

THE

A. G. Withers.

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DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREETHOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

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

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ONE of the first problems that suggests itself to the spiritualistic investigator, who has satisfied himself of the reality of spirit intercourse, is the nature of the future life, and its relation to human life on the terrestrial plane. The invisibility and intangibility of a disembodied spirit to mortal sense of sight and touch, give an idea of unreality to the mind of those accustomed to test everything by the five senses usually assumed to comprise man's entire range of perception ; and it needs not only the evidence of those gifted individuals who manifest a sixth sense or interior sight, and the cumulative testimony of dwellers in the spirit world, who have given evidence of their reliability in matters that were verifiable by investigation or experiment, but a consensus of corroborative testimony through different and independent media, backed up with evidences of the nature and potency of unseen forces, to bring home to the human understanding a conception of the reality of spirit life. All spirits describe surroundings as real as those they were familiar with on the earth plane, but their knowledge and comprehension of things are limited by their capacity for observation and range of perception. Our world is a very small place to those people whose experiences and observations cover but a limited area in which they live and die, and their description of it, given in response to a question from another sphere, would be vastly different from that given by a more intelligent and travelled man, who had mixed with different races and studied the flora and fauna of diverse countries. So it is with the denizens of the vast spheres of spirit life ; each truthful spirit describes his world according to his environment and capacity for understanding it—but all agree on its reality and

apparent substantiality, whilst the form of matter we are familiar with as substantial, is to to their perception vague and shadowy. The spirit of Emanuel Swedenborg, communicating with Judge Edmonds, says :— "We occupy earth—tangible, positive earth—as much as your earth. . . . The earth brings forth spontaneously most of the food required for our bodies, and I would say the advanced spirits do not require so much food as those below them. Their bodies, in every sphere to which they are elevated, lose a portion of their grossness, and as they are more refined become more like the spirit itself. We have trees—real trees and flowers, and mountains and rivers, and rocks and everything material." By reason of his advanced state, when he left the body he found himself surrounded by a scene of such transcendent natural beauty that he says :—"My spirit, lifted beyond itself, sprang forth in one spontaneous gush of love and praise, and I blessed God who had vouchsafed to me the privilege I then enjoyed."

Similarly, but more elaborately, does the gifted seer, Andrew Jackson Davis, describe conditions in the spirit world, varying in degree according to the taste and state of development of the inhabitants, for all can (consistent with their deserts) find surroundings appropriate to their desires. Persons utterly ignorant of spiritual teachings, and having no definite conception of the nature of the after life, will, when magnetized into the sleep-waking or deep trance state, so that their spiritual perceptions are opened, describe scenes in the spirit world appearing to them as real as the *mundane* things to which they are at the time oblivious ; and their testimony will be found in the main uniform. We have personally experimented in this direction, and know what we state to be a fact, and in harmony with results obtained by other unbiassed investigators. Apart from the evidences referred to, is not the condition of things described as pertaining to the spirit world a rational and attractive one—more fitted to the tastes and requirements of intelligent and progressive beings, than dwelling in a gold-paved city, or hovering round a great white throne playing harps or singing hymns through all eternity ? The "many mansions" spoken of by Jesus are a reality, in which all will ultimately find

their homes according to their deserts; but mansions must have ground to stand upon, and need appropriate surroundings, and these the seers of spiritual things and the denizens of the spirit world assure us are there.

OUR FOREIGN EXCHANGES.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PRESS.

We have great pleasure in translating the following from the *Constancia* of the 4th of November last:—

"*The Standard Weekly News Budget*.—This important weekly publication, which appears in this capital (Buenos Aires), has opened, under the title of "Problems of the Unknown," a permanent section, dedicated to the study of psychic phenomena, tiptology, telepathy, *apports*, etc.

"The editor of this section (printed, like the rest of the paper, in English), gives an account of the principal facts related in Spiritualistic works, as also some personal observations and experiments realized in Buenos Aires. These narratives are invariably written in a spirit of broad impartiality.

"We make it a matter of sincere congratulation that so important a publication as *The Standard* should occupy itself with these subjects. It proves to us once more that public attention, finally abandoning its inconceivable prejudices, is interesting itself in this study. We ask for nothing more. Modern Spiritualists, in their propaganda, have restricted their demands upon science and the public, not to the acceptance of a theory, but to the calm and impartial investigation of a phenomenon.

"It only remains for us to felicitate our contemporary on the intellectual liberty and impartiality he has exhibited, in opening his columns to contributions such as these "Problems of the Unknown;" despising the clamour of those who believe they can shut out a mystery from the solar light of Science and who profess to arrest, by the fear of ridicule, the incessant force of investigation. The truth is marching on."

