

# 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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WERE it part of our programme to write a Monthly Letter Home, giving a glance at the prominent subjects of local interest, it would be impossible to pass in silence one very sad topic that has been exciting a subdued, awe-struck, but very intense feeling in our community, the extent of which would be ill measured by what has been spoken and written about it. None but the very frivolous or the very callous among us can read with indifference the terribly frequent announcements, in the daily papers, of infanticides occurring all around us, and often under the most revolting circumstances imaginable. Most of us are content to shudder and pass on to our daily pursuits, dismissing the horrible subject from our thoughts as quickly as may be. This is not wise, and to the wise among us it is not possible. The truly wise, in this matter, are likely to be they in whose hearts there speaks incessantly the voice of a holy inspiration, that will not let them rest so long as there remains untried a single remedy which may either mitigate or stop this great national misfortune and disgrace. A few voices are already speaking earnestly upon the subject, and we doubt not that many who are silent, are feeling deeply and are patiently studying the matter. We hope soon to see some action taken, and we look anxiously to see it wisely taken. We well understand that many difficulties beset those who have it in their hearts to step forward as the initiators of any plan. And we have introduced the subject to our readers because we believe that the free and fearless expression of opinion will do much to clear up those difficulties and prepare the way for action.

At the time that a succession of tragic events first thrust the subject upon the attention of the public, the gist of nearly all that was said about it, whether in

public or in private, was confined to the necessity of making both the guilty parents equally responsible for the young life thrown away. When the establishment of a Foundling Hospital was first mentioned, it was met nearly with reprobation, as if such institutions were nothing but screens to protect evil doers from the consequences of their misconduct, and the results to be expected only a great increase of immorality. In this view of the case there were such grave mistakes as could not fail to be speedily pointed out, and when once seen, to work their own cure. Foundling Hospitals do not concern themselves with the parents, but apply themselves directly and exclusively to preventing the crime of infanticide. The homely old proverb, that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, is of nothing more true than of saving life. To prevent the loss, is far better than any punishment that can be inflicted for having caused it. The Foundling Hospital does not therefore propose to deal with the making of men and women more moral or more prudent, nor with the punishing of those who neglect or violate the most sacred duties of life, but is wholly and entirely devoted to the saving of innocent life. As to the method of punishing or reforming the guilty, it leaves that to be considered and acted upon quite apart. Its mission is to save, to protect, to rear and, later, to send forth into the world honest, useful, well-taught men and women.

The cure of immorality it leaves hopefully to advancing education, and to the slow but gradual raising of both man and woman, sure however that it has no hand in degrading either. It would, indeed, be difficult to imagine a reforming influence likely to have greater power over the future of a weak and erring woman than the knowledge that her child lived, and was cared for where she could sometimes see it, herself unknown, could contribute to its support when able to do so, could even hope some day to take it to her own home, if ever happier times should come to her. There is no reformer like Hope, no wickedness like that of desperation, and the worst women are not mothers. If the object in view is to make a woman who has fallen wholly and irremediably bad, no better method could be devised than so to work upon the lower principles of

her nature, fear, shame, selfishness,—as to induce her to destroy her new-born babe. This done, the road to the lowest depths is indeed open before her, an easy path.

Of those plans which propose to cope with existing evils by meting out equal punishment to the father who neglects to provide for his child, as well as to the mother, we will say but little; not, however, because we do not think them a step in the right direction, but because we do not think they would have any effect in diminishing infanticides. Experience proves that neither laws nor sufferings will wring from the generality of women the name of the seducer.

The reforming power of Hope should never be lost sight of in the management of a Foundling Hospital. The children themselves should go forth into the world so well trained, that any stigma attaching to them as Foundlings may be more than counterbalanced by the character they can earn for themselves as the best trained children and most desirable apprentices, to be found anywhere among the working classes. How is this to be accomplished? The question brings us in face of one of the chief difficulties, as we believe, of such an undertaking—the difficulty of obtaining the services of women good enough, wise enough, and sufficiently educated for the adequate fulfilment of the task. The care and development of such young children must necessarily be given to women? Certainly it is desirable that they should be entrusted neither to the self-seeking nor to the very ignorant.

The actual Superintendent should be a lady (in the highest sense of the term) tender, and sympathizing; with untiring enthusiasm for her work, practical experience in the management of children, and well informed in all those results of modern study, whether theoretical or experimental, that bear upon her charge. Moreover she should herself be systematic and orderly; she should have the unlimited right of choosing her female subordinates, who again should be women chosen for their moral qualities, alone,—cheerfulness, sympathy and energy; and she should be endowed with one of the rarest talents in the world, the power of reading character. When such a woman is found, how is she to be induced to assume the grave and arduous duties of the position, without attaching to it a money value so great as would attract the competition of a crowd of money grubbs?

We are also strongly inclined to believe that no other plan of admittance is consistent with the true objects of such an institution, than that so widely used on the Continent of Europe, which respects the secret of the guilty or unfortunate mother and asks of her nothing but the privilege of caring for the little being she either cannot or will not care for herself. The blank wall of the Asylum has, toward the street, no windows through which prying eyes may be watching her. Only the cradle, ever ready to receive what may be brought in, is to be seen; it turns into the building, and she has parted from her child, but perhaps not forever, for she can reclaim it by attaching a name or token to it by

which it can be identified. In any case, how different a parting from that of one who throws her babe into a cesspool, or does it up in a brown paper parcel and leaves it on the road side!

It has been urged in the public prints that a Foundling Hospital in Melbourne would be very apt to become—as it is in some cities of Europe—an asylum for the the illegitimate children of the rich and influential classes. The probability of such a result is great where ever any system of “nominee” admittance is instituted. But on the plan cited there is no more danger of its being reserved for the benefit of those classes than there at present is of their enjoying a monopoly of the infanticides.

There is also, we think, another recommendation of the abovenamed plan,—the clergy are not likely to patronize it, and thus sectarian influence, class exclusiveness, and the impractical peculiarities of the cloth, might be avoided. The Protestant clergy have nearly uniformly opposed themselves to Foundling Hospitals; and one established on liberal principles is least of all likely to recommend itself to their prejudices. At the same time, no difficulty need exist, and if the founders of such an institution were truly tolerant, none would be thrown in the way, of educating the children in any religious tenets that might be desired. The daily worship of such a household had better not touch on dogmas. And at an age when dogmatic teaching might be supposed to be desirable, classes could be formed to be instructed by competent authorities in the ever varying mysteries of faith. Should, however, the founders of such an institution be agreed in opposing all manner of sectarianism, it is not to be supposed that a single little life that might be rescued by their charity would fail of reaching them on that account. Neither the distracted mother, prompted by her own helplessness, nor the hardened *adandonedé*, determined to rid herself of a troublesome charge would be deterred by any such consideration.

The only reason for tolerating sectarian prejudice, as suggested above, is that a much larger number of persons might be drawn to interest themselves in the establishment, and thus a much larger field of popular sympathy would be open to its beneficial influences. This is a point not to be despised; for with the clergy opposed to it, and much of the respectability of the world refusing openly to support it, for fear of being suspected of laxity in punishing immorality, such an institution would necessarily depend for its support on the few private persons able and willing to stand against this peculiarly terrible crime, and stop it by making it unnecessary,—with no hope of praise, or patronage, or power, accruing to themselves, but solely for the delight of saving and rearing to maturity some of the inflowing life of the world, now so often wantonly and wickedly destroyed.

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The Spiritualists of Sandhurst subscribed liberally to the charities on Hospital Sunday held in that city on the 7th September last. The amount subscribed by them at the Circles and otherwise was £30 6s. 0d. The collection at the Masonic Hall, Melbourne, at the evening service, was £10 18s. 6d., and at the Lyceum, £3. 1s. 4d.



## To Correspondents.

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

## THE DIVINING ROD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—

Permit me to direct your attention to two letters I have in the Dunedin Guardian of the 28th and 30th ult., signed "Aliquis," upon this subject. There is a phenomenon vouched for to a certain extent by the Messrs. Chambers in their Repository No. 25. It may be a new development of the principle by which Moses with his rod startled the ancient Jewish world.

I find that if the rod is held by a medium and another person, and a printed alphabet is laid before it, an influence exterior to and independent of all visibly present will spell out communications often of a very startling character in the first personal pronoun and in the name of deceased persons. I have had to write shorthand to keep up with the speed of the delivery.

Being free to move about, the effort made by the dumb movement of the rod itself to illustrate those messages is if possible more curious than the messages themselves, and speaks a language which can only be conveyed by being witnessed.

Your table as a semi-fixture has no chance here. Please test and report the cause.

Yours obediently,  
W. C.

Dunedin, Sept. 4th, 1873.

[The rod referred to, usually used for the discovery of subterranean water, consists of a small fork of hazel or willow; the two ends of the fork are held between the forefinger and thumb of each hand in a horizontal position. When passing over water the thick end of the rod is drawn powerfully downwards. For the purpose suggested by our correspondent, a printed alphabet covering ten or twelve inches square of paper would be required, and the points of the rod to be held lightly by two persons, so as to allow full play. We shall be glad to hear results of experiments.—Ed. H. of L.]

## THE AURELIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—

SEEING a favorable notice of the Aurelia Co-operative Land and Labor Association in your last issue, will you kindly grant me permission in your next to further criticise their rules and regulations.

As many of your readers are aware that I was endeavouring about twelve months ago to form an Agricultural Association, from the leading observations and enquiries made at that time I may justly consider myself able to give an opinion on the above association.

Rule I. II. set forth the "objects of the association," with which I most heartily concur.

III. to VII. describe "who are eligible to become members." The members of this association shall consist of individuals of mature age, from 18 years and upwards, who hold the spiritual principles of the *Harmonial Philosophy*. I suppose in plain language this means Spiritualists.

As the Spiritualists of Victoria take to themselves the name of Progressive Spiritualists, let us see what this Aurelia purposes doing in the way of progress.

Under the heading "Conditions of Membership" we read Rule XXII., "Exemption from manual labour can be purchased by any member above the age of 50 years for the sum of £300." Here is progress with a vengeance. Have our social reformers been laboring in vain that we find the Aurelia, which is being inaugurated with such a flourish of high-sounding titles and benefits, prostrating itself before the mighty god of competition, *Capital*; for the paltry sum of £300 can be secured—1st, "full participation in the reserve fund allotted to each individual member;" 2nd, "absence whenever they please to avail themselves of the privilege;" 3rd, "home,

clothing, and provisions, upon the same scale as the other members of the association;" 4th, "eligibility to all offices as set forth in our rules;" 5th, "treatment in every other respect as full members of the association."

Government debentures carry 6 per cent. per annum interest, which may be considered a fair average for first-class security, £300 at 6 per cent. is £18 per annum, or 6s. 11d. per week.

