

THE Harbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

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

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

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ORDINATION.

IN looking back upon the civilization of the past, so many of whose errors still hamper our progress, one of the most noticeable peculiarities, from which we are only slowly and gradually freeing ourselves, is the ancient belief in what we may sum up in the one word—ordination. A man was ordained, or set apart, by supposed competent authority, for this or that peculiar work. Then he went on his way without let or hindrance, society accepted him; men trusted him with their lives, their fortunes or their souls, as the case might be, all on the strength of this letter patent which he had received, as doctor, lawyer or priest. But woe be to anyone who dare intrude upon the privileged enclosure without such open letter; no term of reproach was too bad, no legal punishment too severe for such an one; and as to the public putting faith in him, none but the lowest and most ignorant were likely to make such a blunder. Nor was it the learned professions alone that were thus supplied by a special system of ordination, or setting apart of particular individuals for particular work. Even handicrafts were thus guarded from the intrusion of the non-ordained, and heavy and terrible were the penalties sure to be inflicted, both legally and socially, on whosoever dare practice them without having duly served their apprenticeship.

Let us, however, if we would do justice and learn wisdom from the past, at least glance for a moment at the work of the world that has been done by some of the non-ordained. The greatest revolution in religious thought that ever took place in the history of the world was brought about by the teachings of one unordained, save by the Spirit of God—nay, he was proscribed and denounced as a shameless pretender and deceiver by those who were ordained to such studies, and who had

spent their lives in them. We can scarcely marvel, then, that they crucified him. To the court of a victorious king and queen there came one day a poor sea-captain, so poor indeed that he had scarcely decent clothes in which to appear before them. He told them that if they would provide him with a few small ships, he would, in a short time, make them masters of new and undiscovered countries, richer than any they yet ruled over. The offer was a tempting one, but being prudent sovereigns, they referred the unknown adventurer and his plans to a committee of men theoretically and practically experienced in such matters. The report of this committee was quite adverse to the scheme; small as was the sum required to carry it out, they deemed it would be unwise to waste anything in so wild an enterprise. Fortunately for posterity, however, the faith of a woman triumphed over prudential considerations, and Christopher Columbus went forth to discover America. "The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind," Lord Bacon, was set apart for the practice of the law; and succeeded in it so much to the satisfaction of his *professional* brethren, that he rose almost unopposed to the offices of the highest dignity. But the sequel proved the professional judgment to be wrong, and Lord Bacon is now admitted to have been one of the worst Lord Chancellors England ever had, while it is equally certain that Nature had ordained him to be the wisest and most clear-sighted philosopher that ever helped on the progress of the world. A German peasant, meeting with a severe accident, refused to follow the prescriptions of the faculty and undertook to cure himself, when they had given their "legally qualified" opinion that he *must* die. He carried out his absurd, unprofessional system with complete success, he did cure himself, and in spite of the jeers, the ridicule, and the opposition of all the doctors of his day, he cured thousands more beside himself, till now the system of the non-professional, that is the unordained—Priessnitz has its established institutions in every civilized country of the world, and has modified the practice of the very profession that derided his professional ignorance.

It would be easy to multiply such instances; but that is not our object. We seek rather to learn a lesson from the Past, and to apply it to the Present. Modern

society has done much to throw off these shackles, as being injurious to its own best interests, but much remains to be done; and we firmly believe that the time is even now at hand when much should be done to place the occupations, still so jealously guarded, on the same open ground as others. In most departments of thought, or skill, or industry, that man is free to succeed who can do the work required of him; but the so called learned professions seem to cohere as a unit in the unanimity with which they conserve their own professional interests, by exalting and magnifying themselves and their office, and by decrying all intruders on their preserves under various unhandsome names, such as pettifoggers, schismatics, or heretics, and empirics or quacks. The legal professions are of one mind upon this subject. The barristers are jealously watchful that their peculiar privileges are not encroached upon, and hedge themselves well with rules, lest some who are as able—and far more so than some of them—should come in competition with them, yea and possibly carry off the palm and the perquisites. To them, these rules and regulations act as a protection. And the same may be seen exemplified in the subordinate classes of lawyers. The solicitor is as tenacious of his rights as the barrister. He might have no objection to snatching a bit out of the paw of one of his more exalted brethren, but he takes good care that he shall be the only proper maker and former of a certain class of documents and instruments, and doer of a certain class of business. And if, perchance, some honest man thinks himself capable of doing his own business, or assisting his neighbor in doing his, let him look out for breakers, unless he "be legally authorized thereunto as aforesaid."

From time immemorial the priest class have exalted themselves above their fellows, and hedged themselves round with privileges and perquisites. And they—and they alone—would be consistent in their claims, if all churches based their authority, as the Roman Catholic church does, on the indwelling Spirit of God ever present and presiding over its councils. This claim once granted and the appointees of such a body must be held to be well chosen. But no other body upon earth, secular or ecclesiastical, makes such a claim for itself, or would admit it for others; and with the doctrine of infallibility falls all reasonableness in the system of ordination—or apportioning of particular work to be done only by particular men. Apart from the belief in such a divine inspiring influence, there is no more sense in ordaining men as priests, or qualifying men as lawyers and doctors, than there is in ordaining stonemasons to chip level, or carpenters to plane smoothly.

Recent colonial history—for, alas, it is history—has a notable instance of the loss to society that is accruing from this loss of the services of the talented but unordained. A few years ago, one of the most terrible of modern diseases broke forth among us with deadly vigour. It visited the healthiest localities, it desolated the happiest and best kept homes, it baffled the skill of the most experienced men of all the known schools of medicine. Government appointed a Royal Commission of the ORDAINED to seek out a cure. They shook their wise heads, and they wagged their wise tongues, they

spent lots of public money, and of precious time, but they taught us nothing, and they enabled us to cure nobody. The Destroyer marched on, undismayed and undeterred by the wisdom of the Ordained. Then there arose among us one Robert Greathead, unordained, who had the audacity to say he could cure diphtheria, and he did it too. Wherever he was allowed to try his cure himself he almost always succeeded in saving the sufferer, and always succeeded in checking the disease in the community. Now we do not write to bolster up his cure, or to praise him; we refer to him and to his success simply as an example of the latest most remarkable failure of the ancient system of Ordination, and we ask, how much longer shall this Ordination superstition—remnant of superstitious times—flourish among us? It will flourish and grow fat on the life blood of our people, until the people themselves awake in earnest to the nature of the imposition that is being practised upon them. Governments will never free them from it till they decide to free themselves, then Governments will be their humble servants and follow their commands. The learned professions will never write themselves down a failure—will never admit that they are but a remnant of a past age when learning was the exception, ignorance the rule in all classes of society. As in the case of other tyrannies, so also in this, the people alone are the appointed deliverers of the people. After three centuries of strife, the people have *nearly* succeeded in freeing themselves from the *legal* tyranny of the priesthood. When will they set to work in like earnest to overthrow the like tyranny of doctors and lawyers. A drunken doctor may order a dose of medicine that kills a man, and yet he shall be blameless; but let a non-professional adviser, of the steadiest habits and most blameless antecedents, lose a patient, and he runs a good chance of being tried by a doctor, and on the evidence of another doctor, of being brought in as guilty of manslaughter.

And what is there to be said in defence of this vast system of legalized imposition and duly qualified humbug? Two things only; the first a specious pretence; the second a real truth. It is said to be for the protection of the public. For the protection of the public! Protection from what? From charlatans? There is no system imaginable better calculated to foster and maintain charlatans than this same system of ordination. There is no condition in the world in which, in point of fact, they flourish better, or are more numerous, than in the learned professions. Or are we to be protected from overcharges? Then, for pity's sake, let us have no more professions open only to a certain set of men, who can and do band themselves together and say, "Whether it be for life or for death, we will stir no muscle to save this suffering man or woman, except our full fee be guaranteed us." The real truth is, that being thus banded together, and the profession being kept by law exclusively in their hands, they can exact for their services what amount they choose to estimate them at. Now must the public submit to this? Must they pay a fixed fee for a professionally appointed man, be he good or bad, successful or unsuccessful, or else go with their urgent needs unserved? Yes they must, unless they take the remedy into their own hands, and insist on

the law allowing them to employ whomsoever they choose, and on paying liberally only those who prove themselves successful practitioners. Let a man's own powers be the measure of the worth of his services, let that man do any particular work who can do it well, let the incapable and the unsuccessful go without the protection of a diploma, and answer for their failings as other men do in other callings. Let the whole system of Ordination be swept away, among the other superstitions of the dark and ignorant Past in which it originated, and to which alone it properly belongs.

COMMUNICATION.

(A SANDHURST CIRCLE.)

Dear friends,—With joy I come back to earth to tell you how happy I am in my beautiful home, so beautiful that no mortal language can describe to you one half of its beauties, oh, how different is my present existence to that which I feared was my lot when called away from earth, for having been taught to believe in heaven and hell as the future destiny of all, according to their merits, I trembled to think what was to become of my spirit. Oh! with what joy and delight I entered upon my new existence no earthly language can tell, but I will come again soon when I shall be able to give you a better description of my happy home, and have more power over the medium.

H.R.

Dear Friends,—I have been waiting to give you the communication I promised to you, and, if the medium would be more willing to sit for the communications, I would give you many more, but I hope he will soon place more reliance in what the spirits tell him, and believe that all we teach is for the benefit of mankind. For I tell you, my friends, the time is fast coming when man shall no longer be the slave of man, when all law, sacred and just shall, like the star of day, shed its rays equally and alike on all of you, when the people shall no longer be led away by false doctrines, but shall listen to the counsel of those whose mission it is to instruct you to counsel, fraught with piety, and full of wisdom expressive of sublime hopes, maxims pure as the thoughts of Heaven. My friends the age of barbarism has ceased, and that of civilization has truly commenced, the mists of error are dispersing, the fetters of slavery are broken, bounds must be fixed, and reform must purify the church. Too long has the earth been an immense sanctuary, dark and dismal, where the great have been the sacrificers and the weak the victims. Oh, my friends, pray that the veil of ignorance may soon fall, and the dawn of regeneration appear to gladden the earth.

H.R.

Poetry.

NOT ALONE.

I CANNOT be alone;
Where'er I go I find
Around my steps the presence thrown
Of the Eternal Mind.

He lives in all my thoughts;
His house is in my heart;
There is no loneliness for me;
I never live apart.

I sometimes go from men,
Far in the silent woods;
But He is with me even then
In shady solitudes.

The fellow of my walks,
Companion ever nigh,
He fills the solitary place
With love and sympathy.

I cannot be alone;
Where'er I go I find
Around my steps the presence thrown
Of the Eternal Mind.

The British Messenger.

—Prof. Upham.

To Correspondents.

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

MR. FOSTER AND HIS CRITICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Dear Sir,—The *Australasian* of the 28th ultimo contains an account of a sitting held with the celebrated medium, C. H. Foster. The statement of facts I believe to be perfectly correct, but the comments accompanying the statement appear to be altogether unjust, severe, and untrue.

