

THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

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

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

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AMONG the many untruthful assertions which have been extensively promulgated by anti-spiritualistic writers ever since the advent of the modern dispensation, one of the most prominent has been that the study of Spiritualism promoted insanity, and that thousands became inmates of lunatic asylums from this cause. Dr. L. S. Forbes Winslow, in his recent pamphlet entitled "Spiritualistic Madness," goes farther than many of his compeers, and has the temerity to assert that "nearly ten thousand persons have gone insane on the subject, and are confined in the public asylums of the United States." Though apparently a somewhat degenerate son of his late father, as far as talent is concerned, the present Dr. Winslow naturally inherits some of his prestige, and the statement we have just quoted would, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be very generally accepted by those who read it, and eagerly copied by the religious and secular press. Fortunately, however, in the interests of truth, a timely refutation in the form of official statistics is to hand, by which the falsity of the Doctor's statement is made manifest. The oft repeated assertion has been as often contradicted by Spiritualists, and its originators challenged to substantiate it; but it is only within the last few months that any systematic effort was made to disprove it.

In another part of this paper will be found an article by Dr. Eugene Crowell, embodying returns from fifty-eight of the principal asylums in the United States of America, from which it will be seen that the total number of persons confined in these institutions, whose insanity is attributed to Spiritualism, is fifty-nine, against 412 whose insanity is attributed to religious excitement—the total number of inmates from all causes being 23,328. It is a well known fact that if a Spiritualist becomes insane from any cause his insanity

is attributed to his religious belief; hence we may safely infer that a large percentage of the fifty-nine forming the sum total of Spiritualists in the fifty-eight American institutions enumerated, are insane from other causes than that attributed; but setting this hypothesis aside, Dr. Crowell shows that the proportion of insanity among Spiritualists is rather below than above the average. We are not so unreasonable as to assert that the investigation of an absorbing subject like Spiritualism will not, in some instances, induce mental disturbances. Weak and impulsive persons, plunging headlong into the matter, allowing their minds constantly to dwell upon it, to the neglect of their ordinary occupations, may not unnaturally exhibit signs of mental aberration, and commit vagaries which tend to bring discredit upon more sensible investigators; but we most emphatically deny that the Spiritualism which we have from the first enunciated, and which is in unison with that advocated by the leading Spiritualist journals in all parts of the world, has any such tendency. On the contrary, it tends to clear the mind from superstition, to strengthen the reasoning faculties, and to preserve us from the dangers of those religious excitements which periodically help to replenish the asylums in England and America. Those who are familiar with Spiritualists know that the great body of them are rationalists. We do not use the word in the orthodox sense, as implying infidels to religion, but in its more literal one—implying that they rationalize their religion, ignoring all things and beliefs which do not accord with their reason: hence, as a rule, their minds are better balanced and less open to the influence of revivals and similar causes of insanity. But the press, both religious and secular, do not or will not recognize this fact—their treatment of Spiritualism is generally unfair, and often disingenuous; they eagerly publish all that tells against the subject, with very little regard for its authenticity, but when a refutation appears it finds no place in their columns. An instance of this appears under the head of "Journalistic Justice," in another part of this paper. How many of the papers who have echoed the untruths of Dr. Winslow and De Witt Talmage will refer to Dr. Crowell's refutation? But few we trow, very few; most probably, after a little interval, we shall find some of them re-echoing the same old story.

Since the advent of modern Spiritualism it has ever been the same—falsehood and misrepresentation have been freely used against it; but heavily weighted as it has undoubtedly been, it still makes headway, and will ultimately leave the old religions a long way in the rear. Having a firm footing on a truthful basis, it cannot be dislodged by all the falsehoods hurled at it; but the time will assuredly come when its traducers will perceive the futility of their efforts to check its progress, and regret the shortsightedness which prompted them. Were they assured of their own positions, truth would be a sufficiently powerful weapon for them to wield, and falsehood would be unnecessary; the frequent use of the latter against Spiritualism by the orthodox is an undoubted indication of their weakness.

COMMUNICATION RECEIVED FROM A LATE RESPECTED PREACHER IN THIS CITY.

THE THEORIES OF "THEOLOGIC FAITH" AND "LIFE" IN DIRECT ANTAGONISM.

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

I MIGHT say, in explanation of this passage of scripture, that it represents the two theories as stated above. First—*Draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips*, where we have profession, forcibly expressive of theologic faith; and second—*But their heart is far from me*: "heart" here standing for "life" in its active operations, and in which is "practice." In the passage, this latter element is said to be wanting; hence, "life" in all its faculties and possibilities, a dead letter. No wonder that the Great Teacher is represented as uttering his condemnation, while he exposes with withering energy the fallacy of a so styled "Theologic faith," and which might be best described as "sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal."

The antagonism between this faith and the operations of life is proposed for our consideration. We shall endeavour to give the subject the attention which its importance demands.

It must be observed that a discussion of such a matter as this, must of necessity be connected with the existence of an elementary stage of mental growth—because it indicates a failure to perceive obvious conclusions which are in strict conformity with the development of man's spiritual nature. These obvious conclusions being that life, and not mere profession; activity, and not words, tends to secure man's well being in the development of his individuality.

I fully understand what is meant by the terms used, and quite approve of them as distinctive definitions of the theories referred to; for theologic faith, as it is called, embraces that trust in the merits of another which is said to be the alone essential element of salvation; and life, that obedience to the known will of God which is comprised in a carefully trained character, and whereby is sought to be produced within the man, the principles of truth and goodness—which to be of value, must be the man's own special and individual property.

Now, the antagonism arises in this way: one consideration or the other must be pre-eminent in the esteem of man in the matter of his so-called salvation—a term, by the way, which is sadly misunderstood—for the only way in which we could regard such a term would be to think of a harmonious development, in contradistinction to one which was always beset with conflicting elements, as the result of the want of a proper attention to obvious laws. In the attainment of "salvation" then, as it is called, the same laws prevail as in the growth of nature. Deprive nature of its proper accessories, or throw any impediments in the way of her growth, and the result will be deformity, confusion, and apparent failure. So with man, in relation to his physical as well as his spiritual growth, it is necessary to ascertain the most appropriate means whereby the very best ends

may be secured; and did man but proceed on this plan, he would have less to complain of in the way of failure, whether it be as regards the physical or the spiritual aspects of his being.

As affecting the questions at issue, much might be said as to the *origin* of such a fallacy involved in the supposition that trust, or faith as it is termed, in the merits of another, would produce in man that growth into higher states of being for which he is destined. But upon this aspect of the question I do not propose to dwell, except to remark, that so long as man indulges the false assumption that he is powerless to accomplish any good thing, will he fail to recognise or faithfully use the means which the Creator hath without stint, and sufficient for all purposes of growth, bestowed upon every one of His creatures. It is under such circumstances as these, that man is tempted to accept so false and injurious a theory as that involved in theologic faith, as it is termed.

