes, and to "try the communicating spirits by the test of reason and right judgment." Considering the philosophy of spiritualism, the more important of the two great branches into which the science was divided, he said he had taught that God was the deific presence of the universe, that man was blessed with a spiritual nature, that inspiration was universal, that prayer was wholly aspiration, benefiting the devotee—that the judgment seat, like the Kingdom of Heaven, is within—that retribution inevitably follows transgression, that memory was the undying worm, that salvation was natural growth, that true baptism was spiritual influence flowing from the angel world; and that love and sympathy, such as Jesus exhibited, were the only effective means by which the world could be redeemed. This brought him to the subject of "Life and Labour beyond the grave." Death, a natural process, was in its time, just as beautiful as any other transitional phenomenon. It was the key which, unlocking the gates of our earthly prison-house, "let the oppressed go free." It was to be compared to the rose which, climbing over the garden wall, bloomed on the other side. In the process of dying, the spiritual body was not disintegrated or disorganised, but was unrolled or unfolded from out its physical garments, conscious, at last, of the reality of the future life, where the loved of earth had "gone before." The pure and harmonious did not lose their consciousness in the process of transformation. The pale magnetic flame or aura seen by clairvoyants around the dying was an electric atmosphere placed there by guardian angels during the clothing of the new-born soul. The garments of the denizens of the spirit world corresponded in quality and



beauty to the moral status of the wearers. The young man who rolled the stone from Christ's tomb was clothed in a "shining vesture." Infants entered the spirit world as infants, growing to maturity slowly, as if on earth, surrounded by teachers adapted to their state. Premature births as blasted buds were received by matronly angels to be educated in the schools of Heaven. Infanticide and feticide were forms of murder which would call down on the perpetrators retributive justice. The tempter and the tempted, the seducer and his victim, the injured and the wrongdoer, must eventually meet—the wrong to be repented of and for. What, it was asked, were the occupations of the so-called dead? Spirit life was one of intense activity. Action was the soul's highest pleasure. None sat down in spirit land by murmuring streams to sing psalms and "serenade the Almighty," but each found employment suitable to his needs and aspirations. The spirit-world was just as substantial to spirits as the physical earth was to mortals. There were fields, landscapes, lawns, parks, flowers, orchards, fruits, gardens, houses, bands of music, galleries of art, sportive children, angelic schools, and immortal homes where love was law. The sainted John, when "in the spirit on the Lord's day," said "I looked and behold a door was opened in Heaven," and that door had never been shut. The angels of God were ever ascending and descending visiting those who called, ever seeking to gain admission to human hearts, and to influence human lives. If Stephen, James, and John, looking into spirit life, saw crowns, rainbows, harps, chariots, breastplates, seas of glass, and "golden vials full of odours," why should not the clairvoyants of this age see spirits, angels, the "tree of life," and resurrected souls, clothed in white, wearing "golden girdles"? They did see such things in this age, human nature remaining unchanged; they also saw vast brotherhoods, groups of explorers, and massive libraries; they saw spirits controlling media; spirits collecting flowers; spirits inspiring orators; spirits studying the laws of motion, spirits organising circles, and spirits guarding mortals from dangers unseen. The far-reaching mind of Newton had not ceased to investigate—Stephenson's inventive genius was not benumbed. Wesley, Channing, and Theodore Parker had not ceased to preach; the old prophets had not lost their interest in humanity, the apostles still spiritually ministered to mortals. Mozart's white fingers still "wake to ecstasy the living lyre." Philosophers continued to study cause and effect, geologists probed newly formed earths, and astronomers found no hindrances to their further investigations of "the wonderful works of God." Again, in the life beyond the grave kindred souls would meet and renew time-honoured friendships; there the laws of adaptation and attraction reigned supreme. In this life we were often forced by circumstances to endure the presence of those who were repulsive, but as magnet to steel, sunbeam to flower, so in the better land would harmonial souls meet and mingle in eternal joys. Considered from what standpoint soever, spiritualism first met and filled the soul's demands. Rising above clime, country, or creed, it was a science or universal religion—a religion that acknowledged God, demonstrated a future existence, taught retribution, enjoined purity of life, inspired the soul with faith in eternal unfoldment, and invited all races and nationalities to fraternally meet and worship in its temple. Let believing souls rejoice. Already the fig tree of prophecy budded. "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." The poets sang—

"You walk the wilderness to day,  
The promised land to-morrow,

And those who bear the cross to-day  
Shall wear the crown to-morrow."

As a whole, Mr. Peebles said he was delighted with Victoria. He had never seen fairer skies or a more flourishing country. The energy and enterprise of the people were worthy of all commendation. Memories of museums, parks, gardens, libraries, and the fellowship of friends in Victoria, would ever linger in his recollection.

To spiritualists he felt inclined to use the words of the apostle—"Only let your conversation be as cometh the followers of Christ, that whether I come and see you or be absent I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one mind, with one spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

The CHAIRMAN then rose and said that he was delighted to be the medium of presenting his friend Mr. Peebles with a testimonial and a purse of money. Mr. Peebles had given his labours to the cause which he had at heart for nothing. He was invited to visit this colony by a committee of gentlemen who guaranteed him the cost of his journey here and away. It had been thought best for the spiritualistic cause that he should address his audiences in Melbourne without asking them to pay for admission. A collection had been made after each lecture; but the amount received had not been more than two-thirds of the expenses. The committee had not calculated upon any more, and were well satisfied, still, Mr. Peebles, though a missionary, and of the highest order of missionaries—a missionary not to poor uneducated but perhaps happy savages, but to rational thoughtful men, endeavouring to bring before them what he conceived to be a higher truth—must live. The committee had therefore collected a purse of sovereigns to give him this evening, and it was also their intention to give whatever money the audience thought proper to put into the plate. Before presenting him with the purse he would read the address, which he believed Mr. Peebles would value much more. It was as follows:—

"To James M. Peebles, Esq., Author and Lecturer.—Dear and respected sir,—We, the Spiritualists of Melbourne, are desirous, ere your departure from the colony of Victoria, to record in a form which may be to you an ever-present and pleasing memento, our high appreciation of the valuable services rendered by you to the cause of spiritualism and free religion during your sojourn of nearly three months amongst us. Before your arrival the products of your able pen had afforded us much gratification and profit. We have now enjoyed the further satisfaction of your private friendship and public instruction, and can truly say that our regard for your personal worth is only equalled by our admiration of the force, earnestness, and eloquence of your platform utterances. As the pioneer in Australia of American spiritual missionaries, you have had to encounter opposition, obloquy, and malignant misrepresentation, such as are ordinarily meted out by the world to those who lead the van of religious reform. We cannot adequately eulogise the patience displayed by you under this persecution, and the calm dignity with which you have at length, succeeded in partially living it down. The thousands who have flocked to hear your later expositions of the spiritual philosophy, and the evident delight with which they have listened to your rationalistic teachings, furnish the best assurance that your labours have not been in vain. When your angel-directed pilgrimage around the globe is concluded, and you are one more seated by your own fireside, with the loving partner of your life's joys and sorrows, a glance at this testimonial will remind you of the many sympathetic hearts you leave in Australia, and will tend to convince you of the fact that your noble, self-sacrificing work has, through the blessing of our infinite Spirit Father, been crowned with no stinted measure of success. Ever remember us, dear Sir, as your affectionate friends and brethern. Signed on behalf of the spiritualists of Melbourne,—John Ross, Thomas W. Stanford, Charles Bright, Andrew Dempster, H. Brotherton, H. Sanders, G. A. Stow; J. B. Motherwell, M.D.; John Carson, John M'Ilwraith; Geo. Addison, M.D.; W. H. Terry."