We join our congratulations to those of our Argentine contemporary and we regard it as one of the inevitable certainties of the near future, that a section devoted to the subject of psychic science, will come to be regarded as an indispensable feature of every influential newspaper, not professedly materialistic or ecclesiastical, in all free countries. Obviously, there is no question of such transcendent and paramount importance as this; and when once it takes firm hold on the public mind, it will sweep everything before it.

THEOSOPHY AND WAR.

The Theosophical readers of the *Harbinger*, will be interested in the views entertained by an able theosophist in France, Aimée Blech, with respect to war. To us they appear much more rational than those put forth by the Peace and Humanity Society in this city. We take the following from an article contributed to the December number of the *Revue Spirite*, by the writer above referred to:—

"For theosophists who endeavour to look at everything from above, war is not what it is for men in general. In war we see an historical destiny of nations, and not a sanguinary and odious conflict of individuals. Above all, we see in war the accomplishment of the decrees of Karma. There is no iniquitous war, in our opinion, however iniquitous it may appear to be. The Divine Justice governs all things, and the nation crushed by defeat, has, in the past—a long time back, perhaps—itsself prepared the events of the present. For the same reason we comprehend that all those who, in war, fall beneath the blows of their enemies, whether cut down in the splendour of their twentieth year, or in the usefulness of their maturity, have, themselves, by acts previously committed, drawn down upon themselves the Karma of a sudden death. Death never strikes blindly, conducted, as it is, by the hand of Karma, and they alone fall who are marked by the fatal seal.

"But those brave soldiers who give their lives to their country, by an act of devotion, have not so sad a lot as

we imagine: for the victims of duty find high compensations for the sacrifice they are making, in the life to come; inasmuch as by giving themselves, simply and consciously, they offer a reflection—pale though it be—of the sublime Divine sacrifice."

Nor should it be forgotten, that the great Teacher explicitly declared the crowning proof of love—its *ne plus ultra*—to be this, "that a man lay down his life for his friends." And this is precisely what the brave soldier does, who dies upon the field of battle. He lays down his life for his countrymen.

And in this Boer war, how easy is it to trace the operation of the law of Karma, which is, we take it, a reassertion of the impressive declaration that "as we sow, we shall certainly reap;" and of the equally impressive statement by Shakespeare, that

"This even handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips."

The history of the Boer domination in South Africa is one long record of atrocious crimes perpetrated upon the native races, whom they dispossessed, and then proceeded to enslave or massacre. Their sins have found them out. In their insolent arrogance and blind ambition, they struck Great Britain a blow in the face, and Providence has been making use of that Power, to extinguish Boer domination in Africa by a rain of blood. Call it Karma, call it retribution, call it the harvest of an earlier seed-time, or what you will, the fact remains; and it is because narrow-minded theologians are unqualified to grasp the breadth, the magnitude and the grandeur of the sublime principles upon which Eternal Justice governs the history of the world; that they are unable to perceive that

"Though man's a fool, yet God is wise."

A WARNING DREAM.

Le Journal, a secular journal published in Paris, relates the following in its issue of 23rd of September:—Mme. Alexis Drouart, a certificated nurse, living at 67 Rue d'Avron, sleeping by the side of her husband, suddenly awoke at midnight, very pale, and bathed in a cold perspiration, exclaiming, "Auguste! Auguste! answer me. You are still alive, are you not?" Only half awake, M. Drouard replied, "Thou art dreaming. What ails thee?" "Ah! my dear," she rejoined, "I have had such a frightful nightmare. Just imagine, I dreamt that you were dead, and already cold." Reassured, she fell asleep again; as did her husband. On awakening about four o'clock in the morning, she endeavoured to arouse her companion, but in vain. He was a corpse, and already cold and rigid. It is believed he succumbed to the rupture of an aneurism.

AN IMPERATIVE DEMAND.

Professor James H. Hyslop, of Columbia University, in an article on "The Wants of Psychological Research," which appears in the December number of the *Arena*, speaks out with resolute plainness on the imperative necessity which exists for a thoroughly scientific study of the phenomena of Spiritualism, as one which can no longer be evaded. The time has gone past, he observes, for treating the subject with ridicule by the man of science. "In fact," he continues, "the impulse to study the case has gone so far and the genuine phenomena evincing supernormal powers of some kind have become so numerous and suggestive of spiritistic doctrines, that the scientist must either accept or kill the theory, and he cannot do either of these things intelligently without investigation. We have passed the stage when sneers are respectable."