Now, these two systems are antagonistic, because, in effect, the one shuts out the other: for, if man needs absolutely to trust in another for the attainment of an individual result, then he has no power for personal activity within the compass of his being proper to himself, and by which the end aimed at may be acquired by personal exertion in the operations of life.

An individual, to be honest in his dealings with theories of growth involved in either the present or future well being of his conscious existence, must deal with them as means to ends, and according to their several merits. And I most emphatically declare that I cannot see how the two theories can be reconciled, or be used concurrently to produce the desired end. The one gives the lie to the other: for either man of himself can work out the issues of existence, or he cannot; and these conclusions are just what is implied in the terms theologic faith and life. Theologic faith in its integrity, and as propounded by the churches, would for ever bar the way to such an advancement on the planes of being as man's nature is capable of attaining. While on the other hand, a life cultivated on the principle that God has given to man all the means enabling him to rise, to grow, to develope, to be useful, and thus to be happy, must result, when the means are faithfully used, in the most blessed success imaginable. The very fact that so many persons within the pale of the church have tried to combine the two theories, is a clear admission of the imperfection of the first; and it will be just in proportion as this is felt, that the *second* will entirely supersede the *first* as a theory of salvation; and then men will find the great mistake under which they have been so long labouring. All such notions as those involved in "justification and sanctification by faith in another," which church leaders and church members indulge in on earth, are speedily swept away when an intelligent person arrives in the spirit world sphere; and I have found in everything I see here the direct opposite to such a supposition, that any trust in the means of growth possessed by another can in any degree benefit him who merely looks on and regards that one, even though it be with the greatest admiration. I find that man's nature possesses all the elements of growth, and that it is in proportion to the use made of the means possessed, that he obtains by slow or more rapid degrees the higher stages of life. Ever take care to correct that most fatal of all errors, that God hath left man in a helpless condition, or has denied him as an individual, the means of personal growth and advancement. The process of growth, of improvement, of usefulness, and so of happiness, must ever depend upon the recognition by the individual of the means provided him by God, and of the right use of these means as a personal identity, and as a responsible agent.

That help may be obtained from this world of advanced spirits I do not doubt; but such aid is entirely auxiliary to man's personal endeavours, and is intended in no way to override or supersede it.

I must confess, and I do it with the greatest readiness, that there is much in the experience of earth life calculated to mislead; not as the result of a stern necessity, but because of the many influences under which one naturally comes as a member of society wherein so many

errors prevail. But even these untoward influences need not shut out a man from the apprehension of superior—because more natural—means of growth, and he may be quite sure that when he comes here he will be relieved of his errors, and will be helped to attain a more harmonious career.

May 20, 1877.

J. M.

To Correspondents.

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

DOUBTFUL PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I observe that the Superintendent of the Castlemaine Circuit has changed the heading of the Wesleyan Methodist Preacher's Plan (a slip of paper 12 inches by 20 inches: price 6d.) for the present quarter, by inserting a quotation from the 16th chapter of Mark, 15th verse—"And he said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," probably not being aware—although it is stated in the *Spectator and Methodist Chronicle* of June 17, 1876 (a paper which I presume is read by all Wesleyan Ministers)—that the above passage, together with the last seven verses of the chapter, are struck out by the Revision Committee as spurious; however, as the paragraph in the *Spectator* may have escaped the rev. gentleman's notice; and that the passage in question is still considered by him a portion of God's Word, I hope he will excuse me in thus drawing his attention to the matter.

There is little doubt that Jesus never contemplated extending his mission beyond the children of Israel: the chosen people of God—"the Elect," as he termed them, and firmly believed that its object was limited exclusively to them. The prophecies naturally led him to this belief, and that the sole object of a Messiah was the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel. He therefore laid down to his disciples a rule of national exclusiveness; and when he sent them out on their mission, he commanded them—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10, 5, 6.) That these were the views of Jesus may be seen from the many deliberations and contentions among the apostles, after his death, as to the propriety of admitting the Gentiles to a participation in the Kingdom of Jesus. What is meant by this command—"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine." (Matt. 7, 6.) Did not Jesus himself go among publicans and sinners? Who then are the dogs and swine—the Gentiles? Surely he would not thus speak abusively of his own countrymen—the Jews—to whom he believed his mission to be solely directed; nor do I think this the language by which the Gentiles were to be won.

There is no doubt that Jesus here referred to the Gentiles; and this view is confirmed in his charge to the twelve, in commanding them to limit their call to the house of Israel, and not to go into the way of the Gentiles. This is strange language for the Saviour of the world, and is another instance of the narrow and contracted views entertained by him—so entirely at variance with the idea of a divine mission.

Paul, however, when he had charge of the church, took a very different view of this subject, and did not consider the Gentiles as either "dogs" or "swine." When he examined into this new religion, he saw the great mistake that had been made by Jesus in thus limiting salvation to the small section of mankind living in Judea, and he at once, in opposition to the command of Jesus and the wishes of the early Christians, insisted on extending its benefits to the Gentiles also, and successfully carried out the measure.

This spirit is again displayed when the woman of Canaan beseeches him to cure her daughter, and he refuses, saying—"I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." (Matt. 15, 22, 26.) Strange language this in the mouth of the Saviour—calling every one but the Jews by the abusive term of

dogs and swine, and limiting salvation to a small section of people living in Judea.

After these positive declarations of Jesus that his saving grace was to be limited to the house of Israel (a mere fraction of mankind), and which were afterwards confirmed by the apostles themselves, in their strong opposition to Paul when he proposed to extend his preaching to the Gentiles, the early Christians felt themselves in a dilemma whose orders to obey—Paul or Jesus. But a less scrupulous follower soon settled the point, by surreptitiously inserting a few passages at the end of Mark's gospel, whereby Jesus is made directly to contradict himself, by commanding them—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

This order was never questioned, and the discrepancy was easily got rid of by explaining it as an "after-thought of Jesus." But the critical acumen and research of the present age have discovered that this passage is a grave forgery of the early Christians: for that the seven last verses of Mark are wanting altogether in the early Greek copies, as proved by Jerome and Gregory, Bishop of Azssa, A.D. 371. Gregory states that in the most exact copies of Mark's gospel it concludes with the words "neither believed they them," and Jerome says "that in all the Greek copies the last seven verses of Mark were wanting."

It is very doubtful whether, without the co-operation of Paul, Christianity ever would have extended beyond the limits of Judea. He had, at an early period; advanced himself to be the leader of the party, and looked with great contempt on his poor ignorant coadjutors, who possessed no one qualification to carry out the new religion except their fanatic zeal and enthusiasm. He accordingly assumed the name and character of an apostle, and compelled the others silently to acquiesce in the admission of the heathen or gentiles to the new religion—a measure which all the immediate followers of Jesus strongly condemned, as directly opposed to the instructions and commands of Jesus himself.