Trusting to the much vaunted fairness and impartiality of our colonial press I wrote a reply to the article, but to my surprise I received a note to the effect that "no controversial matter on such a subject could be admitted into their columns."

I leave every rightly constituted mind to judge if this be impartial or just—judging from my own standpoint it argues the very opposite, and betrays a spirit *illiberal, unfair, and one-sided.*

Their columns are open to every questionable statement of the bitterest opponents, and closed to any matter furnished by a patient observer. Good bye, to boasted honesty and fairness.

To the lovers of truth it is gratifying to know, however, that in the public mind there is a widespread growing distrust in the integrity of our press. Thoughtful men are compelled to adopt the greatest caution in drawing conclusions from information supplied through such a medium; they have learned from experience that distortion, misrepresentation, and suppression are very frequently associated with any article that may be above the writer's comprehension, or opposed to the belief of a majority of their subscribers, from which it would appear—that it does not always pay to admit the truth.

The spirit of the age, let us be thankful, is against such conduct, and will soon make itself felt in such a manner as to compel our press to observe that which it now claims but fails to practice, viz., *justice to all sides of every question.* It is the absence of this spirit that induces me to crave a portion of your space for the insertion of that which, in justice, ought to have appeared in the columns of the *Australasian.*

MR. C. H. FOSTER AND SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AUSTRALASIAN.

Sir,—“By an Eclectic” has favoured the public, in your last week's issue, with a record of what transpired at two sittings with the above ‘medium,’ and also with his reflections and impressions upon the record.

So far as the recital of the facts is concerned no one can find any fault. But to those who know anything about the subject under treatment, his reflections and impressions must appear presumptuous in the extreme. Reflections and impressions on what—on “this matter” the author says, which I presume from subsequent remarks means “Spiritualism.” And, judging from the tone of the whole paper, one would imagine that the writer had completely exhausted the whole theory, and had laboriously traversed the entire field covered by this subject, whereas, if the truth were known, he has barely entered the threshold of what expands wide as the human race, and is dependent for its existence, not upon what your correspondent may have seen, but upon thousands of proofs which he has not seen—proofs which he and all who think with him can never disturb.

It is a pity “Eclectic” could not for a few minutes put himself in the shoes of one, who for eight or ten years has studied and investigated all the phases of this grand truth, he might then be privileged with a view of himself that would prove of great value to him in the future. He would see how ridiculous a man—especially an otherwise well-informed one—can make himself when he enters upon the consideration of, and gives reflections on, a subject of which he is profoundly ignorant.

And first he evidently writes on the assumption, that all who believe in 'Spirit Communion' have arrived at the conviction through having witnessed the same, or similar phenomena, to that he himself has witnessed, and now gives his reflections and impressions upon. Now I venture to affirm that few, if any, have become Spiritualists through being several times spectators of physical phenomena, or of having a few unimportant questions correctly answered; upon such evidence even your correspondent would be an unwelcome convert. It is generally after many months, and more frequently years, of patient research that true Spiritualists are made, and it is to them that such well-rounded sentences and graceful diction, employed more from a spirit of opposition than honest conviction, becomes pointless and of little avail; and were it not that many will accept all 'Eclectic' has uttered, as the result of earnest investigation and long experience, his paper might go without notice.

He begins by admitting some of the phenomena that took place to be perfectly genuine, and free from trickery, and then proceeds to do his best to cast suspicion upon, the honesty of the 'Medium,' and winds up by again asserting his belief in the genuineness of some of the manifestations. But with this extraordinary sentence in addition—"For my own part I am content to leave them unaccounted for."

This utterance from one professedly of a scientific taste is truly surprising. I have always been taught that science regarded no fact in the realm of nature as unimportant, but rather that it should be closely watched, and strictly investigated to discover the cause. I am afraid this looks as if "Eclectic" was afraid to learn any more on such a subject. There are a class of men who are so materialistic in their nature and tendencies, that they are afraid to be convinced of the close proximity of the spirit world, it makes them miserable—is our defamer one of these?

After crediting 'Mediums' (about whose nature and mission he evidently knows nothing) with that which not one in a hundred enjoys, "ease and affluence," and to the correctness of this statement I challenge contradiction, he goes on in this wise. "They (mediums) are hardly ever found untainted by trickery or unassociated with conscious or unconscious deceit. They have been used as the foundation of one of the grossest forms of superstition the world ever knew—of a religion that has sprung from the very gutters of modern life." This is certainly choice phraseology—very charitable—worthy of its author, and savors of a spirit that is dishonestly reckless for the sake of literary effect.

Now I ask all fair, unprejudiced readers, if it is not quite evident from the latter quotation that "Eclectic" believes, and wishes other people to believe, that the whole structure of Spiritualism has been reared upon "professional Mediumship." I think there can be no mistake about this. Now from what motive can any man make such a statement, when it is known, even by our opponents, that for every one professional 'Medium' there are five hundred private ones—in fact there is scarcely a family without its medium or mediums, and will this writer have the hardihood to assert that trickery and deception are almost universally practiced within the sacred bonds of the family circle. What possible gain can it be to any private medium to deceive his fellow creatures in this matter. In making such a statement, who assumes the most, he who says "they are hardly ever found untainted by trickery," or he who says "some dishonest there may be, but that most are honest I doubt not;" I think anyone with a particle of charity in their composition will prefer the latter assumption.

Many, very many, professional mediums are much respected by thousands for their probity and devotion to a work that demands a life of self sacrifice, and often times hardship, and certainly always persecution.

That there are, and have been, deceivers and counterfeits hanging on to Spiritualism no one doubts, but surely even "Eclectic" would not use this as an argument against the whole movement. Not satisfied with traducing 'Mediums' in general, he concludes his paper with a sentence, which for unbounded presumption I have

never seen surpassed, and which is only equalled by its base falseness. It is to this effect, "This matter (Spiritualism) has done, and is doing, a great deal of mischief, and has never done and is not likely to do the smallest good—that it is dangerous and doubtful, and void of all use to humanity, to warrant them in refusing to trifle with it as an amusement, or to give it any consideration as a thing of serious concern."

A statement more at variance with fact could scarcely be made. It is pitiable to see a mind indicating such cultivation, descending to such a mode of dismissing a subject, about which he evidently has not taken the trouble to inform himself.

In what manner, I would ask, has "Eclectic" procured the information and knowledge that are necessary to warrant the use of such language regarding a movement now agitating the largest, as well as the smallest, centres of civilization.

Who furnished him with the exact particulars about what it has done, what it has not done, and what it can not do? He must surely have accepted a great deal on mere faith, or, what is more probable, gratuitously conceived it in his own mind. We will, however, suppose he adopted the former course, and placed implicit confidence in the veracity of the opponents of Spiritualism. And suppose on the other hand, that I assert the very opposite, and that my assertion is borne out by the testimony of thousands whose veracity is as worthy of confidence as those on the other side, which statement is correct, or which is nearest the truth? I suppose every rational man would say—the most truthful statement is that which is best supported by evidence. If these thousands then are prepared to testify that to them Spiritualism is a good thing, then I say, notwithstanding its having "risen from the gutters of modern life," *it is good, and has done good*, no matter if five hundred thousand said it was an evil thing. Good and evil are relative terms, and acquire force and point from their application, what is a good to me, need not necessarily be so to you.

I suppose it will be expected that I should endeavour to combat the arguments advanced by "Eclectic" against the spiritual hypothesis being the true cause of such manifestations.

Well, let us briefly allude to one or two points. He says, "It appeared to me almost certain that there was an impression produced by the question in our minds upon the mind of the medium." Well, granted that it was so, this will not account for facts communicated through 'Mediums' that never were in the mind of the questioner, instances of which are daily occurring in our midst and elsewhere, but then, according to "Eclectic's" mode of reasoning, even these facts are susceptible of a non-spiritual explanation, which certainly has novelty in its favor, and mystery as well. In speaking of the process by which such answers are supplied, these words are made use of, "I cannot say that it is impossible for a clever-mental conjuror to give you all these answers, and produce before you very strange results, *which you in some way, unknown to yourself, supplied*." This process of reasoning would explain (and confuse) anything and everything.

Again, in speaking of what he witnessed and the cause, he remarks, "That there is absolutely nothing in these phenomena that in the smallest degree is suggestive of spirit causation." And in the same connection, "There is not a single fact in itself that betrays the working of any outside influence. To see how entirely imaginary it is, just observe the assumption that it involves. We do not know that there are spirits. If there are we know nothing of their nature, their powers, their modes of working. We do not know that they could produce such phenomena as these. If the ordinary definition of a spirit be taken as a starting point we know that they could not." Now, granting that nothing "Eclectic" saw gave the slightest coloring to spirit origin, is that any reason why what he has *not seen* should not prove spirit causation? Does he forget, or did he ever know, that 'Mediumship' and spiritual phenomena are as diversified as the human race itself. I, and thousands more, have not seen Mr. Foster nor any of the results of his mediumship, but, notwithstanding,

we have seen that which has proved beyond doubt the grand truth of spirit communion.

Pray who does "Eclectic" speak for when he says "We do not know that there are spirits?" Is he the mouthpiece of his fellow-men generally in this matter? Would he believe his own eyes if he saw a spirit, or would he say it was the hallucination of a morbid brain?

Would he believe that spirits existed if one shook him by the hand; or would he say, "according to the ordinary definition of a spirit," it is impossible? Really, when one reads this article they have a right to come to the conclusion that the writer has explored every knowable region in nature, and sounded the utmost possibilities of human nature. If he knew anything of current spiritual literature, and of the men engaged in the elaboration and investigation of the subject, he would not talk such sublime rubbish; and here let me refer "Eclectic," and all who feel any interest in the subject, to a recent publication of William Crookes, F.R.S., which occupies twenty pages of the January number of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, and exhaustively treats and demonstrates most of the more important phases of modern Spiritualism. And it is worthy of remark that, if a man like Professor Crookes, whose scientific attainments the world is bound to respect, comes before the public after four years' severe experiment and research, and avows his belief in the genuineness of all the phenomena, and that no other hypothesis except the spiritual will cover the ground, is it too much to expect a little more from one of "Eclectic's" intellectual culture than a passing sneer—I think not, verily, as a friend of the cause has remarked, the arrogance of ignorance is *unbounded*. I had intended to take up two or three other points in this article, but I fear I have already encroached too far on your valuable space.

Allow me in closing to state that very few seem to comprehend the true character and scope of modern Spiritualism. Table-tilting, levitation of solid bodies, and many other wonderful phenomena are to most people the sum and substance of this much maligned subject. If this were all, then it deserves much that is said about it. But let me tell them that, if Spiritualism means anything, it means spirituality—or the development of man's spiritual nature, including all that is good and God-like within him. This is the mission of Spiritualism, and it is this that makes it dear to its believers, and that gives it a value beyond and above everything else in this material world; it brings them in closet contact with their spiritual home; it fixes their mind on what is enduring and soul-satisfying. Amidst all the unchanging—often trying—scenes of life its divine philosophy affords a comfort and peace that the world knows not of. For these reasons, and these only, it lives, extends, and is being embraced by all classes of society, and all the powers that the bitterest opposition can command cannot stop its march, because it is God's truth.