The CHAIRMAN then handed Mr. Peebles the address and a purse containing 133 sovs. (The collection subsequently made realised £28 2s. 7d.)

Mr. PEEBLES, in responding to the presentation, said:—Mr. Chairman,—There are occasions in life when silence is eloquence—times when the surcharged heart partially paralysing the lips, makes utterance

nearly impossible. When reaching Melbourne a few months since on a voyage round the world, I was most cordially received by a committee of your citizens who believed in God and angels, in heaven and the ministry of spirits, and by others also, who sympathise with the disseminations of liberal religious principles relating to human duty and destiny, and though a stranger, coming as a plain unassuming man, speaking the 'words of truth and soberness' with firmness yet becoming meekness, I was assailed and persecuted, not for wrong acts or misdeeds, but for alleged wrong religious convictions. Such an offence as "heresy" under the name of spiritualism, was not to be tolerated. "Crucify him," was the cry. Accordingly, certain of this "baser sort" placed me much in the position of the apostle when he wrote, "troubled yet not distressed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed." The cup was to be drained—the trial to be borne in a calm forgiving spirit. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" and what social or religious reformer has not worn the crown of thorns? And yet, as a committee of gentlemen as an "association," as liberalists belonging to that highly intelligent body of the "great unchurched," you have bravely upheld my hands, fortified my resolutions, and manfully seconded my earnest efforts in promoting the "faith once delivered to the saints"—faith in God and man coupled, with that Divine knowledge of a present angel ministry to earth. Since my feet pressed your hospitable shores in October, you have been unwavering in your attentions and kindnesses; and be my future pilgrimages in whatever clime they may, I cannot expect to find more thoroughly genuine and unselfish friends; and it is to me a blessed thought that these and all other sunny friendships of earth are but buds that, unfolding, bloom for ever in the heavens. I can never forget you. With sincere thanks, then, I accept these beautiful and substantial tokens of your kind regards, feeling, however, that the flattering terms in which they have been presented apply more fitly to other faithful workers upon the temple of progress. The purse is a tangible proof of your forethought, liberality, and generous impulses. The illuminated scroll is a beautiful memento of your sympathy. Permit me, in conclusion, therefore, to assure you that wherever I may travel, I shall bear it with me as a token of sympathy and confidence from the spiritualists and liberalists of Melbourne.

The CHAIRMAN announced that a farewell *soiree* to Mr. Peebles would be held on Thursday evening, in the Turn Verein Hall.

The proceedings were then concluded by the singing of a hymn.

#### A SPIRITUALIST'S FUNERAL.

Passed to Spirit Life, on Saturday January 25th. Isabella, daughter of Henry Edwards of Sandridge, and member of the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum. Her body was interred in the Melbourne General Cemetery on Monday the 27th, and on the arrival of the cortege at the gates, it was joined by about 30 members and leaders of the Lyceum, anxious to pay the last earthly tribute to the memory of their departed sister. They were all attired in white or light colored dresses, and carried fresh flowers in their hands, wearing a sprig of evergreen, tied with white ribbon on the left breast. The coffin being lowered into the grave, Mr. John Tyerman delivered an appropriate address, full of encouragement and comfort to the relations of the departed one, Byron's "hymn on Immortality" was then sung by the Lyceum and after a short prayer had been spoken by Mr. Tyerman, the children and leaders advanced to the brink of the grave, and showered the flowers and evergreens typical of undying friendship on the coffin. This concluded the ceremony, which formed a marked contrast to the gloomy and depressing orthodox system.

#### WHY INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM?

We noticed, sometime since, a lecture by Hudson Tuttle, before a German audience of Materialists and Spiritualists, at Turnverein Hall, Cleveland, Ohio. The subject was the "Origin and Evolution of Spirit," and it was so well received that its publication as a tract in the German Language was at once demanded.

The lecture was prefaced by the following observations, especially addressed to his German hearers, but not embodied in the tract:

"It is with a feeling of diffidence I address the countrymen of the great Buchner and Carl Vogt, on a subject which they consider too puerile for investigation, but I am sustained in expressing ideas exactly the reverse of their pure and unqualified materialism, by the consideration that one greater than they is with me—not only the greatest poet of the Fatherland, but the greatest Scientist, of all the long catalogue of distinguished names which form the lustrous crown of united Germany. Modern science, with all its pretentious claims, in its intricate studies of the laws of the living world, received from Goethe its grandest generalizations. He it was who first, with an insight as profound as inspiration, outlined the all-embracing generalization of creation by evolution. In one sentence he has compressed the entire subject of the future life. He asks, 'Why do we desire immortality?' and replies, 'Because we cannot live without it.'

If Humboldt, whom it would be unfitting to designate by any adjective, did not pronounce his opinions on futurity, he did not express himself against the possibility of that existence, and his last words, as he gazed from his couch on the landscape over which the sun shed its glorious rays, in their deepest spiritual sense, refer to a higher state of existence:—"How grand the sunlight! it seems to beckon earth to heaven."

Such was the closing prayer—a spontaneous burst of admiration from him whose forehead was already bathed in the light of the eternal sphere. No priest was there with dogmatic formula to intercept the grand hypothesis. Peacefully as a babe falls to slumber, he whose life of almost a century of Herculean labors in the unexplored fields of science, sank into the arms of the laws of nature in which he reposed such confidence, and was wafted on the wings of that light he so much loved!

And are they dead? Can such minds as Humboldt's, or Goethe, or Von Moltke, or Bismarck, with their gigantic grasp of thought, keen intuitions, and infinite understanding, cease to be? Shall we allow even a Carl Vogt to arise and say over their graves, "As the light of the lamp goes out when the oil is exhausted, so the mind perishes with the brain which gave it birth." Nay, but rather would we say with one equally celebrated, "The soul, the marvel of this great departure which we call death, is here."

What we yield to the intellect we must to our affections. Daily and hourly some are called to part with those who, to them, occupy a more exalted position than Goethe or Humboldt did to the world of their admirers, and affection demands that they have a continued existence. If they are immortal, all men are, for if we exist in the future it must necessarily be by the operation of unchanging laws applicable to every member of the human family. Immortality cannot be conferred as a gift, for that would pre-suppose a miracle; it must be the result of determinate laws, and these applicable to all mankind.

#### WHY SHOULD WE INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM.

The immortal life in this aspect becomes amenable to law, and hence a legitimate province of investigation. The thinker with propriety turned aside from this subject when it was made an adjunct of religion; a dogma, necessary to escape the final deductions of theology. When it was asserted that the body was resurrected at the judgment day, and reanimated by its long slumbering soul, for the express purpose, in nine cases out of ten, to be plunged into a lake of fire to burn for infinite time; the finale of creation being a stupendous miracle, the study of this question was



worse than useless. We have nothing to do with such dogmatic statements. We do not even claim a belief in the future life essential to religion, or the highest form of morality. History furnishes us with examples of the purest and noblest lives of men who discarded not only this belief, but were unqualified Atheists. We do not press the subject because of its religious effects, for we know that the priesthood have employed it as a powerful engine to keep in subjection the dependent laity. The stoutest warrior, who rushes on the serried ranks of the foe with unwavering courage, blanched and trembled with craven fear when a priest threatened to consign his soul to hell. Over the mysterious after-life the priesthood have ever claimed to rule, and they have never hesitated in employing the terrible power it conferred.