Let us see what is required from ordinary members joining this association; under Rule XV., "Every male head of a family, on admission of himself and wife to full membership, irrespective of the number of their children entered in the form of application, or subsequently born, shall pay the sum of £100;" further we read under "Duties of Members," Rule LXVII., "That none shall seek exemption from labor (always excepting those aged members who have purchased a life interest of exemption), but will faithfully, truly, and energetically devote the requisite number of hours set apart by the council to the general benefit of the community, except in case of sickness or circumstances over which neither they nor the community have any immediate control."

Let those rules speak for themselves—they are eloquent. Do the promoters of this "Aurelia" for one moment imagine that the Progressive Spiritualists of Victoria are so very "verdant" as to allow *Drones* with £300 to suck the life blood of their industry? *I don't*. Under heading *Constitution*, Rule XXX., "They shall delegate their power to a body of fifteen members, to be called the chief council for legislative and executive purposes, and which shall be composed as follows:—

1 Chief Councillor,	aged 45 years.
1 Deputy Chief,	" 40 "
1 Treasurer,	" 40 "
Auditors and Councilmen,	" 30 "

The English constitution allows every voter to aspire to any office which his fellow voters may think him qualified, but the promoters of "Aurelia" consider this too great a responsibility to put into the hand of gushing youths of 29 (by the way, sir, has this rule been framed so as to give the chief governing power into the hands of the £300 *Oreans* to rule as well as "suck" the unfortunate "chrysolites?")

Portion of Rule LXIX., under heading "Duties of Members," reads—"nor any sectarian church, chapel, meeting-house, or conventicle for teaching theological notions be allowed to find a place within the precincts of *Aurelian* estate under any pretext whatever."

CX., under "Private Worship"—"That in case any member or family among us shall conscientiously consider it their duty to enter into any peculiar religious rites, worship, or observances, such rites, worship, or observances shall be exclusively confined to their own dwelling, and shall consist only of such members of their own family as agree with them—no coercion being used to compel anyone, however young, to be present." First, not under "any pretext whatever;" second, you may if they shall consider it their duty." But Rule CXI. is the clencher—"And it shall be considered a crime against our harmony to collect or congregate members together in our private dwellings for the purpose of expounding such peculiarities, or taking part in any rites, ceremonies, worship, or observances, other than those sanctioned by our council and rules."

Here is the union of church and state, that old relic of barbarism the council or head of the community shall dictate what rites, worship or peculiarities shall be observed; in fact be keeper of the members' consciences, to disobey or speak as your reason dictates in your own "private dwelling," "shall be considered a crime against our harmony," and I suppose will be dealt with under Rule CV.

Rule LXXX. under *Divorce* we read—"And parties still insist on a separation from incompatibility of disposition arising from want of affinity or otherwise, three months' notice must be given, when the chief council shall take steps to procure a legal separation of such parties as they find it impossible to reconcile."

I wonder what legal tribunal in this or any of the other colonies would grant a dissolution of marriage on the above grounds, if the promoters can state, they will confer a benefit on their fellow-colonists. Rule CXXXI.,

"Juniors or juvenile members under the age of 18 years may be permitted to marry with the consent of their parents and a majority of the chief council; they may also have appointed a separate habitation, but cannot share in the surplus profits, or exercise their right to vote, until they shall have reached the age of full membership, viz., 18 years." I think I have nearly said enough to show that this "Aurelia" is not what its promoters would have us believe. History and statistics have taught them nothing, and the sooner they emerge from their chrysalis state the better for their present as well as future progress.

My own views on communism have undergone considerable modification within this last twelve months; my opinion is that unless men can co-operate together for their material wants, without interfering with each others religious and individual opinions, 'twere far better that society should move on as it has done; such ill-digested schemes as this Aurelia are bound to do more harm than good.

WILLIAM LANG.

[We have been informed since the publication of our review of the rules, &c., of the "Aurelia" Association, that the published rules are not final, but will be submitted to the first meeting of members, when it is intended to propose certain amendments upon them, which may probably remove the difficulties complained of by our correspondent. Meantime it is as well that apparent imperfections should be pointed out, that the promoters may have the opportunity of considering them.—Ed. *H. of L.*]

#### NOAH'S ARK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir,

As it may not generally be known that a gentleman of many years standing in the colony and of very extensive travels is at present exhibiting in the Workman's Hall, Lonsdale-street, the model of "Noe's" Ark, the plan of which he states was found by him at the sack of Peking; it certainly is a model of curiosity, if nothing more. Further, he has on exhibition other curiosities of antiquity which are certainly deserving the attention of the antiquarian and curiosity hunter.

He also has a most unique mode of accounting for the origin of much of the Bible history, which also is deserving of attention.

I have taken the liberty of calling attention to it, hoping that some one who has more time than I have to spare will give a full description of it, and thus enable us to form something like an opinion. By inserting the above you will greatly oblige,

Secular Academy,  
20th Sept., 1873.

Yours truly,  
G. S. MANNS.

#### OUR LYCEUM.

##### THE SUMMER GROUP.

A REFERENCE to the Lyceum Guide will show that the Summer Group consists of members 18 years of age and upwards. Most of the persons composing our Summer Group would, probably, frankly own to the "upward" tendency of their ages. The maturity of its members gives it a character, and, perhaps a sphere of usefulness, rather different from that of any other group in the Lyceum; and it may, therefore, be well to give it separate notice.

It numbers about fifteen persons or more, and is about equally divided between the sexes. Its first leader was our much regretted president Mr. John Ross. Shortly before Mr. Ross left the city, Mr. Manns was elected by the group to the leadership. Many of its members fill other offices in the Lyceum, and can absent themselves from other duties only long enough to take part in the discussions that occur during the time allotted to lessons. Indeed all its members hold themselves in readiness to fill, on an emergency, any office for which they may be competent.

If the regular leader of a group is absent the vacancy can be supplied, at the request of the children, from the Summer Group. If the conductor is in want of an address from the platform (limited to ten minutes) he can generally find someone in the Summer Group able and willing to give it. But apart from these services to the rest of the Lyceum, the Summer Group is the field of many interesting and useful conversations calculated to develop harmonies between minds that would, otherwise, remain strangers to one another, and to draw out thinking powers that would else remain dormant. Many of its members are parents, with children already in the other groups, and the interest felt in all the performances of the young ones is far more than they have any idea of. Every well-planned answer is heard with a thrill of sympathetic enjoyment, and a successful recitation is a matter of general rejoicing.

The short time appointed for direct instruction from the leaders to their respective groups is, in the Summer Group, given up to conversation upon some useful topic, agreed upon the week beforehand. So much interest is often found to attach to a particular subject, and there is so much to be said about it that it is often continued from Sunday to Sunday, each member taking his or her share, and suggesting new subjects for the coming week as occasion and inclination may prompt. Among the topics discussed, one of the first taken up was a consideration of the special use and duties of the Summer Group towards the rest of the Lyceum. The work since done by its different members may be fairly taken as an example of the conclusions then arrived at. Since then Industrial Co-operation, and the duties of Spiritualists as such, have been considered with other similar topics, and with fair promise of not remaining merely matters of conversation.

Owing to the fact that the different individuals who compose it are subject to many calls not likely to be made on younger members of the Lyceum, some laxity is to be observed in the attendance of its members. They are not all perfect models of regularity. Sometimes an individual disappears for weeks, then returns again, and the absence is understood to have been due to exigencies not incidental to younger members of the Lyceum. Neither is the Summer Group especially strong in the calisthenic exercises; though a very good proportion of its members make laudable efforts to attain perfection in that respect, yet there are some who persistently excuse themselves on the score of rheumatism, age, dignity, or what not besides.

They, however, generally consider themselves amenable to all laws and regulations enacted for the good of the whole body, not seeking to set themselves above them; but, on the contrary, desiring to assist in the work laid out for all, namely, the complete moral, mental, and physical culture of each individual. Though the Summer Group is already pretty numerous, there is still room and a welcome for all additional members who, with the necessary age, will also bring sincere good-will and a desire to benefit and be benefited by the Melbourne Lyceum.

#### ITEMS BY THE MAIL.

By the last mail we have further accounts of experiments in spirit-photography. It appears that Mr. Beattie, accompanied by another expert, called upon Mr. Hudson and sat for spirit-photographs. They were allowed to examine everything and make their own arrangements. Mr. Beattie sat four times, and obtained two spirit-photographs, one bearing a strong resemblance to both a brother and nephew. Mr. B. is at a loss to account for the effects on any other than the spiritual hypothesis.

It will be observed that Dr. Richardson is as earnest as ever in the spiritual cause; his lecture at the Cavendish Rooms, London, was well received. A very important confirmation of the genuineness of A. J. Davis's clairvoyance comes to us from America. The ninth planet of our solar system, which he spoke of twenty-seven years ago, has been discovered by Professor Watson.



## MINISTERING SPIRITS.

A Sermon by JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

"Are they not all ministering spirits."—*Hebrews i. 14.*

How often, in reading the words of men and women on great subjects, are we tempted to pause and say—Do you really believe this that you say? What grand things they write about God! what noble things about man! what glorious things about future life! Why, if people believed—really and vitally believed—half they say and write about these great themes, the victory over sense and sin, pain and hardship, sorrow and sickness, life and death, would be already won. We should have no more doubt, no more fear, no more foreboding, no more heart-break. Life would be a sublime triumphal march, and the very gate of death would shine with the radiance of the smile of God.

Especially is this so with what is said and written about the future life and the state of the so-called dead. Heaven is pictured as unspeakably bright, blessed, and beautiful, far transcending the loveliness of earth; and the spirits of the blessed are pictured as filled with rapture, not sorrowing that they have left us, but rather longing for us to go to them. But the special point to which I ask your attention now is this,—that the beautiful and blessed ones are said to watch over us, guide us, stand near us, and find their bliss still in ministering to our needs. Milton writes of "millions of spiritual creatures" who "walk the earth unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep." And referring to the love and care of the angels for the virtuous and the pure, he says,—

So dear to heaven is saintly chastity,  
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,  
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,  
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt.

So the old cradle song has it of little children,—

Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber!  
Holy angels guard thy bed:  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head.

Do mothers who sing that really believe it? What a mighty difference it might make if they did! So Samuel Rogers, speaking of children of a larger growth, talks of man as having "a guardian angel o'er his life presiding;" and, in like manner, Milton writes of God's "winged messengers," sent "on errands of supernal grace." Coleridge, the poet, must have shared similar beliefs, ideas, or fancies, when he rebuked those who think that there is nothing but what we can see or feel, or who think that dirt is a more real thing than spirit. That is, of all delusions, the most delusive, and of all superstitions the most superstitious. Men sometimes talk of the superstition of belief in spiritual beings; why, the most degraded superstition of all is the ignoble and disgusting notion that there is nothing more real than mud. God, the great Life-giver, is Spirit; and yet, as Coleridge says,—

Some there are who deem themselves free  
When they within this gross and visible sphere  
Chain down the winged thought.

