

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."

No. 71.

MELBOURNE, JULY 1st, 1876.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

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In our last issue, we briefly alluded to reports of two seances of the Energetic Circle at Sandhurst, published in extenso in the *Bendigo Advertiser* of May 20th and 27th. The same paper of June 10th contains a summing up of the phenomena witnessed (omitting the tying and untying of the medium) and the reporter's conclusions upon them, and we must confess that a more wordy and superficial attempt to gloss over the facts, we have rarely met with. From the introduction, one would certainly expect at least some logical theory other than the Spiritual to account for the phenomena witnessed, for he grandiloquently says: "To simply discuss a subject, which is apparently inexplicable and contrary to preconceived opinion, with the bald assertion that it is 'all humbug'—even though it really be deserving of such a stigma as these words embody—without first stating the reasons for so brusque a dismissal, is unworthy of a calm investigating mind." From this, we might reasonably assume that the writer felt himself to be possessed of the particular class of mind alluded to, and wished to impress his readers with the fact. Had he stopped at this point, we, and others, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, might have accepted the inference, and cherished his memory in our minds as a sapient Sandhurst reporter; but, alas, he wrote more, and the image we had conjured up was rudely shattered, and the "calm, investigating mind" no longer occupies the form of our ideal reporter. No sooner has he got through the recapitulation of the phenomena than he descends from his lofty pedestal to "common sense," and common sense of the most ordinary type. Before proceeding to use this commodity, he first gives his own definition of it as "The immediate or instinctive response which is vouchsafed, automatically, by the mind, to any question or appeal which can be answered directly;" and follows

this by Dr. Carpenter's definition—"The *acquired condition* of the mind or brain, a condition which embodies the *general resultant* of the whole psychical action of the individual." From the resultant in this case, we are necessitated to think that the soul of this reporter is a small one; we mean no offence, he is not the originator of it, and therefore not responsible, but, from the outcome, the *general resultant* of the soul (or psychical) action in this case, we think, we may fairly assume that the power of this action was limited, very limited. It is not an uncommon thing for people whose sense is very common to imagine themselves cognizant of all the Laws of Nature, and the present writer falls into that error. He says—"Now, my (particular) common sense unhesitatingly refuses to credit that the Laws of Nature can for a single moment be subverted," the assumption from which legitimately is that the members of the Circle and Spiritualists generally believe that the varied phenomena which occur in connexion with the subject are miraculous. This assumption is entirely without foundation; no rational Spiritualist believes in miracles, believing that all phenomena are in accordance with natural law, but they have not the presumption to assume that all the Laws of Nature are within their ken. Professor Buchanan, who has given his attention to Psychology and cognate subjects, for the last thirty years, confesses himself only on the shores of an immense ocean, and, although conscious that few have devoted so much time and study to the science as himself, believes he is only on the first steps of the vestibule. He complains of Dr. Carpenter and other scientists of his class dogmatising upon particular sciences which they have never specially investigated, without regard to the accumulated knowledge of experts who have devoted much time and study to it; but what would he say to our Sandhurst friend, who, without pretence to scientific attainments, considers his common sense the *ultima thule* of psychological knowledge. The writer's ignorance of Chemistry is shewn by his remarks on the conditions necessary for the production of the class of phenomena alluded to; would he demand of the photographer the development of his picture in a light room, or of the chemist and astronomer the conduct of the spectrum analysis without darkness? He does not

even appear to be aware of Mr. Crookes's recent experiments in connexion with light, by which he has demonstrated that *Light is a Force* capable of moving ponderable matter. Darkness is only necessary in the production of those phenomena where spiritual chemistry has to be brought to bear; in the mental phenomena, trance speaking, clairvoyance, writing, &c., light is no obstruction. His objection to "harmony of mind" is, if possible, more irrational than the first. Harmony of mind a suspicious condition! We have a very grave suspicion that the mind which could make such an assertion is not often in that condition, and when he refers to Spiritualism as "a diluted insanity," we are apt to think that his own form of that malady is considerably less diluted, and that his symptoms might be considerably modified and mental condition improved by a dilution of rational common sense, combined with a short course of impartial scientific inquiry. This would give a little tone and balance to his mind which it is evidently now wanting. As the pith of a lady's letter is proverbially in the postscript, so is the most sensible sentence in this writer's article reserved for the last, a sentence he considers so important as to italicise, viz., "*Take it for what it is worth.*" This we do, but our estimate of the value of it is not a high one; it is something less than that of the quantity of paper that it covers. Next time this "very special reporter" appears in print, we trust that good paper will not be deteriorated by its addition.

To Correspondents.

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

INCREDIBLE STORIES IN THE BIBLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I had recently some conversation with the head teacher of a State School, on the strange stories recorded in the Bible, and was surprised to find that any intelligent and reasonable man should be so weak as to suppose the book called the Bible can be the Word of God.

When I come in contact with such men, I invariably admit that, while truth is in the Bible, all that stands in the Bible is not true—that is, my conceptions of right and wrong, my apprehensions of the purity and truth of God, will not admit of my believing many things as recorded in the Bible.

In the Bible I read that when Sisera was routed in battle, he fled to the tent of Jael (wife to his friend Heber) for safety; where he was alluringly welcomed and entertained: "Then, Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary." Then sang Deborah (a prophetess who judged Israel at that time) a so-called inspired Psalm, unto the Lord God of Israel, recounting the horrible atrocity of Jael's deed, and for Jael's perfidious and execrable murder, Deborah pronounces her "Blessed above all women!" and glorifies her abominable perfidy by an elaborate account of her infamy.

Would any one wish to persuade me that the Lord God of Israel had ought to do with that act of treachery and murder? either in the instigation of the thought, or the glorification of the deed?

In the Bible I read that, when the oxen shook the Ark, "Uzzah put forth his hand, and took hold of it," to prevent its being overturned; a very natural, and (as

it seems to me) a very commendable act; but, in the next verse, I read: "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there, for his error; and there he died by the Ark of God." This is more than strange, and I am not singular in this opinion, for "David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah."

In the Bible I read, the all just God was angry with Abimelech for acting according to the deceptions played off upon him by both Abraham and Sarah. Abraham deceived Abimelech by telling him that Sarah was his sister; and Sarah got a cutting reproof from Abimelech for her deceit in having told him that Abraham was her brother; and when Abimelech confessed unto the Lord, saying, "In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands have I done this," God said, in reply, "I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart;" yet, I read that a miraculous barrenness was sent on "all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife!" and, moreover, that the integrity and innocence of Abimelech were punished by God, and that the punishment was bought off by Abimelech's valuable presents to Abraham, who had so wickedly deceived Abimelech. Can Mr. S. believe this strange story as it stands in the Bible? I cannot. Nor do I give credit to any one of the many relations in the Bible wherein God is represented as the author or the countenancer of any unjust deed, or any act of impurity.

I should not be surprised at Mr. S.'s undertaking to justify Joshua's exterminating slaughter of the Canaanites, Samuel's equally horrible war on the Amalekites, Elijah's butchery of unbelievers, and all other similarly inhuman and atrocious deeds. It is this extraneous matter which damages the Bible in the estimation of all thinking minds, for they cannot possibly admit of the Almighty's participation in any species of wickedness, though prefaced with the imposing words "Thus saith the Lord."

In the 24th chapter of 2nd Samuel, I read, "Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah,'" and David did so; and the Lord punished David for numbering the people—punished him for his obedience. This, Mr. Editor, is what Peter would designate "hard to be understood." Fortunately, the same transaction is recorded in 21st chapter of 1st Chron., which runs thus: "And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel," and David did so; and the Lord punished David for numbering the people. This is a very different relation of the transaction, and intelligible enough, but which is the accurate one? Which of the two are we to believe? or are we to believe both with equal faith? Preachers expect us to believe all that stands printed in the Bible! of the wonders performed by the magical rods of Moses and Aaron, of the ramparts of a city falling down at the sound of rams' horns, of an ass speaking in human language, and all other wonderful things which we find in the Bible.

Does Mr. S. really believe it was literally a serpent that tempted Mother Eve? Does he believe that in the most natural sense angels begat giants of the daughters of men? Does he believe it is an historical fact that the Lord God dined off Abraham's veal, cakes, butter, and milk, sitting under a tree? Does he believe that Lot's wife was changed from a walking creature of flesh and blood and bones into a veritable pillar of salt? Does he believe that the sun and moon literally, and in the most natural sense, stood still about a whole day?—does he believe that the shadow was really brought ten degrees backward on the dial?

If Mr. S. believes but this half-dozen items (not to mention many more) in their literal and most natural sense, then, he is indeed a most wonderful Believer.

Were we to credit all that sectarists tell us, Mr. Editor, we might well be without hope in the world. One religious teacher assured me, very seriously, that the sprinkling I had received at infant baptism was of no avail, as nothing short of a thorough ducking (which he styled immersion) could insure me of a heavenly inheritance. Others have told me that unless I am one of the few elected to be saved, I must of dire necessity

be damned. Our mother Church insists on my believing faithfully the so-called Athanasian creed (which nobody seems to understand) and would frighten me into the belief of it, by the declaration that, if I do not believe it, "without doubt I shall perish everlastingly." Another maintained that a belief in the perpetuity of future punishment is "an essential requisite in every man's salvation."

But, Mr. Editor, I should be wanting in due respect, as well as in Christian charity, were I not to admit the right of all these different sects to cherish their peculiar notions. I do not expect ever to meet with an individual who thinks as I think, on all points—it cannot be! and since I claim the right of thinking for myself, I am bound to concede a like right to everyone else. The Trinitarians think that the eternal co-existence of God the Father and God the Son, is the Scriptural doctrine. The Arians think the Begotten must have existed before the Begotten. The Latin Church believes that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Greek Church believes that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father alone. And every particular sect entertains some peculiar notion, tenet, or belief, every one of which beliefs has been supported by hundreds of conscientious followers; a few of them have been maintained by learned disputants; others have been adopted by thousands of enthusiastic votaries; some of them have been propagated by violence and resisted by endurance; many of them have had their persecutors and their martyrs; and each and all of these beliefs have been entertained by individuals claiming the right of private judgment for themselves, though not possessed of sufficient generosity to allow the right of private judgment to those who differed from them in opinion. I am not of any sect or party; with Partisanship and Sectarianism I have done. I believe in Universal Brotherhood, in the duty of bearing and forbearing, in doing good to others, even though that good should be evil spoken of; and he who is not prepared to sacrifice something for the sake of his belief, it matters very little what he believes. Had it been in the order of Omniscience that we should all think alike, we should have been furnished with other Scriptures than those we now possess.

Is it not a flagrant reproach, Mr. Editor, to the scholars of this boasted "enlightened age," that we have not a Bible which communicates to us the true meaning of the original Scriptures: that is, we have not in 1876 a faithful version of those ancient writings clearly expressed in English words. The reader may fancy the innumerable alterations and interpolations it must have undergone, in the exclusive hands of the Romish Church for above one thousand years; and how doubtful of acceptance it must now be, after having passed through such impure, unworthy, and dishonest hands. To the same power may be attributed the notorious interpolations in the ancient MSS. of the New Testament, of several remarkable passages, two of which (says the *Spectator* of 17th instant) are struck out by the Revision Committee, viz., the last seven verses of the last chapter of Mark and the 7th verse of the 5th chapter of the 1st Epistle of John. We may hope, therefore, to be furnished with a passably accurate translation shortly.—Yours, &c.,

LAYMAN.

Vaughan, June 19th, 1876.

THE BIBLE.