If Spiritualism only offered another system of religion, depending on dogmatic statements, I should not plead its investigation, but should at once condemn it. Because it is not dependent on assertion; because it attempts, at least, to prove every position it assumes, is its strong claim on the thinker. If we are immortal should we not know it? Should we not only be conscious of the fact, but also afforded means of investigation? They who have gone down to the brink of the grave, and with lacerated senses and bleeding hearts, consigned to its narrow house the body of all they loved, have felt the necessity of something more definite and assuring than faith. Beautiful as faith may be, her pure and holy forehead bathed with supernal light, and ennobling the soul with calm reliance on the decrees of the Infinite one, yet she fails in the hour when most needed. When in anguish we call to the dear departed, over their inanimate clay, and echo is an only answer from the un pitying air; when we would give our life a thousand times for any signal from beyond the grave to assure us that life and love still exist, faith gives not the signal, but disappears in darkness, and doubt pierces our hearts with a desolating cry of "annihilation."

Spiritualism supplies the place of faith with knowledge. It makes two cardinal propositions, and attempts their demonstration:

- (1) Man is an immortal spirit.
- (2) Departed spirits can return and communicate with earth.

If it prove these beyond denial, then it is one of the most important subjects which can engage the attention. The love of existence is so strong that none would prefer annihilation or death. All hope for continued existence, and the most inveterate sceptic would willingly accept immortality. He may receive cheerfully the results of his reason, and unhesitatingly plunge into the night of oblivion, but it is not a pleasant, cheering view, nor can stoicism make it such.

On the contrary, the assurance that the departed exist and retain their individuality is most comforting when we are called to the bedside of the dying, or when we at last feel that our earthly task is finished.

I ask your attention to these fundamental propositions, and to nothing more. They form the basic framework of the vast superstructure of Spiritualism. You are privileged to receive them and reject all its philosophy if you chose.

Well I know how great is the prejudice that exists against the subject, and unflinchingly bear it, and accept the burden which all new theories justly sustain in vindicating their claims. In this respect I do not ask your leniency; I only request you to grant my subject as unprejudiced a hearing as possible for you to give, and not allow side issues, which, like vampires, have fastened themselves upon it, to influence you.

It is now twenty-three years since the first manifestations of the so-called Modern Spiritualism. During that time it has upheld an amount of deception, arrant imposture, importunate quackery, wild fanaticism, and unspeakable folly, that would have blasted and sank in irretrievable failure any such cause having less vitality.

If, in your prejudice, you point the finger of scorn at the fanatics, fools and knaves who take refuge under the folds of Spiritualism, I can only say, the true Spiritual-

ist regrets that such is the fact, and so far as his charity allows, scorns them as much as you.

Do not judge the subject by these excrescences. There are equally contemptible attachées of the church, and even science has its astrologers and mountebanks. The astute lawyer is supplemented by the grovelling pettifogger; the learned physician by the quack, and the upright clergyman, alas, too often, by the "wolf in sheep's clothing."

If unprincipled selfishness stain the pure robes of Spiritualism, do not cast reproach except on the baseness of those who perform this audacious act. The more you censure in this direction, the better shall we be pleased, for we shall hail with joy the day of purification from the fanaticism and folly which has made the name a mockery.

In the quiet communion with the spirits of the departed, there is no selfishness to gratify, no aggrandizement of presuming folly. Their voices come down sweet as the strains of delicious music, and exalt and purify our souls out of the slough and mire of egotism and vanity. They are heard *not* in the busy mart of trade, in the din of the assembly, in the contention of the world. The antagonism of strife, the heat of party, the agitation of faction, silences their lips.

If Spiritualism was not something better than what generally is received as such, which is absorbed in individualism, and prostituted to corrupt purposes, in turn the wholly devoted champion of Socialism, Communism, Temperance, Woman Suffrage, Mormonism, Shakerism, the Labor Question, Dietetic Reform, and countless other "isms" and "ologies," I should not ask your attention. Not that I cast any reflection on these various issues, some of which may prove beneficial, and others detrimental, but that they have no more relation to Spiritualism than they have to Catholicism. It is the strong cause, and into its eddy has drawn all these struggling issues, that seek by identifying themselves with it to be dragged into notoriety. In the process of time it will cast these off and become purified. The gathering of these drifts of debris has been forcibly exhibited in conventions and mass meetings. Intense individualism and inordinate egotism, reckless fanaticism, open-mouthed credulity, and besotted ignorance, seemingly gathered together for high carnival, have generally succeeded in absorbing whatever common sense there chanced to be present.

Do I say that the reporters of the secular press misrepresented and ridiculed the cause in their reports? I do not know what could have been their object in so doing, for the most absurd and ridiculous report they could make was the exact truth!

Spiritualism was not responsible for these results. The fault lay in its not having any defined bounds, and the platform remains free for all who are pleased to ventilate their pet theories, and the sum total went forth as its philosophy.

#### MEDIUMS.

Nor have been the utterances of mediums less uncertain. It would be strange, if, with such a demand for "manifestations," these should not be spurious as well as genuine. In fact, the sources of error are manifold. The conditions of spirit control, of necessity, are so subtle and evanescent that the communications may be faulty when the best intentions exist. The error may belong to the controlling intelligence or to the medium. Then there is the influence of the circle, and the knowingly perpetrated deception. With these eliminations from the mass of so-called spiritual phenomena, there remains a portion worthy of confidence, and having value as evidence.

Such being the obstacles to meet, and the reasons for prejudice, why should you overcome them and investigate the manifestations? Because, if true, they are of vital importance, and how can you know whether they be true or false unless you investigate? One test by means of the rappings will convince you sooner than a volume of argument. On this question you must see for yourself. It is because argument is *not sufficient* that these manifestations are *necessary*. They come to supply the place of belief with knowledge, and to afford them opportunity, is your imperative duty.

## MAGNITUDE OF THE CAUSE.

To whatever source the phenomena may be referred, they cannot be ignored. The numbers who receive Spiritualism equal those of any of the churches. We may not receive Judge Edmonds' estimate of eleven millions in the United States, although we think it near the truth, but reducing it one half, we have a number far greater than the adherents of Christianity two hundred years after its advent.

The adhesion of numbers alone does not prove a cause true; but it does prove that these numbers find in the cause something that meets their spiritual demands. It is not confined to this country but in all civilized lands, it has been welcomed by thousands, and become the head of spiritual life. Even on the other side of the globe, the glad tidings have been borne, and Australia has her spiritual Journal, and the learned Hindoos have begun to investigate.

## HUMBUG.

No one who has given the subject the least attention will assert that the manifestations are deceptions. They will not be referred either to hallucination, or dishonest deception. Such suppositions might be entertained in an earlier day, but too careful and close attention has been bestowed upon it by individuals whose lives have been devoted to accurate observation, and whose testimony would be received in any other department of knowledge, to permit it now.

Such men as Professor De Morgan; Professor Wallace, the originator of the so-called "Darwinian Theory"; Professor Varley, the Electrician of the Atlantic Telegraph; Professor Crookes, whose researches have lately attracted considerable attention; William Howitt, Garibaldi, Lord Lyndhurst, Jules Favre, and a hundred other equally eminent individuals, cannot be accused of delusion, or of being dupes. In this country, R. D. Owen, B. F. Wade, Garrison, Judge Lawrence, Judge Edmonds, Professor Robert Hare, Professors Mapes, Denton, and Gunning, only head a list almost countless, of well known and reliable adherents.