Let me tell such ignoble and earthly beings that, however proud they may be of their mud and of their superiority to the dreams of people who believe in spiritual things, they have yet to learn the very alphabet of being, and to discover the fountain-head of all life.

Our own Tennyson is full of faith in spiritual things. He says:—

For though my lips may breathe adieu,  
I cannot think the thing farewell.

Again, he says,—

Far off thou art, but ever nigh,  
I have thee still, and I rejoice.  
Dear heavenly friend, thou canst not die,  
Mine, mine, for ever ever mine.  
Be near us when we climb or fall,

he cries: and again,—

The dead shall look me through and through:  
and again,—

They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest.

Now does Tennyson mean all that? If not, what abominable trifling it all is! If yes, what a glorious faith he is inviting us to! His thoughts are echoed by Longfellow, whose poems throb and burn and glow with his belief in the nearness of the so-called dead. What does this mean?—

When the hours of day are numbr'd,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul that slumbered  
To a holy, calm delight:  
Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door,  
The beloved, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more.

Or this?—

The spirit-world around this world of sense  
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere  
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense  
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

Now what I want to ask is,—Do men believe what they say? or is all this mere fine writing and fine talking? Do the poets mean it all; or are they only spinning cobwebs? Do the preachers mean what they say, or are they only helping the poets to do nothing? Is there a life after what we call death?—not a spectral, mysterious, unreal sort of life,—existence as of a jet of gas or miserable ghost,—but a life of a real substantial character for the actual George or Jessie who left us yesterday. And is there, or is there not, a real world inside this or beyond this,—a world just as real to the people in it as this is real to us;—a spiritual world just as adapted to spiritual beings as this material world is adapted to material beings? And is it or is it not a fact that these so-called dead people are just as conscious as ever, just as able to love and hate, hope and fear, learn and serve as ever?—also that they are not far from us, but real dwellers in the spirit-world, which is not far away, but here,—here, as a mighty living sea in which we all float night and day; hidden from us, only by reason of the limitations of the organs of the flesh.

In the *Unitarian Herald* for July 5th, there was a poem entitled, "What the Dead said," a poem of great beauty, and containing either a great truth or a great deal of idle nonsense. I am going to read this poem to you; and, when I have read it, I am going to ask you whether you think the poet meant what he wrote, and, if so, whether you can agree with him. The story is a very simple one. A husband has lost his young and beautiful wife; and he, sitting alone with all that is left to earth of her, asks her to reveal to him now what was the great secret of dying, and what was the chief surprise of that great transaction. He asks her many strange things; and, when her answer comes, it puts all these aside and shoots an arrow straight to the mark, as you will see:—

"She is dead!" they said to him. "Come away;  
Kiss her and leave her, thy love is clay!"  
They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;  
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair:  
Over her eyes, which gazed too much,  
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;  
With a tender touch they closed up well  
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;  
About her brows and beautiful face  
They tied her veil and her marriage lace,  
And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes;—  
Which were the whitest no eye could choose!  
And over her bosom they crossed her hands—  
"Come away," they said, "God understands!"  
And there was silence, and nothing there  
But silence and scents of eglantine,  
And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;  
And they said, "As a lady should lie lies she."  
And they held their breath as they left the room  
With a shuddering glance at its stillness and gloom.  
But he who loved her too well to dread  
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,  
He lit his lamp and took the key  
And turned it. Alone again—he and she.  
He and she; but she would not speak,  
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek,  
He and she; yet she would not smile,  
Though he called her the name she loved erewhile.  
He and she; still she did not move  
To any one passionate whisper of love.

Then he said, "Cold lips, and breast without breath !  
Is there no voice ? no language of death ?

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,  
But to heart and to soul distinct, intense ?

"See now ; I will listen with soul, not ear ;  
What was the secret of dying, dear ?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all  
That you ever could let life's flower fall ?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel  
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal ?

"Was the miracle greater to find how deep,  
Beyond all dreams sank downward that sleep ?

"Did life roll back its record, dear,  
And show, as they say it does, past things clear ?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss  
To find out so what a wisdom love is ?

"O, perfect dead ! O, dead most dear,  
I hold the breath of my soul to hear !

"There must be pleasure in dying, sweet,  
To make you so placid from head to feet !

"I would tell you, darling, if I were dead,  
And 'twere your hot tears upon my brow shed.

"I would say, though the angel of death had laid  
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"You should not ask vainly, with streaming eyes,  
Which of all death's was the chiefest surprise ;

"The very strangest and suddenest thing  
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

Ah, foolish world ! Oh, most kind dead ?  
Though he told me, who will believe it was said ?

Who will believe what he heard her say,  
With the sweet soft voice in the dear old way.

"The utmost wonder is this ;—I hear,  
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, dear ;

"And am your angel who was your bride,  
And know, that though dead, I have never died !"

Now mark what I am saying. The question is not,—Did this reply ever come ? or, Was this scene ever real ? but—Is there a truth in the reply ? and,—If it were possible, might this scene occur ? You observe what she is made to say ;—that the greatest surprise of death is that the so-called dead can see us, love us, kiss us, as of old ; and that, though dead, they have never died. I am not asking whether that can be proved, but whether it contains an intelligible idea : and I will further ask whether it does not contain the only intelligible idea of a future existence ? He who affirms that the dead are really dead, and can never live again, is perfectly intelligible ; and, though I may be sorry for him, I cannot fail to understand him ; but he who affirms that the so-called dead are not dead, and yet denies that they know anything about us or can do anything for us, says something so irrational, so unlikely, so contradictory, and so painfully disagreeable, that it is rather a satisfaction to feel he is utterly unintelligible. Those of us who face the idea of a real life after death with all its consequences, are sometimes accused of superstition. Why, the superstition is all on the other side. What we stand by is solid fact, and what we ask is that life hereafter should be utterly denied or altogether affirmed, unless indeed any should wish to take shelter in that great refuge for the destitute,—Ignorance,—with its end of all controversy, "I do not know."

I will conclude with a reference to two objections often advanced against the dealing in any way with this subject. The first is, that we can really know nothing about it : the second is, that it has no relation to practical life. As to the first of these objections, that we can know nothing about this matter, I will content myself with saying that no one can know that. True science is very quiet, and modest, and cautious, and humble. It is only sham science or shallow science that rushes into denials, and that presumes to say what can or cannot be known. One thing we certainly do know, that we are surrounded with mighty forces of a most astounding nature, which are mainly unseen, but are not always unfelt. Another thing we know,—that we are only, as it were, knocking at the door of this great inner temple,—that life still eludes us, and that what we know is only a poor tithe of what we want to know, and of what is around us, above us, beneath us, and in us, to be known. If I were to give a word of advice to those who are over-fond of the words *Nonsense*, *It cannot be*, *Impossible*, *Don't tell me*, and the like, it would be this :—We have discovered so much about the casket

that we never expected to discover, that we ought rather to cherish than rebuke the hope that we may yet find out something about that which the casket contains. Everything will come in God's good time ; and, when we are fit for it, and when it can be of real use to us, it may come to pass that the link will be discovered which binds the unseen to the seen.

But the second objection remains, that this subject has no relation to practical life. It is simply wonderful that any rational human being should be found to offer such an objection : and yet the objection is urged in the very name of Rationalism. Now, as a Rationalist, and in the name of Rationalism, I undertake to say that if men really believed in the actual continued existence of the so-called dead, and that these were near them, interested in their pursuits, observant of their struggles, mindful of their necessities, and often helpful in their times of need, this great faith would be one of the sublimest factors in human life, one of the grandest creators of noble motive, brave effort, unselfish action, joyous endurance, and invincible hope. Do not tell me that this reaching out of the soul after God and the things of God will rob me of interest, courage, and activity, for the things of this present scene. No delusion could be greater. The truth is that no man is so strong, so buoyant, and so unselfish in his work for earth as he who has caught a glimpse or heard something of the music of the unseen but not far-off heaven. Do not ask me, as a religious teacher, then, to confine my attention to mud. I cannot do it. I do not find all that I want there. I *must* look within : I *must* look beyond : I *must* look above : for I feel that I can only find my God where I find my unseen friends,—in the mighty spirit-world, where all the most real things are, where all the eternal essences are, and whence all life comes to this lower sphere. I will not be dragged down by my bodily senses to the earth. I will let my hungry and thirsty spirit lift me up to heaven. I will not let my flesh defraud my spirit, or my senses cheat my soul. I must "arise and go to my Father ;" for my dearest treasure is there, and my heart must follow too.

### IS SPIRITUALISM A FAILURE ?

We extract the following from a Boston paper recently received :—

PLAIN TALK BY MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN IN THE MUSIC HALL YESTERDAY AFTERNOON—THE FREE LOVE TENDENCIES AND OTHER PERNICIOUS DOCTRINES OF SPIRITUALISM DENOUNCED.

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten delivered the closing lecture of the season before the Boston Spiritualists' Association, in the Music Hall, yesterday afternoon. Her subject was "The Unsolved Problem of Spiritualism," and the lecture was devoted to the consideration of the reasons why Spiritualism has not fulfilled its professed mission. Mrs. Britten was unsparing in her criticism of the manner in which doctrines with which Spiritualism in itself really has nothing to do have been leagued with it. She denounced with especial earnestness the doctrine of free love as repulsive to every instinct of humanity. Mrs. Britten seemed to speak earnestly, and from her heart. At times she showed much emotion.

After speaking of the beginning of Spiritualism and its prospects of redeeming the world when other faiths have proved a failure, she asked : "Can we answer whether our bright hopes have been realized ? Can we say that Spiritualism has been the restorer of faith ; that its disciples and votaries have been made better men and better women ? In many things it has. But the question as a whole must be answered in the negative. There are many causes in our midst, and all on the human side, why 'Spiritualism has been measurably a failure. One of these is the imperfection of spirit communication. In the early days there were no attempts at self-deception. There were no dark circles then ; and all Spiritualists were sceptics. Now a vast amount of literature has been presented to us in the name of the



spirit, and in the name of the spirit we have been asked to accept many new and strange doctrines. Is it not then obvious that we should take some means of ascertaining whether honored names can be held responsible for these teachings which common sense tells us that they would never countenance. Is it true that the mighty dead have indeed retrograded and from the other world come back to us with poor poetry, bad grammar and false doctrines. We should be slow to accept these as coming from their purported source. Above all we should carefully scrutinize all that is given to us in the name of the sacred dead. There is no authority but truth. All truth is capable of demonstration. All that cannot be subjected to this crucial test should be rejected. One of the worst features with which Spiritualism is charged is the dark, the baneful doctrine of re-incarnation as taught by Allen Kardec of France. It is a direct contradiction of the surety given us at Rochester, that there is progress in the spirit land. This wild, fantastic doctrine, which would break up kindred, ties and families, should be rejected. It belongs, as has been said, to the imperfect nature of spirit communication. Spiritualism does not come to us to endorse any special form of human opinion but to make better and strengthen all our opinions.