THE promoters of what goes by the name of the Bible Combination had their grand meeting on Monday. But whatever their strength in numbers, they are decidedly weak in argument. They are not quite agreed among themselves, some of them insisting on the whole Bible, others being willing to accept the Bible less the portions which are considered unsuitable for the teaching of morality in primary schools. The rev. speakers liberally abused those who differed from them, the Catholics being treated as bigots, and the secularists as infidels. The ultimate effect of this attempt to force the Bible on to the public schools will probably be to exclude the Bible altogether. We have a large amount of Scripture teaching at present, with its consequent moral influence, and if the clergy would only let the thing alone we might continue this Scripture for an indefinite length of time. The secularists, who dislike it, have never been violent against it, but the clergy, with the loudest professions of the opposite intention, are doing all they can to force the nation towards the inevitable secular policy.—Sydney Correspondent of the *Argus*.

PRACTICAL RELIGION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Please to enter my name on your list of Spiritists. I would, however, like to see you attempt a union on a more decided and universal foundation; one that would include the good of every sect and nation, the universal brotherhood of mankind—all who believe in the great Master Mind "men call God, and know no more," whose Will is truth, right, and happiness, and the violation of whose laws produces suffering and destruction. Some call Him Nature, but "what is in a name," as long as the power is honoured and the laws obeyed?

Jesus attempted this on a sure foundation, but failed; through the treachery of his pretended followers, notwithstanding he had warned his disciples that many false prophets should arise in his name and deceive many; that "they should beware of false prophets which should come to them in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves;" and surely it ought to be our object to gather back the lost sheep to the fair pastures and the Good Shepherd, who taught that "every kingdom divided against itself would come to desolation." If this be true, and who shall deny it, it is absolutely necessary to adopt some means to re-unite together the various divisions of the so-called Kingdom of Heaven, the Christian Church. What better means can be adopted than that of leaving the commandments of men and returning to "what is written in the Scriptures," "the all things Jesus commanded," "the sure foundation" chosen by him.

He taught that it was "his meat and his drink to do the will of His Heavenly Father." "Not every one," saith He, "that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in Heaven." "Therefore, whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, is like unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock." Matt. viii., 15, 21, 24.

In short, love to God, and love to our fellow men, repentance, reformation, and self-abnegation, and living to God through the hope of eternal life, practical obedience, appear to have been the leading features of the teaching of Jesus, as contained in the first three Gospels.

PROPOSED "PEACE MAKERS' SOCIETY."

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. v., 9.

The object of this society is to endeavour to unite together in harmony; men of every creed and nation, who love God and their fellow men. These duties being more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices,* for on them hang all the law and the prophets;† in short, they contain the essence of all genuine religion.‡

As in every nation those who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of him,§ those who God accepts ought not to be rejected by us. Matt. vii., 12. We believe that the effect of love to God will be obedience to His laws, that obedience to these will produce peace, unity, and happiness, while disobedience results in suffering. That both the living and the dead are rewarded according to their works. Matt. vi., 14, 15; vii., 1, 2, 12.

Proposed Rules.

1. Sound, moral characters required of members.
2. A profession of love to God and to man.
3. That they will endeavour to live according to that profession.
4. That each member shall enjoy the right of private judgment on all other matters.
5. That they avoid discussing differences of opinion on minor matters, unless mutually desired. Matt. vii., 12.
6. That they do not cast reflections on each other's creeds or churches, our object being the cultivation of harmony, fellowship, unity, and co-operation.
7. That a meeting should be held once a month.

* Mark xii., 29, 33. † Mark xii., 37, 40. ‡ Luke x., 26, 28. § Acts x., 35.

8. And an annual gathering take place.
Please read Psalms to 7-17; Ezra xx., 20, 23;
Micah vii., 6-8; Hosea vi., 6; Matt. ix., 13; Matt.
xii., 7-50.

R.

KING'S UKASE.

DEAR HARBINGER,—Since my last letter published in your previous issue, King, the chief controlling spirit of the Energetic Circle, has continued his usual manifestations. He has instructed us to look out for another medium, of much power, to sit with our present one, with a view to further and more varied developments; but, at the same time, has cautioned us against being in a hurry, as much depends upon a prudent selection. King very justly pointed out to us that, it would not be easy to find one so punctual and obliging as our present one, and we were not to anticipate when we did find one that his or her powers would be developed all at once. He (King) would assist us in selecting a suitable person for the onerous position. The selection need not be confined to a young person. Mrs. P., for instance, would have been the best had she been a resident of Sandhurst, and could have attended regularly; but, as it was, we must look out for another. With reference to the admission of strangers to the circle, King said:—"Two years and a half ago I forbade you to admit non-members to our seances, but you continued to do so notwithstanding what I told you. The conditions are as fine as a thread, and the presence of visitors, though you may not think so, constantly interferes with them. Your magnetism comes to us charged with your own wishes or minds, and, as a result, we are compelled to say yes, when we would otherwise say no. It is thus you generally carry your point; but you lose more than you gain by doing it. I now tell you, as you have nothing on your minds to overpower us, that in future you must admit no non-members whatever. You must not even ask us for our permission to do so. When we think it may be done without detriment to your progress, we, of our own will and accord, will tell you so." The circle, therefore, have resolved to rigidly adhere to King's instructions, feeling assured that he knows best, and would not have issued them had he not deemed them necessary. So friends will understand until this ukase is revoked, that no more visitors—be they spiritualists or not, can be admitted to the Energetic Circle. When anything specially interesting transpires at our seances I will acquaint your readers with it.

The late seances we had with Mrs. Paton, of Castlemaine, on off-nights, have been productive of good to the cause of spiritualism. The startling manifestations witnessed on the two occasions that lady was present with us have caused a great deal of inquiry to be made as well as private discussions among the neophytes. It is oftentimes interesting and amusing to the initiated to listen to these discussions. The silly and absurd opinions expressed on the subject, and the total ignorance displayed of it—even by men of education, afford food for reflection. Then, too, the mere laughing jackasses who presume to sit in judgement on a matter they know nothing about—and, from their purely material organisations are never likely to know either,—serve as a warning to Spiritualists that they should not cast their pearls before swine by opening their seances to every booby who may express a wish to be admitted to them; but should remember that those worthy of entrance should be spiritually minded and attracted towards their cause naturally. "Oh," say these human animals, with their spirits as yet undeveloped, "how are we to know about it if we are not allowed admittance to your circle? We wonder, now, if the spirits would tell us who is to win the horse race to-morrow, or where we can get a rich quartz reef." Spiritualists should reply to all such persons:—"We fear you will never make good spiritualists. You will have to grow more spiritual in your natures first, either in this world or the next, before you can understand it; and as for giving you exclusive information about such material things you would, in the first instance, be asking the spirits to encourage

idleness, gambling, drunkenness and cruelty to animals; and in the second, it might be done were you famed for your generosity of disposition, your large-hearted beneficence to the poor, and that they were well assured if they gave you such a knowledge you would use the wealth thus conferred upon you for these high and holy purposes. And that, as a consequence, you would lead more industrious and more spiritual lives." Were spiritualists to take such a stand with all such persons asking for admission to their circles, they would soon find out who were in earnest, and who were mere curiosity seekers. And such inquirers as I have roughly indicated—I mean those of the turf and reef tribe—would soon be got rid of. The same remarks apply to the numerous class of penny-a-liners of the press, who know nothing of spiritual matters, and who very often believe in nothing. Spiritualism has nothing to expect from such persons, who, as a rule, view its phenomena either through materialistic spectacles; or, from fear of their own printer's devil, can only look upon it through the eyes of their own particular newspaper. From all such inquirers into spiritualism "Good Lord deliver us." But I must not enlarge further on this theme, only, let me add, that all honest investigators cannot be too prudent in dealing with applications for admission to their seances. In other words, they should not make their cause too cheap. The majority of applicants are not in earnest, and, therefore, are not entitled to the smallest consideration; and those who are so let them be urged to form circles for themselves. Were this plan carried out, more mediums would be discovered, and our cause would attract to it all those who are naturally inclined that way. It is not desirable, in my humble opinion, that it should be forced upon unwilling minds, but rather that our fellow creatures should be attracted to it as their intellects open to receive its glorious truths.

THE CHAIRMAN.

Sandhurst, 19th June, 1876.

"THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST."

WE have received the first numbers of "The American Socialist," published at Oneida, New York, the principal object of which is the encouragement of socialistic views. In its early days the "New York Tribune," under the editorship of Horace Greeley, advocated Socialism, and for the time gave the movement an impetus, but the failure of the practical experiments checked the progress of the movement. The "Phalanx" in England, and the "Harbinger" in America, vigorously advocated social principles for some time, but though very ably conducted, both failed for want of adequate support. The present paper is inclined to tread in the more moderate track of the "Harbinger," and take up the work where that paper and the "Tribune" left it. It is announced as their "hope" "to be able, with the experience both of failure and success which has now accumulated, to solve the question which has so long been the despair of theorists—how to form communities that shall be sure of permanence and success." The paper is very well got up, and amongst other interesting matter, we notice an account of a visit to the Chittenden medium, Mrs. Mary Huntoon.

SCIENTIFIC PREJUDICE.

WE regret to observe that the majority of the St. Petersburg commission, for the investigation of Spiritualism, have imitated the example of the London and Harvard professors, in exhibiting a strong bias against the subject. They not only insist upon dictating their own conditions to the mediums, but have limited the period of their investigations to May last, thereby excluding the celebrated and trustworthy medium, Dr. Slade, who could not reach St. Petersburg in time. They are evidently afraid of having their theories upset.

ERRATUM.—In "Layman's" letter, in last issue, No. 15 should read "according to what he hath and not according to what he hath not."

BEHIND THE VEIL.

(From the Truthseeker.)

IN Mr. Ruskin's 24th letter "to a working man of Sunderland," occurs this passage:—"Yesterday afternoon I called on Mr. H. C. Sorby, to see some of the results of an inquiry he has been following all last year, into the nature of the colouring matter of leaves and flowers. You most probably have heard (at all events, may with little trouble hear) of the marvellous power which chemical analysis has received in recent discoveries respecting the laws of light. My friend showed me the rainbow of the rose, and the rainbow of the violet, and the rainbow of the hyacinth, and the rainbow of forest leaves being born, and the rainbow of forest leaves dying; and, last, he showed me the rainbow of blood. It was but the three-hundredth part of a grain, dissolved in a drop of water, and it cast its measured bars, for ever recognisable now to human sight, on the chord of the seven colours. And no drop of that red rain can now be shed, so small as that the stain of it cannot be known, and the voice of it heard out of the ground." This illustrates one of the most curious and suggestive of modern discoveries—that we only see a very limited part of what there is to see in Nature, that we only see that portion, in short, which our very limited organ of vision enables us to see. That sounds like a truism, and so it is; but what immense conclusions are suggested by it when Science teaches us that, as compared with actual, probable, and possible objects around us, our range of vision is of the humblest kind!

Professor Cook, in his "Religion and Chemistry," says: "When we reflect that there are waves of light and sound of which our dull senses take no cognisance; that there is a great difference even in human perceptivity, and that some men, more gifted than their fellows, can see colours and hear sounds which are invisible or inaudible to the great bulk of mankind, you will appreciate how possible it is that there may be a world of spiritual existence round us, inhabiting the globe, enjoying the same nature—in fact, the wonders of the New Jerusalem may be in our midst, and the songs of the angelic hosts filling the air with their celestial harmonies, although unseen by us." Sir W. R. Grove, in his "Correlation of Physical Forces," also goes so far as to say: "Myriads of organised beings may exist, imperceptible to our vision, even if we were among them." A great many years ago—long before Sorby and Tyndall experimented; long before Cook, and Grove, and Ruskin wrote—a poor youth, named Andrew Jackson Davis, without education, without books, without any of the modern suggestions of Science, said that he saw, in a "superior" condition, the very things that ought to be seen by eyes adapted to such fine issues. The description of his vision—or call it what we will—occurs in his Autobiography, published, we believe, in 1857. At the time, that part of the world which paid any attention to the book, put down the seer as a lunatic or an imposter. It will, however, be curious, and will add an interesting chapter to the history of the anticipations of Science by the seer, should the singularly vivid descriptions of the boy "clairvoyant" turn out to be scientifically verifiable. Here, at all events, is the extract:—

"This particular event occurred, I think, on the eve of the first of January, 1844. At that time (and during the four subsequent years) I could not recall to my mind, when out of this condition, anything which I had seen or said while in it. But now the vast scene breaks upon my memory in all the vividness and beauty with which it was originally invested; and I can view and investigate—with far more certainty and with deeper satisfaction—the same fields in connection with still higher planes of existence and thought.