Years ago, a committee of Harvard scientific men were appointed, to fathom the mystery of the phenomena, and the result was they became so confounded they could not report.

The Dialectic Society, of London, organised expressly to deal with problems on the outlying grounds of Science, vigorously and honestly began the task, and were quickly overwhelmed by an inundation of testimony. So overwhelming was the evidence, and so at variance with what the majority, in their prejudice, desired it to be, that the report was suppressed, and only saw the light through the zeal of a few of the members. Whatever may have been the conclusions drawn from their report, at least it silences the criticisms that the phenomena are delusions.

Prof Crookes, who certainly can not be accused of partiality for the subject, by the reliable evidence of weights and scales, has proved that force exists and is manifested. That force he terms "Psychic," and thereby shows how great a man may be in one direction while unspeakably small in another. Force is the agent of all change and motion, but how can it possess intelligence? If there were simply sounds and movings of inanimate objects, without design, his theory might be supported, but the moment the rap answers a question intelligently, his theory irretrievably fails; for the waves breaking on the shore might as well be expected to exhibit intelligence as "psychic force." This intelligence is not derived from the circle or the medium. Volumes of facts might be introduced in proof of this point. It is not derived from ordinary knowledge or clairvoyantly.

This conclusion, sooner or later, must be reached. The churchmen who attempt an explanation on any other grounds, than the Spiritual, little understand the dangerous weapons they handle. Admit that these manifestations are explainable by "psychic force" the "unknown laws of mind," "oddylic force" or electricity, will not the same explanation apply to the holy records of the Bible? Spiritual phenomena of all ages rest on

one basis, and the explanation for one embraces all. Was it "psychic force" that performed the miracles of Christ; or electricity that raised the dead Lazarus? or "oddylic force" that rolled away the stone from the sepulcher? Then does not the Christian religion become a sham, and churchmen arrant deceivers? There is but one resource; then Christianity becomes Spiritualized, and the so-called supernatural in Hindostan, China, Persia, Europe, and America, at once become amenable to law; order is discernable amidst even the confusion of dogmatic beliefs.

## THE POSITION OF SCIENTISTS,

is equally unfortunate. They are quick to say that they are the only class capable of investigation. They scorn the idea that ordinary persons can make close and careful observations. In every experiment they know certain well determined conditions must be fulfilled; and nature, not themselves, determines these conditions. When these savans attempt to investigate Spiritualism, they invariably reverse this axiom; and if not allowed to enforce their arbitrary conditions, discard the whole. They are too thoroughly prejudiced to make impartial observations. Sir David Brewster, seeing a table rise into the air, said, "It seems, to rise," and when Faraday was told his table-turning theory had failed, that tables actually rose into the air, he dared not go and see for himself, but expressed himself "heartily tired of the whole matter."

It is the misfortune of theorizers that there are two classes of phenomena to account for, the mental and the physical; and a theory, however nicely adjusted to one, is sure to be overthrown by the other, and the theories require a greater stretch of credulity than the acceptance of its Spiritual source.

## THE LYCEUM.

The Melbourne Progressive Lyceum is making good progress. Both officers and scholars are applying themselves assiduously to their various duties, and the exercises go off more smoothly every session. Two interesting ceremonies have taken place at the Lyceum during the past month, the first being the presentation of a gold watch to Mr. Cook (of which we give an account in another column), and the other a presentation to Dr. E. C. Dunn of a handsome "Conductor's Badge" as a memento of his connexion with the Lyceum, and an acknowledgment of his gratuitous services as instructor of the Lyceum. The presentation was made by Mr. W. H. Terry, who in a few introductory remarks pointed out the great impetus which had been given to the Lyceum through Dr. Dunn's instruction and assistance. He had placed the Lyceum on a substantial footing, and brought it forward to a point which without his assistance it would have taken a long time to reach. The Lyceum as yet was not rich in funds: he therefore trusted that Dr. Dunn would look more to the motive which prompted the presentation of the testimonial and the sentiments it conveyed than to its intrinsic worth. He had much pleasure in presenting Dr. Dunn with the badge.

Dr. Dunn in returning thanks expressed the pleasure he felt in being instrumental in establishing so promising a Lyceum. He had applied himself to the work solely from his interest in the movement, and not with any expectation of reward other than the satisfaction of aiding the cause of Spiritualism. He thought that this was one of the most effectual means of doing so. He thanked the Lyceum for the handsome gift, which he should value as a memento of the Lyceum which would remind him in after years of the officers and leaders of it who had worked so harmoniously with him in the matter. He should ever take a warm interest in its success.

The testimonial consisted of a handsome Conductor's Badge, the Sun in the centre being of gold with a bright cut crystal set in it; the outer shield was of silver, on which was engraved:—"Presented to Dr. E. C. Dunn by the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum, as a slight acknowledgment of his invaluable services to that Association. January 12th, 1873." The appropriate velvet ribbons were attached, and the Badge had a very pretty appearance.



## THE QUESTIONS OF "CREDO."

A writer assuming the *nom de plume* of "Credo" has published in two of the Melbourne papers a letter containing the following queries, which he has called upon me to answer:—

1. If the consulting with familiar spirits, of which he is the advocate, be right and proper for us Christians in the 19th century, how was it that God forbade it so sternly and so repeatedly to the Jews?

2. How is it that the death of Saul is directly ascribed by the sacred writer to his "asking council of one that had a familiar spirit," instead of "inquiring of the Lord?" And—

3. How is it that the burning by the Ephesian spiritualist of their "books" is given by the inspired penman as a proof that "the word of the Lord grew mightily, and prevailed?" See Deut. xviii. 9; 1 Chron. x. 13, and Acts xix. 19.

Having made up my mind to avoid entering upon any irritating newspaper controversy in Australia, I did not respond to "Credo's" invitation. As, however, he appears to be sincerely desirous of obtaining information, I take advantage of these columns to furnish, for his benefit and that of others similarly situated, the exposition which is solicited.

The debatable ground between spiritualists on the one hand and materialists and sectarists upon the other, refers to the possibility and certainty of converse with the denizens of the spirit world. "Credo" sides, unwittingly perhaps, with spiritualists; for certainly he cannot think that God would "repeatedly" and "sternly" have forbidden consulting with spirits, "familiar" or otherwise, unless such phenomena were genuine. To "forbid," or to legislate against a nonentity, would be an unpardonable absurdity. And then the fact that such psychological practices as conversing with spirits existed in the past logically necessitates their existence in the present, human nature being the same, and God and his laws unchangeable. "That which hath been is now," \* \* \* and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. iii. 15.)