H. A.

P.S.—Since writing the foregoing I have had an interview with Mr. Foster, and as an honest man (not too simple) I must candidly admit that what I heard and saw was wonderful—full of the deepest import—and as far as the closest observation could assist—free from the slightest suspicion of dishonesty or trickery. Moreover, I am prepared to accompany "Eclectic" to one more sitting, and defy him or anyone else to account for what occurs upon any known law of nature—mental jugglery, brain reading, clairvoyance, psychic force, or any other rational hypothesis except the spiritual. Is he aware that in the most competent scientific hands all and every conceivable theory, except the spiritual, has signally failed to account for even one of the more important phases of modern spiritual phenomena.

But after all I may save him and myself a deal of trouble. For if baffled upon reasonable grounds to explain the nature and cause of what occurs, he will resort to his own peculiar cheap and insane mode of dismissing troublesome facts, viz., "That he may, UNKNOWN to himself, have communicated *that* with which the medium has just favored him." Such talk is really so silly that comment is useless.

To all who have not yet visited Mr. Foster, and who

may have some interest in this question, let me say—avail yourself of the present opportunity. If you don't, you may have to carry on your mind doubts and suspicions for a long period that half an hour might for ever remove.

H. A.

THE "HARBINGER" CIRCULATION AND SUPPORT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR—With very great pleasure I accede to the request of H. A. in your last issue. Like him my circumstances are comparatively humble: I have to pull off my coat, roll up my shirt-sleeves, and win my "bread by the sweat of my brow."

When I found the *Harbinger* was not a financial success, I felt as in duty bound to take action in the following manner—to subscribe for five copies, one each to be sent to the undermentioned places:—

Castlemaine Mechanics' Institute and Free Library.
Taradale Mechanics' Institute.
Fryerstown do do.
and one additional for myself.

And further, I desire to suggest that (say) ten gentlemen volunteer to *guarantee* the *Harbinger* published free from loss to the present proprietor; this proposition, if acted on, to take effect from the commencement of the present year. My practical sympathy leads me to say that I am perfectly willing to make one of the number.

I have the honor to be, in the cause of spiritual and human progress,

Castlemaine,
April 12th, 1874.

Yours, &c.,
J. S.

SPIRITUAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir,—Without wishing to measure the experiences of others by the little I have seen, I think it will be found to be a fact that when there is only one medium in the circle, if he or she will for the nonce stop his or her ears while the alphabet is being called the intelligence will at once stop too—that is, the table will no longer be able to rap at any letters constituting a word, not to speak of a sentence. If again the method of obtaining the communication be by raps being given while some one runs over an alphabet card with a pointer, and if the medium will shut his or her eyes the intelligence will suddenly stop in like manner. If I am right, what has become of the external operating spirit that it thus suddenly ceases both to see and to hear? Is it to be supposed that the spirit—if spirit be there at all—can only see and hear through the spiritual senses of the medium, and can only discern or take cognizance of natural objects as they are mirrored upon or perceived by the spiritual or inner faculties of the medium—in other words, could not a spirit, if here present, see and hear all that we see and hear by its own—allowed to be much more sensitive organs of perception? If the former supposition be maintained, how can it be verified?

I am, &c., W.C.

Dunedin, 30th March, 1874.

[As a rule, spirits (unless clairvoyant) can only see material things through a material organization. *Matter* to them is as *Spirit* to us, invisible. They see all things that have life through the spirit of that life. The physical body is only cognizable to them through the spirit which it clothes. Many spirits are clairvoyant and have the same power to see and examine gross matter as embodied clairvoyants have to see and examine spiritual things. The impression of sounds, or things visible to the material senses, are most readily read off the brain of the medium by the communicating spirit, consequently this course is frequently adopted, but if this easy avenue of communication is cut off spirits will, as a rule, soon develop new means to communicate wherever there is the necessary mediumistic power available.—Ed. H. L.]

A MONTH'S NEWS OF SPIRITUALISM FROM ENGLAND.

We are in the midst of a week's mission or attempted revival. Services are being held four and five times daily in numbers of churches. The emotions of the ignorant are being worked upon, while the understandings are deluded with miserable superstitions. The very necessity of this mission demonstrates the failure of ecclesiastical christianity. The introduction of private confession was its original end and aim, which was defeated by the evangelicals becoming also "missioners," and now both parties are displaying their perfect accord by denouncing one another. The most moderate are lamenting the spread of unbelief on the one hand, and excess of belief or superstition on the other, while all fail to perceive that true religion is most aided by those who insist on harmonising belief with the discoveries of science and biblical criticism. Principal Tulloch, of St. Andrews, is to be proceeded against in the church courts for such utterances as these:—"Our oldest institutions, and our church above all, are deeply moved with undefined apprehensions of what might be coming on them. It is no more possible to fix men's thoughts in religion than in other matters, and all creeds and confessions from the apostles downwards are nothing more than men's thoughts about religion. They were human moulds into which the Divine substance had been run, in times of spiritual quickening." The Rev. H. R. Haweis has been preaching about Spiritualism. He said:—"In some circles the very rumour that it is to be scientifically investigated raises a hoot of indignation among vast Phillistine communities. I affirm that occurrences which cannot be confounded with conjuring tricks—seeing that conjurors and men of science are alike challenged to investigate them—seem to me to occur, and that they await some adequate explanation. I will commit myself to no theory; I have none. I merely aspire to be honest enough to admit what I believe, that a class of phenomena are daily occurring in our midst which have not been explained; and perhaps I may be allowed to indulge in the vague hope that many hundreds of thousands who are so far of my opinion throughout the civilized world are neither born fools, nor confirmed lunatics."

Sergeant Cox has issued the second volume of his work, *What am I?* It is most interesting, and although it contains much that betrays an imperfect knowledge of Spiritualism, it is the most advanced work on Psychology yet published in England, as it deals with facts. Students of insanity will find in it much valuable aid, while Spiritualists will welcome it as a public recognition by a critical and judicial mind, of the reality of the facts and phenomena they have been insisting on for twenty-five years. True to his former theory he still labours to explain such, by making "psychism" or soul force, the agent *instead of the agency*; but firstly he does not deal with all the known facts of Spiritualism, and secondly it will be apparent that his theory does not even cover those he records. While constantly declaring his inability to accept the spiritual hypothesis, he as carefully assures his readers that he has no wish to dogmatise. He says:—"The formidable objection to the supermundane theory is, that it is too good. Accept it, and almost every book in the scientific library might be burned. Of course, I would not be so arrogant as to assert that the holders of this spiritual theory are certainly wrong. I cannot dispute its possibility, but I contend that we have no right to set it up until we have thoroughly investigated the phenomena, collected a vast body of facts, carefully compared and digested them, mastered all the conditions, and so are compelled to the conclusion, that all explanations consistent with natural science are impossible." All who believe in the Bible must believe in ghosts, for it is full of them. There is no known religion which has not for its foremost article of faith the existence of spirits and the re-appearance of the dead. It is not the Christian creed only, but that of Buddhism and of Mahommedanism." He adds, in a note, "Since the above was written an arrangement has been made for a series of sittings with a psychic of great reputed power, to be conducted by Mr. Crookes, F.R.S.,

in a way to make trickery of any sort impossible. Speculation must be suspended until the facts are ascertained beyond a doubt." He is thus about to do what every individual Spiritualist has done, investigate for himself, with what result every Spiritualist can foretell. This is what was recommended to a very violent and rabid opponent, Mr. David Blair, in a letter to the *Ballarat Evening Mail*, October, 1872. As the best reply to Lord Amberley's article in the *Fortnightly Review* of January, as to what he did not see, was the contemporaneous publication of what Mr. Crookes did see, so the best answer to Mr. Sergeant Cox is the careful and graphic narrative of an impartial observer in the February number of *London Society*, testifying to what he and others witnessed under test conditions. He tells how all present were satisfied of the separate individuality of Katie the apparition, and Miss Cook the medium. When standard monthlies like this, and *Blackwood* (which last November admitted a ghost story for the truth of which it vouched) take up the question, it must be evident to the most obtuse, that the truth is overcoming all obstacles. "It would seem," says Mr. Dunphy in *London Society*, "that the time has come for directing public opinion to these extraordinary occurrences. There may be after all nothing novel in them. They may be old as the witch of Endor, but whether new or antiquated, it is desirable that their existence should be admitted, and that the delusion should be dispelled that the limits of scientific knowledge have been reached."

I have been privileged to attend four seances at Mrs. Macdougall Gregory's. She is the widow of the late Professor Gregory, of Edinburgh, and an enthusiastic spiritualist. Her seances are attended by the clergy and scientific men, and she is doing incalculable good. The medium was Miss Showers. Such of your readers who have read the *London Spiritualist* will remember that she is the daughter of people of good position residing in Devonshire, that spiritual manifestations burst out sporadically in her mother's house, and that through Miss Showers and the servant girl as mediums, nearly all the phenomena have been witnessed. Mrs. S. had not encouraged them, on the contrary being nominally a Roman Catholic, she discouraged and ridiculed them. One by one, however, they have forced themselves on her attention, until Miss Showers is one of the first mediums in England. I have had the whole history from her own lips, and I consider it the most interesting demonstration of the truth and use of Spiritualism, that has come under my observation during four years' study. Like the poets, this medium was born, not made. She had always been peculiar and had the habit, as was thought, of talking to herself. The subject of modern Spiritualism being brought under her mother's notice, her mediumship became developed *per saltum*. They were favored with spirit lights, direct writing, luminous arms, and the full materialised form, &c. When we met them, they were ignorant of all the rules and conditions of the spirit circle, but we seated ourselves around a table and in a minute or two the usual detonations and movements occurred. Then we had the singing by four spirits, through the organs of the medium. One calling himself Peter Clifford, sang in a rough baritone, and addressed us in a gruff, hoarse voice, that was apparently produced low in the thorax. He said he departed in the reign of George the Fourth at the age of twenty-two; that he is quite happy, but does not care to talk about earth life. He devotes himself like John King to the spread of Spiritualism, is very fond of, and kind to his medium. We asked the best way to extend a knowledge of Spiritualism? The reply was, "form circles in your own families." He talks in a strange Cockney manner, and abounds in repartee. Another controlling spirit is Florence Maple, who passed away at Inverness a few years ago. She has a sweet musical voice, and expressed great satisfaction when it was praised. At our second seance we had a cabinet arranged, in which Miss S. sat; we were directed to shade the light and sing; the face of what was asserted to be Florence, appeared at the aperture, with the head enveloped in a mass of muslin. We were invited to approach one by one, and the face spoke to us all, some of the muslin being cut off for