Before I seated myself, facing the operator, I observed a few individuals in the room; as usual, they were after tests and wonders; but I had, at the time, but little idea of having anything resembling a successful experiment. I knew as yet but very little of the nature of magnetism; had not learned anything definitely of the wonderful phenomenon of clairvoyance; did not, in fact, entertain a clear conception of any such condition. Nevertheless, the mystic magnetic state was completely induced in less than thirty minutes.

I observed an intense blackness before me—apparently extending hundreds of miles into space, and enveloping the earth. This reminded me of my first night's experiment. Gradually, however, this midnight mass of darkness lifted and disappeared; and, as

gradually, my perception was awakened and enlarged. All things in our room—together with the individuals in it—were surprisingly illuminated. Each human body was glowing with many colours, more or less brilliant and magnetical. The figure of each person was enveloped in a light atmosphere which emanated from it. The same emanation extended up the arms, and pervaded the entire body. The nails had one sphere of light surrounding them, the hair another, the ears another, and the eyes still another; the head was very luminous—the emanations, taken in combination, spreading out into the air from four inches to as many feet.

The utter novelty of this view overwhelmed my mind with astonishment and admiration. I could not comprehend it. Again I felt confounded, and could not feel perfectly certain that I was living on earth. It seemed that the whole earth, with all of its inhabitants, had been suddenly translated into some Elysium. I knew then of no language which could describe my perceptions: hence, I did not yield the slightest exclamation, nor attempt an utterance; but continued to observe, as one in solitude, with a feeling of unutterable joy and holy reverence. A few moments more, dear reader, and I not only beheld the exteriors of the individuals in that room—clothed with light as it were—but I also as easily perceived their interiors, and then, too, the hidden sources of those luminous magnetical emanations. In my natural or ordinary state, remember, I had never seen the organs of the human viscera; but now I could see all the organs and their functions—the liver, the spleen, the heart, the lungs, the brain—all with the greatest possible ease. The whole body was transparent as a sheet of glass! It was invested with a strange, rich, spiritual beauty. It looked illuminated as a city. Every separate organ had several centres of light, besides being enveloped by a general sphere peculiar to itself. And I did not see the physical organ only, but its form, aspect, and colour also, simply by observing the peculiar emanations surrounding it. For example: I saw the heart—surrounded by one general combination of living colours—with special points of illumination interspersed. The auricles and ventricles, together with their orifices, gave out distinct flames of light; and the pericardium was a garment of magnetic life, surrounding and protecting the heart while in the performance of its functions. The pulmonary or respiratory department was also illuminated with beautiful flames, but of different magnitude and colour. The various air-chambers seemed like so many chemical laboratories. The fire in them wrought instantaneous chemical changes in the blood that flowed through the contiguous membranes; and the great sympathetic nerve, whose roots extend throughout the lower viscera, and whose topmost branches are lost in the superior strata of the sensorium, appeared like a column of life, interwoven and super-blended with a soft and silvery fire!

The brain was likewise very luminous with prismatic colours. Every organ of the cerebellum and cerebrum emitted a light peculiar to itself. I could easily discern the size of the organ by the shape and intensity of its emanations. This view, I well remember, excited in me much admiration. But I was so deeply in the magnetic condition, and so impoverished in language, that I neither manifested any delight nor described a particle of anything which I then beheld. In some portions of the smaller brain I saw gray emanations, and in other portions lower and darker shades of this colour—in many and various degrees of distinctness—down to a sombre and almost black flame.

On the other hand, in the higher portions of the larger or superior brain, I saw flames which looked like the breath of diamonds. At first I did not understand the cause of these beautiful breathings; but soon I discovered them to be the thoughts of the individuals concerning the strange phenomena then manifested in my own condition. Still I continued, my observations. The superior organs of the cerebrum pulsed with a soft, radiant fire; but it did not look like any fire or flame that I had seen on earth. In truth, the brain seemed like a crown of spiritual brightness—decorated with shining crescents and flaming jewels. Here I will parenthetically remark, that what is thus natural to the human brain in this its first stage of existence, is preserved and indescribably improved in the Spirit-Land to which we all are surely tending. Each brain seemed different—different in the degrees, modifications, and combinations of the flames and colours—but very, very beautiful! From the brain I saw the diversified currents of life or magnetic fire, as they flowed through the system. The bones appeared very dark or brown; the muscles emitted in general a red light; the nerves gave out a soft, golden flame; the venous blood a dark, purple light; the arterial blood a bright livid sheet of fire, which constantly reminded me of the electric phenomena of the clouds. Verily, gentle friend, I saw every ligament, and tendon, and cartilaginous and membranous structure, each illuminated with different sheets and magnetic centres of living light, which indicated and set forth beautifully the presence of the spiritual principle.

Thus I saw not only the real physical structures themselves, but also their indwelling essences and vitalic elements. Another thing was very remarkable: I knew the individuals had garments upon them, because I could see an element of vitality, more or less distinct, in every fibre of clothing upon their person! Just as you would look, by an act of volition, from the blisters in a pane of glass, through it, at the objects and scenes beyond, so could I discern—and that, too, without a conscious effort—the whole mystery and beauty of the human economy, and enjoy that festive illumination which the ten thousand flames of the golden candles of life imparted to every avenue, pillar, chamber, window, and dome, of the human temple!

But the sphere of my vision now began to widen. I could see the life of nature in the atoms of the chairs, tables, &c.; I could

see them with far more satisfaction—as regards their use, structure, locality—than I ever remembered to have known in my ordinary state. Next, I could distinctly perceive the walls of the house. At first, they seemed very dark and opaque; but soon became brighter, and then transparent; and, presently, I could see the walls of the adjoining dwelling. These also immediately became light, and vanished—melting like clouds before my advancing vision. I could now see the objects, the furniture, and persons, in the adjoining house, as easily as those in the room where I was situated.

At this moment I heard the voice of the operator. He inquired "if I could hear him speak plainly." I replied in the affirmative. He then asked concerning my feelings, and "whether I could discern anything." On replying affirmatively, he desired me to convince some persons that were present, by "reading the title of a book, with the lids closed, behind four or five other books." Having tightly secured my bodily eyes with handkerchiefs, he then placed the books on a horizontal line with my forehead, and I saw and read the title without the slightest hesitation. This test and many experiments of the kind were tried, and repeated; and the demonstration of vision, independent of the physical organs of sense, was clear and unquestionable.

At length, feeling somewhat exhausted, I resigned myself to a deeper sleep which seemed to be stealing over my outer form. Presently, my former perceptions returned with greater power. The village was now instantly subjected to my vision. It was now as easy for me to see the people moving about their respective houses as in the open thoroughfares, and it was also as easy to see their most interior selves as the external lights and shades of their physical bodies.

'Twas the first of January, remember—cold, bright, cloudless, frosty, beautiful! A piercing wintry wind swept o'er the earth, chilling and freezing as it went; but my perceptions waved on—the village with its inhabitants melted away before me, and my enjoyment was greater and fresher than ever I experienced in the glow and beauty of May or June.

By a process of *inter-penetration*, as I now term it, I was placed *en rapport* with Nature! The spirit of Nature and my spirit had instantly and for the first time formed—what seemed to me to be—a kind of psychological or sympathetic acquaintance—the foundation of a high and eternal communion. Her spacious cabinet was thrown open to me, and it seemed that I was the sole visitor at Nature's fair—a royal banquet!

The properties and essences of plants were distinctly visible. Every fibre of the wild flower, or atom of the mountain-violet, was radiant with its own peculiar life. The capillary ramifications of the streamlet-mosses—the fine nerves of the cicuta-plant, of the lady's-slipper, and of flowering vines—all were laid open to my vision. I saw the living elements and essences flow and play through these simple forms of matter; and in the same manner I saw the many and various trees of the forests, fields, and hills, all filled with life and vitality of different hues and degrees of refinement. It seemed that I could see the *localities, properties, qualities, uses, and essences of every form and species of wild vegetation*, that had an existence anywhere in the earth's constitution. The living, vivid beauty and overawing sublimity of this vision I cannot even now describe; although, as the reader will see, I have since frequently contemplated scenes far more beautiful and ineffable.

But my perceptions still flowed on! The broad surface of the earth, for many hundred miles, before the sweep of my vision—describing nearly a semicircle—became transparent as the purest water. The deep alluvial and diluvial depositions were distinguishable from the deeper stratifications of stone and earth, by the comparative and superior brilliancy of the ingredients of the former. Earth gave off one particular colour, stones another, and minerals still another. When first I discerned a bed of minerals—it was vein of iron-ore—I remember how I started and shivered with a sensation of fright. *It seemed that the earth was on fire!* The instantaneous elimination of electricity, from the entire mass, gave the appearance of a deep-seated furnace under the earth. And my agitation was not lessened by perceiving that *these rivers of mineral fire* ran under the ocean for hundreds of miles, and yet were not diminished in a single flame—yea, could not be extinguished!

Innumerable beds of *zinc, copper, silver, limestone, and gold*, next arrested my attention; and each, like the different organs in the human body, gave off diverse kinds of luminous atmospheres. All these breathing emanations were more or less bright, variegated, and beautiful. Everything had a glory of its own! Crystalline bodies emitted soft, brilliant, azure and crimson emanations. The various salts in the sea sparkled like living gems; sea-plants extended their broad arms, filled with hydrogenous life, and embraced the joy of existence; the deep valleys and dim-lit ravines, through which old ocean unceasingly flows, were peopled with countless minute animals—all permeated and pulsating with the spirit of Nature; while the sides of ocean-mountains—far, far beneath, the high pathway of travel and human commerce—seemed literally studded with emeralds, diamonds, gold, silver, pearls, and sparkling gems, beyond computation.

In this mystic vision, gentle reader, I saw everything just as you will—with the penetrating senses of the spirit—after you pass away from the visible body at physical death. It was very, very beautiful to see everything clothed with an atmosphere! Every little grain of salt or sand; every minute plant, flower, and herb; every tendril of the loftiest trees—their largest and minutest leaves; the weighty mineral and ponderous animal forms, existing in the broad fields now before me—each and all were

clothed with a dark, or brown, or gray, or red, blue, green, yellow, or white atmosphere—divided and subdivided into an almost infinite variety of degrees of intensity, brilliancy, and refinement.

In my glorious vision, I well remember how I gazed at the little plants in the fields—and saw, lovingly encircling each one, an atmosphere of life peculiar to itself. This golden and hazy emanation—encircling some species of vegetation—was apparently from four inches to eight feet in diameter. Some animals gave off a sombre sphere three or four feet thick, and beyond this a very dark, thin air—as many feet more—which shaded off into the surrounding space.

I saw the different crystalline bodies of the earth act upon each other, and, intermediately, upon the solid substances to which they were attached—by means of a generous commingling of their magnetic emanations. I saw the flowers exhale their odours, with which perfume they clothed themselves, and then formed attachments with neighbouring flowers—by breathing out upon them, according to a spontaneous blending of spheres, the sweet breath of their life. There was not a dew-drop, chambered in the petals of the rose, that did not glitter with a living essence—prophetic of coming animation! I saw currents of electricity flowing from a mineral bed in one portion of the earth, to its kindred (but positive) neighbour in another department of the same hemisphere. And I saw the little flames, arising from the essences of plants and trees, leap upward into flowing currents which were instantly absorbed and wafted away to more foreign and proper destinations.