I will now answer the questions of "Credo" *seriatim*.  
1. God, the "Our Father, who art in Heaven," never forbid the Jews or any other nation "consulting," or holding conscious converse with spirits. Had He so done, enacting a law perpetual in obligation, then Jesus transgressed the law, because he conversed with Moses and Elias who had been in the spirit world many centuries. This "Lord thy God," who in the 18th chapter of Deut, so "sternly forbade consulting spirits," was only the tutelary divinity of the semi-civilized Jews, termed by Moses, "the God of the Hebrews." Some of the Church Fathers as well as the Gnostic christians taught that Jehovah—the Lord who talked "face to face with Moses"—was "only an angel." St. Austin made this candid confession. "The angel who spake to Moses called himself Jehovah" (3rd lib., ch. ii. p. 23). And further, this spiritual intelligence, the "Lord" of the Jews is denominated in Judges (ii—1) an "angel" who made the Israelites to "go up out of Egypt." It would be quite in keeping with the characteristics of this Old Testament "tutelary deity" to forbid spirit communion—a deity who frequently became "angry"—who "repented that he had made man"—who was "jealous" of other gods (Josh. xxiv—19)—who threatened to "dash infants in pieces" (Hosea xiii—16)—who commanded mutilation by "circumcision" (Gen. xvii—4)—who compelled the prophet to "walk naked" (Isa. xx—2)—who "deceived the prophet" (Jer. xx—7), and who commanded the destruction of the Midianite "males," and the preservation of the "women children" for carnal purposes (Num. xxxi—1, 18). I repeat, spiritual communications, or anything else pure and spiritual, would necessarily have been distasteful to such a depraved tutelary god; but that the God reverently worshipped by Jesus, and denominated by St. John "Love," never denied mankind the heavenly pleasure of conversing with their "loved in heaven." If "Credo" insists that this "Lord thy God" who issued edicts against "consulting with spirits" was the Omnipresent God of the universe, and if said edicts or commands are still binding upon "us christians in the 19th century," then by parity of reasoning the other Old Testament commands are equally obligatory, such as "ye shall not mar the corners of the beard;" thou "shalt not wear a woollen and linen

garment;" thou "shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds;" "whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the water (such as oysters) ye shall not eat;" of "swine's flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcasses ye shall not touch." Does "Credo"—do "us christians" heed these Bible commands?

II. "The death of Saul" is not "directly ascribed" to his asking counsel of one who had a familiar spirit. On the other hand, the Scriptures emphatically affirm (1 Chron. x—3, 4) that the "archers hit Saul, and he was wounded of the archers." And when the armour-bearer "refused to thrust him through," Saul "took a sword and fell upon it," and died. The death seems as natural as that of any suicide. In the opinion of the "sacred writer" counselling with spirits of questionable purity may have had something to do with his death; but opinions traversing a period of several thousand years, with the necessary imperfections of translations, are of little consequence to us. "Any testimony," says Locke, "the further off it is from the being and existence of the thing itself, the less proof and force it has." If this "Lord," because not inquired of, "slew Saul," as "Credo" intimates, it is only in keeping with other murderous acts that he commanded—"Slay every man his brother, \* \* \* and every man his neighbour" (Ex. xxxi—21). Again, "slay both man and woman, infant and suckling" (Sam. xv—3). Such a "Lord" is unworthy our worship.

III. The phrase "Ephesian Spiritualists" in connection with the "books" burned is utterly unwarrantable. The genuine Spiritualists of this Ionian city were those constituting the Christian Church in Ephesus; and who according to the Patmos Revelation, "had laboured and not fainted." Those using "curious arts" and cabalistic "books" were evidently conjurers and magicians dealing in the "black art," an art bearing about as much relation to those Spiritualists of Ephesus who listened to the preaching of Paul and John as did the immoral conduct of the carnal Corinthian Christians (1 Cor. v—1) to the celibacy of Jesus. The primitive principles and precepts enunciated and lived by Jesus Christ and true Spiritualism are in perfect accord. Celsus insisted that Jesus studied legerdemain in Egypt. Other scoffers considered the "signs," "gifts," *alias* the spiritual manifestations attending the apostles to be nothing more than clever magic. History repeats itself. The genuine is often counterfeited, and all of heaven's blessings may be abused. "Try the spirits," said the apostle. Individual reason is the test, and truth the final authority.

J. M. PEEBLES.

## DEATH OF MR. J. W. PEARSON.

The above gentleman passed to spirit land on the evening of January 8th. after a brief illness of only a week's duration. He passed away happily, the spirit world opening out to his vision ere the physical link was severed. Mr. Pearson was an energetic man of business, kindly and genial in social life, and a sincere and earnest investigator into the spiritual philosophy. It is only a few weeks since he attended our Lyceum, with the view of gaining information of the system. He was then apparently in good health, and we had some conversation with him concerning Lyceums, and the propriety of establishing one at Sandhurst.

We have received a letter from an intimate friend of his at Sandhurst, from which we extract the following:—

"I am in a position to assert that the deceased gentleman died in the full belief of the truth of Spiritualism. A friend of mine who was with him constantly on the night before he died and up to his last, informed me that he asked him the question if he felt happy in his belief of Spiritualism, when the dying man at once raised his arm in token of assent, and a few minutes afterwards said he saw the spirits hovering round him. He leaves a widow and three young children, the bereaved wife and mother being also near her confinement. Mr. Pearson is deeply regretted by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He was of a kind and gentle disposition, and one who was esteemed the more he was known. Though only acquainted with him for a short

time, I feel as if an old and esteemed friend had been taken from me. However, Spiritualists know that when their friends are taken away they are only gone before. They also feel happy in the assurance of being able to communicate with them by means of the spirit telegraph. So they do not sorrow as those who have no hope. Mr. Pearson was a member of one of our Sandhurst circles, and I have no doubt they will ere long have a communication from him."

Mr. Pearson was part proprietor of the *Bendigo Evening Star*, which paper has always devoted a liberal amount of space to spiritualistic matters.

#### DR. DUNN'S LECTURE AND SEANCE AT THE TEMPERANCE HALL.

THE above lecture and seance took place at the Temperance Hall on Monday, January 13th. Although the prices of admission were high, there were nearly 300 persons present. Dr. Dunn prefaced his lecture by reading an inspirational poem from Lizzie Doten's "Poems from the Inner Life." He then announced his subject as "Spiritualism, and the objections to it raised by the masses." Spiritualism, he said, was no transitory thing; it extended through all ages; the facts are recorded in every page of the Bible and of history. His definition of Spiritualism was simply a belief that spirits did or had held communion with earth; anything beyond that was individualism. The modern development of Spiritualism had arisen from investigation into certain phenomena which occurred at Rochester, in New York state. Some little raps were heard, and these raps had caused a new era to commence, and had been the death-blow to false theology. One objection urged against Spiritualism was its low origin, but the objectors forgot the origin of Christianity. Another was that the spirits gave contradictory utterances, and sometimes lying ones, but it was not extraordinary that amongst 100,000 mediums there should be a few black sheep. The conditions in the future life might be regarded from different standpoints. In the same manner as a distant part of the world—say London—would be described differently by men in a different sphere of life and action, who might visit there and form their opinions from what came under their notice in the particular sphere in which they moved. It was said that mesmerism, biology, &c., would account for all the facts. This he admitted. Mesmerism was simply a positive mind controlling a negative one. It was not the body controlling that mind, but the spirit, and by death the spirit was robbed of nothing. The spirit, therefore, exercised the same influence after death as before, but the negative mind instead of being mesmerised was made a spirit medium. The raps were caused by electricity produced by the circle, and the spirit operator caused the raps by using the electric current. An objection was made that the manifestations were always in the dark: they were not always so, though darkness seemed essential to some of them; he might not be able to explain the reason, but it was well known that light had a powerful effect in many ways. Certain chemicals were destroyed by the action of light. It was a well known fact that machinery worked better at night. Photographs could not be developed in the light, &c. He asked no blind belief but that we should investigate, observe the necessary conditions, invite the gentle spirits of the loved ones who were ever hovering around us, and they would respond.