Paul soon perceived that the religious views of Jesus were ill adapted to the conventional habits of society, and impracticable as a general system. He therefore set about their reform, which, however, ended in his creating an entirely new system of religion. He felt the impossibility of persuading the people into a belief that a crucified Jew could be the promised Messiah, which proved, as he himself acknowledged, "unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." (1st Cor., 1, 2, 3.) He did not hesitate to lay aside the genealogical descent of Jesus from David, and to give out, agreeably to the example of the times, that Jesus was divinely begotten of God, as was Plato, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Confucius, and other founders of new religions; and his announcement that Jesus' death was an atonement or satisfaction to God for all the sins of mankind, who were "justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2, 16)—these were most satisfactory and acceptable doctrines, both to Jew and Gentile, rich and poor.

The precepts and example of Jesus inculcated the most rigid self-denial, the utmost contempt for the things of this world, and an abhorrence of all wealth, power, and dignities. Paul, on the contrary, for the purpose of bringing over the wealthy and opulent, modified all these extreme views. In opposition to Jesus' commands to offer no resistance, but if a man was struck on one cheek to turn the other also,—Paul taught that resistance and anger were allowable. "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." (Eph. 4, 26.) For all the wrongs he suffered at the hands of Alexander the coppersmith, he prayed "the Lord to reward him according to his works!" (2nd Tim., 4, 14.)

Yours truly,

Vaughan, May 14, 1877.

LAYMAN.

By latest advices we find that Mr. Walker, the medium, was speaking at Auckland on May 16th. We also gather from the *New Zealand Herald* of the 17th that arrangements were being made for a public discussion on spiritualism between Mr. Walker and the Rev. Mr. Webb.

PROPHECY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Recently a small pamphlet, entitled "Prophecy and the Eastern Question," has been extensively circulated in Melbourne, and in some quarters has created a considerable *furor*. Its author, Robert Roberts, of Birmingham, appears to belong to a peculiar sect, known as the "Christadelphians," or, "Thomasites," and he is the author of several works on the subject of Prophecy. To give a synopsis of the pamphlet would be intruding too far on your space; but I gladly refer your readers to the work itself, which will repay a perusal. I may mention, however, that it professes to give biblical authority for the approaching fall of the Ottoman empire; war between England and Russia, in which the former is to be worsted; the restoration of the Jews; the appearance and personal reign of Jesus Christ, &c. *En passant*, I would remark that—1st. With regard to the defeat of England by Russia, Edward Hine, in his "Forty-seven Identifications," and his "Flashes of Light," adduces numerous Scriptural passages to show that "Britain can never be conquered;" and—2nd. As to Christ's *personal* reign—that doctrine has been completely exploded in several works, particularly in H. W. Mortimer's "Refutation of the Personal Reign of Our Lord," Melbourne, 1867, which, notwithstanding its many literary imperfections, is in my opinion the most argumentative and convincing work ever published on the subject.

My object in writing is not to answer Roberts' *brochure*, but to examine an argument often brought forward by Christians in proof of the Divine origin of their Bible. They say that if the prophecy concerning the Eastern Question be fulfilled, indubitable evidence will thereby be furnished that the Bible is of Divine origin, and exclusively the Word of God. I propose to look into this argument, and show its erroneousness. This, however, I must defer till your next issue, with your permission, having already made my letter rather lengthy.

Yours truly,

VOX VERITATIS.

JOURNALISTIC JUSTICE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—On Monday, the 30th of April last, I forwarded to the editor of *The Southern Cross* the following letter, in answer to a paragraph that appeared in his journal the previous Saturday. Up to the present moment (May 19th) no notice has been taken of my communication. This fact places in no enviable light the moral *status* of the above-mentioned evangelical print.

Yours faithfully,

T. A. A.

[The following is the letter referred to:—]

A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to correct an erroneous paragraph, copied in your last issue from the *Camperdown Chronicle*, wherein it is stated that Dr. Peebles, during a lecture in the Melbourne Opera House, consigned the editor of the above-mentioned journal, along with Dr. Cameron, to the "lowest sphere in the spirit-world." The only reference Dr. Peebles made to the *Southern Cross*, or to its distinguished editor, was a slight animadversion, in passing, upon the virulent character of the article reviewing the Rev. H. N. Wollaston's essay on Inspiration. No mention whatever was made of Dr. Cameron, or the writer of that article. With regard to the editor of the *Chronicle*, Dr. Peebles stated that if that gentleman were to die *that night* (15th April), he would doubtless proceed to that part of the spirit-world, whither resorted all violators of the truth. These are the facts of the case—facts, you will observe, very different from the untruthful assertions of the rural editor, who, in so repeatedly indulging in his familiar habit of misrepresentation, has clearly evinced his amenability to the charge impliedly preferred against him by Dr. Peebles. Thanking you for the insertion of this, I am, sir,

Yours truly,

T. AYLAN ANDERSON.

29th April.

RE-ORGANISATION OF THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.