No, no, language can not describe this scene! Sufficient to say, that all Nature was radiant with countless lights, with atmospheres, with colours, with breathings, and with emanations—all throbbing and pulsating with an indestructible life-essence—which seemed just ready to graduate and leap up into the human constitution! Everything apparently emulated to be Man! But I could no longer endure the exquisite happiness—I felt incapable of maintaining a quiet feeling—my emotions had become so deep and unutterable!

I now yearned for a companion, for association. For a moment I realized painfully that I was viewing all this magnificence alone! This thought made me feel isolated also, and incapable of retaining my recollection. Whereupon I began to think yearningly of the village—of the room in which I had taken a seat for the magnetic experiment—of the individuals whom I had seen in the room—of the operator, too—and, immediately, my vision began to diminish and contract. The distant continents, oceans, fields, hills, forests—all gradually faded and disappeared. The effulgent lights were left far behind! Now, I could discern, as before, the interior condition of those in the room, and the face of the operator also, who now said: "Come, come, Jackson, you've been very still! Can you see anything—have you anything to say?" I made an effort to describe what I have been writing in this chapter. I remember how I struggled for a few words; but, as I was about to relinquish all attempts thereat, I involuntarily exclaimed, in a low and tremulous voice, "How beautiful!"

I heard my own accents, and never did I stronger realize the total inexpressiveness and impotency of human language! At that time I said and beheld no more. In a few moments I felt the hand of the operator passing over my head. Soon I returned to my ordinary state, with not a single vestige—of what I had seen—alive in my external memory. Therefore, all that I have herein related is a revival of the impressions that were then made upon my mind.

All this, that once appeared to be mere rhapsody or raving, has risen into some importance in the light of late discoveries in science. It will be read with special interest by those who have paid any attention to the new book, "The Unseen Universe," of which we are giving an account in these pages.

THE LATE MR. GEORGE WALKER.

A VERY general feeling of regret has been expressed by the spiritualists of Melbourne at the sudden and unexpected demise of Mr. George Walker, late of the Bank of New South Wales. Mr. Walker was a staunch and consistent spiritualist and reformer, and lectured on several occasions for the late Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, he was also a contributor to this journal. His writings though caustic, and tinged with satire on the incongruities of prevailing dogmas, were full of a powerful reformatory spirit and elevating in their tone. Although a man of strong will and positive nature he was an impressionable medium, and received through his own hand many communications from the land to which he has now gone. We miss him as a friend and supporter here, but feel assured that with his deep interest in the progress of spiritual truth in this world, we shall find him working (perhaps as efficaciously) to that end on the other side.

FREE THOUGHTS ON THE LIFE OF JESUS.

BY A WRITING MEDIUM.

Introduction.

At this remote period of the history of man, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to decide to which section of the human race in the past we are instrumentally indebted for the first basis of sound religious thought, from which have grown the many diversified systems now prevalent in civilized society. Any conclusions to which we might come would at the best be speculative, although it must be admitted that, apart from the intuitive faculty in man which leads him in a general sense naturally to regard such matters, there must have been such a basis originally laid down.

Taking that view of this subject, we shall not, therefore, attempt to make the experiment involved; but rather allow our thoughts to rest upon a period, not so very remote when relatively considered in connection with other historical periods, and endeavour to realize as far as we can the possibilities, if not the absolute facts, which distinguish the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth.

In thus endeavouring to form an ideal in relation to Jesus, we do not, however, propose to ignore records which profess to give distinct utterances relative to his life and mission; we intend, as far as possible, to rely on these records for a base, while we allow play to the imagination, over which, at same time, we propose to instal the control of a sound and educated rationality. In addition to this, we claim the supervision and guidance of higher Intelligences, who, from a more exalted position, and surrounded by greater advantages, can impart valued aid, and render our labours less likely to be beset with error, either as to matters of fact, or of judgment.

The theme upon which we thus propose to dwell, must, we think, from the very nature of the subject, prove attractive to a wide class of readers. And, although in the treatment of our subject, we shall doubtless exercise greater freedom of thought and expression than is usual with orthodox writers, we trust not to transgress those laws, which while fixed and unchangeable, allow a breadth of illustration which is not always taken advantage of. By this means we hope to relieve the atmosphere of a truly noble life of many of those doubtful passages which have hitherto clung to its delineations.

And, in addition to this, we believe that such a compilation as we contemplate, can be made to embrace the advanced views which now prevail, regarding the religious life of man; and which really is the natural outcome of seeds sown by the Nazarene centuries ago, who, in connection with other great Teachers, did his part to assist human progress. The world's prophets from time to time have been enabled to strike sparks of vitality in the human mind, which, although crude at the outset, are calculated to assume in due time such a form and shape as shall be best adapted to secure man's truest freedom from the bonds of a narrow system whereby the human mind becomes stunted in its growth. Indeed, we conceive it will not be the case that the truth respecting Jesus as a teacher will be attained, until that freedom of thought to which we have referred in relation to the facts of his life, which are known to be extant, shall have been exercised thus boldly.

Independent of influences which have ever had the effect of restricting free inquiry, we feel that we can enter and take advantage of many sources of information otherwise rejected, because conceived to be outside the circle of ecclesiastical dogma. There are many fair fields of information affording suggestive ideas which have been declared dangerous by so styled authoritative writers of the history of Jesus, and in these, when the imputation of dangerous has been removed, we may find beautiful flowers, alike descriptive of the fairest virtues, and affording evidence of the brightest wisdom: characteristics displayed by Jesus in his intercourse with his fellow men.

In further elucidation of our purpose, we may call the attention of our readers to the demand which now exists for a more generous presentation of possibilities,

as connected with the aids to religious growth. The light which is reflected from behind shows in a clearer outline that which may be attained in the future; and, far be it from us to complain, when men on all hands are expressing dissatisfaction with outgrown theories, and asking for such as will more really suit the circumstances of the case.

The entire experience of the past makes apparent the necessity for revision of existing theories; reconsideration of methods, which, although they suited a narrow compass of mind and experience, are found to be unsuited to human wants as these now exist. It cannot be denied that we live in stirring times, when, if ever it were so, that the great battle between truth in all its phases, and error in all its forms, has to be fought, that time is the present; not necessarily as the result of the one striving to destroy the other, but really that by this means, a man in the possession of a clearer intellect, and a purer heart, may be able more and more to discern the truth, and take to himself that which will best help him to fulfil the destiny which his existence presupposes. An ideal life of Jesus, brief, but characteristic, may help to secure such an object, and thus afford a means whereby a desirable end may be gained.

We would guard our readers, however, against supposing that, after all that we can say on the subject, any thing but the briefest, or perhaps crudest, representation of this subject, can be offered. It will only be in the remote future, when men learn to view the history of the past, by the aid of a more cultivated reason, free from credal prejudice, and under the influence of a purer and more spiritually refined mode of life, that the true life of Jesus will be written. This need not deter us in the meantime doing our best as a contribution to so interesting a subject; and, in the light of such an object, and in the spirit of a broad and universal charity, we propose to lay before our readers such jottings of thought as may help some, we trust many, of our fellow beings, in the pathway of a wise, loving, and happy development; strengthening in them the purpose to live more effectively; and, thus, to anticipate beyond the range of earth life, a brighter, more useful, and a happier career!

CHAPTER I.

As an objection to the course we are pursuing, it might be argued that in the New Testament we have a more authentic and complete life of Jesus than could be otherwise produced. That in these records, not only is it proved that Jesus really existed, but that his character and work are fully and ably delineated. There are grounds, however, for concluding, that were we confined to this source of information, an adverse rather than a favourable issue might be arrived at. Woe! to the world, if the race of man was shut up to the Bible records. This has already been proved in the results of that close adherence to its statements, on the basis of which the existing theology and religious belief have been built, resulting in that wide-spread confusion and conflict which now rages between the various sections of the so-called Church of Christ.

It is not our purpose to deny that, within the boards of the Bible, are many admirable expressions, or that some of its statements may be historically true, in a general sense. On the other hand, we do most distinctly affirm that an exclusive reliance on that Book, to the exclusion of other writings either more ancient or more modern, and the neglect to test its accuracy of statement by the process of rational thought, have proved most disastrous to man's moral and spiritual experience.

Even though we were shut up to a mere comparison of sentiments, apart from a judgment of a special value, or otherwise, of the Bible utterances; and were to place side by side with these the teachings of Seers who lived ages before Jesus was born into the world; it would be found that there was a prior claim to the possession of a wisdom, equally as sublime, and an application thereof to the wants of human nature, quite as suitable as any of the teachings the Bible presents.

But we are prepared to go much further even than this, and point out that the writers of the Bible must

have been indebted to teachers, who lived long before their day, for many of the strikingly beautiful sentiments which have been passed off as their own original thoughts and expressions. Here is an instance, in which the very genius of the teachings of Jesus is found to be embodied in the utterance of another seer (Confucius) centuries before: "Do unto another what you would he should do unto you; and do not unto another what you would not should be done unto you. Thou only needst this law alone, it is the foundation and principal of all the rest." And again: "We cannot observe this necessary rule of life if there be wanting these three virtues—(1) Wisdom, which makes us discern good from evil; (2) Universal love, which makes us love all men who are virtuous; and (3) that resolution which makes us constantly persevere in the adherence to good and aversion for evil." And, to take even another example, an utterance which for its value is incalculably precious, as revealing the common sense view of man's case as a growing and progressive creature: "If a person have departed from the path of integrity and innocence, he needs only to excite the good that remains to make atonement by pains and industry, and he will infallibly arrive at the highest state of virtue. It is not enough to know virtue, it is necessary to love it; but it is not sufficient to love it, it is necessary to possess it."

Now, we ask our readers to ponder those ancient utterances, and to compare them with teachings which are found in the Bible, whether they refer to the mode of man's recovery from a so-called lost condition, or to the conduct of human life generally. And having done so, we think they will agree with us, that to confine ourselves exclusively to the Bible records, and to ignore other writings to which we have access, would be the height of folly.

We do not, however, intend to follow up this train of thought at the present stage, but have rather referred to it in connection with the evident importance which exists of examining many other authorities, both ancient and modern, relative to the facts of the life of Jesus, either as a real person, or a prominent teacher being assured, that in the adoption of this course, we shall arrive at a far more satisfactory conclusion than could be attained if we took for granted all that the Bible professes to tell us of his life and character.

There have been writers, who declare, and there are such at the present day—and who, no doubt, honestly believe—that no such person as Jesus of Nazareth ever existed. Writers who imagine that these records of his life are mere fables, mythical representations of conceptions originated in a variety of human minds, under different circumstances of the world's history, and gradually brought into their present form and shape, to enable priestly domination to ride rampant, and thus to enslave the minds of their fellow-men. To sustain such a view, arguments have not been wanting; although we are inclined to think that the conclusion thus come to is rather the result of a fierce reaction, a violent demonstration against the folly which led men to confine themselves to the one record, and, while placing their own estimate upon it, deducing therefrom a system at once unreasonable and arbitrary as between man and man.

On this very ground, then, we are far from condemning such writers, some of whom have proved the liberators of thousands of minds from a crushing and ruinous thralldom; men who have stood in the very fore-front of the battle, and at a time when persecution was more in vogue than it is now, endured much discomfort, and even suffering, that they might arouse their fellow-men to reflection, and quicken them to seek freedom from a thralldom which neither they nor their fathers were able quietly to bear.

(To be continued.)

BRIEF ITEMS BY THE MAIL.

THE *Spiritualist* of February 11th contains two accounts of the moulding of spirit hands under strict test conditions in Manchester, England. This new and wonderful phase of spirit manifestations is now pretty well demonstrated as a fact.

At a meeting of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, held April 6th, Mr. Sargeant Cox confirmed the statement that the wreck of the "Strathmore" was discovered by a clairvoyant, and the fact communicated to the agents before the news came by the ordinary channels.