The admission is significant; but it only applies we fear to the United States, and to Western Europe; where people are more logical, less addicted to *à priori* reasoning, and more open to the reception of new ideas than they are in Great Britain or Australia. Of course, every honest Spiritualist will go heart and soul with Professor Hyslop, in pleading for a rigorous investigation, by the severest scientific methods, of the phenomena of Spiritualism; the separation of the genuine from the spurious, and the unsparing exposure of frauds and charlatans.

That gentleman goes on to remark, that "whether true or false, it is equally important to have a thorough scientific verdict upon this great question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" We cannot afford to be fooled on either side of the matter, and the work of the Society for Psychological Research has gone so far that no intelligent man can any longer sneer at it without understanding its facts."

In season and out of season we have been endeavouring in these columns, year after year, to induce people to substitute earnest and patient inquiry for scoffs and sarcasms, but apparently all in vain. We may hope, however, that such an appeal, made by a distinguished University Professor to men of science in the United States, may be more effectual. At present, as he remarks, many narratives of psychic phenomena, or what appears to be such, are stated by half informed and credulous persons, of an entirely unscientific habit of mind, and they are quite disregarded by the general public. Now, as he goes on to say, "The enormous interest of belief and life cannot be made to depend upon stories coming from such sources. Hence, we must have the means to sift these phenomena and to bring the genuine cases under the control of the scientific mind, which alone can separate the false from the true and important. It is the scandal of science that this has not been done already."

All this is perfectly true; but some of us, who have been carefully investigating these phenomena for thirty years, have the strongest possible grounds for complaining that the scientific mind is often so altogether unscientific. For what can be more so than the refusal of professedly scientific men to investigate novel and surprising phenomena, for no other reason than that they are novel, and that they appear to contradict and upset their preconceived notions with respect to matter, mind, and spirit? This was the case with Thomas Huxley, in conversation with whom, on the 11th January, the present writer ventured to remind him of his refusal to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism; and he replied:—"What of that? My objection to any such inquiry was the result of my environment; and I have now discovered that it was so. If I refused to investigate them, it was because *I was prejudiced*. I could not look beyond the range of my vision which was bounded by matter. . . . I was always immersed in it, just as Tyndall was: and neither of us was qualified to discern the existence and nature of matter in a much more sublimated form than that with which we were then acquainted. But you should be tolerant and charitable with respect to all these things, remembering that, in the animal kingdom, there are innumerable varieties of vision, depending upon differentiations in the organic structure of the eye. And again, the mole had eyes once, until he ceased to employ them, and then they became aborted by disuse. The mere physicist is a good deal like the mole. He works underground; that is to say, he is buried in matter. Nor can he see anything beyond it and the properties it possesses. Well, leave the physicist alone, until he reaches a higher plane, and acquires visual organs which enable him to perceive the spiritual. I speak in parables, but this is a way I had. This medium's brain is not that of a man who ever studied natural history as mine did; otherwise I could express myself much more clearly to you than I am doing. . . ."

Professor Huxley's attitude towards psychic phenomena, while he was on the earth, was only that of hundreds of scientific men; that is to say it was influenced by prejudice, and prejudice is obviously incompatible with the scientific spirit. Professor Hyslop, as his two articles, in the April and June numbers of *Harper's Magazine* for 1900, showed, approached the subject in a similar frame of mind; but his prejudices were dissipated by the logic of facts. He honestly acknowledges it. He sees the vastness of the domain of inquiry which is opening out before the investigator of psychic phenomena, and he calls for such an endowment of the scientific study of these, as will ensure an income of £200,000 per annum; either to be placed at the disposal of the American Society for

Psychical Research; or to be invested as a trust in the hands of some University; or to be applied to the establishment of a Psychopathic Hospital. "There is no more imperative work in the world," he observes, "and none needs so much the attention of this humanity-professing age." True! And equally true is his contention that if this study "can in any way sustain or prove the conception of immortality—the work of investigation, by the best trained men, cannot be sacrificed without impeaching both the intelligence and the morality of the human race."

Yet even Professor Hyslop stoops to pander to the prejudices of his class, when he states that he hopes to "save men from the follies and illusions of traditional Spiritualism." Why, he has learned all he knows upon the subject by means of a medium, who is thrown, or falls into trance, according to the methods of "traditional Spiritualism;" and, through whom, spirits who have proved their identity, have communicated with himself, with Dr. Hodgson, and with others, by the traditional modes of intercourse. The faculty for upwards of a century heaped measureless scorn upon Mesmerism; and then embraced it, under the name of Hypnotism. Are men of science going to repeat the same tactics with Spiritualism?