DEAR HARBINGER,—“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,” is a precept of the Apostle Paul's, to which I give a cheerful assent, because it is so applicable to the method which all honest seekers after new truths should adopt in their investigations. Were it to be more generally applied by those who presume to sit in judgment on the phenomena called Spiritual, many of them who came to curse would remain to pray. Several of the old members of the late Energetic Circle feeling strongly about the injustice to which Dr. Slade had been subjected on his recent visit to England, and believing from the incontrovertible evidence which they had repeatedly got in the dark, and by other means, of the writing phenomena, and therefore in Dr. Slade's innocence, resolved to re-organise the circle, to sit in the light under strict test conditions, and, if possible, prove the truth of the direct spirit-writing for themselves. Out of the fourteen members composing the former circle at its close in December last, eleven of them have joined the new one, and have resolved to sit every Sunday evening until December next. In order to do away with all appearance of suspicion, they are to sit with the light burning in full, and have got a handle, similar to those on a paint brush, nailed to the end of the slate, which the medium holds, so that his hand can be seen the same as that of every member of the circle. The table is small, of the ordinary make, with a plain bar of wood nailed across its centre underneath for the far end of the slate to rest upon, so that the weight shall be taken off the medium's wrist. To secure the necessary darkness for the spirits, a table-cloth of green baize is thrown over the table, and reaches to the ground. A narrow slit has been cut in this cover, into which the slate, after having been cleaned and examined, is thrust, the long handle only remaining visible, and upon which the medium's hand rests. In addition, a folding-slate is laid on the top of the table, and on each of these slates, both below and above, are placed small crumbs of ordinary slate pencil about the size of a pea for the spirits to write with. The conditions are so simple and complete that if writing is obtained under them, not the slightest grounds will be left for any one to say that it has been produced by fraudulent means. On the floor, also within the area covered by the table curtain, are laid several slips of previously examined and marked papers with a pencil, so as to afford our guides every facility for communicating with us, either by writing on the slates, or on these papers. We have sat on three successive Sundays, all of the leading members of the old circle having joined us. Several beautiful selections on the organ are played by Mr. J., and we have vocal music as well, and prayer. Our circle is truly harmonious, and are all in earnest in the important work they have undertaken. At the first sitting we had strong table movements, and an excellent test of the presence of an intelligent being, though invisible to us. The table rapped that we were not seated properly, and ultimately, after a good deal of conjecture, we discovered that our medium was to be changed. He was ordered to sit opposite to where he was seated, and a young lad, about sixteen years of age, and of a mediumistic temperament, to take his place, and hold the slate instead of him. We all got a complete surprise, as did these two mediums, and we could clearly see that an outside intelligence was controlling and directing our operations. We were subsequently informed that our old spirit-band were with us, that they approved of our method of sitting, and would do all in their power to aid us. Also, that our former medium, not being a test medium, they were to use him as a condenser of the power, and the new medium for the writing. If we would persevere, be of one mind, and in earnest, they would try to give us “the direct spirit-writing under our own conditions;” but we must wait for it, as we had to do for former manifestations. Our circle have had wet weather at their two latest meetings, which has kept some away, and retarded our progress; but we have resolved to be patient, and persevere unto the end. When we have anything of importance to communicate in which your readers are interested, I shall write and let you know.

Sandhurst, 14th May, 1877. THE CHAIRMAN.

AN ADDRESS TO FREE-THINKERS.

(Concluded.)

I EXPECTED to have concluded the above, and to have commenced the "Address to Spiritualists" before this; but finding that the replies kindly accorded to my former communications require to be briefly reviewed, I must postpone the Letters to Spiritualists until the next issue. Whilst fully appreciating the editor's indulgence in throwing open his columns to an enemy (a friendly enemy) to "the faith," I fail to see that he has refuted my statements. Though accused of being sophistical, I beg to say my only desire is to seek and elicit Truth; and if it can be clearly demonstrated to me that my religion is false and somebody else's true, I would instantly embrace the truth. "Rationalist," in the *Harbinger* for April, says he rejects the doctrine of the "Trinity," because he has no sound evidence "that it exists." Then what does he make of Omniscience? of Omnipotence? of Omnipresence? of Eternity? of God? He probably believes in the value of vaccination. Why? Is it because he has sound evidence of its truth? Had he never read anything on the subject but Dr. Sexton's treatise, "Vaccination, Useless and Injurious," he would probably be an utter disbeliever in the efficacy of the treatment. It is impossible to have "sound evidence" on all subjects.

The reason why the majority of "infidels" reject the "Trinity" is that it opposes their reason; in other words, their reason cannot grasp or apprehend it. But they forget that the idea of Eternity, &c., is also incomprehensible. And so are many, many facts, which, all the time, they believe in. Can they tell why snake-virus paralyses the frame? why the magnetic needle points towards the north? why plagues, invisible, traverse the air, "and deal" destruction "round the land?" Can they tell for what purpose human beings are endowed with a "spleen," an organ whose use has not yet been ascertained? I fear I must relinquish all hope of convincing the editor that the analogy, enunciated in my first letter, really does exist; but on his foot-note (page 1205) I would remark:—

(1.) The editor says the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement are not supported by the Bible. Now, as proof that the former dogma is scriptural, I refer to the letter of "Vox" in the same issue; and, as evidence of the scriptural character of the doctrine of Atonement, I refer to the following texts amongst many:—Ephes. v. 2; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. ix. 22; John ii. 2.

All this is extraneous to the original import of my letters, but the editor's note renders it necessary that I should reply.

(2.) The editor discourses about "the incidence of immutable law;" but I must be a little more commonplace, so beg to propose that:—

I. All that exists, exists by God's permission.

II. Evil exists.

III. Therefore evil exists by God's permission.

By "evil" I mean "all unhappiness, calamity, mischief, harm, wickedness, and depravity."

And I conclude that the character of a God, who can permit the existence of all this evil (and Free-thinkers must admit it) could not be injured by there being ascribed to him the possession of the "human passions" portrayed in the Bible. And now, O Rationalists, in the words of Collier, "There are few things reason can discover with so much certainty and ease as its own insufficiency."

"Stoop, stoop, proud man! the gate of heaven is low,
And all who enter in thereat must bend!
Reason has fields to play in, wide as air;
But they have bounds!"

Think not the Infinite will calmly brook
The plummet of the finite in its depths."

FRIENDLY OPPONENT.

[Our correspondent is very persistent, but does not improve her position thereby. We leave "Rationalist" to reply to that part of her letter which refers to him, and this, we apprehend, he will find an easy task. Her comparisons all through are inapplicable, inasmuch as the Trinity is a purely ideal, whilst the various matters she alludes to are positive effects, of which the causes,

in some instances, have not been fully traced, though science and clairvoyance are rapidly solving them. Snake-virus paralyses the brain by a peculiar chemical action upon the blood, the corpuscles of which become distended. The magnetic needle points to the north by the polarity of the magnetic currents. Plagues are caused by gross magnetic emanations, which drift over the earth's surface, and cause zymotic action in the blood. The spleen is a nervous gland, known by medical men to exert an important influence on the mind, and by clairvoyants to be the connecting link between the vital functions of the body and the brain. Our fair correspondent is discreet in relinquishing the hope of convincing us of the analogy referred to, while we retain our reasoning faculties as clear as at present, we are impenetrable to such sophistry. In alluding to the Bible we, of course, refer to the recognised orthodox and universally accepted standard of the Christian Churches (King James's version), so that "Vox's" readings, even if correct, do not apply, whilst the texts quoted by her are not nearly definite enough to build the Trinity upon. All good is relative; absolute evil has no existence. Unhappiness, calamity, wickedness, depravity, &c., are merely discordant conditions, out of which are evolved more harmonious ones, and are as necessary to social development and growth as are clouds and storms to the development and growth of vegetation. Reason, in discovering its own insufficiency, discovers also the insufficiency of an unsubstantial negation, such as that presented by our correspondent. It has a firm footing as far as it goes, and halts only where that footing cannot be found; but it passes a long way beyond her standard ere this limit is reached. With the exception of "Rationalist's" reply, we must decline to insert further correspondence on this subject.—Ed. H. of L.]

SPIRITUALISM AND INSANITY.