THE *Spiritualist* of April 14th contains an account, by a clergyman of the Church of England, of the carrying by spirit power of a lock of hair from a circle at Portsmouth to another in London, within two hours of the time it was cut. The attention of the circle was directed to a corner of the well-lighted room, whence they saw the lock of hair slowly floating towards the medium, alight on his head, and then fall to the ground. The same paper contains an account of a wonderful cure of Goitre, of 16 years standing, by the mesmeric treatment of Dr. Mack.

MR. WM. CROOKES, F.R.S., recently gave a lecture at the Royal Institution, explanatory and illustrative of his discovery of a force in light. By the construction of delicate instruments he has been able to exactly measure the mechanical force of light; this he demonstrated by an experiment to his audience. By calculation he estimated that the pressure of sunlight on the earth's surface was upwards of two cwt. per acre, or 57 tons to the square mile.

A SUPERNATURAL VISITATION.

A considerable sensation prevailed in the neighbourhood of Macarthur owing to the nocturnal presence of an apparition which has been seen by several persons on the estate of Mr. Carmichael, at Harton Hills. It appears that four men, working at a job of fencing, were camped about two miles from the head station, when they were alarmed three or four nights ago by seeing a figure draped in white, stalking backwards and forwards in the moonlight. So frightened were they, that they beat a retreat to the station, and communicated the particulars to Mr. Towart, the overseer, whilst a dog they had with them participated in the alarm, and ran away howling piteously. Next night a party of eight, including a policeman from the township, bivouacked in the haunted spot, and five of them were rewarded by getting a sight of the ghost. The news began to spread, and we understand that a large party was to be made up from Macarthur, with a view to solve the mystery if possible. Tradition states that the locality in question was, many years ago, the scene of a fatal affray between the early settlers and the aborigines, and that in these encounters the blacks came off second best. Of course the supposition is that one of the natives so disposed of has jumped up "whitefellow" in fulfilment of the aboriginal belief, and hence the astonishment of the nerves of the fencing party by his "counterfeit presentment!" It should be mentioned that the ghost has already one casualty to answer for, inasmuch as one of the interviewists, in his hurry to get a sight of the apparition, was thrown from his horse, and broke his leg. We trust some of those who may have been fortunate enough to have seen the thing, will send us a progress report.—*Hamilton Spectator*.

DR. CUMMING AND THE QUEEN.

The Rev. Dr. Cumming, of the Scotch National Church, stated to his congregation, on the 16th of January, that he had recently preached a sermon before the Queen, at Balmoral, on the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, and having stated that the souls of the blessed in heaven would recognise each other perfectly, and would speak to each other about the events of the past. On the conclusion of the service, her Majesty advanced to the steps of the pulpit and thanked him heartily for his sermon, telling him how happy it had made her feel. Dr. Cumming added that he was extremely honoured by the conversation of such a Sovereign as Her Majesty.—*Herald*, April 24th.

MR. PEEBLES IN MEXICO.

THE "Banner of Light" of May 5th contains a highly interesting letter from J. M. Peebles, giving an account of his travels in the land of the Aztecs, and reflections on the social and religious condition of the people, concluding with a description of a Seance attended by him in the City of Mexico, from which we extract the following:—

"The circle that I had the pleasure of attending, meets every Monday evening at the residence of Gen. Gonzales. It has one hundred and twenty enrolled members, thirty or more of whom were present upon this occasion. They have a library and several excellent writing mediums.

The president, Antonio Santiago—seemingly just fitted for his position—is a gentleman of grave and paternal deportment. On his right sat Gen. Gonzales, the presence of whom reveals a strong psychological power. Sitting along the sides and at the ends of the table were several ready secretaries and writing mediums. At the tinkling of a bell all was silent. The seance was opened with prayer. The mediums taking their positions, soon wrote with great rapidity. The influence seemed to be a combination of the impressional and semi-mechanical. The quietness and order were admirable, and the various messages from the spirits exceedingly interesting.

While I would not flatter Jupiter for his trident, I must in justice say that, phrenologically speaking, I have seldom or never seen a more intelligent assemblage of ladies and gentlemen convened in a seance-room.

By the aid of Gen. Gonzales one lady present, Dolores Portugal, became psychologically entranced. The words uttered in this ecstatic state were taken down by the secretaries as they fell from her lips. Thus conditionally magnetically, she would find concealed objects, endure the candle's blaze before her open eyes, become rigid as a bar of steel, and exhibit no flinching from the thrusting of pins into her limbs. Other interesting experiments were tried, demonstrating her complete unconsciousness to all external things."

MRS. HARDY IN A SACK.

THE PAINE HALL MATERIALISTS CONFOUNDED.

MRS. HARDY being much beset alike by incredulous Materialists and doubting Spiritualists to give a moulding seance, under "test conditions," appeared at Paine Hall last evening, enveloped in a sack, and sat upon the platform before a large number of spectators, with the view to producing the mould of a spirit-hand under circumstances which would preclude the editors of the *Investigator* and the *Spiritual Scientist** from alleging that she "did it with her feet." In about twenty minutes from the time the screen was drawn around the table, under which stood the pail of water and paraffine, the invisible chemists signified to the medium that their work was completed, and when the table was removed there lay by the side of the vessel a perfect waxen mold of a human hand. The sack enveloping the medium to the neck was carefully examined by a committee before and after the sitting, and found to be intact, and the infidel member of the committee publicly confessed his inability to suggest any possible human mode of accomplishing the result achieved.

Mr. Seaver and another gentleman in the hall wanted Mrs. Hardy to also enclose the paraffine and water in a bag or screen, but for reasons best known to the medium and those conversant with the subtle conditions of mediumship, this was declined, although an experimental seance under the direction of Dr. Gardner, that morning, at the house of the medium, where the water and paraffine were locked within an enclosure of wood and wire, resulted as usual in the production of a mould, which was found floating in the water. It is due to the medium to say that this double test, or the interposition of the wire screen, largely added to the draft upon her vitality, but fully assured Dr. Gardner, if the assurance was needed, that the production of the mould was the unmistakable result of supersensual forces, and gave him confidence to assert in Paine Hall last evening that this was the beginning of a series of experiments which would astonish the world. He even promised Mr. Seaver the pleasure of soon witnessing a spirit in full form standing upon the platform of his materialistic temple. Mr. Seaver said that was just what he wanted to see. *Nous verrons.*—*Spiritual Scientist*, Feb. 24.

* The *Spiritual Scientist* has not said that Mrs. Hardy "did it with her feet."—ED. *Spiritual Scientist*.

MATERIALISM AND ITS OPPONENTS.

THE *Truthseeker* (edited by John Page Hopps) of January last contains a masterly criticism on Mr. Tyndall's article, "Materialism and its Opponents." The criticism is in the main favourable to Mr. Tyndall, but in reference to his scurrilous allusion to Spiritualism, the writer says:—

"We cannot conclude this notice, however, without a reference to the one false note of this article, and to the one opponent of Materialism of which Mr. Tyndall speaks with an animus, and even an indecency, that ill become him. He hates "Spiritualism," and he calls it an "intellectual whoredom;" and it is to be feared that his bad language and bad temper are partly due to the fact that he is conscious Spiritualism, if proved true, would silence him most effectually on some points. Of Spiritualism we will only say this—that, amid all the vulgarity, nonsense, and deception connected with it, we see in it the *possibility* of a great discovery; and it appears to us to be supremely foolish and unscientific to dismiss it without inquiry. If there is an unseen world, and if there are intelligent beings there, it is quite reasonable to suppose that, under certain conditions, the veil might be lifted, and the two modes of being blend. Besides, Mr. Tyndall, in this very article, has himself made a statement which ought to effectually prevent him coming to a rough conclusion about a subject he knows nothing of. He tells us, what is, indeed, a notorious fact in science now, that we are altogether limited in our knowledge by our very imperfect senses. He says, about a kindred subject: "In all such inquiries we are necessarily limited by our own powers. We observe what our senses, armed with the aids furnished by science, enable us to observe—nothing more.

Alter the capacity, and the evidence would alter too. Would that which to us is a total absence of any manifestation of consciousness be the same to a being with our capacities indefinitely multiplied?" That is just the question: How far can our senses go? and we repeat that any statement on that point should be examined with scientific calmness, and not dismissed with unscientific irritation and contempt. One of Mr. Tyndall's illustrious predecessors as President of the British Association—Sir W. Grove, author of the great work on the "Correlation of Physical Forces"—actually says that "Myriads of organised beings may exist, imperceptible to our vision, even if we were among them;" and other men of science, Mr. Tyndall's equals or superiors in some things, declare that there are such beings, and that, under proper conditions, they manifest their presence. It is a subject for *experiment*, not for hysterical affirmation on the one side, nor rude and wanton denunciation on the other. To Mr. Tyndall, then, and to his followers, as well as to his assailants, we repeat our word of warning:—You also have your perils and your failings. Beware *you* of acting over again the dreary tragedy of scientific prejudice and philosophic pride. Do not talk about the impossible, do not scoff at novelties, do not put bounds to the knowable, do not make sure that you are infallible. Let us have freedom and fair play all round. Let us, if necessary, choose "commotion before stagnation, and the leap of the torrent before the stillness of the swamp." Above all, let us *hope* that there is a mighty God of love above us; let us *hope* that man is not a beast that perishes; let us *hope* that we are not being betrayed by these mighty yearnings of the heart; let us *hope* that this school-house of earth and time is but introductory to a life that shall make the great fact of evolution and development not the throb of an earthly moment, but the law of an eternal day."

PSYCHOGRAPHS.

A new phase of spirit photography is described in the *Banner of Light* (April 22nd), by Allan Putnam. At the rooms of Mr. B. P. Brown of Boston, he obtained five different figures on his own plates in darkness, he having charge of the cap of the camera, and the photographer sitting by him the whole time. A gentleman resident in Melbourne, has favoured us with a copy of this artist's spirit photos, the photograph of the living person occupying the place of the sitter, a well defined and youthful female spirit form appearing behind the chair.

SPECULATIVE SPIRITUALISM.

IN the days when Good came out of Nazareth, and through the carpenter's son were poured the teachings of the highest spheres, they found various ground to fall upon—Pharisees, bitter and unrelenting in their bigoted hate; Sadducees, supercilious and scornful, a people enslaved and debased, its rulers corrupted, its religion a dead husk, its social life a whited sepulchre. By slow degrees it permeated the poor and lowly, and at last overflowed on Gentile ground, and, as one among a thousand obscure sects, was held up to the mockery of the great and wise; but, nevertheless, it spread. Its teachings, before too high, stooped to a common level; to attain power, it renounced purity, it absorbed the obsolete legends of the mystic past; the principles were bowed before the man, and the radiance of his Humanity exchanged for the empty title of a God. The renunciation of the lusts of the flesh, became, in lower minds, Asceticism; the deeds of Charity died in the embraces of a fictitious Faith; the records, written by impassioned devotees, were recklessly interpolated, and tortured to new meanings, then to be also exalted to a supernatural height. It was not enough that the spirit and life were divine, but the letter must likewise become so, and the light of his countenance be checked by ritual and rites, as in the glass and the bars of a lantern. Its popularization and its materialization were one, its power advanced as its truth waxed dim, till, as the political tool of despots, it swept across the western world.

There have been revelations before and since, Individual, National, Universal, but it and all pale before the new dawn breaking upon a higher age. We have the same trial, the same opposition, but in miniature; we have greater strength and swifter progress, for the democracy of this age delivers us from the ancient dread. We are not confined to a single course of action, we are not linked to a single name; Goodness and Truth are, in degree, the dowry of all, and our very errors—necessary and transient—strengthen the Reason which should be man's only guide. But no longer is the great drama enacted "in an unnoticed corner of the world," though the millions are ignorant and oppressed, though the few are envious and crafty; the deeds are done in the daylight—a suspicious Science is at its elbow, a ready press notes every act, and gives it to the world. A history is being built that must defy all storms of time; the floodgates will not shut again, and, strive how men may, the Spirit world is passing through the breach, and e'er long every fortress of falsehood will be in their hands. We meet Pharisee and Sadducee on their own ground, though as scornful and as bitter as of old the sceptical, philosophy, parallel to that of Greece and Rome, is not now at a distance, but in our midst. We ask no faith, we accept the challenge of proof, and as far as we have truth the victory is assured. Science and Religion are the high courts of man's appeal, instituted before history, their verdict is final, and though, like all things human, liable to err, yet in their verity are they eternal. Spiritualism does not seek to oust or scoff at them, but to perfect and complete them; they are her kindred, her progenitors—

"The force of Nature could no farther go,
To make a third she joined the primal two."