THE COMING REFORMATION, OR

THE RELIGION OF RIGHTEOUS ACTION.

An Address given at a meeting of Members of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, at the Austral Buildings, Collins Street, Melbourne, on Monday, 14th Jan., 1901.

BY H. JUNOR BROWNE, ESQ.

Most people, who have been taught *what* to think not *how* to think, erroneously consider that those who do not, like themselves, entertain the popular views regarding the divine Author of our being are Atheists. In order to dispel this utterly false idea, I shall preface my address this evening, with the following lines:—

"Oh, Sacred Presence, Life divine!
We rear to Thee no gilded shrine;
Unfashioned by the hand of art,
Thy temple is the childlike heart.

"No tearful eye, no bended knee,
No servile speech we bring to Thee;
For Thy great love tunes every voice,
And makes each trusting soul rejoice.

"We will not mock Thy holy name
With titles high of empty fame;
For Thou, with all Thy works and ways,
Art far beyond man's feeble praise.

"But freely as the birds that sing,
The soul's spontaneous gift we bring;
And like the fragrance of the flowers,
We consecrate to Thee our powers."

To those who have made religion their earnest and prayerful study for years, it is truly surprising that there still exists such foolish misconceptions as are popularly entertained regarding what true religion really consists of. The fact is that not one in a thousand ever devote five minutes consideration to the truth or reasonableness of the religious views entertained by them. Through false teaching they foolishly assume that it is sinful to question the truth of what they have been taught to believe, and are afraid to allow themselves to contemplate the truth and rationality thereof, because in olden times some semi-savage wrote: "He that doubteth is condemned," "He who believeth not is condemned already." They shut their eyes to the fact that it is not only their right but also their duty to doubt every statement regarding religion and on all other subjects which is not in accord with their experience; for doubt is the lever by which the world has been raised from savagery to civilization. Any statement which cannot stand to be doubted and to be tested by rational analysis evidently cannot be true or worthy of acceptance, and any institution which forbids free inquiry into its teachings thereby tacitly acknowledges the falsity of its doctrines and its own unworthiness; for, if its teachings were true, no amount of doubt or questioning their credibility could possibly

assail them, since truth courts inquiry, and the more it is investigated the brighter it shines; unlike error, it requires no assumed authority to give it weight, for its evidence is within. People, as a rule, put popular opinion in the first place and religious truth in the second place; the consequence of this is, that while in the past great advances have been made in the arts and sciences, religious views have, as a rule, remained stagnant.

Among all the various systems of religion in the world there is no more debasing conceptions of God than those set forth in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, in which the Almighty is represented as having cursed with an eternal curse all the race yet unborn, not for any fault of their own, but because two of their forefathers were disobedient, and as having prepared an enormous place of eternal torment for the many, and a circumscribed place of everlasting bliss for the few who are credulous enough to profess to believe these and the other impious conceptions regarding the divine Author of our being and the destiny of man. With such revolting conceptions of the Almighty, formed in ignorant and superstitious ages, which are still held by people in general as being divine verities, is it to be wondered at that Materialism and Atheism are so prevalent, not only among non-church goers, but even among regular attendants at what is termed divine service. The wonder is that such God-dishonouring doctrines do not turn all Church-goers into Materialists; for, notwithstanding the pious reverence they entertain for time-honoured fables, the divine sense of right and wrong, with which God has endowed them, must at times revolt against such debasing conceptions of Him as set forth in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, and as still upheld and inculcated by those who claim to be the spiritual teachers of the masses.

Three of the principal reasons for my having renounced the popular faith are as follows:—1. Because the leading fables of the book on which it is based are mere plagiarisms from the old Babylonian and Hindoo legends, which are opposed to what science has disclosed. 2. Because its teachings are immoral, such as, that a man may go on sinning until the eleventh hour, when, if he will only repent and believe in an absurdity, his sins, however heinous they may have been, will be instantaneously washed as white as snow, thereby encouraging immorality. 3. Because of the God-dishonouring character of God set forth in the Bible, namely, that he is a jealous God, a God of Hosts and Armies, a consuming fire, who has created the wicked for the day of evil, and who will laugh at the wicked when their calamity cometh. I acknowledge that higher and nobler views of God are also set forth in the Bible, but this only shows the contradictory character of the book and its consequent unreliability. Time precludes me from enlarging on the many glaring contradictions contained in that book, which I once held was of divine authority, as I otherwise certainly could easily do to the satisfaction of all who are truly animated by the love of truth. In the Bible it is stated that man is made after the image of God; if this were true then mankind would also be without sin, whereas Jesus is reported to have declared that there is none good but God, and this is self-evidently true, as all have sinned, for to err is human. If God exists, as all Nature proclaims He does, He must be infinitely good; whereas man is so constituted that he is of a dual character, Spiritual and Carnal, the one, which is his higher nature, manifesting his good qualities, and the other, his lower nature, his evil propensities, the former being at all times at war with the latter. It follows, therefore, that it is false to say that man is made after the image of God, who is infinitely good, unless we are to erroneously assume that God, like man, is both good and evil. I mention this to show one of the many inconsistencies upheld by the popular faith, and one that is never questioned by its upholders. Man in his spiritual nature, it is true, is God-like, but in his carnal nature he is brute-like; and sometimes more brutish than the beasts of the field, as is evidenced by reports in the daily newspapers.