"This form of delusion (*Spiritualism*) is very prevalent in America, and the asylums contain many of its victims; nearly ten thousand persons, having gone insane on the subject, are confined in the public asylums of the United States."—Dr. L. S. Forbes Winslow, of London.

"There is not an insane asylum from Maine to Texas which does not contain victims of Spiritualism."—Rev. Dr. Talmage, of Brooklyn.

THE FACTS.

THE number of asylums, or institutions for the insane, in the United States, July 1st, 1876, according to the American Journal of Insanity, was,—

State Institutions...	58
City or County	10
Incorporated Charities	10
Private	9
Total	87

And eight others were then in process of construction. The whole number of patients in these 87 institutions, at that date, as estimated by the same authority, was 29,558.

In December last, 1876, I addressed the following questions to each of the medical superintendents of the institutions for the insane in the United States:—

1st, The number of patients admitted to or under treatment in your institution during the past year; or, if this has not yet been ascertained, then during the previous year?

2nd, In how many cases was the insanity ascribed to religious excitement?

3rd, In how many to excitement caused by Spiritualism?

In answer to these questions I have received either written replies or published official reports, generally both, from 66 superintendents, but of these only 58 are available for the purposes of this exhibit, the remainder not furnishing the information required. The information obtained from the 58 reports and written replies is here given in a tabulated form, and every fact and figure bearing upon this question, favorably or adversely, in the reports and letters received is here presented:—

THE INSTITUTIONS—WHERE LOCATED—THE TOTAL NUMBERS OF PATIENTS DURING PERIODS STATED; AND THE NUMBERS OF THOSE WHOSE INSANITY IS ASCRIBED RESPECTIVELY TO RELIGION AND SPIRITUALISM.

	Year.	Whole Number Admitted or Treated.	No. from Religious Excitement.	No. from Spiritualism.
Maine Insane Hospital, Augusta, Me.	1875-6	374	4	6
Vermont Asylum for the Insane, Brattleboro, Vt.	1875-6	222	3	3
New Hampshire Asylum for the Insane, Concord, N. H.	1876	268	3	3
State Lunatic Hospital, Taunton, Mass.	1876	583	3	1
Worcester State Lunatic Hospital, Worcester, Mass.	1876	829	10	3
Shady Lawn Insane Asylum, Northampton, Mass.	1876	23	3	1
Boston Lunatic Hospital, Boston, Mass.	1876	248	9	1
State Lunatic Hospital, Northampton, Mass.	1876	470	9	1
Butler Hospital for the Insane	1876	198	4	
Connecticut Hospital for the Insane, Middletown, Conn.	1875	616	4	
Retreat for the Insane, Hartford, Conn.	1875	233	4	
New York City Asylum for the Insane, Ward's Island, N. Y.	1875	401	4	
New York City Lunatic Asylum, Blackwell's Island, N. Y.	1875	412	4	
Bloomington Asylum, New York	1875	287	4	
State Lunatic Asylum, Utica, New York	1875	1,004	4	
Munroe County Insane Asylum, Rochester, New York	1876	250	4	
New York State Asylum for Insane Criminals, Auburn, N. Y.	1876	88	4	
Sanford Hall Insane Asylum, Flushing, New York	1876	48	2	
King's County Lunatic Asylum, Flatbush, New York	1876	751	8	
State Homeopathic Asylum, Middletown, New York	1875-6	281	8	
Private Insane Asylum, Pleasantville, New York	1876	15-6	8	
New Jersey State Lunatic Asylum, Trenton, N. J.	1876	487	8	
Western Pennsylvania Hospital, Dikmont, Pa.	1875	170	4	
State Lunatic Asylum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pa.	1875	167	1	
State Hospital for the Insane, Danville, Pa.	1873-6	620	9	1
Insane Department of Philadelphia Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.	1876	383	7	
Friends' Asylum for the Insane, Philadelphia, Pa.	1876	122	7	
Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, Philadelphia, Pa.	1876	268	7	
Insane Asylum, College Hill, O.	1876	95	3	
Western Ohio Hospital for Insane, Dayton, O.	1876	626	20	
Longview Asylum, Carthage, O.	1876	767	5	
Cleveland Hospital for the Insane, Newburg, O.	1876	763	13	2
Northwestern Hospital for Insane, Toledo, O.	1876	158	8	5
Michigan Asylum for the Insane, Kalamazoo, Mich.	1876	850	8	2
Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane, Mendota, Wis.	1876	181	6	
Northern Hospital for Insane, Winnebago, Wis.	1876	530	7	1
Iowa Hospital for the Insane, Mount Pleasant, Iowa	1874-5	1,016	7	1
Hospital for the Insane, Independence, Iowa	1874-5	464	17	2
St. Vincent's Institute for the Insane, St. Louis, Mo.	1874-5	427	7	
St. Louis County Insane Asylum, St. Louis, Mo.	1874-5	721	28	1
State Lunatic Asylum No. 2, St. Joseph, Mo.	1876	126	20	1
Northern Hospital for the Insane, Elgin, Ill.	1875-6	785	18	1
Illinois Central Hospital for Insane, Jacksonville, Ill.	1875-6	998	13	2
Bellevue Place Asylum, Batavia, Ill.	1876	89	2	1
Illinois State Hospital for Insane, Anna, Ill.	1876	146	2	1
Indiana Hospital for Insane, Indianapolis, Ind.	1876	419	8	3
Minnesota Hospital for Insane, St. Peter's, Minn.	1876	253	16	
West Kentucky Lunatic Asylum, Hopkinsville, Ky.	1876	341	6	
Alabama Insane Hospital, Tuscaloosa, Ala.	1876	98		
Central Lunatic Asylum, Richmond, Va.	1871-6	637	40	
Eastern Lunatic Asylum, Williamsburg, Va.	1876	377	4	
Western Lunatic Asylum, Staunton, Va.	1876	423	8	
West Virginia Hospital for the Insane, Weston W. Va.	1876	408	11	
Insane Asylum of North Carolina, Raleigh, N. C.	1874-6	115	11	
Maryland Hospital for Insane, Baltimore, Md.	1876	169	1	
Texas State Lunatic Asylum, Austin, Tex.	1876	109	8	
Nebraska Hospital for the Insane, Lincoln, Neb.	1876	188	9	1
Insane Asylum of California, Stockton, Cal.	1876	1,201	36	15
		28,328	412	59

From the above table it will be seen that of 23,328 insane persons now, or recently, in 58 institutions. 412 are reported insane from religious excitement, and 59 from excitement caused by Spiritualism.

Assuming that in December last there were 30,000 insane persons in the various institutions in the United States (an increase of about 450 since July, 1876), according to the above figures there should be of this entire number 530 insane from religious excitement, and 76 from Spiritualism, and whether we regard the relative numbers in the above table, or as estimated in all the institutions in the country, we find there are seven inmates insane from religious excitement for every one insane from Spiritualism. It will also be seen that while there are 87 asylums, there are only 76 insane Spiritualists within their walls—not one to each institution.