each. I was the last who spoke to her, and she vanished saying, "I am getting smaller, I must go, God bless you all." The medium was not tied, but before entering the cabinet Peter had insisted on her being searched. This was very marvellous, and difficult to believe, but greater wonders followed. At our third sitting, by direction of the controlling powers, tape and sealing wax were provided and left with a lighted candle beside the medium; presently we were summoned, and found her tied and sealed. We were told that Peter had done so! On seating ourselves in the room, we were made to sing, and were joined by the gruff voice of Peter, while, as he said, entrancing his medium. Soon after, the face again appeared, and addressed us all. We were this time allowed to examine it by the full light of a large wax candle about 8 feet off. She gave us her fingers to touch, and Mrs. Gregory was asked to kiss her, which she did, saying the face was warm and life like. I asked to see the medium and Florence at the same time, but consent was not given. Peter did not impress me as being amiable, or genial, or scientific, but as I thought displayed irascibility, declaring that if not allowed entire management, we should have no manifestations. I cannot deny that I was much distressed at the intense resemblance of the face as shown as Florence, to that of the medium, when I looked carefully at her after the seance, and that I desired more complete evidence as to the distinct and separate individuality of Florence, the reputed spirit, and Miss S. the medium. I was certain that the tapes knotted and sealed were found after, as they were before the manifestation. I had no suspicion of the medium, but I desired better proof of the integrity and truthfulness of the presiding genii (the invisibles), and more complete assurance that the entranced medium was not unconsciously to herself, shown at the aperture. We know so little of the science of apparitions that the most philosophic course is to observe and record. Prejudice of any kind can but obstruct the coming truth, and must delay correct deductions. I am happy to say that at our fourth seance all my doubts were removed, for the tying of the medium, with tape and the sealing, were entrusted to Mr. Herbert Noyes, B.A., and myself. We used as a seal the signet ring of Baron Dupotet, of Paris, who was present, and who with ourselves, on the recovery from trance of the medium, examined the knots and seal, and testified to their being untampered with. The baron declared it was a case of double, and was enraptured. The various rumors occasioned by the Volekman assault on Katie have drawn a letter from Mr. Crookes, in which he only asks all to suspend their judgment on the matter, until he lays before the public scientific proofs. He, Mr. Varley (consulting electrician to the Atlantic cable,) and Sergeant Cox, are engaged together, and I hear that they too have already obtained decisive proof of the separate identity of Miss Cook and the apparition. Of course there is much jealousy among mediums, and Miss C. has not escaped the usual bitter slander occasioned by her notoriety.

London, 20th February, 1874.

W.L.R.

LYCEUM FESTIVAL.

In consequence of the excessively wet weather previous to Good Friday, the contemplated picnic of the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum had to be abandoned, and an indoor Festival substituted. The members of the Lyceum and their friends to the number of about two hundred assembled at the Turn Verein Hall, about 11 a.m. on Friday, the 3rd April. No regular programme had been prepared, but a variety of amusements were improvised, including dancing and singing, the only Lyceum exercise being marching in file and division, which was very creditably done. Luncheon and Tea were provided for the members of the Lyceum. The fare, though simple, was done ample justice to, and after tea the Lyceum was dismissed after a very enjoyable day.

SELFISHNESS.

The proud are selfish ever;
The selfish friendly never.

THE BRAHMO SOMAJ WORSHIPPERS.

As progress in all countries necessarily interests Spiritualists, they must like to know more of the Brahmo Somaj—"Society of God"—and the real Theistic Church of India, originally founded by Rajah Rahmohun Roy, a distinguished Hindoo reformer of the Brahmin caste. Being a fine scholar, versed in the *Sanscrit*, he became convinced that the earliest Vedas taught a system of pure Theism. Thus believing, he wrote against the "idolatry of all religions," encouraged education, advocated free thought, and opposed *suttée*—voluntary widow-burning, then a common though not an obligatory practice, at this time, in India. Universally esteemed, Rahmohun Roy died while on a visit to England in 1833.

These first Hindoo reformers, though exceedingly liberal in most matters, firmly believed the Vedas to be the infallible Word of God. Ere long, however, some doubting the infallibility of the Vedic Scriptures, four young yet scholarly pundits were sent to study and copy from the four Vedas. This research dispelled the gathering fog of infallibility, and the Brahmo Somaj, numbering many of the choicest intellects in India, ceased to be a Vedantic Church. From this time the sacred books of all nations were taken for what they were worth, and no more.

No band of reformers, whether in India or America can expect to ever sail on sunny seas. Storms, petty dissensions, will arise; some within, others without. Social persecution from Orthodox Hindoos lifted its hydra head, and a partial eclipse came on, followed by indifference to the interests of Theism.

At this critical hour there came upon the stage a caste Hindoo and graduate from the Presidency College, *Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen*. This religiously inclined scholar, reading and admiring English literature, and the works of Theodore Parker, soon shook off every vestige of idolatrous superstition, becoming a staunch Theist. Connecting himself with the Brahmo Somaj, he quite unconsciously found himself in a short time a leader in their ranks. Expressed in a sentence—these Brahmo Somaj worshippers are simply radical Unitarians, practicing the same order of Sunday worship, only engaging in more singing. Among their innovations are the equality of women, the ignoring of caste, the rejection of the "sacred thread," and the performance of the marriage ceremony without absurd Hindoo rites.

When proud Brahminical Hindoos found that these iconoclastic Brahmos not only denied the infallibility of the Vedas, but did not respect the custom of child-marriage, nor cherish faith in Hindoo theology generally, they reproached them as heretics. On the other hand, "when Christians find," says Keshub Chunder Sen, "that Brahmos call in question the authority of the Bible, dispute the divinity of Jesus, and freely criticise Christian doctrines held in reverence by the best and wisest of Europe, an utter contempt is felt for the poor, misguided, presumptuous Theists of India, whom the Rev. Dr. Duff styled "striplings on the banks of the River Ganges."

Here are sketches from their articles of belief:

"God is spirit, not matter. He is perfect, infinite and eternal. He is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, all-merciful, all-blissful, and holy. He is our Father.

The soul is immortal. Death is only the dissolution of the body. The soul lives everlastingly in God. There is no new birth after death; the life hereafter is only the continuation and development of the present life. Each soul departs from this world with its virtues and sins; and gradually advances in the path of eternal progress while realizing their effects.

Brahmonism is distinct from all other systems of religion; yet it is the essence of all. It is based on the constitution of man, and is, therefore, ancient, eternal and universal. It is not sectarian, not confined to age or country.

All mankind are of one caste, and all are equally entitled to embrace the Brahmo religion. Every sinner must suffer the consequences of his own sins, sooner or later, in this world or in the next; for the moral law is unchangeable and God's justice irreversible.

It is the aim of the Brahmo religion to extinguish caste-hatred and animosity, and bind all mankind into one fraternity—one brotherhood of souls."

—From J. M. Peebles' *Letters of Travel*.

"ESSAY ON LIFE" unavoidably held over till next issue.

A SPIRITUAL CHRISTENING AT SANDHURST.

Although Progressive Spiritualists attach no importance to what is called "the sacraments of the church," yet to those of their number who believe in going through some form in giving their children a name, no objection whatever is offered. Spiritualism is not a sect, and if its friends are true to it and understand aright the real position it ought to occupy in the public mind, it never can or will become so. Hence, then, the necessity and the justice of not interfering unduly with the prejudices or superstitious feelings of the masses. Old customs and habits are not done away with in a day, and if by gentle and tolerant means people can be weaned from them, it is better for the cause of truth that such means should be adopted rather than harsh ones, which very often defeat their own object. It was, therefore, with some such feelings uppermost in all their minds, that the Energetic Circle gave their consent to Mr. and Mrs. M., two old members, and staunch Spiritualists, to have their infant daughter baptised by the spirit, Katie King, per her lady medium, Miss G. The consent of John and Katie King had been previously asked and obtained, the interesting ceremony accordingly took place on Sunday evening, the 12th April, in the circle room, there being a large attendance of members, and no visitors admitted. The proceedings commenced at 6'45, so as not to interfere with the regular seance at 7'30 o'clock. The parents with their infant arrived a few minutes before the time, and nearly every member of the circle was present. The table in the middle of the room was covered with a white cloth, on the top of which burned two tall wax candles, and between which there was placed a very pretty bouquet of choice flowers. On the end of the table next to where the two mediums sat was placed a small but neat crystal font full of water. The lady organist sang and played—the circle most heartily joining in—"Shall we gather at the river," when it was observed that the lady medium was controlled. "The Lord's Prayer" was then repeated by all, and at the end of the responses the lady medium rose from her seat and walked across the room in a stately manner, and with her hand as she passed round the table, extinguished the light. In a minute or two light was again called for, and both mediums were now under control and standing near to the font. The lady medium with her eyes still shut went up to where the mother was seated and took the infant from her. She then, while holding it in her arms, addressed the circle as follows:—"We had to put the light out for a little, as it weakened our power. What does all this mean? Why, it is nothing but a meaningless form, and can be of no service to the child whatever; but as we promised to do it, it shall be done." The light was again put out, and in a minute or so re-lit. Then Katie—per her medium—twice sprinkled the child's face with water, and John King and her, each said in a quiet voice and with modest dignity, "The child's name is Katie King." Katie then handed it back to its mother, and both mediums were reseated. Katie, addressing the chairman, said:—"We never had to do such a thing before, and were not therefore fully prepared for it; and the light weakened the power very much. Some present are disappointed; but we did it to gratify the parents, and as they are pleased, so are we." The mediums were then awakened, and the ceremony was ended. Before Mrs. M. retired with the young Katie King, the chairman asked permission of her to hang round its neck a blue ribbon to which was attached two gold and silver coins which an old lady, who is not a Spiritualist, had sent for luck. The permission was gladly granted.

THE CHAIRMAN.

GOD'S LOVE FOR CHILDREN.

That child upon its mother's breast responds
More softly than the dew upon the roses;
Who made that mother love her child to please,
Who furnished for it that soft bed of ease?
And who supplied that sweet nutritious food
Must love it, and delight to do it good.

A TRANCE LECTURE.

Last Sunday night, Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan delivered a trance sermon at the Cleveland Hall, Cleveland-street, Portland-road, to a large and intelligent body of listeners, among whom were Mrs. Honeywood, Mr. James Wason, Mr. Benjamin Coleman, Dr. Purdon, and a great many of the leading friends of the spiritual movement.