"I wish now to speak of that popular doctrine which is identifying itself with Spiritualism over the length and breadth of the land, which proposes to reform all the evils of our social system by the abrogation of the marriage tie. It has been too publicly bruited, too universally admitted that the Spiritualists are the only sect and the only class of persons who largely and openly maintain this doctrine, for us to shrink or evade the responsibility of speaking of it. I have searched carefully through the journals of the United States, I have searched earnestly and faithfully through all sects and classes, and have found that vice and sensuality runs riot in every department of life. I have nothing to say against those who say that the social evils can be eradicated by the abrogation of the marriage tie; but what I have asked of them, what I have pleaded for and that for which I protested against them to high Heaven, is that they shall not affirm that Spiritualism and their doctrine are one and the same thing [Applause.] I must, although it grieves me to do so, give you my reasons why I insist on this line of demarcation. I know the wrongs that exist in the marriage relation, and I would be the last to say that those who live in hatred the one with the other should be compelled by the force of authority, public opinion or law, to continue to live in this condition; but my views of reform are totally at variance with those of the social reformers, so-called. I would begin at the other end of the marriage tie. I would make marriages better. I would have our young men and young women educated to understand the deep responsibility of the position they assume. I would have them understand what a high office it is to give birth to a new generation, a new creation. They should remember that their child which is launched on the great ocean of life is a spirit that must live forever, and that its weal or woe through countless ages is imprinted on its brow by its parent's actions. I would thus make marriage more holy, more sanctified, a deeper and more solemn responsibility. For the sake of society, the State and the country I would ask that our own belief should be made the foundation of a holier education for this tie, and if wrong and unhappy marriages are made then let the law intervene, and let there be the same dissolution of the contract as would be observed between two merchants. I cannot consent to have my holy religion identified with this wild and insane attempt at reform which I consider to be the darkest blot that has ever rested upon the hemisphere of social life. I cannot; I will not."

In closing Mrs. Britten bid her friends farewell, perhaps for but a season, perhaps forever. She spoke of the grand faith to which the Music-Hall platform was dedicated by Theodore Parker, who founded the noblest theology in the world. It had been the lot of the Spiritualists to succeed him, and she trusted that they would look to it and rescue their faith from the darkness and error into which it had fallen, and make it as pure and holy as his.

#### BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS TO PERSONS DESIRING TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM.

It is, in the first place, an essential to the harmony of the intended circle that the apartment in which they purpose meeting should be of a comfortable temperature, and *not too warm*, for anything which tends to discompose the physical organization, militates against that harmony and passivity of mind which is essential for fluent and orderly communications. It is possible, in some instances, for persons to investigate successfully *alone*; but it is rare that all the qualifications necessary are to be met with in one individual. It is better entered upon by an association of six or more individuals, with as great a diversity of temperament as possible. If able to get together the requisite number, it is better to form a circle in this wise, viz.: let the company sit down around a moderately sized loo table, or light square one, with the dark and fair, or positive and negative temperaments alternate; sit in an easy position, with the palms of the hands on the table, and the right hand touching the neighbours left, so as to make a complete chain (have at hand a planchette and some large white paper.) The first indication of an Influence is a slight vibration or wavy sensation under the hand, although the table may not perceptibly move; if this is distinctly felt, a movement of the table is sure to follow. The most common movement is the elevation of one side of the table, but a rotary or lateral movement will often occur. Should a distinct movement occur, one of the circle should ask the invisible influence to move the table towards the person whom they can best influence as a medium; when this is accomplished, all questions should be put by the person so selected, who acts as chairman of the meeting. The ordinary and, perhaps, most appropriate questions to begin with are "Is there a spirit present, if so will it move the table a certain number of times?" This being answered satisfactorily, make an arrangement with the unseen influence, that three movements shall signify an affirmative; one, a negative; and two, *doubtful*. If the questions are answered fluently, suggest the use of the alphabet. The medium slowly repeating the letters, the table being raised at the right one, until a word is spelt out. In this way, where the control of the table is good, messages of a considerable length may be received. Do not ask questions on purely material subjects, nor presume that spirits know everything, or you will meet with disappointments. If, after half an hour's sitting, you should not succeed in obtaining a movement, bring forward the planchette, lay a sheet of paper on the table, and place the planchette upon it between two of the sitters, the apex (containing the pencil) from them. The person to the left of it should place the right hand, and the one to the right, the left hand upon it; at first the arm may rest upon the table, but after a little while raise it, and let the pressure on the planchette be as light as possible. If a movement is obtained, it only requires application to lead to the reception of intelligible writing, which may come on the first occasion or take several sittings to develop. Should the first two not succeed, let two others try, try also different combinations, until you have exhausted the material of your circle, this will seldom happen; but, if it should do so, it will be necessary to add to its numbers. To ensure success and progress, the circle should meet regularly, and when the best arrangement of the individuals composing it has been ascertained, they should be careful to occupy the same positions at the table on every occasion. If strangers are allowed to join the circle after it has commenced the reception of communications, it has a disturbing effect, and is likely to lead to unsatisfactory results.

Most persons have some mediumistic power, and it rarely happens that where there are three or four persons in a family, they cannot get the planchette to operate, even without forming a circle, but the evidences so obtained are not always so satisfactory as those obtained by systematic application. If the investigation is earnestly pursued, higher forms of mediumship grow out of it, in accordance with the developing capacity of the individuals composing it.

W. H. T.

#### SPEAKING IN THE TRANCE AT SANDHURST

LAST evening at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, Williamson-street, a party of ladies and gentlemen assembled to the number of some twenty-four, to hear addresses from spirits through the mediumship of Miss Phillips, a young lady of good education and pleasing manners, and whose mediumship is apparently of a high order. Miss P. was controlled by a spirit named Hall, one of the band of spirit-lecturers who speak through her. The address lasted about an hour, and was most instructive and eloquent, the audience regretting the absence of a shorthand reporter to have taken it verbatim. The address was mainly on the truth of Spiritualism; its power to educate and prepare the minds of the masses for its reception; its beneficent influences for the happiness of the humblest of God's creatures, and the desire the spirits had to see those of their dear brethren who were still in the flesh freed from the petty sectarianism engendered by iron-bound creeds, which represented God and the spirit-world in a false light, and tended to produce the infidelity and materialism, which were spreading so rapidly of late years everywhere. Spirit-

ualism stood forth to cure this cancer which was eating away the vitals of what might be termed true Christianity—the divine doctrines of life and eternal felicity which proceeded from the source of all good. Here in Australia they were all removed far away from events full of portent to the inhabitants of some other countries, and the inhabitants of this city of Sandhurst were peculiarly well adapted to receive the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism and to spread its doctrines everywhere. And it was their duty to speak of it and to preach it whenever and wherever they had the opportunity. Some there were amongst them who, from a want of moral courage, hid the precious gem within their own breasts and drank the cup of happiness themselves: but this was selfish, and should not be continued. The spirits wished to see the truth spoken freely to all, and it would thus reach every part. It might be asked, when God permitted his bright spirits to visit them, why did He not prevent the unhappy ones from coming? Precisely for the same reason he permitted the good ones to come. The unhappy ones were his children as much as the greatest saint that had ever lived, and by the laws of affinity which were eternally in operation, all were allowed to come to work out their own salvation, some as ministering angels, others to aid in good works, or that, by repentance and amendment, their prison doors might be thrown open and their freed spirits mount upwards to those higher spheres of light, and life, and glory, from which they never afterwards could fall. The spirit-lecturer then denounced in no measured terms the notion of an endless hell. There was undoubtedly "punishment," but it was not a vindictive one, and was not inflicted by the Creator but the creature himself who, by an unerring law of his being, was thus made to suffer, as it were, to be the administrator of his own punishment. The lecturer concluded an able address by expressing the pleasure he felt at meeting so many of them on that occasion, and wished them all "good-night."

The medium was then controlled by a spirit named Gordon, a poet, and for the space of twenty minutes there flowed from her lips with remarkable fluency a stream of beautiful poetry after the style of Edgar Poe. The control was abruptly interfered with by the approach of two spirits, who also controlled another medium present, and asked for the prayers of all present in their behalf which were freely accorded to them. After singing the evening hymn and prayer, the circle—a most impressive one—terminated.

## Answers to Questions.

*The growing desire for information on all subjects connected with Spiritualism and Free Religious thought, has induced us to reserve a portion of our space for the publication of answers to questions, practical and Spiritual. We therefore invite the public to send us questions on any subject of general import, the most important of which will be submitted to the controlling spirit of an advanced local circle, and published with the answer as space admits, those questions of minor importance which we feel ourselves competent to answer will be answered by the Editor. We wish it to be distinctly understood that no personal questions will receive attention.*

**QUESTION.**—Presuming that certain spirits have been living and accumulating knowledge in the spheres for thousands of years, why must every spirit necessarily investigate for himself—why should these more learned spirits not communicate this knowledge to the younger ones?

**ANSWER.**—Because the younger ones would be very little benefited thereby. Educating a man does not constitute him a wise or a good man. Let him be ever so much educated on earth, of what use is it to him in that moment when he stands alone upon his moral and spiritual value? Culture of the mind is valuable it is true, to give expression to either good or evil; but he is the wisest man who gains his knowledge from observation. It too often happens that acquired knowledge is the greatest hindrance to the true development of the individual. All the knowledge you possess is but the alphabet that prepares the mind or spirit for something that will be revealed hereafter—a revelation that will show you how utterly useless is all your learning when

considered in the light of spiritual development. There is a very great difference between the development of the intellectual faculties and the God-principle—otherwise good-principle—the possession of which makes a man truly valuable in the world. It is here so many mistakes occur. An uneducated man may have a simple way of expressing his thoughts; yet his thoughts may reach far and wide—may traverse the fields of nature and read the books there opened, while the learned search where there is nothing to see.