The following table presents the statistics of this subject for long terms of years, of thirteen institutions, as taken from their original reports; the other reports being deficient in like information.

	No. of Years.	Whole No. Admitted or Treated.	From Religious Excitement.	From Spiritualism.
Worcester State Lunatic Hospital, Worcester, Mass.	44	11,302	385	66
Connecticut Hospital for Insane, Middletown, Conn.	9	1,272	24	24
State Lunatic Asylum, Utica, N. Y.	32	11,831	247	32
Pennsylvania Hospital for Insane, Philadelphia, Pa.	35	7,167	212	
Western Pennsylvania Hospital, Dikmont, Pa.	19	2,981	70	7
State Lunatic Asylum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pa.	25	3,988	10	4
Longview Asylum, Carthage, O.	17	3,679	134	12
Western Ohio Hospital for Insane, Dayton, O.	20	3,918	196	12
Iowa Hospital for Insane, Mount Pleasant, Iowa	16	3,028	112	12
Eastern Lunatic Asylum, Williamsburg, Va.	8	554	20	
Alabama Insane Hospital, Tuscaloosa, Ala.	15	1,205	64	1
Indiana Hospital for Insane, Indianapolis, Ind.	26	6,701	469	82
Minnesota Hospital for Insane, St. Peter's, Minn.	10	1,449	71	2
		58,876	1,194	289

Here we have records of 58,876 patients, of which number the insanity of 1994 is ascribed to religious excitement, and that of 229 to the excitement of Spiritualism. According to these figures, 30,000 of these patients (the present number of inmates of our asylums) would show 1016 insane from Religion, and 117 from Spiritualism, and the relative numbers of those whose insanity is ascribed respectively to the excitement of Religion and Spiritualism in former years and at the present time, appear as follows:—

In 30,000 patients in former years, from Religion, 1016; from Spiritualism, 117
 "30,000" at present time, "530"; "76"
 Showing a diminished number of cases from both Religion and Spiritualism at the present time.

An important fact should here be noticed, which is, that as the knowledge of Spiritualism has extended and the number of its adherents has increased, the records show not only a comparatively but an absolutely less number of cases in which Spiritualism is assigned as the exciting cause of insanity, and it is a question whether the greater comparative decrease in the number of cases ascribed to religious excitement may not justly be attributed, at least in a great degree, to the influence of Spiritualism in disseminating more correct, rational, and consequently less revolting ideas, of the nature and extent of future punishment.

Seventy-six insane from Spiritualism at the present time, out of a total of 30,000 inmates of our asylums, are within a fraction of 1 in 395, and one-quarter of one per cent. of the whole number in the asylums, instead of 33½ per cent., as asserted by Dr. Forbes Winslow.

In 42 of the published reports of institutions for the insane which have come to hand, there are tables showing the previous occupations of the patients admitted or treated within one or more years, and from these I find that out of a total of 32,313 male patients, 215 are set down as clergymen, while in same reports the total number of male and female Spiritualists is only 45. Insane clergymen are here in the proportion of 1 to every 150 inmates, while the proportion of insane Spiritualists is only 1 to every 711.

If we estimate the number of Spiritualists in the United States as low as 2,000,000—which I believe to be less than their actual number—we are entitled to a representation in the lunatic asylums of 1333, while the number actually there, according to official reports, is only 76. Thus we are taxed for the support of these institutions without fair representation; but as we are taught by our religion to exercise charity toward all men, we are willing that all clergymen, and the members of their congregations, shall have the lion's share of the advantages these institutions afford. Their needs are greater than ours.

Dr. M. Ranney, Superintendent of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane, in which, in 1874-5, more than 1000 patients were treated, says, in his letter to me, that there is not at the present time one Spiritualist under his care.

According to the Report of the Worcester State Lunatic Hospital, Mass., in which, in 1876, 829 patients were treated, no Spiritualist has been a patient in the institution during the last three years.

Dr. John Curwen, Superintendent of the State Lunatic Asylum at Harrisburg, Penn., in which during the past twenty-five years 3988 patients have been admitted says, in his letter to me, that "We have not had for a long term of years any cases caused by Spiritualism."

In the State Lunatic Asylum at Utica, N. Y., 11,831 patients were admitted during the past 32 years, the insanity of 32 of them being ascribed to Spiritualism, but all these were admitted within the period of five years from 1849, when Spiritualism was in its infancy, and comparatively little understood, and since 1853, or for 23 years, not a patient has been admitted in whose case Spiritualism was assigned as the exciting cause of the insanity.

Dr. B. A. Wright, Superintendent of the Northwestern Hospital for the Insane at Toledo, Ohio, writes me:—

"The cause of the mental derangement of eight patients (in 1876) was religious excitement. Many more act as though religious excitement had been the cause of their insanity, but this is not so stated in the committing papers."

Dr. J. B. Cooker, now or recently City Physician of New Orleans, in a letter to Rev. Dr. Watson, of Memphis, says,—

"I have been in charge of the Lunatic Asylum of the parish of

New Orleans some seven years, and out of a large number that have been admitted and discharged in that time, have never had one case of insanity on account of Spiritualism, but several cases of insanity of other forms of religious belief."

The following is an extract from a letter received from Dr. C. H. Nichols, Superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane at Washington, D. C., in which 931 patients were treated in 1876:—

"I see a paragraph, attributed to Dr. Forbes Winslow, is going the rounds of the newspapers, stating that there are ten thousand lunatics in the United States who were made insane by Spiritualism. My observation leads me to suppose that there may be *one per cent.* of truth in that statement."

The Doctor's estimate is very nearly correct. Instead of there being one per cent. of truth in the wild assertion of Dr. Forbes Winslow, there are only three-fourths of one per cent.

Dr. J. W. Ward, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Lunatic Asylum at Trenton, writes:—

"We have eight cases said to have resulted from Spiritualism, but whether Spiritualism was the cause, or the result of insanity, in these cases, it is difficult to tell. Friends in giving histories of cases are very prone to mistake hallucinations, &c., expressed after insanity is established, and the cause of the malady itself."

Dr. D. R. Burrell, Resident Physician of the Brigham Hall Asylum at Canandaigua, N. Y., says:—

"Statistics in regard to religious excitement and Spiritualism, as causes of insanity, are of little account at present. Friends often speak of these as causes, when they are merely results, as you learn upon obtaining, after weeks or months, a fuller history of the cases. Many of the so-called 'religious' cases I have met did not think of religion, or become religious, until they were touched with insanity. Cannot the same be said of Spiritualism as a cause?"