The burden of this proof rests upon Spiritualism, before she can be recognised as of kin to such great names, and she accepts it. Rejecting at once and for ever the usurped authority of dogma and prejudice, she demands her trial in the light of Reason.

"Nothing extenuate, nor aught set down in malice." This is her plea; stern justice, and no quarter given or taken to any error, however high or hoary. Of truth there are three tests:—

1. The Possible.
2. The Probable.
3. The Proved.

The first two are Speculative. Let us now proceed to their succinct consideration. 1. The Possible—The existence after death of the real man—in distinction to his mortal frame and his power of still communicating with those in the flesh—is a statement that the most rabid

must admit to be possible; Omniscience alone could deny it, Science does not attempt to. 2. The Probable, *i. e.*, the rational—To admit Spiritualism to this division is to say that the theory, for so it is here termed, is consistent in itself, and, granted certain premises, which are themselves simply unproved, is a faithful induction or deduction therefrom. Here Religion supports us, for without half the truth, that of Immortality, all her creeds were false and baseless, while all alike proclaim some instances of supermundane visitation and intercourse with the unseen. These Science rejects, and to her we must proffer other food, though here it must be briefly. *First*, a passing allusion must be made to the universal acceptance of the idea, and though this argument is much vitiated by the fact that the wish may, more particularly in this case than in any other, become "the father to the thought," since never are desires so strong, never is emotion more powerful, never could "expectant attention" or "unconscious cerebration" accomplish so much, yet the truth which Professor Huxley so pithily expresses—"We can find tribes without Gods, but none without ghosts"—must be a primary factor in our conceptions, having its due place and weight. *Secondly*, let us remember that Science still proclaims Mind as a thing utterly unknown, and without kinship to sensible existences. By some thinkers it is held to be unknowable, since to know what Mind is, it would have to be both subject and object at the same moment, and this is impossible; but all, save a very few, unite in postulating the substance of Mind as an unknown quantity. Mr. Spencer has discovered to us Psychogeny or the growth of Mind, by experience and its various developments in accordance with its environment, but that which grows, changes, and develops, physiologist and psychologist alike can do no more than name. Science teaches us how unreliable are the first impressions of sense; the phenomenon of a looking-glass is one only surmounted by continued experience; every hour we correct the verdict of the eye, which proclaims the tree near us to be so vastly greater than those in the distance. Hearing is often at fault. Touch and taste require cultivation and adjustment, to fulfil their truer uses.

We have learned, after long schooling, that though man be "the measure of the Universe," yet the measure is liable to much error; we have discovered that the most powerful forces in Nature are the invisible, such as Electricity—that the lightning is a seen effect of unseen causes (Wallace); that we are still, by the aid of more and more complex instruments, discovering elements of almost inconceivable rarity. We find that the flea holds the middle place with regard to such of the living creation as are at present known, and that forms of life exist in number and minuteness utterly defying our clumsy senses to perceive, or brains to imagine. If such has been the unbroken testimony of the ages, disclosing more and more our ignorance of external existences, and inability to recognise or formulate them, the conclusion is readily arrived at that that most delicate spirit which we call Mind must be beyond our sensual reach; that, consequently, its existence, out of, as it is in, the body, would be imperceptible, and that only through Matter could it manifest its powers here or hereafter. Thought and Affection have no relation to the atoms they animate; the sweet Sympathies that mould the form, the glad perception of harmonious Sounds, of Beauty, that most ethereal of dreams, and yet so potent in reality—the noble Aspiration; even dreary Doubt, Despair, and evil Passions stand removed from all ideas of dust, between whose state and theirs a great and an impassable gulf is fixed forever. No effort can lift us out of ourselves. The spirit rejects at once the vain endeavour, and from its verdict we have no escape. It is the spirit knows, and *save those manifestations of itself which we call thought and feeling, we know nothing and of nothing.* Sensation is the spirit's recognition of resistance; all our conceptions of matter are Spiritual and ideal; its properties are only attributes of spirit, its very existence otherwise unknown. If Charity and Faith in one another, the love of Truth, of Beauty, and of Goodness—if these belong to Matter, Matter must be spirit, and immortal too—the unindividualised mass seeking to embody and to express itself, "sleeping in the stone, dreaming in the

animal, waking in the man," our names mislead us. Spirit and Matter are, then, two sides of the same thing, which, in its higher state, rises above time and circumstance, and triumphs in the "wreck of Matter and the crash of worlds!" *Thirdly*—Though by these and other thoughts, men have been led to hope that life was not limited to Earth, the Religions have been justly taunted with the nature of the existence they proffered to the world, and the unbeliever could shape no future while he had no constant trust. The imbecile character of the popular Christian Heaven, diabolical in the early, and maudlin in the later centuries, was well calculated to repel the strong or cultivated by its absurd inanities, of wings, white gowns, and perpetual psalmody; and it was not till the advent of Emanuel Swedenborg, the last of the Church Fathers, and the first of the Spiritual Seers, connecting the waves of Primitive Christianity and Spiritual Rationalism, which are in all essentials one, that a true and acceptable glimpse of the Future State, since popularised and extended by Davis, Tuttle, Edmonds, and others, was given to mankind. Swedenborg first taught that man rises from his body, with all his memory, abilities, organs, virtues, vices, and individuality unchanged, he showed the bathos and weakness of the prevalent conception of spirits, as disembodied and inhuman ideas, without affection or reason, and displayed the marvels of the Spirit and the Spiritual world, which, though imperceptible to material senses, are as real to their refined senses, as the material creation is to us. Modern Spiritualism has confirmed, elaborated and extended his teachings, and through mediums of every race and creed, a picture of the Future Life has been unfolded, rational in all particulars, satisfying scientific and moral law, and fulfilling the highest aspirations of the noblest of imaginative minds—analogue to our Earth existence, it yet rises above it. It is no life of inaction, melancholy, or insipid emptiness, but is earnest, vigorous, joyful, Lifeful and Mindful. It is truly a higher, purer life, of all that is best in humanity, of Intellect, and scientific research, of Art and its enchantments, of Goodness, whose active sphere extends to many worlds of Truth and Beauty without end. Nor are these departments of our Nature singly satisfied, though all the rest conforms to them. Sweet social intercourse with all the loved, instruction from the wise, assistance to the weaker; and these, through fitting means, Temples, Museums, Theatres, and Libraries—calm habitations, graceful garbs, new powers of thought, sense, and affection, new tasks, and new delights, progression everlasting of Spirit and of sphere to higher Heavens; the weak and wicked are strengthened and purified, becoming at length, by stages of experience, as their better brethren, the wise and good, who in other realms attain to states of Being, inconceivable to earthly minds. For lowest and for highest, there is hope, for all is happiness—good and evil are conditions of existence, perfect and faulty, to which the mind adjusts itself, and rises in obedience to immutable Law. The thorough harmony of nature is prolonged and perfected in the spheres, of which earth is the seminary. The grades of existence are proportioned, and to each a place is allotted. Humanity in all its glory lives and grows forever. No sullen creed is stamped on this domain; as the sun shines on the just and the unjust, so in the Spirit-land is there a home for all. No Vicarious Atonement, no Hell of Wrath, no Rites, or Doctrines, set Reason at defiance. Each must work out his own Salvation, and bear the natural consequences of his deeds. It is no bigot's conclave, innocent Mirth and Pleasure are its constant visitants; all is healthful, natural, and free. Of all these things Religion is unaware; it has no revelation that can stand the test of inquiry—its Heaven, its Soul, its God, are visionary, unreal, and untrue. The Spirit-land originates in accordance with Scientific Law, the perpetual refinement of Matter, which the Earth and planets accomplish by Evolution, sublimating all gross substances till they became sufficiently rarefied, in plant or animal, to rise to their attraction in the second sphere, as a bubble through the denser water; still the process continues, and so they pass further upward at the fitting hour. Life there, and communication with this world, are conducted by analogous means, equally rational, but here of necessity

omitted, yet it is strange that those who recognise the delicate emanation of the rose as it soars to its new abode, should deny to that more elaborate laboratory, known as man, a kindred spirit, which should, in its departure, let fall the leaves, and show all bare the stem, whose purpose, like the rose's, is fulfilled.

Fourthly, Swedenborg, who enunciated the modern theory of colors before Goethe, stated the fact of the nebulous origin of the solar system, before Laplace, which many other seers have since more fully attested, and with no less zeal than Spencer, Darwin, or Wallace, have investigated and approved of the great theory of development now all powerful.

But are we to consider the progress of Matter as so much more perfect than that of Mind. Is it not more harmonious to the spirit of that theory to see Mind also crowned with triumph in its end. Mind without Individuality is nothing; it is Matter without atoms. To say that Mind in the aggregate will advance is saying that it is of the Vegetable Kingdom merely, and retains its laws in a Being utterly removed therefrom. The vegetative functions of man belong only to his purely physical economy, above that rises the animal and then the human. Activity, Consciousness, a Moral Sense, and Volition—these must bear some fruit in his Future. Dissimilar factors cannot produce similar results, and that the generic Immortality of Matter, should become Individual Immortality in Mind, is surely a reasonable philosophical conclusion. We have seen that, granting an Immortal Principle in man, all evidence goes to prove that it would be imperceptible, known only by certain manifestations; of the existence of some such conscious Power within us, all are assured, and we proved that no connection with its sensations, whose supposed object we call Matter, could conceivably exist; we found that a fitting apex to the Spiritual Evolution, which is concomitant with the Material, would be found in Individual (the only real Mind) Immortality; we found that an analogical and rational explanation of a Future State, and its relation to the present, was offered us by this same Power (from some source necessarily, and avowedly from such a disembodied agency); that the conditions of such a state are provided here, and that they answer to the highest conceptions of Moral Law which Science has yet attained; and finally that a belief in such a characteristic has been universal in all times and places. Nor do these brief epitomes represent all the strength of Speculative Spiritualism, which assuredly is so closely akin to Truth that we might accept it without fear. There are here hidden so many subtle principles, and so much intuitive certainty, that the purely problematic question may be considered as much more than solved. The probabilities reach such a height, they almost overshadow the positive proof of Science, that sustains and creates them, and if Modern Spiritualism often forgets this voice of Nature speaking to the Soul, it is because the superfluity of Fact disdains its Father Principles. That Intercommunication must of necessity follow on the heels of Immortality must be too patent to need discussion. In the mythical and false Heaven of Religion, where the Soul was deprived of all its good and greatness, and doomed to an imperfect, subsidiary, and limited existence, such an inhuman conception might well lurk. But those who see in Nature a foreshadowing of all the Future, and whose minds receive the noble discipline of Science, cannot but cast aside the empirical generalisation, which divided the Seen into fixed and stationary divisions, of Vegetable, Animal, and Human, as rigidly and recklessly as the Unseen was banished from Thought, Sense, or Reason. Nature is a perfect whole, of which Seen and Unseen are but parts, and all her stages overlap; all her powers are connected, unitised, and vivified by One Life. Those who retain, beyond the Grave, the Sympathies that made them what they were to us, could never be content to stand aside, and see their old familiars groping dimly in the darkness. Earth is the base of Heaven, and rises into it without a marked division; there are here as many grades as in the higher land, that rolls all round about it like a sea. Goodness and Truth know nothing of Time or Space, and where they are is Heaven, and its Light—beyond them only Weakness, Error, Hell. There is no limit to the Soul,

its Powers, or its Desires, and this the greatest, often noblest, must be fed.