It cannot be but evident to all thoughtful people,

whose minds are not blinded by prejudice and bigotry, that there must be something radically wrong with the popular systems of religion, seeing that after so many centuries of their existence there is still prevalent so fearful an amount of immorality, crime and misery, in all so-called Christian countries. In confirmation of this I need only refer to the daily accounts of these in the public Press of the different countries throughout the civilized world, not only in regard to disbelievers but also among adherents of the various sects claiming the title of Christian. The question, therefore, to be solved is: "What is the character of the reformation necessary to bring about the desired end, namely, to cause people to become better and happier?"

The first thing to be done is, while retaining all that is true and good in the popular faith, to do away with its false, irrational, and God dishonouring doctrines, to which I shall refer further on; in fact, some of its fundamental principles will have to be discarded, such as belief in the infallibility of a book or a Church, and in the idea that man's future happiness is dependent on his faith or belief in certain superstitious views regarding religion written in ignorant and semi-barbarous ages, when this tiny speck called Earth was supposed to be the sole object of interest to the Almighty, and the centre of the universe round which the Sun revolved. The popular idea regarding the Jewish tutelary god of this planet, Jehovah, being identical with the infinite Evolver of universal nature, must also be discarded. It is true that many of the attributes pertaining to the latter have been superstitiously ascribed to the former, but the inconsistency of this is apparent when the human weaknesses attributed to the Jewish god are considered.

It may be asked if the testimony of the Bible in regard to a future life for man be dispensed with, where is evidence of man's survival after physical dissolution to be obtained? It is to be obtained from the same source from which the Biblical writers received what was evidence to them, but which is only testimony or secondary evidence to others. Some of the Biblical writers even deny that there is a future life for man. One of them, for instance, declares that "Man hath no pre-eminence above a beast," "as the one dieth, so dieth the other." Another writer evidently had grave doubts on the subject, for he candidly asks, "If a man die shall he live again?" On the other hand, there are many accounts given in the Bible of the manifestation of and of communications having been received from those who had formerly dwelt on earth, and who had passed through the change called "death." Unfortunately, these accounts of spirit manifestations have been so exaggerated and falsified, through their having occurred in ignorant and superstitious times, that there is little reliance to be placed upon many of them. Take, for instance, the account of Jesus having hungered for earthly food when He appeared to His disciples in the materialized form, or of that given in Genesis xviii, of three angels appearing to Abraham on the plains of Mamre, and of their having eaten a good square meal, which he got his wife Sarah to prepare for them. That three angels appeared to Abraham may be true, but that they ate a solid meal, judging by the experience afforded by modern spirit manifestations, is certainly a palpable exaggeration and an addition by the writer thereof. Unfortunately some of those who, through the investigation of psychic science, know the grand truth of God's infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Mercy, and of the glorious future that awaits every human soul eventually, still endeavour to run with the hare and the hounds by holding that the exaggerated and fabulous accounts of spirit phenomena in the Bible are on an equality with those of the present day of inductive reasoning, when we have made steam our galley slave, the sun our portrait painter, and electricity our postman and lamp-lighter. Falsehood and truth, however, like oil and water, will never blend. Others hold Modern Spiritualism to be a religion. They might as reasonably assert that Astronomy is a religion. It has, however, a religious phase, being the science of life here and hereafter, the phenomena of which supply the only rational