Dr. H. R. Stiles, Superintendent of the State Homeopathic Asylum for the Insane at Middletown, N. Y., writes:—

"All of us have a touch of supernaturalism in our make-up. Is it surprising, then, that when bodily and mental disease, conjoined, have slackened the rein which common sense (the will of our daily lives) holds upon this lingering relic of supernaturalism, the confused mind, not comprehending its changed relations with the outer world, seeing and hearing many things which seems strange, and (in its then state), fearful and forboding, naturally revives what it has heard of spiritual influences, and the patient rants and raves about and attributes his troubles to Spiritualism? But these delusions generally appear *after* the insanity is recognised, so I am inclined to acquit religion and Spiritualism of this blame to a large extent. At least my own personal experience does not induce me to charge it upon them."

Dr. B. D. Eastman, Superintendent of the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester, Mass., in his report for 1873, says of the causes of insanity assigned by the friends of patients, as stated in the tables in the published reports, that—

"Tables of this character are very unsatisfactory. The friends of patients, from whom the statements of causes usually come, sometimes purposely practice deception, and often display great ignorance by assigning as a cause some comparatively trivial circumstance attendant upon the beginning of insanity, or some symptom of the already fixed malady."

It can readily be understood how appropriately these remarks must apply to persons who exhibit insane symptoms, and who previously have been more or less interested in Spiritualism. Its unpopularity, together with the impression so prevalent that Spiritualists must necessarily be to some extent unbalanced in mind, render it more easy and natural to attribute the mental aberration to this cause than to any other, and thus, doubtless, a certain proportion of the small number of inmates of our asylums upon whose warrants of committal Spiritualism is inscribed as the exciting cause, are in no degree indebted to their belief for the cause of their affliction.

Dr. John P. Gray, editor of the American Journal of Insanity, says in his report:—

"Every great religious movement, indeed, from John Knox and John Wesley to Moody and Sankey, has been accompanied with its per centage of insanity, but that only shows that there is in every community, at any given period, a certain amount of constitutional or incidental morbidity ready to be developed into insanity by every suitable occasion, and religious excitement only stands prominent among the number of moral influences."

These remarks also apply to Spiritualism, though not to the same extent.

Dr. J. Ray, the eminent authority in medical jurisprudence, and who has made a special study of insanity, remarks in the American Journal of Insanity for Oct., 1867:—

"It is to be regretted that the prevalent tendency is to ignore them (the facts of Spiritualism) entirely, rather than to make them

a subject of scientific investigation. It is surprising that physicians, especially, with such well-recognised affections before them as catalepsy, somnambulism, ecstasy, and double consciousness, should jump to the conclusion that all the facts of spiritualism and animal magnetism are utterly anomalous and impossible."

Contrast these wise and cautious words of one of the most experienced specialists in this country, with the unsupported assertions and blind generalizations of Dr. Forbes Winslow, and Rev. Dr. Talmage.

(To be concluded in our next)

THE WESLEYAN SPECTATOR CONVICTED.

THE editor of the *Wesleyan Spectator*, in his issue of April 27th, continues to manifest his tolerant and gentlemanly tendencies in this manner:—

"Mr. Peebles vouches for the reality of spirit-pictures and photographs, but who shall vouch for Mr. Peebles? There are residents of Yarra Bend, of equal if not superior natural abilities and culture to the American 'Seer,' who are as confident as he is of even more extraordinary things. But when a gentleman with lack-lustre eyes and introspective look assures us that he is the Angel Gabriel, we are not the less satisfied that the speaker is under a delusion because he has faith in his own pretensions. And as we know that in every instance where the so-called 'spirit-pictures' have been examined by intelligent unbelievers imposture has been detected, Mr. Peebles must accept the alternative of attempting to deceive or being deceived."

While it is generally conceded that Wesleyan Christians need considerable watching, it is positively certain that there are multitudes of intelligent free-thinking men in all English-speaking nations who require no "vouchers." Dr. Peebles is one of this class.

Singularly destitute of originality, this Wesleyan paragonist continues to echo, or repeat, parrot-like, the cheap newspaper "slang" of calling Dr. Peebles the "American Seer." And yet, can anything different be expected of one of these latter-day Wesleyans who has been "quickened," and "born again?" Prayer is never amiss. We, therefore, pray that this Wesleyan Christian, writing in the *Spectator*, may be frequently quickened; frequently "born again"—and "born" better each time, for humanity's sake. Amen.

"We know, says this Wesleyan 'that in every instance where the so called spirit-pictures have been examined by intelligent unbelievers imposture has been detected.' This statement is false *unqualifiedly false*. When, Oh, when will these Christians cease to 'lie for the glory of God?' A few years since, when Mr. Mumler, the most prominent of the American spiritualists, was arraigned in New York for 'imposture,' he employed counsel, went into court, and came out victorious. His spirit-pictures were proven *under oath* to be *genuine*. After godly sorrow—full confession—and due repentance for this late and all past sins, will this Christian editor have the kindness hereafter to at least try and approximate the truth when writing of Spiritualists and Spiritualism.

Considering the heathen origin and demoralising influences of the Wesleyan Church dogmas, we do not expect as much of him, or any "babe in Christ," as we do of free-thinking scholarly journalists connected with the secular press. But not to be too exacting, this *Spectator* man can certainly *try* to write the truth.

"If at first you don't succeed,
"Try, try again."

—O—

THE "Mediums" by last mail contain accounts of materializations and other marvellous manifestations, through the mediumship of Miss Wood, of Newcastle, under the strictest conceivable test conditions, the medium being screwed up in a cage prepared by the investigator—Mr. Adshead—and friends, at his own house. Under these conditions, a beautiful female form was materialized, walked out into the room, touched several of the spectators, and wrote a message on paper handed to her by Mr. A. In the issue of March 30th are illustrations of the seance room, cage, &c.

MR. J. M. PEEBLES has just arrived from Sydney by the City of Adelaide, and will commence his final course of lectures here, at the Opera House, on Sunday next. We commend his article on "Organisation" to the attention of Spiritualists here, and trust it will lead to some practical effort being made in that direction.

OUTLINES OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY FREDERIC BOND.

No. V.—"THE SOUL."

—o—
 "The Stars shall fade away, the Sun himself
 Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
 But *then* shalt flourish in immortal youth,
 Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
 The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds!"