Mrs. Tappan began by offering the following prayer:—"Our Father, Thou Infinite Spirit, Thou light, and life, and surpassing glory, Thou strength above all things, and Thou soul of wonderful compassion, we praise Thee. The boundless firmament proclaims Thy power, Thy glory; the everlasting stars revolve in response to Thy law and Thy breath, and the soul of man—more mighty than worlds, more dazzling than stars, endowed with more surpassing glory than the sun—the soul of man worships thee, and aspires to know Thee, because of Thy endless love, strives to know Thee because of Thy wisdom. But Thou, that searchest the human heart, Thou whose presence is here, even as a voice, respond. Even as a penetrating soul, Thou canst judge of the offerings Thy children bring, whether they be of the spirit of purity and light, whether they be of that perfect praise whereby the soul is made fully in accord with Thee. But let us be strong in the strength of meekness, let us be wise in the midst of Thy patience and understanding, let us be filled with the breath of Thy power and inspiration, till all life shall be embodied in loving deeds and words, until mankind shall forget its misery and its strife, and be uplifted to behold those angels who evermore sing praises to Thee in words and deeds of loving kindness. And to Thee, O Father, be praise for evermore."

Mrs. Tappan, in the trance state, said that the subject of the discourse that evening would be the nature and efficacy of prayer. She said that the tendency of modern thought was towards exact science, and that one of England's leading men of science had recently asked that the ward of a hospital should be set aside, and the patients in that particular ward be prayed for, to see whether prayer had any influence over their recovery or not. This shout of derision from the world of science was naturally followed by one of horror from the religious world; but the fact that a man should thus go beyond his sphere, and ask the deity to gratify one of his petty foibles, shows what is abroad in the nineteenth century. Whilst materialism is thus asserting that there can be no answer to prayer, something should be done to make the real nature of prayer understood. Materialists declare the whole world to be inflexibly governed by law, and that man can receive nothing unless he asks for it in accordance with natural law, consequently that the sentence in the Lord's Prayer, asking for bread, is superfluous, because if a man wishes for bread, he must plough, and sow, and reap, before the bread can be forthcoming. If he wishes for political power or for success in battle, he must work for them, and adopt means to attain the end; and everybody knew that praying was not much in accordance with military ethics, or much relied upon by the leaders of armies. Such extreme ideas on both sides as to the nature of prayer were, probably, mistakes. Material things should be prayed for in material ways. Men had eyes, hands, and feet, and should use them if they wanted material blessings; they should sow the seed in full confidence that time and the laws which God had made, would bring them the harvest. But the materialist applies his methods to spiritual things, in doing which he makes a mistake; he forgets that there may be laws which transcend those of physical nature, but whereby the spiritual nature is sustained and fed. God may have methods that science does not understand. Professor Tyndall, before challenging the Almighty to perform an experiment to please him, ought to place himself in a condition to learn what prayer is. The man of science bends his knee to nature, and searches her realms with reverence, but when he comes to the vestibule of the spirit, without reverence and without awe, he tears down the veil of spirituality, and says there is nothing there, but that reason alone will suffice. Other qualities of the mind have to be developed before man can understand the things of the spirit. The eye of man alone was not sufficient to discover many of the stars, which

have been brought to his knowledge only by means of the telescope, and may it not be true that man's spiritual nature may be limited also, and needs a telescope to learn more of the things of the spirit. Religion, with her snowy brow and with her loving voice, has spoken in many tongues, in every age, in every land, and found her responsive echo in the human heart. It is true that although God answers prayer, He must do so in accordance with law, but at that point the man of science must stop, for the Almighty does not necessarily answer prayer in accordance with material laws, and those who have no souls, or think they have none, cannot be within the range of the comprehension of these things, any more than a blind man can see the sun. There may be thousands of channels of which the materialist knows nothing, whereby the Infinite works out His purposes. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire," says Dr. Watts, but there are desires which are not of the soul, and may not be the legitimate subject of prayer. Prayer should deal only with that which comes within the range of spiritual requirements. Prayer cannot transcend natural laws, says the materialist. But what are natural laws? Who has pointed out the boundaries of infinity? To limit the laws of the Deity is to bind infinity. Mrs. Tappan then went on to say that prayer was efficacious also in proportion to its intensity, just as sound could be heard at a greater distance when it was more intense, and that as the union of two or three voices would intensify sound, so praying in unison would produce more powerful effects. Moreover, if several persons agreed about one request, it was likely to be less selfish, and would more probably come within the true range of spiritual powers to answer. The union of the several minds would form a spiritual atmosphere, and when its waves vibrated they might reach the centre of the soul itself. The man intent upon material things passes through the field of nature without seeing any beauty in the flowers, and without recognising the fragrance of the breezes; their glory was lost to him. There was, in truth, a realm of spirit which might be entered by prayer; but the upper chambers of the mind, the spiritual part of the soul's temple, could only be entered by desire. Men could not be forced upwards. No messenger would take them unwillingly into the realms of life and light. She closed by saying that the laws which control spirit were as perfect and inflexible as those which govern matter, and she exhorted her hearers to cultivate their spiritual faculties.

SEANCE AT CASTLEMAINE.

On the evening of Easter Monday, the 6th April, a few friends from Sandhurst met, according to previous appointment, at the now somewhat celebrated cottage of Mr. and Mrs. P., Castlemaine. These friends (six in number) arrived at "the great centre" by the afternoon train, and found waiting to receive them the familiar faces and forms of Messrs. B. and P. They afterwards paid an informal visit to the romantic-looking cottage of Mr. and Miss F., where they were most hospitably entertained, spending a pleasant half-hour together in agreeable conversation, and being delighted with their kind host and hostess, the visit breaking the monotony of their afternoon's ramble through the rather quiet streets of quiet Castlemaine. After partaking of a well served up tea at that prince of hotels, the Cumberland, we all proceeded under the guidance of friend P. to his house. We found Mrs. P. waiting to receive us, and she gave us a hearty welcome. Mrs. P. we found in excellent health and looking remarkably well. She has not held any seances (except one) this year before, and was, therefore, rather doubtful of meeting with much success on the present occasion. However, in this, as the sequel will shew, she was—as all were—agreeably disappointed. A little pleasant chit chat was carried on after reaching the cottage, until Mrs. P.'s youngest pledge of connubial affection in the shape of a fine sturdy boy, could be coaxed and sung into the arms of morpheus, which rather important preliminary having been duly accomplished, we at once proceeded to the seance room. This we found to be the same where the illustrious Melbourne investigators, with

their detective, held their abortive seances some twelve months ago, and which they, by imposing *their* conditions on the phenomena, took the most certain means of defeating their own object, their failure creating some stir at the time and causing unmerited odium to be heaped upon the innocent medium. The window and door having been bolted, all of us took our places round a large circular table and placed our hands on it. Then the light was put out, and all the visitors being members of the Energetic Circle, Sandhurst, we at once struck up our favorite tune, "Shall we gather at the River," in which Mr. P. who, by the way, has rather a fine voice, most heartily joined. This was followed by "Home of the Angels." The harmony being apparently now complete, Mrs. P. was, though perfectly conscious, under control, she being considerably convulsed. After sitting in silence for some little time we were all startled by a loud crash on the table, which, from the sound, seemed to be some heavy article. Mr. P. struck a light, and there, to the surprise of all, was the iron wheel of a wheelbarrow, the wheel weighing some 16½ pounds, and which, previous to the seance, was lying in the yard at the end of the house. As to what power or agent it was which brought such an article through two locked doors into the room, and placed it on the table around which we were all seated, and without injuring anyone, I leave your readers to find out for themselves. Mrs. P. nor any of us were not even thinking of such a thing, so it could not be our will, and if not ours—whose? There was force and intelligence required to produce such a manifestation; if not the spirits of the departed, who, or what other agent could do such a thing? We decline to entertain the theory of deception in this instance, as Mr. and Mrs. P. are incapable of deceiving either themselves or their friends in such a matter, and had not the opportunity of doing so even if they had the will. The circle then sang "Guide me oh thou great Jehovah," when several of the sitters, including Mrs. P., saw white cloudy figures, sometimes over the table, and at others near to some member of the circle. It was suggested to Mrs. P. to ask for perfume. In a little, she and nearly all present smelt like brandy near to them, and the medium said, "like fingers has wet my lips with it." On Mr. P. lighting up, we found a wine glass full of colonial wine on the middle of the table. This was regarded as a very beautiful manifestation as, in fancy, we could picture to our mind's eye the invisible agent going to the kitchen where the bottle was, uncorking it, lifting it up and pouring out the wine into the glass; then re-corking the bottle as it was afterwards found, and conveying the glass to us. Light again put out, when Mr. D. said, "some small article has fallen at my right foot." Lighted up and found it to be one of Mrs. P.'s ear-drops. Our invisible friends had silently taken both her ear-drops out of her ears without her knowledge; but the other one was not to be found. Mr. and Mrs. P. told us they were not afraid, as the control frequently took things away and brought them back again in their own time and way. After sitting for some little time longer, and Mrs. P. finding the peculiar influence gone from her, and no further manifestations occurring, the seance closed with the singing of a hymn. We then adjourned to the parlour, and after partaking of the kind hospitality of our hosts, took our departure for the train, highly pleased with all we had seen and heard. Mrs. P. accompanied us to her garden gate, and when we were about fifty yards away called out to us that the spirits had just returned her the missing ear-drop.

W.

Sandhurst, 10th April, 1874.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Truth, saith the Priest 's, a mystery,
Which few perceive, believe, obey;
"You're wrong!" says science, "'tis not so,
But something simple we can show;
'Tis nothing more than accuracy,
In what we do, believe, or say;
And all that do this truth deny
Do certainly affirm a lie."

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTS' SOIREE AND BALL.

A *Conversazione* and *Soiree Dansante*, under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, was held at the Masonic Hall on Tuesday, April 21st. About 150 persons sat down to tea, the number being largely augmented afterwards. Tea was followed by a Concert, under the direction of Professor Hughes, at the conclusion of which the President (Mr. Brotherton) read the following address:—

Another forward step in Spiritualism has recently been made by the publication of Mr. Crookes' examination into spiritualistic phenomena, wherein he testifies most completely and unreservedly to the genuine existence of the phenomena, and to the honesty and integrity of the mediums who have lent him their assistance, and submitted to have his experiments carried out in the manner that he has prescribed.

It was a common accusation (by those who denied the existence of the physical manifestations) that Spiritualists were not able to convince *one* scientific man of any eminence that such occurrences had any existence; and if we wanted to place the subject in a position worthy of being entertained, we should procure the affirmative and favorable testimony of men who had been educated to investigate methodically and minutely into physical nature—who were not likely to be deceived either by tricks or mental eccentricities, and who from their superior knowledge would be able to point out the producing cause or agent of what might appear to be startling to minds unprepared to sift and consider the various methods in which nature does her work.

When, therefore, Mr. Crookes declared his intention of examining into the phenomena, and made certain demands which our opponents seemed to consider it was impossible to satisfy, he was elected into their champion, and was considered to be a man of sufficient scientific attainments to be an authority to Spiritualists in whatever conclusions he arrived at, he ranked high as a scientific chemist, and was Editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*.