"Strangulation by drowning after I was injured. It was not my fault, do not question me." Again, as usual, quite correct. The father of another gentleman in the audience, announced his presence by Christian name and surname, and afterwards indicated the ballot paper sent up folded by the gentleman, which on being opened was found to be the same as the name previously announced. The spirit then, through the hand of the medium, wrote "I come to satisfy my son that I am here." George D—z. Right again. Mrs. Fetherstone's letter, which appeared in the January number of the *Harbinger*, contains the account of another wonderful test. On another evening a well-remembered famous actress announced her presence to one of her friends in the hall. Again, a lady was answered by a friend of hers who passed over some time ago; the name, which was an uncommon one, happened to be known also to the writer, and by a strange coincidence we met a near relative of his whilst journeying home. We told him that his relative's name had been given at Mrs. Foye's meeting that evening. "What was the name?" he asked. "Claud H—y," we replied. "Good gracious, he has been dead some time—said the gentleman—he was drowned in a yachting accident in the bay."

Mrs. Foye will commence her second course of Lectures and tests next week, probably at Masonic Hall. Particulars in Saturday's papers.

ASTROLOGICAL NOTES.

By I. K.

Regarding the horoscope of the late King Umberto, concerning which a paragraph was published in last month's *Harbinger*, I can show closer astrological prediction than that of Mons. Grandseve although it is undoubtedly very clever. At least three astrologers, two in England and one in France, predicted the fatal event to the very day. This is extremely wonderful when we come to consider the difficulty astrologers have in getting accurate information as to the natal hour of even kings and queens.

The present period was long ago regarded by astrologers as dangerous to the health of our late Queen. Heinrich Däath, an astrologer for whom I have very great regard, writing in "Modern Astrology" last December, said concerning the lunation:—"Not a good time for monarchs and titled personages. Deaths of such will transpire."

The "Astrological Magazine," of Madras (edited by the learned and courteous B. Suryanarain Row) for November and December is to hand. It is an interesting journal, gotten up in a pleasing manner, and contains some splendid articles. "Hindu system of Calculating Longitudes of Planets" is cleverly put and will interest Western Astrologers. Mr. Row writes interestingly on the ages of Chaldean and Hindoo Astrology, in which he claims for Hindoo Astrology a greater antiquity than Chaldean. It would take too much space to go into details, but much can be said concerning the matter from both points of view. The article, "Combinations for Illegitimate Births," from the pen of Mr. Koneti Aizar is good, and will repay perusal. The article, "Follies and Flights of Intellect," is one to make thinking people think more. Mr. V. Sosbramanya Sastry continues his interesting translation of the *Jataka Parijata*, a work which will be a very happy addition to our astrologic literature.

The usual monthly report of the Melbourne Spiritualistic Lyceum has not come to hand, but we may mention that Mrs. Foye gave an impressive address there on the morning of Sunday, January 20th, and that next Sunday evening a joint memorial service will be held in the Oddfellows' Hall (where the Lyceum holds its sessions), by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and the Lyceum, at which several leading Spiritualists will take part. A Lyceum was re-established at Richmond in December, and holds its sessions in the afternoon, Mr. Fielding being the conductor.

TENNYSON'S MEDIUMSHIP.

All true poets are mediums, as a matter of course, because, as every Spiritualist is well aware, mediumship of the highest kind, and genius, are convertible terms. Few men or women of genius, however, are consciously mediums; and those who are so, are reluctant to acknowledge that, however great their gifts may be, they are merely the mouthpieces and instruments of higher intelligences in the spiritual world. It is so humiliating to that pride and egotism, which Pope has called "the vice of fools." But Tennyson knew himself to be a trance medium from boyhood upwards; described his sensations, and spoke of the condition as "the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the wierdest of the wierdest, utterly beyond words . . . the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction but the only true life." Speaking of this trance condition to Tyndall, Tennyson said:—"It is an apparent isolation of the spirit from the body;" and wishing doubtless to impress upon him the reality of the phenomena, he exclaimed, "By God Almighty, there is no delusion in the matter! It is no nebulous ecstasy, but a state of transcendent wonder, associated with absolute clearness of mind." Tyndall's visit to the poet, during which this conversation took place, occurred in 1858, and twenty-eight years later, Tennyson described his trance experiences in the poem entitled *The Ancient Sage*:—

"The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And passed into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
Were strange, not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and through loss of Self
The gain of such large life as, match'd with ours,
Were sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world."

At such times, the poet was brought face to face with the only reality, with the eternal, and experienced a vivid sense of his own immortality; and naturally so, for his spirit had detached itself from its earthly garments, its material encumbrances, and was actually standing, for the time being, in the other world. He was living, as he said, "the only true life," and could commune directly and not indirectly, with those intelligences who, at other times, were obliged to speak to him by impression and inspiration, which are merely two names for one and the same thing; for the word "impression" may be applied perhaps to the ideas and impulses ordinarily received by us; while "inspiration" represents the action of a higher class of spirits upon specially organised brains, such as are possessed by what are called men and women of genius; that is to say, by exceptionally gifted mediums.