**QUESTION.**—If it is not knowledge that is increased as development proceeds, in what does development consist?

**ANSWER.**—It consists, not only in the cultivation and growth of the intellectual faculties—that is only a part—but of the human as a whole. What is the knowledge you speak of? It partakes of earth—little above it—and only that little which is above it is calculated to develop the spiritual perceptions: it is the minor portion that should be the major; hence, knowledge, as commonly understood, though good in part, is an injury, if by it the individual is thrown out of mental balance. A preponderance of the spiritual is, on the other hand, an equal drawback, for, with the excessive development of the religious principle, comes a proportionate loss of reason. He who most equally develops the harmonious mind on earth has the advantage when he enters upon the inner life. The mind should be supplied with such food as will open out the whole of the intellectual as well as the spiritual perceptions. There are astronomers, for instance, who are wise in their own particular study, but whose minds are so cramped in every other that they are sectarian—bigoted—and it is as difficult for such to progress in the after life as for those who are chained to any system of orthodoxy.

The term knowledge wants more clearly defining. The more knowledge you can acquire, from experience, the better.

## FAITH.

WE take the following extract from our evening contemporary, to show the prevailing method of dealing with a very difficult subject. That it is highly desirable to find some other remedy will hardly be disputed by those whose minds are free enough to form for themselves a judgment between right and wrong, unbiassed by the prejudices of the time. The subject is of great and painful interest at present, and we believe that it is among the free-thinkers and fearless doers of the world that the real interest and the true remedy are to be found:—

"THE Worshipful the Mayor and the four J's P. who presided at the City Police Court this morning are evidently possessors of faith in greater quantity than that which can be measured by one grain of mustard seed—faith, of course, in the powers of the bench. A mountain was to be removed this morning, and the bench is evidently satisfied the obstruction is no more. A wretched woman is charged with child-desertion. Homeless, penniless, and without a friend to turn to, burdened with an infant in arms, she is unable to obtain employment. She leaves her child with another woman, succeeds in getting work at eight shillings a week, and does her utmost to support her baby. Her means are not sufficient. She appears in court as a deserter of her child, and is reprimanded by the bench. She is out of work, and again without a hope of getting any, because of her child. The bench, however, says she must support it, must look after it; and advises her to be careful and not to injure it. In other words, not to commit infanticide. The wretched mother leaves the court, comfortless and hardly clad, with the child in her arms, in all probability to be shortly heard of again, driven to crime by the misery of her situation. The faith of the bench is still as great as ever—but the mountain is not removed. A donation to the helpless woman from the bench would have enabled her to provide elsewhere for her child till she could obtain employment, and would have saved her the misery of her present position and us the recording of another magisterial farce."



## SPIRITUALISM INCARNATE.

From the *New York Era*.

FOSTER, THE MEDIUM. SOME CURIOUS FACTS IN HIS CAREER. AN INDEPENDENT SKETCH OF AN INTERESTING SUBJECT.

Independence, and especially the independence of the press, is a great thing—a very great thing; so very great a thing that it is very rare. Now, independence does not merely mean boldness or ability to expose error or imposture, nor does it merely signify a readiness to uphold a truth: it means a determination in all doubtful cases, where certainties from the nature of the case are out of the question, to state the exact facts of the case, leaving it to others to decide upon its theory or its merits. Looked at from this point of view, the press has always been unfair to, and never been truly independent on, the question of "Spiritualism." True, there are a few papers who endorse this doctrine, professed "organs" of Spiritualists; true also, there are many papers which delight to expose the clap-trap which has too often disgraced so called "Spiritualism," but up to date there have been very few papers indeed, which, without either "exposing" or "endorsing" this subject, simply give the real facts concerning it—leaving opinions to others; yet these last papers are the only "independent" ones, and among these is the *ERA*; and in the present article it is proposed simply to state some interesting facts in regard to a curious man, Foster, the Medium, who has created quite a stir among the Spiritualists, and who is at present in this city.

The man Foster, himself, is the most unspiritual looking personage imaginable—there is nothing at all ascetic or æsthetic about him. He is of this world, worldly, and is full-formed, full-faced, muscular, handsome; a good-looking blonde-brunette of the order that takes life easily. He loves wine and tobacco, horses and social excitements, and vehemently insists that a man's "spiritual" gifts have nothing to do with a man's "spiritual" character, but are essentially fortuitous and accidental. Pope "lisped in numbers, for the numbers came;" and so Foster became a medium simply because, as he phrases it, "the spirits came to him"—he did not go out of his way or change his habits to seek them.

He is a Yankee by birth, having seen the light first in Salem, Mass. He is about 35 years of age, and has been a clairvoyant and a medium since his tenth year. His "Spiritual gifts" attracted some attention in New England, and subsequently visiting London, he became quite a lion. During this portion of his career he became quite intimate with the great novelist and romancist, Bulwer, and this episode in his life is worthy of attention.

He was introduced to Bulwer, then Sir Edward only, in London by Mrs. Frederick Barnes, an intimate friend and warm admirer of the distinguished author. Bulwer at that time was undertaking a new novel, and was likewise investigating "spiritualism," and thus meeting Foster at such a period his mind was still more strongly directed to this subject. He invited Mr. Foster to call and see him at Knebworth, an invitation of which Mr. Foster availed himself on several occasions, and for several days at a time. His reminiscences of Bulwer at his ancestral home are decidedly interesting and throw considerable light upon the character of that prince of letters.

According to Foster, Bulwer was a man very haughty and self-assertive in the company of his equals or his rivals, in rank or literature. He was reserved with Palmerston, on his guard with Disraeli, and rather unfriendly with Lord Russell; but with those who did not come into competition with him in any sense he was very courteous and affable. To Foster he was the pink of politeness, a perfect host; and he was beloved by all the servants of his elegant establishment. He was given to hospitality, and was in the habit of entertaining the best men in the kingdom. Sometimes he was visited by lords of rank and position; but as a rule,

owing to his unfortunate domestic arrangements, he was deprived of female society, a loss which he keenly felt. He was a great worker, also a great dandy, full of pet affectations—a mixture of Beau Brummel and N. P. Willis. He was not a man of sincere convictions, and devoutly believed in only one thing—himself.

As for spiritualism he studied its phenomena, and never suffered himself or others to rail at it. Yet he was not a convert to spiritualism, as then (or now) understood. He had trained himself always to look at both sides of every question, so that when others attacked spiritualism he would, guardedly, defend it; and when others enthusiastically supported it he would attack its abuses—so that neither side of the argument could fairly claim it.

During Foster's visit to Bulwer the latter was engaged in constructing that wonderful novel called "A Strange Story," in which certain spiritual phenomena are discussed and illustrated in a manner as yet unsurpassed for originality and interest. Certain points in the hero of this novel were taken from the personell and history of Foster, and Bulwer often alluded to the fact that Foster was the model upon which he had based his Margrave.

On several occasions Bulwer, who evidently regarded "A Strange Story" as his greatest book, would read passages from it to Foster. The two, author and medium, would sit in the library at Knebworth, side by side, and there after the reading, the author would become a disciple and Foster would hold a seance.

On one occasion, Bulwer advised Foster confidentially not to call himself "a Spiritualist" so that the name should not excite popular prejudice against him, but to give his "exhibitions" merely as "scientific phenomena"; but this advice was unpalatable to Foster, and Bulwer taking some offence that it was not adopted a coolness arose between the two men.

Remaining for some time in London, and then travelling through Europe, Foster returned to this country and has now temporarily located himself at No. 19, West Twenty-second street, en route for Australia.

And now the questions naturally arise, What does this man Foster do? And how does he do it?

With regard to the second question with reference to the "how,"—the modus operandi, of the phenomena,—nothing can be definitely known. Mr Foster says unhesitatingly that they all take place through spirit agency, of which agency he is a mere instrument, and that he does not cause the phenomena any more than he could prevent them. He says candidly that the spirits come to him, and take possession of him, and communicate with him, and that all he can do is to submit to their influences, to do as he is told, and to tell others what they tell him. He certainly seems to be sincere in what he says, and resorts to no clap-trap whatever. There are no trances, no darkened rooms, no spirit faces, no music in the air, no feeling of hands and legs, etc. No charlatanism or trickery of any visible kind. He sits during a seance in a well-lighted room, beside a small table with no apparatus upon it, and extremely simple; he holds nothing in his hands, smokes a cigar, and converses on the ordinary subjects of the day, at intervals. He claims that the spirits appear to him, or else whisper in his ear, and that their communications to him are all "external," made from without, entirely independent of his own volition or mentality. It may be that all this is not true; it may be that there is some trickery in the matter; but, if so, from the very nature of the case it is so skilfully done as to amount to a positive miracle of skill; and certainly no one as yet has been able either to expose the trickery or to explain the phenomena.

What he does is simple, yet wonderful enough, and can best be illustrated by a literal, plain, unvarnished narrative of a visit paid by the writer to the rooms of Mr. Foster, 19 West Twenty-second street, on the afternoon of May 28th,—in company with an artist and a merchant of this city, each of whom can substantiate this narrative in every particular.

First, Mr. Foster requested us to write on a slip of paper, the names of some twenty or thirty people, men

and women, having among them a certain name of "a departed spirit," with whom we specially wished to "communicate." This slip of paper we afterwards cut into separate slips, each containing a separate name, and of each slip we made a ball or pellet, and then shook them together, so mingling them that to save our lives we could not tell which from which. Yet by taking these pellets or balls, or slips in his hand, and applying them rapidly to his forehead, he was able to feel at once which pellet, or slip, or ball contained the particular name with which we wished to "communicate." Grant that this was a trick—yet it was so astonishingly, cleverly managed, that it alone would constitute "a whole evening's entertainment." And if it was a trick, how was it done?

Second, in answer to Mr. Foster's summons there were all sorts of raps, although Mr. Foster himself was not at the time near the table. There was also writing done *under the table*, and writing, too, of names which from the very nature of the case, must have been wholly unknown to Mr. Foster, unless indeed he was in the possession of the secrets of all our life, almost from our cradle, which was impossible, as we had never laid eyes on him until that day. Grant that all this was trickery, too, what is the explanation? How was it done?

Third, at Mr. Foster's request we thought of the name of a deceased lady friend, a girl who had been dead for years—and lo! on, or rather under Mr. Foster's arm, on the surface, there appeared in pink or blood, the letters of that dead one's name. We then thought of a male friend, deceased, and lo! his name appeared on the back of Mr. Foster's hand in blood-red letters. "Trick," you say again—but how were the letters made? and how on earth did the names happen to be correct each time? One thing is certain, there was no optical delusion about the matter; for this writing in blood-red letters was seen and read by the artist and the merchant accompanying us, as well as by our eyes.