There is yet another thought that comes to cheer us, and to favour our bright hopes, drawn from our Treasure House, our Mother, Nature, prophetic and inspiring.

We speak of Progress, and mark how, through the seemingly disastrous rule of fire, volcanic wrath, and glaciers' strength, the Earth has risen; we see in all her children, Mineral, Vegetable, or Animal, this progress working, and through strangest means, the same is true of Man. War, Pestilence, and Tempest scourge Humanity, but only to incite it to its path, which ends where all the evil of Nature ends, in good—for an advance to Good is Progress. Seeing this, that even the sparrow's fall promotes some use, we almost read a Purpose, and have Faith, we shall not be forgotten in the tomb.

MELBOURNE SPIRITUALIST AND FREE-THOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

MR. DREW's reply to Mr. Jas. Smith's lecture, given on the 4th June, attracted a large attendance. The principal portion of it was devoted to the political aspect, which we rather deprecate as calculated to arouse party feeling and divert the minds of the members from the primary objects of the Association. Apart from this fault, the general tendency of Mr. Drew's discourse was to show that the people of this colony had progressed politically, religiously, and socially.

Mr. Carre's lecture on the Bible was from a Christian standpoint. He argued for the necessity of the Book as a moral and religious agent, and predicted sad consequences were it destroyed.

The lecture delivered by Mr. Alfred Miller on Sunday, June 25th, entitled "Our times in relation to the past and future," was a highly interesting one. History he likened to a great panorama unrolled from the future, passing before us at the present, on to the roll of the past, where for the time it was forgotten, till some students, looking over the vast roll, picked out the striking pictures of the various epochs, and so made history.

The ancients in all time seem to have cherished an idea of God, or an invisible power expressing itself in nature. To modern Spiritualists the air was full of spirits. The notion of a deity was generally associated with fear.

In reference to war in both ancient and modern times, religious contention was as a rule the origin of it. The present aspect of things indicated the approaching millennium of the day of thought. The lecturer deprecated the idea that the ancients excelled the moderns either in arts, sciences, manufactures or philosophy, the ancients wrote philosophy—we improved and acted upon it.

Democracy and conservatism were ever struggling against each other, but the former was progressing, though the ratio of its progress was retarded by the frequent desertions from its camp. Conservatism, being uppermost, called out from its eminence, "I am King of the Castle," &c., and democracy, incensed, rushed to try and take its place. The formation of companies, for the accomplishment of every conceivable object, was a good sign. Co-operation tended to an improved social condition. The scientist with his microscope, searching for the origin of life, by the aid of improved instruments, only found a new vesicle within the last discovered; and so it was in thought—the germs of thought and matter were the same. The lecturer alluded to the decadence of theological literature; -Paley's "Evidences" and Butler's "Analogy" had survived all other theological works, but these even were getting obsolete. The religious literature of the day appeals to the sentiments; the churches do not appeal to the reason and senses, because they realize that they have not wherewith to satisfy them.

With the rise of the printing press, oratory had declined; men could diffuse their ideas more largely through newspapers than by speech, hence the incentive to the cultivation of the art was lessened. Fiction and poetry were channels of truth, and, when rightly read,

were instructive and elevating. The printer has superseded the priest. In our practical everyday life, materialism was taking the place of the spiritual; we lived in the present, and with reference only to this life. Scepticism in religion was almost universal, not only among the masses, but in the churches and even the pulpits, but in the latter it was not avowed. People had been looking for light, but were disappointed at not being able to find it in any revealed religion. The Spiritualist professed to present tangible and palpable ghosts? The image of the steam engine, the printing press, must have been in the minds of the inventors before they were constructed; the conception of the artist takes form in his mind before it is expressed on the canvas.

A practical religion was wanted by the world. The lecturer briefly alluded to politics as tending to materialism, and concluded his eloquent address with a peroration on the immortality of ideas. The lecture occupied the whole evening, Sunday next, July 2nd, being reserved for its discussion.

On the 9th inst., Mr. W. H. Terry will lecture on "The Moral Teachings of Spiritualism."

THE MEANING OF THE SPIRIT HAND.

BY EPES SARGENT.

Among the earliest phenomena of modern Spiritualism was that of the spirit hand. I have repeatedly seen and felt it under conditions which left no vestige of doubt in my mind as to the fact; and I have conversed with many investigators, whose opportunities for testing the manifestation have been superior to my own.

I was conversing on the subject the other day with Dr. H. F. Gardner, one of the earliest of our American students in Spiritualism, and he told me that on one occasion, when D. D. Home was the medium, a spirit hand became materialized out of a luminous vapour in broad daylight. "I grasped it," said Dr. Gardner, "and held on to it, while I examined it carefully. I found it in every respect like a perfect human hand. Then I willed mentally that it should become warm, and afterwards cold, and then melt away and disappear while I was holding it, and all this it did!"

Early in January, 1876, I attended a sitting at the *Banner of Light* office, Boston, at which Mrs. Mary M. Hardy sat for the moulding of spirit hands. I sat on the platform within three feet of her, and with no one between us. A pail of hot water, with a thin layer of melted paraffine floating on top of it, was brought on to the platform. Before Mrs. Hardy was a small pine table, formed of a simple plank, with four slender posts for legs. Over this plank a cloth, reaching to the floor, was thrown by two gentlemen well known to me, and selected by the critical spectators to superintend the process; and then the pail was placed in the little dark chamber formed by the cloth under the table.

"O, it is all very simple," the eager-sceptic will say; "the medium had her feet free; she had an artificial hand concealed, and this she worked with her foot, so as to make it form a glove in the paraffine."

The absurdity of such a solution can only be realised by one who sat where I did, and watched, as I did, the whole external performance. In two or three minutes there was a rap from some invisible force on the table, the cloth was thrown up, and on the floor, visible to all, lay two delicate gloves of paraffine, light as gossamer, perfect in every part, and indicating by the bend of the fingers, and the part of the wrist attached, that for a human, fleshly hand to have extricated itself from the glove, leaving it in that form, would have been difficult, if not impracticable.

Since that exhibition a condition has been added, under which, in the presence of Dr. H. F. Gardner, Mr. Luther Colby, and other investigators, the fact of the moulding of the spirit hand has been placed beyond a doubt. Mrs. Hardy was still the medium. A box had been procured, with wooden bottom, cover, and posts; the sides were of a strong wire, known as a three-eighths mesh. The wire carried around the box was in a single piece, the two ends coming together on one of the corner posts, and at the point of contact being covered

with a strip of wood firmly nailed to the post. The cover of the box was made in two parts, opening from the centre outward; one of these covers was arranged to be secured with two bolts, and the other fastened with a lever lock. The box, constructed under the directions of Dr. Gardner, and in the interests of those desiring a thorough test, was 30 inches long, 30 deep, and 24 wide.

No table was used at the trial sittings; the condition of darkness being obtained by simply throwing a black cloth over the box, inside of which the pail containing the melted paraffine was placed. At the initiatory seance a hand was moulded, but when the box was opened the glove was found floating in the pail on the hot paraffine, and nearly melted; although one finger which had fallen outside the pail was secured, and a cast of it taken. A second seance was more successful; and at a third a well-defined paraffine glove of a feminine hand was found beside the pail when the box was unlocked.

I see from Mr. Reimers's communications to the *Spiritualist* that the spirit hand has been moulded in England under test conditions almost equal to those adopted at the seances of Mrs. Hardy. If anything were needed to add force to these tests, it will be found in the following letter from an intelligent sculptor, giving his opinion of certain casts recently taken in Washington from the paraffine gloves made by spirit action at Mrs. Hardy's recent seances in that city:—

To whom it may concern:

WASHINGTON, D. C., JAN. 30TH, 1876.

This is, on special request, to certify that I am a modeller and sculptor of twenty-five years' experience, several of which years I spent in Italy in the study of the great masters of painting and sculpture; that I am at present a resident of Washington, having my studio at 345 Pennsylvania-avenue, and that on the evening of January 4th inst., I was asked by a friend to repair to the residence of a private citizen, 1016 I street, N. W., Washington, to examine some gypsum casts of hands and give my judgment thereof; that I was there shown by a gentleman who was presented to me as Mr. John Hardy, of Boston, Mass., seven casts of as many different sizes of hands, which I inspected under a strong light, and with the aid of a microscope; that I found each of these a wonderful production, correctly modelled according to anatomical laws, and wrought with such minutiae as to the lineaments of the cuticle, etc., as I have never before seen in models of hands, or any part of the human body, except when the same are made by the actual application of gypsum or wax to the naked hand, or other part, in several separate pieces, which when united form a "piece-mould," in which the casts are taken; that these casts in questions bore no evidence of having been made in "piece-moulds," (or "waste-moulds," as called in my art), but seemed to have been cast in solid moulds. That among these casts was one which I was informed is reputed to be that of the right hand of the late Vice-President, Henry Wilson, and made since his decease, and which appeared to me to be singularly like his hand in shape and size, I having viewed his hand a few hours after his death, when taking the only mask of his face which was made, and purposing to take a mould of the hand, which I was prevented from doing only by the anxiety of the awaiting surgeons to perform their *post-mortem* examination.

I willingly add, as requested, that the above-mentioned cast of Mr. Wilson's hand would, if made by our "modelling tools," do great honour, in my opinion, to the most accomplished artist who ever lived; that being specially interrogated upon this point, I fearlessly give it as my judgment that not more than one in a hundred reputable sculptors could model such a hand, in all its details, and that it would be hazardous for that one to try; but there is no method known to my art in which these casts, in the condition in which they were, as presented to me, could be made, except in piece-moulds, as to general configuration, and then subjected to elaborate carving to hide the seams and other evidences of the manner of their production—a great work in itself, when I consider the microscopic inspection which the casts withstood; that the creation of one of these casts would (if possible to be effected by any one sculptor, without the aid of a most talented

engraver) require several days' time; that I was shown on the same evening at the same place with the casts, two gloves, or moulds of hands, made of paraffine, in the like of which I was told the casts were taken; that I carefully inspected these paraffine moulds, and found that they were without seams in any part, and must have been made in some way whole, over some model, like a perfect human hand, for instance, which model might be dipped several times into some semi-liquid adherent substance, like the paraffine, and then withdrawn, leaving the glove entire; but such was the shape of the gloves and moulds (as well as that of the casts), with curved fingers, wrists some inches smaller than the size of the hand at the centre, or over the *phalangeometes carpal* joints, &c., that I deemed it impossible to withdraw the gloves whole, and of even thickness throughout, and was therefore left without any satisfactory theory of the method of their production.

I am also requested to state that I am not a Spiritualist, have never attended a seance, or conversed with a "medium," so-called, to my knowledge, and know nothing of the philosophy of "Modern Spiritualism," except what is generally imputed to it as regarding the immortality of the soul, and the possibility of the spirits of the dead returning; the former of which is a matter of faith with me, but of the latter of which I have no evidence sufficient to entitle me to an opinion thereon *pro* or *contra*.

JOHN O'BRIEN, Sculptor."

If facts like these, coupled with the testimony of the thousands who have felt, seen, and grasped the spirit hand, do not attract the attention of our professed physicists, then it must be because they are pledged more to Sadduceism than to science. The proof of the spirit hand involves that of the great fact of the materialisation of the entire human form, with its appropriate clothing. If out of the cosmic atoms, forces, or whatever you choose so call them, surrounding us, a spirit can mould and project the facsimile of a human hand, perfect in every respect to the external senses, then why may it not materialize a whole body, together with such drapery as it may choose? The lesser fact is the one step which makes easy and credible the larger fact. The materialized hand, guided by intelligence, is an indication that it belongs to a potential body, substantial though invisible, and having power to take on at will different forms and degrees of matter, from that degree which the sensitive plate of the photographer can catch, to that where the form becomes visible to the normal sight of several spectators.