Hitherto those scientific men who were not Spiritualists (for it is a great mistake to think there are no Spiritualists whose names are eminent in science) who had been got to make an investigation into the matter, had done it so reluctantly and incompletely that our side had given up all faith in their fairness or abilities, and although we knew that we had nothing to fear from a patient and thorough investigation by Mr. Crookes, we were afraid he might have prejudged the matter, and that like some of his predecessor scientists he would refuse to do more than notice and dilate upon such facts as seemed to support his foregone conclusions. Now that he has been investigating the subject for four years we will place his testimony, which you are already acquainted with, against the prior conclusions of some other scientists, nearly all of which I have extracted from a recent number of *Human Nature*:—

Professor Faraday.—“Unconscious muscular action.”

Professor Agassiz.—“Stupendous delusion, making men liars and women worse.”

Professor Huxley.—“Even supposing them to be genuine, of no manner of interest.”

Professor Brewster.—“It is and it aint, but more of the aint than the is.”

Professor Thomson.—“Insanity and delusion.”

Professor Carpenter.—“Unconscious cerebration.”

Professor Tyndall.—“Apparatus, trickery, and false pretensions.”

Is it to be wondered at that we have acquired the habit of placing more reliance in our own judgment of what is palpable to our senses—rather than appeal to such a jury to inform us we will say—whether it is possible we can feel pain or not when we are hurt; and yet some of the facts, that it was not possible we could reliably decide upon each for himself, were almost of as simple a character as this, requiring no greater amount of scientific acumen or shrewdness to assist in arriving at a decision. But there are others besides scientific men who are obstinate and antagonistic in regard to Spiritualism; a friend of mine is very glad at the result

of Crookes' examinations because it now takes the matter out of the hands of fools and fanatics; there is still the old grudge, though the testimony for the first part of the question at issue is in our favor, we are still blind enough to hold that Spirits are the active agents in producing the results—this, I hold, we are not in a fair position to argue till the whole of the phenomena claimed are *admitted to be facts*—and one point ought not to be overlooked when this branch is under consideration, which is this; that a number of persons sitting together (or in some cases an individual alone), who have carried out the directions given in the various phases of communication adopted by this blind and unconscious force, have produced results which the psychic force had previously said would happen, and further, have familiarized us with a knowledge of certain facts, which the most learned men of the world said were impossibilities and contrary to nature's laws, and although the unconscious blind force has shewn a knowledge superior to the point attained by our most stute philosophers, we are held to be not justified in concluding that the directions we have followed have emanated from beings possessing more knowledge than ourselves.

It is a favorite expression “that we should exhaust every other explanation before giving in to the Spirit theory,” and that our forefathers, in their ignorance of science, attributed natural phenomena to supernatural agency—thus inferring that Spiritualists are adopting the explanations of our savage progenitors. I am of opinion that it is the right course to pursue to examine into all and every theory of causes; but the fact is, they never allow the Spirit theory to have any place in their deliberations, it is ignored altogether, and not allowed its rights of examination with the rest, even when all the other explanations, both singly and collectively, are found to be insufficient. Inductive reasoning ascends from the parts to the whole, and includes all learning deduced from experiment, but this has not been the mode adopted by those who profess to admit the facts claimed by, but deny the conclusions of Spiritualists; a theory which is questionably possible, for a disintegrated portion of the facts is put forward as an explanation, which ought to satisfy Spiritualists if they only could be brought to reason; but what kind of an exercise of reason would it be if we ignored the unanswered cognate facts; We should not be inductionists, but distributionists, descending from the whole to a part, and each of us would be holding those theories based on such isolated facts only, as the formulator had selected to support his theory.

How could we reconcile psychic force with intelligence; unconscious cerebration, with one solid substance passing through another without any apparent fracture; unconscious muscular action with motion without contact; clairvoyance and mesmerism with spirit photographs; or even trickery and self-delusion with the confirmative testimony of trained, careful, and honest investigators; and can the whole of such theories combined account for the gradual formation of a human figure under your own view, possessing locomotion and variation in expression of feature, moving substances from one place to another, conversing, touching persons who feel the contact, appearing to play musical instruments and the instruments responding to such appearances—for the hand of the form when grasped eluding the pressure, by gradually resolving itself into imponderability, and the whole form disappearing as it made its advent. Spiritualists cannot give up their Spirit theory for any explanation which does not include this with the other facts claimed and put forward in their case for solution.

I will here give an extract from the last January number of the *Dublin University Magazine*, headed “Opposition to new Truths”—

“For thousands of years the ambition of the ordinary mass of thinkers was to gain distinction, not by discovering and teaching truth, but by spinning fanciful theories, and then supporting them by a perversion of reasoning. A deceptive logic thus became fashionable, and truth was mangled between the majors and minors of crafty syllogisms. The object was not to acquire truth by the patient observation and diligent study of

nature, but to seek for plausible arguments to uphold preconceived opinions. Thus nature was read, not by the light of her own luminous revelations, but her phenomena were interpreted to accord with the whimsicalities of erroneous preconceptions. For thousands of years such was the course generally pursued in every department of human knowledge, and such, to a large extent, is the practice still followed; hence it is that the prejudices, more especially of professional education, and of preconceived opinions generally, have always been as walls of brass against the disturbing innovations of New Truths. Lord Bacon sought to reverse all this. He taught that observation and experience—the ascertainment and collection of facts—was the first duty of the rational mind, the first step towards the desired haven of scientific truth. Facts unmistakably ascertained and verified as such may then be generalized, and the inductive process of reasoning may be fully relied on to lead to truthful conclusions."

A practical knowledge of spiritualistic phenomena is too much disseminated amongst all classes of society for there to be any hope now of writing it down, or crushing it out of existence—like other departments of knowledge facts in connection with Spiritualism have been known for ages past, and of course they have had the usual repudiation; it is now their turn to be collated, verified, and redeemed from the superstitious character assigned to them. Facts are not superstitions, and we may yet live to see the scientist and materialist (our strongest foes at this stage) turned into our most active supporters, helping us to fight against other errors, oppressions, and ideas, which the human race cannot at present get rid of.

It was then announced that the remainder of the evening would be devoted to dancing. The room having been cleared and Zeplin's Band introduced, dancing was kept up with spirit until midnight, when the company dispersed with very general expressions of satisfaction at their evening's entertainment.

THE PYRAMIDS.

During the ascent of the Pyramids, by Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn, the latter was entranced by the spirit of an ancient Egyptian, and to the consternation of the Arabs spoke as follows:—

Traveller, you stand now upon the summit of one of the world's wonders—a mountain of stone rising from trackless sands. I once lived under these skies, vested in a mortal body. Thesame majestic river rolled through the valley; but winds, storms, shifting sands and maddened convulsions have changed all else. This pyramid, upon which I often gazed, was, even then, more a matter of tradition than history. It must have received its final cap stone full six thousand years since. Our time was measured by ruling dynasties. My years on earth seem now like a half-forgotten dream. Starry worlds have faded; islands have risen from the ocean; continents have disappeared; thronged cities have perished; conquering kings have been born, ruled, died, and been forgotten; but this Titanic monument of the desert still stands in stately solitude. And yet nothing earthly is immortal; this pillared pile of composite, of granite and of porphyry is slowly, surely crumbling. Only the undying soul, the templed pyramid of divinity within, is eternal. See, then, oh, stranger and pilgrim, that every thought, deed, act—each a "living stone" placed in the spiritual temple you are constructing—is polished and fitted to its place with the master's "mark."

But you wish to know the purpose of this, the oldest of the pyramidal structures. The aim was multiform. Carefully considering the constellations, the position of the North Star, and the shadow cast by the sun at the time of the equinoxes, it was built, upon mathematical principles, to the honor of the Sun-God that illumines and fructifies the earth; built for the preservation of public documents and treasures during wars of invasion, and built as a store-house for grains during famines and devastating floods, with that mystic coffer in the centre, as an exact measurer for the world! A universal system of weights and measures, a universal currency, and a universal government were Utopian theories of the

ancients before my period of time. This pyramid was not built by forced toil and at a great sacrifice of life, but by gratuitous contributions, the servants of the wealthy doing the manual labor. There are seven granary apartments in the structure, with shafts leading from each to the common granary of the coffer, now called the King's Chamber. These shafts have not yet, to my knowledge, been discovered.

During long rains and terrible floods, ancient Memphis was twice swept away—once even to its walls, with all its inhabitants, in a single night. Convulsions of Nature and terrible floods were then common. Immediately after one of these, this pyramid was commenced, requiring more than a generation in the construction. It was completed before the great flood and the wars of the shepherd's kings.

Once in my time the water rose and rolled over the very apex of these stones. It rained *forty-five consecutive days*; and while torrents swept down the Nile valley from the south, stout, heavy winds from the Mediterranean drove the water up the country, piling wave upon wave, till this structure was completely submerged. But, though thus buried in the flooding waters, the treasures and well-filled granaries remained to feed, when the waters subsided, the famishing people who had fled southward to the hilly country. There seems to be less water upon the face of the earth now than then. Liquids are becoming solids, and change in every department of being is doing its destined work. Only pyramids of truth, constructed of immutable principles, are eternal!

Che-ops-see, the great king of the world, died in Thebes. Embalmed by the priests, he was placed, after a time, in this pyramid, as a mark of honor for having conceived and planned a monument serving as the saviour of his subjects. Finally, he was godded, or deified *Ramases the First*; and the Sphinx, that calm, weird, unreadable face, now mutilated by a degenerate people, was designed to hand the outline of his physiognomy down to posterity. I must leave. Stranger from a foreign country, do well the work appointed you, that, when ashes and sands claim their own, you may be prepared for the fellowship of those ancient spirits of whom you seek counsel."

LETTER-CARRYING BY SPIRITS.

A few months since, we gave an account from Baron Kirkup of the carrying of a letter by spirits a distance of sixty miles, from Florence to Leghorn, and the return of a reply thereto by the same means in about one hour. This performance appears to have been exceeded in a recent experiment of the Baron's. Portions of a letter from him appear in *Human Nature* for January, from which we extract the following:—

"I have likewise had a demonstration of letter-carrying more perfect than any of the former ones, of which there have been four or five. I myself wrote the letter alone in my room to a lady at Bologna, distance 110½ miles by railroad. The spirits Annina and Regina promised to take it and wait for an answer. It was a long one, very punctual, and on large paper. That and the two journeys—221 miles by railroad—were all accomplished in two hours and twenty-five minutes! The distance by straight line is less, of course; how much I do not know. The answer was thrown into my lap. I saw it in the air coming. The lady herself has since arrived from Bologna and confirmed what she wrote, and I knew her hand-writing. She is the mother of Annina."

WE are in receipt of a letter from Dr. José Agustín de Escuderos secretary of a spiritualistic society at Montevideo, ordering the *Harbinger of Light* for the Scientific and Spiritual Library there. We are also in receipt of the first two numbers of *El Eco de la Verdad*, a journal devoted to moral, religious, and political free thought, from which it would appear that Spiritualism and free-thought are making progress among the Spanish community in South America. The letter referred to is a very polite one, and is countersigned by the president and vice-president, Signors Fore, and Dionisio Eivin. Any friends conversant with Spanish can have the loan of "El Eco" on application at our office.