But thus far, in all this series of phenomena, there has been a material basis; there have been papers, and writings, and rappings, and blood, etc.; i. e. things more or less material. We now proceeded to subject Mr. Foster to the experimentum crucis, to remove all material base of operations, and to make him deal with mentality alone. Casting our thoughts back upon the past, the long-forgotten, or at least seldom thought of past, we carefully invoked the image of a beautiful girl, upon whom we had wasted any amount of sentiment, but who, alas! had been sleeping in the churchyard for fifteen years. We thought upon her, and asked Mr. Foster to communicate with her, though without mentioning any of these particulars to him or telling him her name. Handing us a card with the letters of the alphabet inscribed upon it, he requested us to touch the letters in any order we chose, assuring us that whenever we touched any of the various letters which composed this once dear, and dead one's name, there would be a rap heard on the table; so that, by putting down the letters which when touched with our pencil were followed by raps, in their order, the full name of the lady would be given. We took the card and touched the letters at random, but the moment we touched the first letter of her name there was a distinct rap. Our friend, the artist, who himself had never heard of the young lady, noted down the letter. Then we touched other letters at random, but the moment we touched the second letter of her name there was another rap, till finally the whole name of the dead girl was spelled out. Now Foster had never heard of the girl, of course; the artist who took down the name had never heard of her; we had not ourselves breathed a syllable of her name; and yet here was the name spelled out correctly and by raps. But more than this, Mr. Foster also rapped out for us the letters of the name of an old maiden aunt who had been opposed to our attentions to this young lady, and who had herself been dead for over ten years. More than this even, Foster rapped or caused to be rapped out for us the names of three sisters, with whom the writer had been on friendly terms twenty years ago, in Philadelphia; he also told us,

"through spirit agency" he said. various particulars about these sisters which was only known to their immediate and humble circle, and which we had ourselves almost forgotten; he also rapped out the name of a well-known dramatist, recently deceased, a friend of ours, and putting himself into communication with the spirit of one of his dramatic pupils, rapped out the name and gave us various interesting facts in the history of a popular actress, likewise recently departed. In brief, Mr. Foster gave us the names of the parties we were *thinking of*, names which we had never uttered, names utterly unknown to him; names, the majority of them utterly unknown to the parties accompanying us; names shrouded, so we thought, in the recesses of our memory exclusively; and not only did Mr. Foster give us the names of these departed personages, but he evidently obtained from some source, particulars concerning them which enabled him to talk understandingly about them. How he did it God knows, we don't—but all this he did do. It may be all trickery, all psychology, all what you will, but at least it was all done; and he does similar things every day, and as Bulwer himself said of these phenomena, "no man knows how they are, nor denies that they are."

#### THE FOSTER SEANCES.

Mr. Charles H. Foster, who has excited so much attention in London and New York by reason of his wonderful powers of communicating with the other world, is at the Parker House, where he is holding seances. During the week several members of the press have visited him, and he has afforded every opportunity for a close investigation. His powers seem principally to be directed to the answering of written questions to the deceased. We ourselves witnessed a most remarkable exhibition of power on the occasion of our visit. A gentleman connected with the press was notified that a brother of his was present. The journalist wrote in shorthand for his brother to write his initials on Mr. Foster's arm if he were present, and Mr. Foster immediately after notified the journalist that his brother had written his initials upon his arm, and turning up his coat sleeve displayed to the astonishment of all the initials in red marks upon the arm. Other equally astonishing tests were given, and there can be no doubt that Mr. Foster is capable of astounding all with the phenomena he can develop at his seances.—*Boston Journal of Commerce*, July 12th.

#### TO SUBSCRIBERS.

SUBSCRIBERS who receive their papers in a colored wrapper will please understand that their subscriptions are due, and oblige by forwarding them as soon as possible.

We extract the following from a letter received by a friend, from Dr. W. L. Richardson who is now in London. "I enclose you a photograph of a Spirit, you may depend upon the truth of Spirit Photos, although I suppose there have been some false ones manufactured for some. Hypocrisy and deceit are however the homage paid to virtue and truth. The very fact of there being imitation Spirit photos shews that there must have been true ones, all here are perfectly satisfied of the fact now, and the evidence is accumulating daily. I attended a seance at Williams's 61 Lamb's Conduit Street, and we had good evidence. I tied up the Medium and the Cabinet; and presently saw John King walk out of the Cabinet, he carries his own light. He has invented it, it appears to be phosphorescent, no smoke or flame, but is apparently a solid substance like a glass crystal, he is a most agreeable spirit and most obliging, he was draped with a Turban on his head. He has lifted some one up at a seance at Mrs Macdougall Gregory's. He got on the table, then went up to the ceiling, then descended to the floor. He spoke to us all, he was accompanied by Peter who called John King the "Boss." You will see all this in the *Medium* of August 8th., which will contain a photo. \* \* \*



## PREDICTION OF A. J. DAVIS VERIFIED.

EDITOR BANNER OF LIGHT—We have at last a verification of the prediction made by A. J. Davis in 1846 that a *ninth* planet would eventually be discovered in the solar system. The following is from the Boston Journal of Monday, June 16th:

"The Smithsonian Institute at Washington received at one o'clock on Saturday a telegram from Prof. Watson, of Ann Arbor, Mich., announcing the discovery of a new planet in 17 hours, 16 minutes of right ascension south, and 21 degrees, 43 minutes of declination, rapid motion north, 11th magnitude."

When Mr. Davis, by a method which professed to transcend the limitations of science, assumed the existence of both an *eighth* and a *ninth* planet (see Revelations, p. 160), Neptune had not been discovered. Mr. Davis's declaration was in manuscript in March, 1846. In September following, the planet was discovered. It is true that Le Verrier had already predicted the existence of an *eighth* planet, but that prediction did not reach this country until the summer following Mr. Davis's declarations. Still, critics insisted that Davis might have had access to Le Verrier's calculations, and so would not admit the validity of his claim.

But no one will assume that the existence of a *ninth* planet was even suspected by astronomers in 1846. Yet by clairvoyance and spiritual insight, Mr. Davis anticipated scientific discovery *twenty-seven* years. Will our scientific savans acknowledge this simple fact, and credit clairvoyance with at least one well-established claim?

It is well known that a furious attack was made upon Mr. Davis through the New York Tribune of August 15, 1847, by Prof. Taylor Lewis, in which he styled the "Revelations" from "beginning to end a shameless and wicked imposture;" and all concerned in the production of the work as "engaged in a nefarious juggle to obtain money by false and impious pretences." The Professor also complained that "he denies the possibility of prophecy, yet claims to have predicted discoveries in astronomy."

I wonder if the Professor cannot be induced to rise and explain the coincidence of Davis's blasphemous prediction and the recent discovery of a *ninth* planet? Or, failing to do this, will he not exhibit the "Christian graces" sufficient to confess his libelous charge of imposture?

And yet in a still more important matter has Mr. Davis anticipated scientific discovery. He declared, twenty-seven years ago, that the outermost planets of the Solar System enjoy inherent light several hundred degrees greater than what our earth receives from the sun. And this description of celestial phenomena has been verified through the revelations of the spectroscope within the last year.

In No. Three of the Popular Science Monthly Mr. Proctor publishes the results of recent investigation. The luminosity of Jupiter is so great that his satellites appear like dark bodies when they pass across his disc. When Mr. Davis dictated the "Revelations," the self-luminous peculiarity of the large planets was not suspected. It is nonsense to regard his description of facts as a coincidence without a cause. Yet I do not suspect there is anything transcending the normal expression of intelligence in Mr. Davis's revelations. No claim of supernatural intervention is set up, nor is the possession of exceptional faculties assumed. Nature and law include all that has been given to the world through this channel. But here is suggested powers and agencies in the mortal and immortal realms which have escaped the cognizance of scientists and theologians. Human Nature is continually breaking out in unexpected places and giving us new surprises. Spiritualism embraces a factor which so sensibly qualifies the problem of life and being, that we must recognize it if we would avoid vitiating our results.

E. WHIPPLE.

## MEDIUMSHIP.

We extract the following from an article entitled, "Man's Spiritual and Physical Bodies—their relation to each other in health and disease"—which appears in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, of May 3rd.

"Man is a spiritual being, has innate ideas, and is capable of receiving ideas from other spiritual beings, either in or out of the form; these are dependent on the conditions of the organs, some persons having much greater power in both these directions than others, and when looking at the spiritual brain, clairvoyantly, we can readily discern different conditions. T. L. Harris said, many years ago, in looking at the brain of an imbecile person "I see it like a very fine and beautiful honeycomb with regular cells, but they seem to be empty;" then turning to an intelligent child, he remarked, "I see the same kind of structure here but it is full and like a honeycomb filled with honey." In all these departments, there is a mutual and reciprocal action between the spiritual and the physical systems and favorable conditions for one are always reflected upon the other and the reverse; but there is no other part of the system in which this is so strikingly illustrated to the clairvoyant vision as in the brain when it is in action, either in forming thoughts or collecting ideas from around it in the great reservoir of mentality, or from individual spirits who have done this. There is a peculiar light which emanates in radiating lines from it, and if the thought or idea be one that the seer can comprehend, it may be seen and understood in that light.

The spiritual brain has two modes of communicating, one to those upon or above its own plane of thought, which is a silent transmission of ideas; the other which reaches to those below it, is by gestures and language. Mind-reading is a well established fact, but it only extends to those who are nearly upon the same plane. Knowledge is power in every department of life, but in none more conspicuously than in the fact of man's twofold natures. Almost all the mysterious phenomena of life which have hitherto baffled man's investigation, may be understood when this subject is comprehended.

The phenomenon of sleep consists in a partial abstraction of the spiritual from the physical. Dreams are the result of a more or less perfect recollection of the action of the spirit while thus separated from the body; of course they are very much modified by the condition of the body, but their clearness depends upon mediumistic development, as we shall see.

Insanity is a common result of the imperfect control of the spiritual over the physical brain, and is frequently the result of obsession, by which we mean the control of ignorant and undeveloped spirits, who cause much suffering to mankind, and there are few more important lessons for us to learn than that we should do all that we can to prevent imperfect and undeveloped spirits from passing out of the form as they invariably react upon humanity within it.

Mediumship in all its forms results from the fact that the spirit within gives place to those around it to a greater or less extent. For instance the spirit of a rapping medium is so far displaced from its control of the body, that the electrical concussions peculiar to that body can be directed not only for the production of sounds, but that these shall be produced in such an orderly manner as to convey intelligence, which is the distinguishing characteristic of Modern Spiritualism. The same is true of the tipping medium, and of all other forms of mediumship in which the control increases from the lowest form up to a total and absolute unconsciousness in which a spirit having displaced the resident for a time, takes complete control of the body, and gives its own manifestations, modified somewhat, however, by the peculiarities of the body used as an instrument.

The development of mediumship consists in training the spiritual powers so that they may separate themselves temporarily from the physical. There are many conditions that favor this: First, a desire on the part of the individual, which will promote it directly by its action, and indirectly by leading to the observance of

The lecture on "Woman's Education," reported in our last, was delivered by Miss Mary Finlason, at the Mechanics' Institute, Castlemaine, on June 29th, 1873.

the necessary rules. Although such a desire may promote the development of mediumship, yet it is not necessary since many have been developed without any desire on their part, and even against their wishes.