Though this spirit hand be but the A B C of the wonderful science of Spiritualism, it is the key to it all just as the alphabet is the key to all recorded literature and science. In proving the spirit hand we prove that it is not with shadows that Spiritualists have been dealing, but with solid facts, with eternal verities that point to a truth the most interesting that could fix the attention of a human being; a truth which must ultimately revolutionise our notions of the nature of matter and its relations to mind, and which, in making the immortality of man a scientific conviction, must force us to orient ourselves anew in respect to all the great questions, moral, religious, social, and physiological, that have agitated the human mind. For, say what we will, our civilization is grossly Sadducean, and the Christian religion is far from being like the religion of Christ.

In the new-found freedom to which Spiritualism introduces men, many of them may go off into extravagances and abuses. Spirits in the flesh and spirits out of the flesh may continue to work evil as they always have done; but evil under Providence may be one of the means and conditions of good. God reigns, and only so much evil is admitted as could not be avoided without the sacrifice of more than equivalent good. Evil, in its last analysis, as all the great seers have told us, is but privation and imperfection. Without the limitation and the spur of evil there could be no individuality, no freedom, no high persistent effort, no satisfaction of right thinking and right acting. As long as human blessedness lies in activity, as long as no good attainment by man can be effortless, there must be evils to transmute and obstacles to overcome.

Spiritualism shows us that there is not an exemption from this law in the next stage of being; for between that and this no unbridged hiatus exists. Evil is found there as here, since man is there as here a progressive being. Happy those who have made the discipline of this life a stepping-stone to something higher and better in that life beyond the present, to which the index finger of the spirit hand is pointing! Let us not be at all daunted by the evils and perplexities, which seem to be as incidental to Spiritualism as to mortal life in general.

Boston, March 10th, 1876.

THE CIRCLE AND SPIRITUALISTS' REGISTER.

THE returns for the above register are coming slowly to hand. The promoter's disinterested appeal should have met with a more general and hearty response; the work is, nevertheless, being done, though slowly. Amongst the last month's responses is one which the correspondent gives us liberty to make what use we like of; we therefore publish it as likely to be of interest to our readers.

"Our family circle consists of myself, wife, and four children, one boy aged 12, and three girls aged respectively 10, 8, and 7 years. We had the usual table manifestations and writing with planchette for about two years; then the children saw showers of flowers and infant spirits, we ourselves seeing nothing but an occasional light; next they began to describe scenes in people's (visitor's) lives, occurring before they (the children) were born; next occurred the levitation of flowers gathered from the mountain, rising from the table, whirling about the room, and falling into the children's laps; but the most wonderful of all has been the teaching of the children (by the spirits) to dance so beautifully that people came for miles to see them. The spirits first placed them under control, making their limbs quite rigid. Our eldest girl, Sarah Marion, seems to be a clairvoyant medium, as she can tell people's thoughts when they are miles away, and we repeatedly hear all of them conversing with the spirits. They tell us they can see the spirits as plain as they do us.—Yours, &c.,

"THOMAS WALLACE, Buangor."

Those who have not received answers to their letters will please understand that there is as yet no information to hand for them.

DR. A. BUTLEROF'S EXPERIENCES.

THE "Spiritualist" of March 17th, contains a translation from "Psychic Studies," of some experiences of Professor Butlerof and M. Aksakof, with the medium Williams. Their first experiences at the public seances were very unsatisfactory, and they came from them with the worst impressions, thinking they had been made the sport of the medium and his confederates. With the view of thoroughly satisfying themselves, they invited Mr. Williams to their hotel, and a series of five sittings held there, thoroughly convinced them of the genuineness of Mr. Williams's mediumship. M. Butlerof congratulates himself on having taken this step, and points out how naturally ordinary scientific sceptics fall into grave errors by forming their opinion on first impressions or insufficient observations. After describing the room (an ordinary hotel apartment without cupboard or wardrobe), M. Butlerof says:—

"I will not describe every *seance* in detail, but will relate only the most striking manifestations. While we sat at the table, holding Williams fast, various objects were brought to us from a chest of drawers in the room, which stood behind Williams, at a distance of about four feet, Williams remaining meanwhile immovable. Even if he had had his hands free, the objects would have been beyond his reach. At the first sitting M. Aksakof and myself were both touched on the face with something soft. This as we afterwards learned, was M. Aksakof's silk scarf, which was lying in his hat on the drawers, and had been brought to us with the hat. Immediately afterwards the hat itself was crushed down on M. Aksakof's head, and then, at my expressed wish, also

placed upon my head. At another sitting, we being all in the same position as before, a musical box, which was playing on the table, was raised in the air, and wafted to and fro, as we could tell distinctly by the sound. Presently the box was placed for a moment on my right shoulder, next to Williams, while I still continued to hold him fast. Another time various articles were brought, and placed upon our table or in our hands, such as a match-box, which was also opened, a clothes-brush and a travelling-strap.

When Williams was placed bound in the cabinet, or rather behind my plaid, which was suspended like a curtain, the phenomena were more powerful, especially at the two last *seances*. As we sat at the table we heard the voices of Peter and of John King. This latter personage is a well-known apparition at Williams's circles, and manifests both audibly and visibly. Peter's voice is quite different from that of King, who speaks in a deep bass and very quickly. These voices suggested that we should have a cabinet *seance*. We lighted a candle for a few minutes, while Williams placed himself behind the curtain. We had formerly bound his hands together with tape, which was passed round his neck, and fastened to nails which we had driven in the wall for the purpose. In these last sittings our precautions were taken even more securely; we screwed an iron staple into the wall; a long tape was fastened round the medium's neck, and another piece was passed three times round the wrists which were drawn together and securely tied. The long ends of both tapes were then threaded through the iron staple, and drawn across to our table, where I held them all through the sitting with my left hand. After each sitting the tapes were found intact throughout their length; the last time the three bands round the wrists were found to be flat and clean, and I was able, while holding the tapes, to feel the slightest motion on the part of the medium. Only at the beginning did Williams draw in his hands a little, apparently as he was passing into the mediumistic sleep. Later on, while the phenomena were taking place, he did not stir in the slightest degree. We two sat at the table, on the side furthest from the cabinet, with our faces turned towards it, at a distance of about three feet from the curtain.

I will relate a few characteristic occurrences of the last sitting. After the light was put out, we again heard the voices of Peter and John. These voices were usually heard and appeared to come from various parts of the room; at one moment they were close to us, at another further off, and often on the side opposite to that on which the medium sat. Presently phosphorescent lights were floating in the air, and immediately the form of John King became visible. This apparition is accompanied by a greenish phosphorescent light, which increases in brightness, lighting up John's bust. It is then seen that this light comes from a luminous substance which the form holds in its hand. The man's face, with a thick black beard, is tolerably distinct; the head is draped with a white turban, and the upper part of the body with white garments. The form was outside the cabinet, and near to us. We only saw it for a moment at a time, the light vanished, and the form retreated into the darkness, but reappeared again as quickly. The voice of John comes from the spot where the figure stands, generally, but not always, while the form is invisible. John asked us what he should do for us. M. Aksakof begged that he would rise to the ceiling and say a few words to us in that position. Accordingly we saw the form appear just over our table, and then gradually rise upwards to the ceiling, which became visible in the light proceeding from the luminous object in the hand of the figure. While up there, John called out to us—"Will that do?" (*Ist es so recht?*)

Peter, in the meantime, although invisible, was busy and loquacious in the darkness, moving various objects through the air and touching us with them. As before mentioned, we sat on the side of the table furthest from the curtain; behind our backs about four feet distant, stood the washstand, on which were a water-bottle and glass. Suddenly we heard the ringing of glasses over our heads, as if two pieces were being struck together. Then followed a rapid pouring of water into the glass; the glass was handed to M. Aksakof, the bottle to myself. As it stood in my hand, I felt sensibly that another hand was holding it above. At this moment we heard the medium move and groan, and the

voice of Peter exclaiming that he wanted to give "his medium" something to drink. The water-bottle floated away from my hand we heard the movement and inarticulate murmuring of the awakening medium, mingled with the voice of Peter; then the gurgling of water from the bottle, and in another instant I received the bottle back into my hand. During all that I have described, and indeed throughout the sitting, we were satisfied—so far as our hearing could perceive—that Williams remained in his corner, while the voices of John and Peter were speaking near to us outside the cabinet; occasionally also the sounds proceeding from the medium, and the speaking of John and Peter, were almost simultaneous.

In conclusion let me remark that it is quite natural if other Russian inquirers regard these phenomena with suspicion. Owing to the scarcity of mediums in our country they have had at present few opportunities of observing them; nevertheless they have not held back altogether, but took up the investigation so soon as some of their colleagues announced seriously that they had really witnessed the manifestations. On the whole American and English men of science have furnished the most remarkable examples of prejudice and obstinacy. It is easy enough for them to inquire and observe, and to convince themselves of the objective reality of the phenomena; they have powerful mediums always at hand, and yet with a few honourable exceptions they prefer to deny or to ignore the existence of these facts, and to treat as unworthy of attention or credit the testimony of such men as Hare, De Morgan, Wallace, Crookes, Varley, and others. In no far-off future such conduct as this will be pointed at as a glaring example of scientific prejudice and scientific superstition. I am aware that these words can hardly be allowed to appear in conjunction; the adjective "scientific," however, does not here refer to true science, which knows neither prejudice nor superstition, but only to such men who may belong to its ranks on the one hand, but who do not work in the true spirit of science so long as they pretend to serve the cause of human knowledge by a system of ignoring facts.

May the scales soon fall from their eyes, and may they soon enter on the only path to truth, namely the path of experiment! St. Petersburg, 2-14 December, 1875.

I feel constrained to add my testimony to that of my valued friend, Professor Butlerof, in respect of the manifestations which we witnessed in the presence of Williams. Besides this, I can testify to having received the confirmation of the appearance of John King from Mr Crookes in his own house, Mrs. Crookes's hand being on Williams's shoulder, while he was asleep behind the curtain; also that in the house of Mrs. Macdougall Gregory, the curtain behind which Williams was placed, was nailed over the embrasure of a window so closely that the medium was in a niche almost hermetically sealed; and that yet John King appeared above the table, round which the company were assembled in front of the curtain! Williams's reputation as a medium is the best-established of any I have met in England.

ALEXANDRE AKSAKOF.

THE DIVINING ROD.

THE matter of "dowsing," or searching for water by the divining rod, has been attracting attention in the neighborhood, and the following particulars in connection with one experiment have come to our knowledge. We learn that an attempt has been made to find water on Mr. Heath's property at Lake Albert, by a previous owner, Mr. Walker, who sank wells some 200ft. deep, in different places without success. Other attempts were, we believe, made in the same neighborhood with a like want of success. Mr. Heath was running short of water, and having a certain amount of faith, or perhaps we should rather say curiosity, with reference to the divining rod mode of getting water, he wrote to Mr. Hammond, of Junee, to a gentleman, Major Wells, who was supposed to have "the gift." While waiting for a reply, Mr. Heath learned that Mr. John Vincent was also a fortunate possessor of this same gift. Accordingly he applied to Mr. Vincent, who went out to Mr. Heath's property. Mr. Vincent picked a thin twig from a tree which he called a "yellow jacket," and with this in hand he walked over the ground, pointing out after some time what he called the line of drift, indicated as he said by the motions of the rod in his hand. He then pointed out a spot not more than 150 yards from the site of the previous well experiments, and upon the advice thus conveyed Mr. Heath sank a well, getting water at 11 feet, and at 25 feet was furnished with such a copious supply that he considers all his wants in this way must be satisfied for a considerable time. On the opposite side of the lake Mr. Macleay sank some wells, but the water obtained was so salt that it could not be used, whilst that obtained by Mr. Heath was fresh, clear, and pure as water could be.—"Wagga Advertiser."

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