Wordsworth was one of these; and walking one evening with Professor Bonamy Price, the poet, approaching a gate, seized hold of one of the bars, and, turning to his companion, said:—"My dear Sir, to assure myself of the existence of my own body, I am sometimes obliged to grasp an object like this and shake it."

Tennyson's trance-condition seemed to recall to his mind, as his son tells us in his delightful *Memoir*, the state which Paul describes:—"Whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell."

J.S.

The Commonwealth of Australia has been plunged in grief by the transition of our beloved Queen, Victoria—the Great and Good. Britannia's children in all parts of the world were endeared to her by her many noble and womanly qualities, and proud of her for the glory of her reign. But our grief is mellowed by the knowledge that great as was her earthly estate, her present one is a higher one, where happiness is unalloyed by the care and responsibilities incidental to her position in this world. It has long been an open secret that the Queen was a believer in Spiritualism, and the publication of her own reflections on death and eternity remove all doubt on the subject. At present there are no English copies beyond those that were printed for distribution among Her late Majesty's personal friends; but it is probable that the *veto* on the English publication may now be removed, or a translation from the French edition sanctioned.

The Temple of Health, for October, contains a criticism by Dr. Peebles, of Christian Science Healing, as presented and practiced by Mrs. Eddy, with particular reference to a recent lecture on the same subject, by Judge Ewing. Speaking of Mrs. Eddy, the doctor says:—

"It must be some forty years ago that I met the now Mrs. Eddy in the city of Boston. I was then investigating mesmerism, occultism and especially Spiritualism; and she was recommended to me as being a 'first-class Spiritualist medium.' She admits in her writings that she 'heard a mysterious voice calling her for some twelve months when about eight years old.' I found her a very pleasant woman, but decidedly self-contained, if not suavisly egotistic. She seemed to me to be suffering quite unconsciously from chronic inflammation of the phrenological organ of self-esteem. Such persons generally manage to get into the counsels of the Almighty. Conversing with one of these Christian Scientists, lately, he pronounced Mrs. Eddy, 'Our Divine Leader.' With Mrs. Eddy 'God alone heals'—God does the healing; but she and her devotees take the fees.

Saying nothing of sanitariums, nothing of the virtues of sanitation and hygiene, every observing and cultured mind freed from fanaticism, must admit that at times medicines are a necessity. The thinking, brainy work I so testifies. And yet Mrs. Eddy contends that all medicines are useless—that God only can heal—that 'all is God'—that 'all is good'—that 'there is no matter'—'no disease'—in fact, all diseases from the bubonic plague of India to the black vomit of Vera Cruz, are only 'the errors of mortal mind—mortal beliefs'."

The doctor admits that the Christian Scientist have by suggestion, concentration and thought force, done some excellent healing, but he objects to the ridiculous claims made by Mrs. Eddy and her followers, and the exorbitant charges made by her for lessons—as much as three hundred dollars (over £60) being demanded and paid for a three weeks' course. Mrs. Eddy confesses that when she "was led to name" this amount she had some qualms of conscience about it. "The amount greatly troubled me. I shrank from asking it, but was finally led, by a strange providence, to accept the fee." This, Dr. Peebles remarks, seems amusingly funny when God does the healing.

Quoting again from Mrs. Eddy the following:—"After my discovery of Christian Science, most of the knowledge I had gleaned from school books vanished like a dream." The Doctor remarks:

"Not a cultured individual that ever read her books would doubt this, for they abound in assertions, in incoherent jargon, and in vague self-contradictory statements and such blunders at confounding gnosticism with agnosticism. Here is a sample of her poetry:

'Students wise, he maketh now thus
Those who fish in waters deep,
When the buried Masters hails us
From the shores afar, complete.'

He confesses his inability to solve the meaning of these mysterious words; they are too deep for his comprehension. He denies that this sect has any "patent for healing with God's seal thereon." There are numerous other cults who successfully dispute it. "Christian Science," he says, summed up, is just this:

"There is no evil, no sin, no sickness. Matter and the mortal body are nothing but a belief and an illusion."—II, 193.

Dr. John L. Quackenbos, late professor of English literature in Columbia College, writes thus:

"The one grain of scientific truth underlying Christian Science practice wins credence for the whole system. The Christian Science healer is a sort of spiritual broker on the floor of the celestial exchange who, always for a liberal commission, negotiates between the divine and human, and loves to consider himself on equal footing with Jesus Christ. I know that some men and women, well educated in certain directions, belong to the cult, but they are not broadly educated, and I maintain that Christian Science is the voodooism of the half-educated."