#### THE SEANCE.

Previous to commencing the seance Dr. Dunn said that, in consequence of the success of his previous cabinet seance, he had been requested to give a public one, and had with some reluctance consented. Anything that might occur would not be from his power; he merely yielded himself a passive agent. He expected that were his body to pass through the ceiling above, he would next day be called a humbug and trickster. He requested the chairman to select any two well-known gentlemen, who were not Spiritualists, from the audience; and, after some delay, Messrs. A. K. Smith and De Verdon consented to act. The cabinet (described in our last), the panels of which had been standing on the

platform during the evening, was then put together and stood in the middle of the platform, the circular opening facing the audience, the door towards the north gallery, which enabled the spectators there to see right into it whenever the door was opened. The tying was accomplished by Mr. De Verdon, Mr. Smith merely supervising it. He commenced by putting a noose round Dr. Dunn's neck, passing the rope down the back, between the legs, up to the right hand, which was secured to the side; the left arm was tied over the breast, the ropes being crossed from the neck to the breast, and round the body above the waist. The tying occupied nine minutes; and, in answer to a question Mr. De Verdon stated that he did not think it possible for Dr. Dunn to untie himself within a reasonable time. He was then shown into the cabinet, and no sooner had the door been closed than a hand appeared at the opening. This hand appeared and disappeared within fifteen seconds from the closing of the door. The guitar was heard to twang and the bell to ring several times; soon after the bell was thrown out of the opening, a hand being visible at the same time, and the door being opened disclosed Dr. Dunn with the ropes undisturbed; but Mr. De Verdon said he thought the manifestations might be produced with the hands. This appeared disingenuous, Dr. Dunn having submitted himself unreservedly to his hands; if there was any defect in the tying it rested with him. Dr. Dunn, who was doubtless annoyed at Mr. De Verdon's conduct, said he would ask the spirits to untie him, and in three and a half minutes emerged from the cabinet untied and with the rope in his hands. Dr. Dunn then said he would try an experiment he had never tried before, viz., to enter the cabinet, place both his hands out of the cabinet, and see if any manifestations would occur. He accordingly did so, and in a short time the bell rang and the tambourine was beaten. He again emerged, and a chair having been placed in the cabinet he said he would go in and see if the spirits would tie him up. In nine minutes forty-five seconds the cabinet was opened, and Dr. Dunn found securely bound to the chair, his hands being tied to the back of the chair, and his feet to the lower front rail. The tying appeared very secure, and, although several persons were engaged untying, it occupied three and a half minutes. This brought the seance to a close.

#### ANOTHER SEANCE.

AFTER the preceding seance Mr. A. K. Smith, in the course of conversation with some gentlemen, said that if Dr. Dunn would allow him (Mr. Smith) to bring his own rope, and tie him up as he liked, he would forfeit Ten pounds if he (Dr. Dunn) got loose. A gentleman present said he would see Dr. Dunn and endeavor to arrange the matter. Dr. Dunn consented, and the meeting was arranged for Wednesday, January 15th, at eight p.m., at Dr. Dunn's lodgings. Shortly after the appointed time Mr. Smith arrived, accompanied by three friends, who, with three friends of the Doctor's and Mr. Peebles, adjourned to a private room. The gentleman who had made the arrangements then stated that Mr. Smith was to tie up Dr. Dunn just as he thought proper, and requested those present not to interfere in any way. Mr. Smith had brought his own rope (a long piece of thin Manilla line), which he commenced operations with by tying Dr. Dunn's hands together by the wrist behind him; he then laced the arms together from the shoulder to the elbow, making fast in the centre until all his rope was used; an additional piece of rope was then borrowed (making in all about fifty feet), with which the arms were bound together from the elbows to the hands. Mr. Smith worked steadily and without hesitation at the tying (evidently having a definite plan) and occupied fourteen minutes in the process. Previous to the tying the room was searched by those present to see if any person or appliances were concealed. As there was no cabinet it was suggested that the party should take the light and go outside the door, and Dr. Dunn should call if released. In two and a quarter minutes the party re-entered, and found Dr. Dunn free, and the ropes with every knot untied, at his feet. Mr. Smith expressed himself perfectly satisfied that his money was fairly lost,



and Dr. Dunn said that he would volunteer them a test. He would first see if the spirits would tie him up. The company then left the room, and in five minutes were recalled, when they found Dr. Dunn securely tied to a chair. He requested them to place a bell on the floor, to fill his hands (which were tied by the wrist behind him) with flour and his mouth with water. This was done, and on the party leaving the room the bell was heard to ring. When the witnesses re-entered Dr. Dunn's feet were found outstretched in the direction the bell, and one of the party suggested that he had rung it with his feet; the same gentleman objected to a knot about Dr. Dunn's wrist not being secure, and expressed the opinion he could easily untie it. He was requested to do so, and after some attempts confessed himself unable. He then said that possibly the hand might be slipped through. It was agreed that the party should leave the room whilst Dr. Dunn was untied. His mouth was accordingly refilled with water, the flour being still in the hands, and in about four minutes the party re-entered, finding him free except the loop on the wrist (which it had been suggested might slip.) This he stated was left on purposely, for the objector to try and slip over. This he failed to do, and on measuring the girth of the compressed hand, it was found to be at least half as large again as the wrist. These manifestations took place under strictly test conditions, and fairly non-plussed the sceptical portion of the witnesses.

#### FAREWELL SOIREE TO MR. PEEBLES.

A FAREWELL soiree was given to Mr. Peebles in the Turnverein-hall Latrobe-street, on Thursday evening, Jan. 16th, previous to his departure from Australia. Mr. J. Ross, President of the Association of Progressive Spiritualists, was in the chair, and there were about 200 persons present. The proceedings commenced with some music and singing, after which

The CHAIRMAN spoke of the attacks which had been made against Mr. Peebles by a section of the Press, and expressed his gratification that that gentleman had lived them down, and secured the respect and friendship of a large number of persons. Mr. Peebles was, he remarked, eminently qualified to teach, and he had during his short career here been the means of giving liberty and freedom to many minds which had previously been bound in the thralldom of orthodoxy. He had sown the good seed, and it was for those whom he was about to leave behind, to nurse it so that it might produce a rich harvest. Things were now in a hopeful condition, and Mr. Peebles left this community not with fame or popular applause, but with the reflection that he had achieved satisfactory results. The chairman then called upon the assemblage to wish Mr. Peebles God speed and a happy voyage.

The call was responded to by loud cheers.

Mr. PEEBLES, at the request of the chairman, then came forward and addressed the meeting. He observed that the emotions which thrilled his being at the present moment were very different from those he felt when he first met them. Then he was a stranger, but now he was in the presence of friends—friends whom he loved with that fraternal appreciation which bound soul to soul. He had always through life been an unfortunate man, being on the unpopular side of moral and religious questions. He had associated himself with the anti-slavery movement, with the temperance movement, and subsequently with the spiritualists, so that he had always been on the struggling side. When he first communicated with his friend Mr. Terry relative to a pilgrimage to Australia he asked him not to announce him with high-sounding words and phrases, as he was simply a plain, unassuming man, who spoke from the depths of his soul. On reaching Melbourne he was disappointed. In the first place, the beauties of the country, the climate, the magnitude of the city, and the size of its parks and gardens far excelled all he had preconceived, but the condition of spiritualism was not so far advanced as he had supposed. For instance, he did not expect to be called an apostate and a bold-faced blasphemer. The application of such terms to him thrilled him with the

keenest sadness, he found he was compelled to go back fifteen years, and deal with objective phenomena. He cared not for the phenomena of spiritualism so much as for the grand philosophy that man was a progressive being, and that all men had their guardian angels watching their progress towards the immortal spheres, for it was not the name we took but the life we led that secured the crown. It was better to be anything, even an atheist, and lead a true, noble, and Christ-like life, than a nominal spiritualist living a selfish, sordid, unspiritual life; hence his great aim was not so much to proselytise men as to induce them to grow into everything that was good. He advised all present as spiritualists to be nobly generous to others, and to endeavour to be peacemakers. Concessions where there was no principle involved were as beautiful as heavenly, and charity was among the divine graces. Purity was the password to the heaven of heavens.