MR. FOSTER.

Mr. Foster has been very busy during the last month. We have seen numbers of those who have visited him who have at one sitting received sufficient evidence to convince them of the truth of spirit intercourse. We have been present on several occasions, and in no instance did Mr. F. fail to fully satisfy his visitors. It has been asserted that Mr. Foster obtains his information by clairvoyance from the written papers, or the minds of his visitors. Two or three visits to him will entirely dispel this illusion, as it is a very common occurrence for names and information to be given which were never written or thought of by the enquirers. Mr. Foster expresses his intention of leaving by the outgoing California mail; those who wish to see him will need to do so forthwith. We would advise those who have doubts in their minds with regard to the future life to take this opportunity to solve them, as we are not likely to have such a medium amongst us for some time to come, if ever.

MISS FLORENCE COOK'S MEDIUMSHIP.

(To the Editor of the *Medium*.)

Sir, — It has been my endeavor to keep as clear of controversy as possible, in writing or speaking about so inflammatory a topic as the phenomena called Spiritual. Except in very few cases, where the prominent position of my opponent would have caused my silence to be ascribed to other than the real motives, I have made no reply to the attacks and misrepresentations which my connection with this subject has entailed upon me.

The case is otherwise, however, when a few lines from me may perhaps assist in removing an unjust suspicion which is cast upon another. And when this other person is a woman—young, sensitive, and innocent—it becomes especially a duty for me to give the weight of my testimony in favor of her whom I believe to be unjustly accused.

Among all the arguments brought forward on either side touching the phenomena of Miss Cook's mediumship, I see very few facts stated in such a way as to lead an unprejudiced reader, provided he can trust the judgment and veracity of the narrator, to say, "Here at last is absolute proof." I see plenty of strong assertion, much unintentional exaggeration, endless conjecture and supposition, no little insinuation of fraud, some amount of vulgar buffoonery; but no one has come forward with a positive assertion, based upon the evidence of his own senses, to the effect that when the form which calls itself "Katie" is visible in the room, the body of Miss Cook is either actually in the cabinet or is not there.

It appears to me that the whole question narrows itself into this small compass. Let either of the above alternatives be proved to be a fact, and all the other collateral questions may be dismissed. But the proof must be absolute, and not based upon inferential reasoning, or assumed upon the supposed integrity of seals, knots, and sewing; for I have reason to know that the power at work in these phenomena, like Love, "laughs at locksmiths."

I was in hopes that some of those friends of Miss Cook, who have attended her seances almost from the commencement, and who appear to have been highly favored in the tests they have received, would, ere this, have borne testimony in her favor. In default, however, of evidence from those who have followed these phenomena from their beginning, nearly three years ago, let me, who have only been admitted as it were at the eleventh hour, state a circumstance which came under my notice at a seance to which I was invited by the favor of Miss Cook, a few days after the disgraceful occurrence which has given rise to this controversy.

The seance was held at the house of Mr. Luxmore, and the "cabinet" was a back drawing-room, separated from the front room in which the company sat by a curtain.

The usual formality of searching the room and examining the fastenings having been gone through, Miss Cook entered the cabinet.

After a little time the form "Katie" appeared at the side of the curtain, but soon retreated, saying her medium was not well, and could not be put into a sufficiently deep sleep to make it safe for her to be left.

I was sitting within a few feet of the curtain close behind which Miss Cook was sitting, and I could frequently hear her moan and sob, as if in pain. This uneasiness continued at intervals nearly the whole duration of the seance, and once, when the form of "Katie" was standing before me in the room, I distinctly heard a sobbing, moaning, sound, identical with that Miss Cook had been making at intervals the whole time of the seance, come from behind the curtain where the young lady was supposed to be sitting.

I admit that the figure was startlingly life-like and real, and, as far as I could see in the somewhat dim light, the features resembled those of Miss Cook; but still the positive evidence of one of my own senses that the moan came from Miss Cook in the cabinet, whilst the figure was outside, is too strong to be upset by a mere inference to the contrary, however well supported.

Your readers, sir, know me, and will, I hope, believe that I will not come hastily to an opinion, or ask them to agree with me on insufficient evidence. It is perhaps expecting too much to think that the little incident I have mentioned will have the same weight with them that it had with me. But this I do beg of them—Let those who are inclined to judge Miss Cook harshly, suspend their judgment until I bring forward positive evidence which I think will be sufficient to settle the question.

Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private seances with me and one or two friends. The seances will probably extend over some months, and I am promised that every desirable test shall be given to me. These seances have not been going on many weeks, but enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook, and to give me every reason to expect that the promises so freely made to me by "Katie" will be kept.

All I now ask is that your readers will not hastily assume that everything which is *prima facie* suspicious necessarily implies deception, and that they will suspend their judgment until they hear from me again on this subject.—I am, &c.,

WILLIAM CROOKES.

20, Mornington-road, London, 3rd February, 1874.

FUNERALS IN AMERICA.—Mr. Macrae, in his recent book, "The Americans at Home," gives us some interesting descriptions of the manner of conducting funerals there. "The whole family (males and females)," he says, "attend the funeral. Mourning attire is not considered essential. Everybody dresses quietly; but at half the funerals in Boston no mourning is put on, even by the family of the deceased. The tendency is to diminish the gloom connected with the rites of sepulture, and suggest the idea that death is simply the passage from one life to another. . . . Some sects have more elaborate funeral rites than I have described as prevailing in Boston, while others dispense with ceremonies altogether. The Roman Catholics and Episcopalians have their usual service at the grave; but, on the other hand, the Shakers, who have no belief in material resurrection, and regard the body as nothing but the worthless and cast-off garment of the spirit, bury it unceremoniously in the fields and rake the earth over it so as to obliterate all traces of where it has been laid. They look upon graveyards, tombstones and epitaphs much as we look upon the practice of those savages who bury a warrior with his bow and arrows, and some food at his side."

INVESTIGATION.

One thing is sure—the more the truth we try
The more will doubts and difficulties fly;
But, if what's false we should investigate,
Darkness and doubt will soon accumulate.

CONSISTENCY.

Truth cannot inconsistent be,
While falsehood's inconsistency.

MR. CROOKES' ARTICLE ON SPIRITUALISM.

There has been a widely expressed desire to see the article which appeared in the January number of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, giving an account of Mr. Crookes' experiments in spiritual phenomena. With the view of meeting this want, we will, if a sufficient number of extra copies are subscribed for, publish the article referred to, as a supplement to our next issue. Friends are requested to send orders for extra copies early.

A LESSON IN CHURCH.

I will preface the following simple narrative of an actual experience by stating that, though I am a Christian, I am also a Spiritualist; two facts which I wish I dare hope, would prejudice no one against me; for my own part, I should like to see the combination more frequent than it is. I am a Christian, because I am so constituted as to crave indulgence in those devotional practices and memories which, though to many they are a burden, are to me a pleasure. I am, therefore, a regular attendant at one of the best arranged churches in town; for this I do not claim any credit to myself, but freely confess that it is a matter of self-indulgence, just as some people indulge in the Opera, or in dancing, or in less lawful pleasures. I am a Spiritualist, because I am a medium, and have therefore had forced upon me evidence of a character I could not refute. The following occurrence, however, took place in an ordinary dream, such as, I believe, all people have, and might make a better use of than they do. It is for the sake of a possible use that I record my dream, and seek to address myself, through the press, to a larger audience than, with my church proclivities and my retiring habits, I could otherwise hope to meet. I have great respect for established customs and manners, and I always conform to them myself, but sometimes even a trifling thing like this dream of mine, suggests to me that we might, in good society too, introduce a few improvements.

In my dream, I found myself, apparently on a Sunday morning, seated as usual in the church I habitually frequent. The organ was playing one of the fine voluntaries we are always favored with, and the pews were already crowded with well dressed people. Everything around me was as natural as long habit could make it, nothing aroused in me the faintest suspicion that I was dreaming. Just at this moment, there entered upon the familiar scene the most unfamiliar figures. Three tall, stately, noble-looking men, but such queer figures, and dressed like nobody else there. One, in particular, seemed to be the leader and was far the finest in appearance. A lofty brow, a stately figure, and a most gentle manner, could not, however, disguise the fact that even he had none of the peculiar polish that can be attained only by constant intercourse with good society. Then they were dressed in such an unusual manner, and seemed so evidently strange and unacquainted, that it was not to be wondered at, as they turned right or left wherever a place seemed vacant, that no one offered them a seat. Indeed some actually repulsed them, as their leader seemed to ask permission to enter, either with that cold, incisive stare which is the peculiar gift of well-bred English people or by turning their backs, and intentionally ignoring the request. Being strongly clairvoyant and impressionable, I saw plainly that the moment he was thus repulsed, the leader ceased to wish for that seat; where he was not welcome, he had no wish to intrude, not even to further his own convenience or that of his companions; and this peculiarity of disposition, it appeared to me, resulted not only from an unusual degree of unselfishness, but also from an innate sense of harmony so delicate that it felt the slightest misplacing or repulsion of individuals and of temperaments, as the ears of some persons detect the smallest error in music. I sat some way up the church, near the chancel; at first I felt no disposition to do other by the strangers than those around me were doing; but as they approached close to me I experienced a sudden impulse, apparently the result of merely watching them, and allowing myself to be infected by a certain genial atmosphere that seemed to flow from them. I

rose and even before they had reached my pew, in which there was ample room, I had invited them into it. The leader smiled upon me with a grand, sweet smile, that seemed to open to my consciousness an unsuspected stream of love and sympathy between us, and pointing, not to his immediate followers, but to the general public that surrounded us he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." With that I awoke, retaining still, however, a pleasant sense of satisfaction at my sleeping experience, which accompanies me into all crowded places, whether churches, streets, railway carriages, or other places of assembly, and which, I confess, has induced me to modify somewhat my customary exclusiveness, at least so far as regards mere strangers who require but a passing accommodation. Perhaps my readers may be able to point a moral to my dream, without further aid from my feeble pen.

BONES TO PICK.

Our old friend, B. S. Naylor, has just issued a twelve page tract with the above caption. The subject of it is a dialogue, supposed to take place outside the Stawell Lyceum, in which persons of various religious opinions take part, the principal point under discussion being the Unity of God. The Unitarian party are content to fight their adversaries with their own weapons, and take the Bible as a basis for their argument, combatting the rather dubious texts brought forward in support of the Godhead of Christ, and producing an overwhelming number of texts in favor of their own position, at the same time the strongest Trinitarian arguments are brought out and examined. The Lyceumites, in the end, obtain the victory, and "Roberts," their leader, concludes as follows:—"Reason is the highest and noblest faculty of man; and our platforms are now telling our pulpits, that he who will not reason is a bigot; that he who cannot reason, is a dunce; that he who dares not reason, is a slave; and that he who does not reason, is not a reasonable being."

THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.

The chairman, in a note which he has appended to a private letter to us reports of the above circle as follows:—

We had two of the most satisfactory and convincing seances on Friday and last evening we ever had. Eleven of us on Friday felt the spirit-faces quite plainly, and last night seven of us felt the heads and faces of a male and female spirit, two of us feeling the body as well. The features were all felt quite plainly and under test conditions. The materialisation of spirits is now an undoubted fact amongst us. One of those we felt last night was a male and the other a female spirit. Both the mediums were held by members of the circle or otherwise vouched for during the occurrence of these extraordinary manifestations. The female spirit-face and head which I felt, last night, was that of a young girl, with long hair falling down her neck, and small but well-formed features. Whilst the male medium was beside two of the circle and they were feeling the faces of a female spirit, he asked them in a whisper to ask the others one by one where the lady medium was. The chairman, when the question was asked of him, replied, "She has just come up to me and placed her hand in mine, and her dress is touching mine." Judge of our surprise when two members seated at the far end of the circle called out: "No, sir, the lady medium is seated between us and has been here since before the singing began." The hand which I felt was softer than the lady medium's, and it was that of Katie King. On Friday King's light was beautiful and more luminous than usual. We are to see the spirits in five or six weeks from this date."

Sandhurst, 27th April.

THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN.

Man's duty is that he may learn to do
That which is right unto himself or others;
Then honestly investigate what's true,
And prove a blessing to yourself and brothers.

CHRISTIAN PHENOMENA.

TO CHRISTIANS.

Fellow men, I am amazed at your presumption in questioning the phenomena of Spiritism, and yet remaining so utterly regardless respecting your own.

You call yourselves "the Church of God," while you exhibit none of the phenomena by which that church was distinguished! You have neither Ephod, Ark, Shecina, Urim and Thummim, nor Prophets. The gift of the Holy Spirit, with spiritual gifts, and the answer to prayer have been withdrawn from you, and instead of repenting and turning to God, and seeking after a restoration of these privileges, you are sitting in judgment upon your fellow servants, who really possess phenomena satisfactory to themselves; these, without any proof on your part, you attribute to the Devil. Who made you a judge and a ruler over us? Have not your iniquities separated between you and your God, and your sins hid his face from you that he will not hear?

May we not mock at you, as Elijah did at the worshippers of Baal, saying "Cry aloud, is your God talking, or is he pursuing, or, peradventure, he is on a journey and must be awaked;" "tarry first till you are endowed with power from on high, for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii, 38, 39. "And we shall gladly receive you;" in the meantime it is our duty "to try them who say they are Apostles and are not."—Revel. ii, 2.

Sincerely your well wisher, a Spiritist,

R.

JOHN KING.

THE name of "John King" is a familiar one among Spiritualists in connection with physical manifestations. He appears to be the controlling spirit in the production of this class of phenomena at several circles in England America; and even in this part of the world. We think it probable that the following address, given fifteen years since, as reported in Mrs. Hardinge's Modern American Spiritualism, is from the same spirit:—

GENERAL ADDRESS OF KING, SERVANT AND SCHOLAR OF GOD.

"THE SPIRIT OF ONE who makes himself known by the name of 'King,' Servant and Scholar of God, desires to make his general address in the presence of Jonathan Koons, his family, and others; which persons I have selected in consequence of the pure clairvoyant power which exists among them, and other magnetic qualities, whereby spirits are enabled to speak and write sentiments which are in this mode not liable to be distorted by bias, or misrepresented by ignorance. And in consequence of the anxious desire manifested by those people to receive spiritual truths do we come amongst them; yet we know that our work will be rejected by many, and condemned as the production of their King Devil, whom they profess to repudiate, but do so constantly serve by crucifying truth, and rejecting all that is contrary to their own narrow pride and vain imaginings.

Truly we do not flatter ourselves with the idea of a welcome from minds of this class, or from any who are bigoted to their own opinions; nor do we seek to accommodate our speech to the prejudices of man, as we fear is the case with many of the manifesting spirits of this day. But strange as the form of human speech is to us now, and bounded as is the thought of angels in its narrow confines, yet as far as words can serve, am I bound to speak of that divine truth I know, for its influences reach me like a flaming fire streaming from the celestial realms of the Most High, and pours in consuming justice over the earth, winnowing the chaff of falsehood from the grains of truth, until the uttermost parts of the earth shall be fed with the bread of eternal life.

Many there are who so firmly engrave the image of Satan on their hearts that they see only his reflection when they look abroad, or behold in the faces of others the picture mirrored, which they themselves have drawn; and such, I full well know, will thus regard my coming. The bigot will have none of me, because I

have said, in opposition to his narrow creed, that I am of a race of men who lived before their fabled Adam; and because I claim a still more ancient state than their ignorance can master. I must be false, or else 'a spirit of evil.' If I would tear the mask of ignorance from the eyes of men, and show them truths long hid in darkness or veiled by superstition; if I dare disturb their fabled thoughts of God, and how he wrought in the days when men were unacquainted with the means to record their life and times, and hand them down to posterity,—then they cry out their comprehensive watchword, 'Devil!' so that all which they in their littleness think right, they call 'the Word of God,' and label 'sacred,' and all which they do not know or comprehend, they call 'the work of Satan,' or the words of 'heathens.'

"With what astonishment we contemplate this frail and blinded being, man! So frail, and yet assuming to be so strong, that a weak, short-lived mortal presumes to call a nation his, and swings in his very hand the destinies of millions of his fellow-beings, seizing their lands, spoiling their goods and houses, and making laws by which he binds their very lives, until his own is rent from him in a single minute, and then the strong man becomes a clod of clay! So blind that he cannot see the event of the next ensuing instant, and yet pretending to know just what God thinks, and wills, and does, and how he made all things, and how he is pleased or angered; pleased with one human worm for mumbling out a form of words, and angered with another for eating meat upon a day when he should eat naught but fish; in a word, this poor blind atom, fain would claim to know what ecclesiastical angels, who presided at his planet's birth, would veil their heads in deep humility ere pretend to understand. And thus man sits in his darkened cell of ignorance, wrapped in the antique rags his ancestors have woven, and thinks he's walking in the light of celestial revelation. Groping himself in blindness, he pretends to point to others the only path to Heaven. Living amongst dead men's bones, he says 'there is no spirit,' and pretends to gather from the ashes of corruption, the daily bread, meat for the living soul. He looks to earth for heaven; to matter to discover spirit; to a dead and buried past, to steer his barque through present ills, or guide it to future havens. He makes himself a king, and then parcels out God's heritage to his fellow-men, as if the earth were his, instead of being stolen from God. He makes himself a priest, and then pretends to sell out passports to God's heavenly kingdom. He takes away the patriarch's ladder on which angelic feet descend, and then sets up one of his own building, made out of ancient myths and modern mysteries, and invites men to ascend it, without angelic aid.

"I tell you nay; and yet the spirit strives with men; and, if perchance some stray and wandering sheep should hear our voice, and gather to the fold of spiritual truth, our work will not be vain; and freighted with that single soul, we may return to our heavenly Master, and say, 'Our work is done.'"

HERR DOBLER EATS HUMBLE PIE.

We quote part of a paragraph which appeared in the *Newcastle Daily Journal* of Friday:—

"HERR DOBLER AND DR. MONCK AT DARLINGTON.—For the last three nights Herr Dobler has been performing his wonderful tricks at Darlington, and giving each evening his dark seance, in imitation of the Davenport Brothers' alleged spiritual manifestations. On Monday evening, the Spiritualists, with Dr. Monck, challenged Herr Dobler in his 'dark seance.' Herr Dobler, however, said it was no part of his work to submit to the test conditions they wished to impose, and a great deal of hard talk passed, the audience siding for or against Herr Dobler, as the case might be. The Rev. Dr. Monck, who recently lectured at York, Darlington, Newcastle, &c., was present, and between him and Herr Dobler quite a scene occurred, upon the latter applying some strong epithets to Spiritualists. A large audience gathered the next evening, but no repetition of Monday's proceedings occurred."

The paragraph concludes by reporting incidents which

are more fully detailed in the following paragraph from the *Darlington and Richmond Herald* of Saturday:—

"**HERR DOBLER AND SPIRITUALISM.**—Herr Dobler, at the conclusion of his dark seance, on Wednesday evening, said that, in giving what they had seen that evening, he did not wish in any way to interfere with the science of Spiritualism. He had not had experience in Spiritualism himself, and was not a believer, but he had had a great deal of testimony from gentlemen as to the manifestations—extraordinary manifestations—which had taken place at their own houses—gentlemen whose word he could not doubt. With regard to the Davenport, whose manifestation he produced, he had no doubt it was jugglery, and the proof of that, to his mind, was that he could produce them by that means. It must be understood that he laid down no challenge to produce other manifestations than were produced by the Davenports, as the Spiritualists, he understood, had taken it very much to heart, and thought that he was interfering with their belief. With the science of Spiritualism he deemed it right to make this statement. With regard to Spiritualism he thought there was a good deal of humbug mixed with it as well as truth. (Hear, hear.) There was a gentleman in this room on Monday evening—the Rev. Dr. Monck, of Bristol—between whom and myself a little cross-firing took place, and, in the heat of the moment, he had made remarks respecting that gentleman which he would not otherwise have done. (Hear, hear.) He had had the pleasure of meeting that gentleman there, and, though both he and Dr. Monck resided in Bristol, they had never met before. He had heard on the authority of gentlemen residing in Bristol, who knew Dr. Monck, that he was an excellent medium. Some clergymen whom he had recently met there state that what took place at Dr. Monck's seances was supernatural—in fact, from what he had heard of it, he had no doubt of it himself. (Applause.) Dr. Monck spoke of the frank and handsome manner in which Herr Dobler had spoken, and regretted that anything unpleasant had passed on Monday night. He had no doubt that Herr Dobler was irritated by the striking of matches, which the Spiritualists looked upon as wrong, but for which, perhaps, some excuse might be found in the way in which Herr Dobler's bill was drawn. He was glad to find from Herr Dobler's statement that he had no wish to attempt to expose Spiritualism generally, but only the Davenports, whom he (Dr. Monck) had never seen."

The pie devoured by Herr Dobler is not quite so high in flavor as it ought to be. This conjuror does not produce what the Davenports did. He says he has no experience in Spiritualism, and so he can know nothing of the Davenports, whose phenomena are universally recognised as spiritual. If this trickster were confronted by the Brothers as he was by Dr. Monck, it is quite probable he would be just as apologetic to them as to the doctor. A slight increase in public enlightenment on the question would render the unblushing impudence of these fellows impossible.

MR. TYERMAN lectured in the Orderly Room, Sandhurst, on Sunday last. The lectures (especially the evening one), were well attended, and listened to with great attention. We understand he intends to visit Sydney to deliver a course of lectures this month.

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