In conclusion, Dr. Peebles gives credit for the good in the system, but advises his readers, after a careful study of Mrs. Eddy's works, to read the Hon. W. A. Parrington's criticisms and statement of facts concerning the wild vagaries of Christian Science.

Mr. W. Bechervaise, formerly Post and Telegraph master at Ballarat, a rational and consistent Spiritualist, who always had the courage to stand by his belief, both in public and private, has after several years of travel returned to Victoria, and is at present residing in Melbourne. Mr. Bechervaise has had some interesting experiences during his travels, some of which we hope to publish. He was an honorary member of the late Dr. J. B. Motherwell's circle, to which he had the entree whenever he was in Melbourne.

A GOOD TEST.

In a letter from a subscriber in a neighbouring State he refers to a sitting he had with Mrs. Ada Foye, in San Francisco, some years since, and says:—"D—P—, an old friend of mine, of whose death I had just heard came, and in the course of a communication said—'They will be glad to hear of you at Y., and so will the little dogs.' We had, at that time (in Australia) a kennel of little dogs (terriers) which we kept for rabbiting, and it was hardly likely that Mrs. Foye, who did not know our names, should know of our having so many little dogs." This gentleman had such pleasant recollections of his seance with Mrs. Foye, that he accompanied the kindly greetings that we were charged to convey to her with a cheque for a substantial amount.

The Palmist's Review, which for some time past has only been issued quarterly, has resumed monthly publication. The November number contains a two page supplement, with the diagrams of the hands of six notable Frenchmen, including Dumas and Zola, the readings of which are given by Mrs. St. Hill. Besides some other interesting articles on Palmistry, there is a most amusing account of the experience of an Amateur Palmist, entitled "Witchery in Hands," re-printed from *The Westminster Gazette*.

We have received two copies of *The Modern Mystic and Occult News*, and one of *The Mystic and Medium*, which seems to be a continuation of the same journal in combination with *The Medium*. They are both published at Los Angeles, California. The first two contain some good, original matter on hypnotism, suggestion, &c., with some explanations how "fake" or fraudulent mediums perform their imitation phenomena, but the latter one goes so extensively into the "fraud" medium business that the good things are overshadowed by the evil ones. We think this is a mistake. It is necessary to caution readers against frauds, but the wholesale presentation of crime and criminals has anything but an edifying or uplifting effect upon the reader.

Mr. John Thorogood, an earnest and enthusiastic spiritualist of Tamworth, N.S.W., passed away somewhat suddenly on January 6th, much regretted by his friends, who esteemed him for his disinterested efforts to promote the cause he loved.

Mr. W. J. Colville, after a very successful visit to New Zealand, occupying between six and seven weeks, has now returned to Adelaide on a fourth engagement commencing Sunday, January 27, concluding Sunday, March 3, after which date he expects to visit Broken Hill or Tasmania, and then return to Melbourne for a short period beginning Sunday, March 31. All communications addressed c/o *Harbinger of Light* receive prompt attention. Mr. W. J. Colville brought very encouraging tidings from New Zealand, especially concerning New Century Hall, Wellington, which is a very excellent meeting place, admirably adapted for lectures, concerts, etc., and under the exclusive direction of the Association of Spiritualists, of which Mr. McLean is the efficient President. During Mr. W. J. Colville's stay in New Zealand, his work was chiefly confined to Wellington and Christchurch, but as loud calls have reached him from Auckland, he expects at no very distant date to spend three weeks there en route for San Francisco.

Victory, a Salvation Army publication, publishes "A New Year's Greeting" by "Devotion" in its January issue.

ACROSS THE BORDER.

Passed to the higher life on Jan. 6th, after a short illness, JOHN THOROGOOD, of Tamworth. For years he was a true and earnest Spiritualist, and won the respect of all who knew him.—Inserted by his sincere friend, ALFRED E. LONG.

Just as we are going to press, a report reaches us of the election of permanent officers to the Perth (W.A.) Spiritualistic Association, together with its objects and methods, which we will refer to in next issue. Mr. R. S. Fletcher is the Secretary.

NEW BOOKS JUST RECEIVED.

- "IMAGINATION," by Arthur Lovell 5s. 6d.
- "CONCENTRATION," by the same 2s. 6d.
- "LIVING UNIVERSE," Henry Wood 6d.
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