Second. Normal, healthy conditions, although disease has in many instances tended to this separation of the spiritual from the physical, which constitutes mediumship, and there are individuals who only exhibit mediumistic powers when they are out of health, yet it is a well established fact that the highest and most perfect forms of mediumship, are not only consistent with, but result from, the very best conditions of health or harmony between the two systems.

Third. A good moral life is essential to the highest form of mediumship, although there are many mediums who are not on this plane, but their mediumship is imperfect in proportion to their undeveloped conditions, though this is no excuse for it.

We have said desire promotes the development of mediumship by leading persons to observe the rules which facilitate this. As each individual has some peculiarities in the system, the first rule we present is: Be careful; follow closely whatever gives consciousness of an increase of spiritual power in any direction, and attend regularly to this. It may be sitting alone quietly, singing or reading; it may be the association with certain individuals either in circles or otherwise. There should be a constant effort to hold fast that which is already attained; for this purpose regularity of habits and especial and conscientious observance of your contracts to meet the spirits at particular and specified times and places. The associations with congenial mediums is often a great advantage, and there should be care in following out the directions that may be given through these, and when you begin to distinguish spiritual impressions from your own, reason with the spirits as with mortals; talk to them face to face as friends and companions, and if they convince you that that which they impress you to do, is right and proper, do it without hesitation, always exercising your own judgment.

Much folly and fanaticism has been exhibited by mediums from a blind observance of crude impressions which were not in accordance with their own judgment and common sense.

Brother and sister mediums, all over the land, let us endeavour to realize that we are responsible for our own acts and resolve that we will only do that which appears to us clearly to be right. We present the foregoing thoughts for your serious consideration in the hope that as you turn them over in the lines of your own experience, they may be to you, as they have been to us, a comfort and strength. The creed which we would give to the world, is short and plain, but at the same time we believe it covers the whole ground; it is, "To be good, and to do good."

#### SOME EXPERIENCE AND CONCLUSIONS REGARDING SPIRITUALISM.

From the (London) "Spiritualist."

BY J. M. GULLY, M. D.

I have, in preceding articles, endeavoured to trace some of the uses to which Spiritualism may be at once put by its advocates; and I have named the conditions on which, in my view, it can be made useful. It would rejoice me much if circles of Spiritualists could be extensively and regularly formed, where the predominant thought of each member of them, was the subtle and sublime communion which they were then courting with spirits, whose surrounding light is as the noontide sun to the rushlight which illumines our bodily-encased spirits. As much of that greater light would thus be added to our smaller, as the physical agent through which our spirit exhibits itself is able to bear without subversion; we should get teachings from the highest spheres transmitted through spirits who are nearer to earth's doings because they are sent as missionary love-spirits to aid and inspire us in our plodding bodily existence; we should become lovingly familiar with the

fringes of the veil of the pure spirit-life, or even have a corner of it lifted up for our eager gaze; but the gaze must be eager, the desire for light intense, the curiosity upward, the hope heavenward. The night of dogma is far spent, and the dawn of facts and holy philosophy is spreading over and brightening the world of thought and feeling, and giving strength to individual spirit exertion in place of the paralysis induced by churches and sects. Physical science, beholding solid substance moved by virtue of certain forces, has deified those forces as the sole creator and cause of all that passes in the universe. Men of science, like theologians, are dogmatic and sectarian; they hold they have discovered all the forces and all the applications of them that can possibly exist, just as theologians hold that nothing more of God can ever be known than is already revealed in their books and creeds; both alike live in very partial light, inasmuch as they limit the sources of it; they will have nothing but what squares with their forces and their creeds. We Spiritualists should be thankful that it has been given us to obtain facts which link our minds with the eternal and the illimitable, which point to us the sources of endless light, and, it may be, thousands of forces as yet not dreamed about, and the results of which to those minds must be, if the investigation be calm and solemn, increasing joy and contentment, enlarged knowledge, and still higher and higher hope.

With whatever state of the spirit we may investigate the facts of Spiritualism, there will always be, to different minds, a varying appreciation of the worth of the different modes of communication with the disembodied. In the experiences which I have recorded the messages were given by alphabet raps, there was music, and, on one or two occasions, voices. I confess that these modes, and that by direct spirit-writing, command my undoubting belief more than indirect writing and trance-speaking; not so much from suspicion of *mala fides* as from knowledge, in the case of trance-utterance, that the spirit of necessity speaks through the medium's brain, which may be more or less active in the process, and, in the indirect writing through the medium's hand, which, being connected with a brain in actual wakefulness, may be influenced in what it writes by what is passing in the nervous centre, the medium being, in either case, not intent on deceiving. This objection does not apply to raps, of which no one present can possibly command the time, place, or force; to music, which is given when not one present can play the instrument at all, and sometimes with no instrument near; or to direct writing or voices which are effected when the mouths of all present are closed and the hands holding each other all around. It may be queried whether Allen Kardec wrote the number of volumes which he sent forth as the dictations of predominating spirits without a mingling of Allen Kardec in the teaching. At all events, he seems to have had all the "re-incarnating" spirits to himself, and stood alone to hold their theory. So, when a controlling spirit denounces vaccination as injurious, it always happens that the controlled is of the same way of thinking when not entranced. These and several other reasons may be advanced for advocating the greatest accuracy in the conditions which surround a medium when speaking or writing under control, and the greatest caution in receiving what is so uttered. The temptation to get messages rapidly renders speaking and writing a favourite evolution of spirit power; but I cannot help thinking that slower methods with fewer openings for error are preferable. Very probably, as the investigation proceeds, we shall learn how to stop up these openings, and then our proximity to real spiritual teachers will be surer as well as nearer. Meanwhile, I hold that the first necessary step towards this consummation is to bring together spirits in the flesh intent upon the highest aims of Spiritualism, with the intellects freed from prejudice, and the moral sensations pure, fraternal, yearning for knowledge more than for marvels.

Before I close, let me offer a few words on the question of the intervention of "scientific" men in the investigation of Spiritualism, without which, we are



told, the world at large will never accept it. The contradiction to this, is the fact that several millions of the world have accepted it, spite of the laughter, contempt, and scurrility of the majority of scientific men, who, for the rest, must be hard pressed to put forward a Dirks for their objector and expositor. To hear them speak, one would imagine they had reached the uttermost Thule of causation, when they invented the word "force" to account for all the physical phenomena of creation. It seems never to occur to them that "force" may have a cause, or, at least, may need a definition; they sit down contented that in these five letters (for they are nothing more until the word is defined in its essence and in its origin) they have the spring of all they examine; they take for granted that there can be no other causes at work in the universe, save that to which they give this name, and they contemptuously refuse to enter on the inquiry whether such other causes do exist. I maintain that men in this state of mind render themselves ridiculous when they assume the airs of a hierophant, dogmatise as to the limits of inquiry, and excommunicate all who presume to question whether their Deity, "force," accounts for everything which the human mind is capable of observing and feeling. As I before said, the parallel between the man of science and the dogmatic theologian is complete, when the former places himself in the position he does in the matter of Spiritualism and its evidences; and truly it is somewhat too hard upon human nature to have two series of dogmatic tyrants aiming to stifle her aspirations for more light. And how do they stand as regards the *irrefragable* character of their own facts? What has become of Newton's emission theory of light? Gone! What of Hutton's fire theory of terrestrial changes? Gone! Until twelve years ago the sun was ninety-six millions of miles from us, now it is only ninety. What has become of a host of simple substances? Found to be compound. At one time the "convulsion" doctrine regarding geological changes was held, now the slow and gradual doctrine is the order of the scientific world. And yet at each stage of knowledge he who ventured to question was pointed at with the finger of scorn by the leading scientists of the day and the received stage. "Yes," reply the scientists, "but when we inquired into the new facts and theories and found them well-based, we accepted them." Precisely what you should do, gentlemen, with reference to Spiritualism, and what you will find it your necessity to do, unless you choose to be left in the cold and in the dark regarding a series of phenomena which find no explanation in your ultimate cause, force, but which are as well based as any fact in any laboratory. Bishop Berkeley says, "So you arrive at *truth*, though not at *science*;" and be assured that there is plenty of truth to be found without your science. At one time there was reckoned to be only seven sciences—grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy; referring to which Pope says—

"Good sense, which only is the gift of heaven,  
And, though no science, worth the seven."

So we Spiritualists will manage to arrive at some valuable truth regarding our present and future existence without your aid, and with the aid of sound external senses, and that other interior sense of which the poet just quoted speaks, and which you cannot give us. You say our external senses are in a state of hallucination; then must those of some ten millions of people be in the same state, and *exactly on the same point*—a phenomena which the human race never yet exhibited.

But granting skill and acuteness in the processes of experimenting on physical nature, there remains an absence and a presence in order to render the skill trustworthy—the absence of a prejudiced mind and the presence of a candid one. As yet we have seen little or none at all of these conditions of mind in what men, having pretensions to scientific distinction, have uttered concerning the phenomena of Spiritualism recorded to them; "pooh-pooh" is only another expression for prejudice, and the demand for previous conditions, according to laws to which they restrict their belief, is

not the spirit of candour. Thus there is small likelihood of the body scientific ever investigating the body spiritual and its agencies in any manner which would be fair to the inquiry, or advance our knowledge of the subject. If I might venture a recommendation to the believers in Spiritualism, it would be to cease praying the scientific doctors to come amongst them. Surely in ten millions of persons there are those who would "know a hawk from a handsaw" as well as the most pretentious scientist—those who can surround a phenomenon with such precautions as to render it unassailable by trick, and indubitable in its causality? It sounds potential to divide by word of mouth, though not by act of proof, the whole race of Spiritualists into the rogues and the fools, the impostors and the gulls; but what if the retort discourteous were made, and the gentlemen of science were reminded how they constantly go into courts of justice, get compensation and declare point blank against each other—nay, are subpoenaed and paid beforehand to declare this way or that? Where is, then, the positivism of science as opposed to the humbug of Spiritualism?—and which of the two witnesses is the fool, and which the rogue? No; we can do without the men of science, and I trust the body of Spiritualists will come to that conclusion. When another ten millions are added to our numbers, they will be glad to join the party; it may pay them to do so, for the phase of contempt will be past; meantime they stand shivering in fear before Grundy, and worshipping their new deity—Force.