He had not done so much good to Spiritualism as he had hoped to do, but he had done all he could under the circumstances. The issues were with the angels and those they held in charge. He cherished only kindness and goodwill towards the people of Victoria.

His heart was in the work of Spiritualism. To its divine principles he had consecrated his life: and he could never be too thankful to those who had united in bidding God speed to a stranger in a strange land. But he was not a stranger now; he could never forget the friends he would leave behind in Melbourne. He should feel the beating of their generous hearts when sitting in his cozy home in America with his own family. It was not probable that he should on this side of the river of death meet again any of those now seated about him, but it was a blessed thought that in the land of souls—the glorious hereafter—all would meet and know each other. He would not say farewell, for life was but an endless change of being, and we only parted for a time, to meet again in spirit life, where love was law and progress the key-note of eternity.

At the conclusion of his address, Mr. Peebles was greeted with hearty applause, and the company adjourned to the refreshment room, where an ample supply of light refreshments had been provided by Mr. Clements, the caterer. Subsequently, several songs and pieces of music were very creditably performed by lady and gentlemen volunteers, and after a highly humorous speech from Mr. Bright, Mr. Dunn delivered a farewell address, and the meeting was brought to a conclusion about 11 o'clock.

#### REVIEW.

##### \* SHALL WE LIVE ON EARTH AGAIN?

The basis of this pamphlet is a lecture delivered by Mr. Tyerman, at Masonic Hall, Melbourne, on the 8th of December, 1872. It has since been revised and enlarged, and is now printed for circulation.

The publication is not inopportune, as the doctrine has been introduced and promulgated from a public platform in Melbourne, and is supposed by many to be a tenet of spiritualistic belief. Mr. Tyerman, after fairly stating the case for the Re-incarnationists, analyzes the theory, and rejects it for the following reasons:—

1st. Because the alleged necessity for it appears to rest on a pure assumption, unsupported by evidence.

2nd. The assumption is virtually denied by the admission our spirit friends make in reference to certain other spirits.

3rd. Because, as we have no definite recollections of our previous incarnations, we cannot benefit by our previous experiences, and therefore practically they are of no use to us.

4th. Because there is no guarantee that any given incarnation will advance the soul beyond the point it had previously reached; while it is just possible that in many instances it may result in its debasement and retrogression.

5th. Because of the monstrous possibilities it involves.

\* Shall we live on Earth again? or the doctrine of Re-incarnation examined. By J. Tyerman. Melbourne, Terry, 96, Russell-street, 1873.

6th. Because it involves the destruction of our individuality, and therefore defeats the end contemplated by Re-incarnation.

7th. Because there is no necessity for it, inasmuch as the purpose of Re-incarnation can be better promoted, and its object better attained without it than with it.

All these positions are well argued by the writer, and if the local advocates of the Re-incarnation theory will condescend to argue the subject, they will have some tough work to refute the arguments here adduced. There is an appendix containing some correspondence between the author and Mr. Peebles, in which the latter gentleman expresses his views on the subject of Re-incarnation. The pamphlet is well worthy of perusal by all those who take an interest in the subject treated upon.

#### THE HALF-YEARLY CONVERSAZIONE.

The half-yearly conversazione of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists was held at the Turn Verein Hall, on Tuesday, December 31st, 1872. About 150 persons sat down to tea, and the number was considerably increased afterwards. Mr. Peebles (who had been invited to attend) was unable to be present through indisposition. Mr. John Ross briefly addressed the meeting, congratulating the Spiritualists upon the general progress of the movement, and speaking encouragingly for the future. After some music and singing, Mr. Tyerman was called upon for an address, and in response thereto favoured the assemblage with a lecture, excellent in itself, but of too substantial a character to be properly appreciated by an audience met for festive purposes. At the conclusion of the lecture Mr. Tyerman informed the meeting that this was the last occasion on which he would have the pleasure (or pain) of addressing the Association, with the year would end his connection with it, as its paid or public Lecturer. He had devoted his life and energies to the spread of Spiritualism, and the Association had not supported him as it should and could, and therefore on them rested the responsibility of the step he was now taking. He had no other alternative, and with the new year he should strike out a new and independent course for himself, trusting to God and the sympathies of those who were fast joining the ranks of Spiritualism for support. At the conclusion of Mr. Tyerman's remarks (which had a most baneful effect upon the meeting), the chairman rose and expressed his opinion that Mr. Tyerman had shown very bad taste in trying to introduce discord into so harmonious a meeting, and that he might have chosen a more suitable occasion to speak of his own private affairs. The Association had done its utmost to make adequate provision for Mr. Tyerman, and although there might have been a want of organisation, there had not been a want of will. They had fully recognised the abilities of Mr. Tyerman, but could not be expected to do impossibilities. At the close of the chairman's observations, Mr. Tyerman got upon a form and attempted to say something, but there were loud cries of "chair," and as the audience would not allow him to proceed, he resumed his seat. Several songs and duets were then sung by ladies and gentlemen, and the entertainments were concluded with a ball.

#### THE SPIRIT-FORM MADE VISIBLE.

The materialization of spirits seems to be getting very general now in many parts of the world. The two best known media in England for this class of manifestations are Mrs. Holmes, and Miss F. Cook. There are several accounts of Seances with these two ladies in the London papers, we extract two of the most interesting.

"On Sunday evening, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes made their usual weekly visit to Mr. Slater and family, where a very remarkable series of seances have been held. One room is devoted entirely as a spiritual laboratory, on one side of which is a cabinet made of wooden frames and heavy curtains, with an aperture about twelve inches square in the side, about five feet from the ground. A lamp was placed on the mantelshelf, on a line with the wall of the cabinet in which the aperture is placed. The rays were broken by a small camera being placed in front of

the lamp. The light was so bright that large type could be read where the spectators sat, about six feet from the cabinet. Mr. Slater and Mr. Holmes went inside, and sat with their backs to the front of the cabinet. Mrs. Holmes sat between the spectators and the cabinet, but to the right, the light being to the left. Several melodies were sung, and by raps the spirits desired Mr. Slater to leave the cabinet, which he did. Then Mrs. Holmes was entranced by "Rosie," who made everyone laugh with her merry conversation. Every eye was directed to the aperture, and soon a white oval form was seen, in which were gradually developed eyes, nose, and mouth, with beard. Several persons exclaimed, "How like Mr. Burns! if he were not present in the body, we should take that face for his. It bowed in answer to questions, but was not recognised. Then an old lady, in cap and strings peculiar to a deceased member of the family, came so distinctly as to be plainly recognisable and answered by movements of the head. Two others were seen in a similarly satisfactory manner, and another figure, which was but imperfectly represented. Then it was said the power was exhausted. The fact was that the greater portion of the sitters were suffering from ill-health, and the usual supplies of force were not at command.

"Some may object to Mr. Holmes being in the cabinet, who might on that account produce the faces by trickery. To such objectors we would say, Try it yourselves; go into a strange house, and without any apparatus but what you could carry in your pocket, produce such effects by artificial means. Again, the faces were in appearance a luminous white, not phosphorescent, or giving off rays of light, but like mother-o'-pearl. To a certain extent, the faces were self-luminous. A white rag, or drawing of a face, would not have been so white and well defined if placed in the same position. These also were observed to come from the ceiling of the cabinet, above the top of which and the ceiling of the room there was a large space illuminated by the light from the lamp. The faces did not come from below, in Mr. Holmes's direction, from the side, or present themselves with the dark side and then turn round the face. As before remarked, these faces came from the top of the cabinet, sometimes in an indistinct form, and then became intensified in detail before the eyes of the spectators. A clairvoyant saw the more interior formation. A series of oblique rays, like the letter A, issued from Mr. Holmes's body, and another emanation, peculiar to the spirit, came down from above. When these two influences joined at a point, then the spirit-faces developed themselves. Thus it is not reasonable to suppose that any action on the part of Mr. Holmes aided in the production of these faces, but that they were veritable and genuine spirit-phenomena.

"After a pause, an attempt was made to obtain direct writing. A small slate, by Faber, was at hand, ruled with red lines on both sides, and quite clean and free from writing of any kind. One side was ruled across, and on the other side the lines were in a longitudinal direction. Mr. Slater and Mr. Holmes went into the cabinet with this slate, on which was placed a small crumb of pencil, about the size of one-third of a barley-corn. This slate was held one end by Mr. Slater, the other by Mr. Holmes, their other hands being joined. Directly, the sound of writing was heard; and when one side was full, the slate was forcibly turned over, and the other side was written upon; after which the slate was jerked out of the hands that held it. This writing was not done either by Mr. Slater or Mr. Holmes, who could not have done it even if they had wished in such a dark place, and with such a morsel of pencil. When brought to light it was found to be written on on both sides, each side in a different handwriting. The ruled lines were accurately followed, and when the page was full the writer had begun again at the top and written a line in between those already written. The ruled lines were followed on both sides, one being written across the other up and down the slate. The following is a copy of what was on the side ruled across, the punctuation and capital letters being accurately transcribed in this copy:—

"Matter, power, spirit, each points to the other, and



each finds in the other its fulfilment. But spirit is the root of all things—the invisible creator of nature—eternally the same, while the creature is ever undergoing fresh changes. Spirit is uncreated and self-existent. Nature and all in it exists and perishes. Nature is the garb of spirit, sometimes seen in rays, sometimes clothed in the royal garments of majesty. But nature is never more than a covering, a form, a type, a perishable image of an imperishable Being. Only Spirit and Revelation are real. Matter and force, life and act, have only value and significance because therein spirit makes itself known and develops its eternal existence. Man even is dust, and nothing without spirit. Good-bye friend Slater, from Bullock.

On the other side of the slate, written in the direction of the lines from one end of the slate to the other, and interlined, so that in reading every alternate line had to be missed, was the following inscription:—

The same process of philosophy that materialises spirit also spiritualises matter. We lose nothing in giving up the old ideas of immateriality if we still hold that matter is cunning enough to produce consciousness, thought, affection, and will. Names are of no consequence. If the latest thinkers choose to call the thing that manifests these phenomena nervous fluid, or ether, or force, or tissue under the play and vibration of a combination of forces, I do not see in this language any danger of our shocking our old-fashioned souls. Matter or dynamical machinery that is capable of personality is very likely to have also the faculty of immortality. Good night, dear friends, Doctor.

The above inscriptions are evidently not only the products of minds used to literary work, but also of minds used to thinking and ratiocination, and presenting a high degree of liberality. As the handwritings were different, so are the styles, literary and philosophical, of the two extracts. We ask—What greater proof could there be of individuality than the above experiment indicates, and an individuality distinct from that of any person present, and manifested through organic conditions invisible to the physical eye?"—*The Medium and Daybreak*, Nov. 29, 1872.

At a seance held with Miss Florrie Cook, this evening, the guests present were Count Wimpffen, Mr. and Mrs. Inglis, Mr. W. H. Harrison, Mrs. Blyton, Mr. and Mrs. Cook and family, and myself. The medium having been shut up in the cabinet, was in five minutes securely tied, and the knots were duly sealed by Mr. Inglis, who had previously thoroughly examined the cabinet. The doors having been again closed, a dark face appeared at the opening, after a short interval, but only manifested for a few moments, being distinctly seen, however, by several of those present. After some singing the medium was entranced, and Katie appeared at the opening, previously remarking upon the similarity of her appearance to that of the medium. A very good and clear view of Katie was obtained, the spirit turning her face in various directions in order to present different aspects of her head. By direction of Katie the cabinet doors were then opened, and the medium found entranced in a stooping position. The seals and fastenings were found intact. After a short interval the seance was resumed, the medium being again secured; the tying was duly examined and the knots sealed by Count Wimpffen. The first spirit which then came had a white fat face, which shortly gave way to one with a dark brown face, neither being recognised. After an interval for refreshments there was another sitting. After a good deal of singing, Katie again manifested, and asking for permission to cut a lock of hair from the medium's head, she took a pair of scissors from the hand of Mrs. Inglis, and severed a curl, which she handed with a piece of her own to the medium. On releasing the medium and comparing the colours of the two specimens of hair, that of Katie's was found to be of a light brown, and of a peculiar character. Katie instructed those present not to pinch the specimen, and on Miss Cook resuming her place in the cabinet, she took back the hair from her, but promised to give a better lock of hair for preserving on some future occasion. A number of concussions of a rather loud and startling nature were made, and, in the course of the sitting, Katie

spoke both with the direct voice and also through the medium when entranced.

THOMAS BLYTON.

74, Navarino-road, Dalston, E.

November 12th, 1872.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—Allow me to add my mite of testimony about a seance for spirit faces which I attended at Miss Florrie Cook's, on the 18th of last month. The marvellous manifestations which I witnessed (which I had seen mentioned in your columns) were truly astonishing. The tying-up of the medium by unseen power or agency is, I should think, convincing enough for almost any sceptic, the knots of the cord being drawn so tightly, it was with great difficulty that I was able to untie them, and I feel quite positive that the medium could have had no hand in the matter herself. I helped to seal the knots, and after the manifestations of the various faces, the seals were quite intact, whereas if the medium had moved in the slightest, they must have been broken.

Previous to my visit I had heard that the spirit Katie was so much like the medium herself, which raised doubts in some minds, but I could not see the slightest resemblance. The face was much smaller, and fair, with light eyes; whereas the medium is very dark with brown eyes. The second face was smaller, resembling the face of a Hindoo child, about five or six months old.

The next face of a female appeared to be about thirty years of age, with a broad flat face, which appeared to be in pain, but in neither of these three could I see the slightest resemblance to the medium.

The fourth face, which I think was termed the Parsee, with the white head-dress, seemed to partake of the features of the medium. In conclusion, I must say that the phenomena are the most wonderful I ever witnessed.

W. BROOKS.

Forest Gate, Essex,

November 2nd, 1872.

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