THE funeral of Mr. Coney's son, who received fatal injuries while playing at football, took place on Tuesday last: he was buried in the Melbourne Cemetery. The circumstances attending his death were of a most painful character. He was in the bloom of youth, just emerging into manhood as it were—the pride of a widowed father, who lost an elder son about a year and a half ago in his twentieth year. This one had, like his brother, always been a most kind, affectionate, and obedient son, always anticipating his father's every wish. His loss is deeply deplored by his father, sisters, and brothers, to whom he was fondly attached. The fatal accident has again called attention to the desirability of some step being taken to prevent the recurrence of such accidents in connection with the game of football, or to cause it to be played in a legitimate manner as in England, where the extreme of ruffianism is not allowed.

The father of the deceased youth belongs to the Free-thought school, and was extremely anxious to avoid the farce of the rites and ceremonies of the Church, but did not know how to do so without offending some individual clergyman, a thing he was most anxious to avoid, as he grants to everyone what he claims for himself—the right of private judgment. But how to avoid the collision he did not know, for, as the law stands, if he had his deceased son buried in the Church of England ground, he must have permitted the ceremony and the reading of the burial service by an authorized clergyman of that church. Fortunately, however, the father procured other ground in the non-conformists portion of the cemetery, where he was at liberty to have the remains of his son committed to its last resting-place in accordance with his own wishes.

Mr. Manns kindly conducted the short, simple, but much more natural service in a very impressive manner. It consisted in the reading of a short poem—"Into the silent land; ah! who shall lead us thither?" &c., and delivered a short oration upon the painful bereavement which the father and family had sustained in the loss of one so young and dutiful; upon the sympathy which was felt for the bereaved; and the moral courage which he had that day manifested, and the faith which he had shown in the principles which he professed, even in the dark hour of bereavement.

We hope that others by his example will be encouraged to act out their belief. The service was concluded by the reading of another short poem (while the remains were being lowered in the grave,) "Take, oh death! and bear away whatever thou canst call thine own," &c.

This circumstance has again called our attention to

the great necessity of Spiritualists and others, who see the desirability of a more simple form of burial service in conformity with their views, taking a decided stand upon this point. The time has come when such a step should be taken, and we strongly urge the necessity of an organisation to carry it out; we shall then show to the world that the Spiritualist and free-thinker can meet on one common ground, and that, while Christianity teaches that for conscientious difference of opinion the last hour of life will be the beginning of never-ending misery, we on the contrary say that, at that solemn moment when death exerts his inexorable dominion, and the anguish of separating blanches the cheek, when even tyranny pauses in its pursuit of vengeance, and the tempest of passion is stilled, we say that can never be the moment chosen by a God of love in which to commence the execution of a purpose which humanity cannot conceive nor contemplate without terror and dismay.

From a pamphlet just received we find that a Spiritualistic Association has been formed in Hungary. Considerable progress has been made; many of the nobility are interested in the movement. We shall give a fuller account in our next.

### SPIRITUALISM IN AUSTRALIA.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT CAVENDISH ROOMS, ON SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 27TH, BY DR. RICHARDSON, OF MELBOURNE.

I come from that far country where, according to Mr. Gathorne Hardy, the result of disestablishing religion is that no one speaks without swearing and almost every one gets drunk; from that country at your antipodes where every free man has a voice in making the laws which govern him; where the labouring classes have gained the right to work eight hours, to rest eight hours, and to recreate themselves eight hours; from that land where every honest and capable man can really sit under his own vine and fig-tree. There the Teuton, the Celt and the Anglo-Saxon are founding a new republic, and there the great wave of Modern Spiritualism is spreading over the length and breadth of the land. It is sapping the foundations of ecclesiastical Christianity; it is splitting asunder corporations based on self-interest and human authority; it is, with you, labouring to solve the problem as to what is to constitute the church of the future, what is to be the confession of faith and formulated creed. It is, amid much ridicule and denunciation, proclaiming the rule of love, the brotherhood of the human race, and the absolute and unconditional freedom of each immortal soul.

Among all sections of the churches that profess to be followers of Him who was at once a free-thinker and a communist, dogma is losing hold of men's minds, and superstition and authoritative religion are being gradually cast off like old garments. There the people resolved, long before you did, that capital punishment (barbarous although it be) should be carried out in private before responsible witnesses; there the ballot was an institution for twelve or fifteen years before it became law here; there it was resolved that as the state, in its capacity of curator, was the common parent of Christian, Jew, Chinese, Mohammedan, it should have no religion, and that therefore there could be no state aid to the sects; there the state education is free, compulsory, and secular *only*; that is to say, it is not the duty of the schoolmaster to teach religion, although the sects are at liberty to use the state schools *after* school hours for religious instruction. The last sign of progress in Australia is the passing the bill legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

It is now some ten or twelve years since the subject of Modern Spiritualism began to attract attention in Melbourne. Before that time there had been subscribers to the *Zoist*, and others who were acquainted with the facts and phenomena of vital magnetism. I, myself, had long ago recognised the mesmeric phenomena as spiritual manifestations, and doubtless others with me

were thus prepared for the advent of scientific Spiritualism. It was not, however, until very recently that any attempt was made to associate or organise. In October, 1870, eleven persons, one of whom was a lady, met together in Melbourne to devise some plan by which Spiritualists might interchange experiences and ideas. A society was formed, called the "Melbourne Branch of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists." I had the honour to be elected the first president, and I held that office during the first year. I am happy to say that the Association continues to progress under the able presidency of Mr. John Ross, and numbered, when I left, some 150 members. Sunday services are held, when lectures and addresses are delivered by members, and at the last meeting I attended in April there were some 250 persons present. Connected with this association is the Children's Lyceum, which was opened last November with 60 young persons, and had, as Mr. Terry, the conductor, informed me, in April, 120 members. It must be evident to all that Lyceum organisation is most important, and I trust soon to hear of its promotion in this metropolis. With the same objects in view, although apart from the association, there is labouring in Melbourne a man who has suffered much in the sacred cause of truth. We hear a good deal of the liberality of the Anglican Church and of its comprehensiveness; it doubtless may be so in England, near the centres of civilization, but it is in the Colonies that one may see what may be truly termed Episcopal despotism. Its lordly bishops profess to be disciples of the lowly Nazarene, who welcomed all labourers in the field of humanity by saying, "He who is not against me, is for me." The Rev. Mr. Tyerman held charge at Kangaroo Flat, near Sandhurst; he officiated at a pretty little church, and had a comfortable parsonage, where he resided with his family. Spiritualism had made a considerable stir around him, and some of his parishioners had become mediums. He determined, before denouncing the subject of which he knew nothing, before he cut off from church membership these persons, that he would himself examine its claims to truth, investigate the "*delusion*," and expose what he considered its falsity. He had just concluded a course of sermons on infidelity and scepticism, when this new heterodoxy was thus forced on his notice. He very soon discovered that he was himself a powerful motive medium. His investigations were not concealed, for as he had entered publicly on the subject for the purpose of refuting the supposed deception, he made no secret of his doings. Some of his parishioners, however, who did not desire more light, put themselves in communication with the heads of the church, and Mr. Tyerman received a visit one morning from the venerable Archdeacon Crawford of Castlemaine. He demanded at once if Mr. Tyerman believed in Spiritualism. The humble investigator, who had come to curse but who had remained to bless, who was fulfilling the scriptural injunction of proving all things, neither hesitated nor prevaricated, but boldly replied that if the questioner meant by Spiritualism the power of the departed to communicate with mortals, he undoubtedly *did* believe it. Then said the archdeacon, "I hereby suspend you from all your duties as a minister." Mr. Tyerman was allowed one month to vacate his house, and he was then turned out in the world with his family of six children. The Spiritualists, to their honour be it said, forthwith subscribed the sum of £310, which enabled Mr. Tyerman to pay off his outstanding liabilities, and to remove to Melbourne.

He is now doing good service to the cause. He holds Sunday evening meetings, and addressed, when I was last present, between four and five hundred persons. The service is aided by an excellent choir of some twelve or fifteen volunteers, and they have a professional gentleman as their able conductor. Aiding the cause of free thought, and thus of rational religion and Spiritualism, we have besides the services just named a free discussion society. Here every Sunday evening all subjects of social or religious interest can be discussed, provided the disputants conform to certain rules which are carried out by a chairman. Invitations were lately sent to all the leading ministers in the city of Melbourne



to come and defend or discuss their beliefs. Two only responded to show reason for the faith that was in them. At the Unitarian Chapel in Melbourne the entire Sunday services are conducted, and have been now for nearly twelve months, by a lady, Miss Turner. Her addresses are of a very high order—very rational, logical, and often profound.

At Sandhurst, a mining town of some 30,000 inhabitants, friend Denovan, a true Spiritualist, has elicited at a circle of his own formation, and with mediums of his own developing, every evidence that is needful to convince. Last November I was present at a grove meeting where he conducted service and delivered an address, at which hundreds of persons were present. At Castlemaine, a town of 25,000 persons, Mr. Leech, a barrister, has for some years been holding Universalist Sunday services, and is now a pronounced Spiritualist. But before these or any other lecturers had brought Spiritualism before the public, Benjamin Nayler had taken the field. He not only lectured but started a monthly paper called the *Gloworm*. He is now occupied in lecturing at Stawell, where there was an association of Spiritualists, who had built themselves a hall. Shortly before I left, our dear friend and brother James M. Peebles addressed audiences of 3,000 persons in one of our Melbourne theatres for four successive Sunday evenings. His lectures were reported at length by the *Argus* and *Age* newspapers, apparently the only independent ones in Melbourne. Students of spiritual literature are scattered over Victoria, and our own periodical, the *Harbinger of Light*, is entirely devoted to the cause; of course, like any of the other forty-six spiritualistic journals, it is not a monetary success, but, from the solidity of its articles and the rational unsectarian tone it adopts, it is doing a mighty work, and, as its name implies, is ushering in the dawn of a brighter day. In Melbourne, Castlemaine, Sandhurst, Hobart Town, and other places, private seances are held frequently. We have some good mediums. My dear friend, Miss Armstrong, niece of the present Archbishop of Dublin, is one of the best.

The speaker alluded to the widespread belief in the religious world that the second advent or some spiritual crisis was near, and remarked: "We do not look for any personal coming of the Lord in the clouds to assume any physical sovereignty; we do not anticipate any material rule for a thousand years; but we do know that the Lord is coming, that the Christ principle is filling men's hearts, that his angels are descending, that the night of the world is past, that the first rays of the dawn is streaming through the departing gloom, and that the world is awakening to a glorious destiny."

"Let us, then, so imitate Christ, that, whether in Australia, or in England, or in America, we may exemplify the practical beauty of our belief in the living pure and temperate lives, in the abnegation of self, in the respecting the laws of our countries, and by living as nearly as we can in harmony with divine natural law, thus shall we best worship in all our actions every moment of our lives the great Spirit, thus shall we ensure our own happiness."

[We regret that our space prevents us from giving more than an outline of the Doctor's excellent discourse, which was listened to with profound attention.]—*Medium and Daybreak.*

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