THE belief in the distinctive existence of the soul, or something that dwells in and outlives the external body, has been entertained since the earliest ages. The question of the origin, nature, and destiny of the soul constituted one of the leading questions discussed by the various ancient philosophic sects; and the conclusions they arrived at concerning it, differing as they did so greatly from each other, go to show the extreme diversity of opinion prevalent in the early ages in regard to the subject. Plato fixed the seat of the soul in the head, and Heraclitus held that it was a spark of the stellar essence (*scintilla stellaris essentie*); whilst other philosophers, though of a less important school, contended that apart from the human organization the soul did not exist. The philosophers of Egypt, a country generally considered to be the first seat of learning, taught, however, that not only did the soul exist, but also (according to Herodotus) that it was immortal. They employed numerous hieroglyphics to represent it, such as a heron, a ram, a basket of fire, or a hawk with a human face; and instead of bewailing the death of great and good men, they rejoiced at their translation to higher spheres of usefulness in the world of departed spirits. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul Plato accepted unreservedly, and supported it—though his arguments were not considered by Cicero to be powerful or satisfactory—by his theory of innate ideas. The future state of the soul he made dependent upon the tone of its earthly probation. If a man had lived "unspotted from the world," his soul was absorbed into the Divine Spirit; if not, it was relegated to a place of punishment—the soul of an indolent person being transformed into a beast; that of an effeminate man into a woman; that of a volatile, frivolous person into a bird, and that of an ignoramus into a fish.

In modern times, likewise, the word "soul" conveys a variety of interpretations to different minds. Some—among whom may be classed the Spiritualists—contend that the human soul is an ultimate element in the universe, and *ergo* independent of organisation for its existence; whilst others assert that it has no actual existence of itself, but is merely an expression of the force of matter. This latter hypothesis is the one disseminated by the majority of the scientific community at the present day, and the remarkable rapidity with which it is gaining ground shows how opportune is the spiritual science in helping to counteract its baneful effects. Scientists of the Tyndal school maintain—and perhaps with some degree of reason—that it is not within the ordinary province of science to discover the elements of the "soul." They have almost—nay, some of them already have—arrived at the point of ignoring the word altogether, simply referring to it in a spirit of kindly toleration. Because the soul cannot be measured by a yard-stick, weighed by a pair of scales, or viewed with a microscope, they hold that it does not therefore exist; and those who entertain a contrary opinion, they regard with a feeling either of forced pity or smothered contempt. It never occurs to them that other principles similar to the soul—for the soul, in one sense, is a principle—cannot pass through similar tests. If one were inclined to resort to the *tu quoque* style of argument, one could easily retort by challenging such scientists to measure eighteen yards of centre of gravity, or say how many spoonfuls of chemical affinity are required to fill a pint jug. And yet they do not, cannot deny the existence of these principles.

But what does Spiritualism teach concerning the soul? The theory inculcated by spirits of the highest order is this—that man is composed of an external body, inside of which is a "bright silvery one," denominated the spirit-body, whilst within this again is the soul itself.

Spirit intelligences say that the soul has existed from eternity; that it is a moral being, distinctive, independent of matter, and retaining its individuality after its release from the external body; and that it is indestructible and eternal. The origin of the soul is beautifully referred to by Wordsworth in the following lines:—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
 The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter darkness,
 But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
 From God, who is our home."

Spiritualism teaches that in the spirit world the soul has opportunities of progressing upwards and onwards from sphere to sphere, increasing in knowledge, and thus creating its own happiness. Suppose a man to have been a voluptuary whilst on earth, he will gravitate to a position for which he is fitted in the world of souls. No amount of death-bed repentance, no end of priests' prayers, bags of gold, charitable endowments, no mere calling on the magic name of "Jesus!" will save such a man from the inevitable doom he has earned for himself. As he has made his bed so will he lie. But on the other hand, all hope of amelioration is not withheld from him. The very worst criminal will be able in the future world to extricate himself, by means of higher aspirations and well doing, from the Slough of Despond into which his vicious propensities and indulgencies have plunged him.

In order to diminish the likelihood of interminable confusion which the indiscriminate use of the word "soul" causes with many thinkers, it has been suggested by a well-known propounder of the Continental School of Spiritualism that it should be prefixed by some qualifying term, indicative of the point of view we adopt when discussing matters related to the soul. This idea has certainly many advantages to recommend its adoption, and is, moreover, a method employed by scientific men when considering the various subjects that appertain to their own particular domain—in relation to oxygen and hydrogen for instance. It is to say *vital soul* for the principle of all material life; *intellectual soul* for the principle of intelligence; and *spiritual soul* for the principle of the soul's existence and individuality after death. In this case, the term "vital soul" would be applied to all organic beings, whether plants, animals, or men; the term "intellectual soul" could be applied only in reference to animals and men; and the term "spiritual soul" to men alone.

Orthodox Christianity deludes its disciples with the idea that let a man have been of the most wicked character whilst sojourning on this mundane sphere; let his sins be as scarlet, yet, if he will only repent at the eleventh hour and call upon the name of Jesus—a name that Christian preachers so frequently profane—all will be forgotten and forgiven, and the soul of that man will be eventually ushered into the presence of its maker to receive the expected reward—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." Below, his life has been spent in cursing the Almighty, disregarding all moral and spiritual obligations, persecuting the fatherless and the widow, and pandering to pay and to power; above—such are the magical effects of uttering a stereotyped phrase on a death-bed—his spirit, these Christian preachers tell us, will pass immortal years in chanting the praises of Him whom he thought little of during his earthly career. Contrast these teachings with those of Spiritualism, and the difference is as startling as it is boundless. On the one hand, Christianity teaches that the wife-beater, the murderer, the licentious, and the arrogant may enjoy the society of the pure angels in Heaven by simply repenting of their sins when death approaches; on the other hand, Spiritualism warns us that our punishment in the next world will be in proportion to the wrongs we have committed in the flesh: if we put our fingers in the fire we must bear the pain. It can thus be easily perceived how it is that Christians, as a rule, hesitate to embrace the doctrines of Spiritualism. It can, furthermore, be readily divined why journals of the *Melbourne Spectator* class evince such ardent anxiety to deter their readers

from investigating the phenomena and doctrines of Spiritualism. But it would perhaps be profitable to them to remember that the terms which they employ in order to attain their object simply furnish the outside world with fresh exemplifications of good-hearted Tom Hood's celebrated triplet—

"Alas for the rarity
Of Christian Charity
Under the Sun!"

Such journals are well acquainted with the fact that in Spiritualism, the champion of spiritual and intellectual freedom, they have a formidable and uncompromising foe, and that let the battle of Truth *versus* Error be waged as long as it may, the Spiritualists will always be found at their guns.

SPIRITUAL ETHICS.

PERHAPS the finest philosophical treatise on Miracles and Modern Spiritualism ever written, is that of A. R. Wallace. This simple and concise synthesis, of scholarly style and scientific method, displays a perspicuity and penetration well worthy of his world-wide reputation, as an eminent leader of the most advanced school of evolution, and by its vigorous and logical reasoning secures for him a respectful hearing in the present, and a grateful Fame in the Future, from many who will wisely make it the Text Book of their supermundane studies. Among the many valuable expositions which this work contains the prominence given to the ethical aspects of the movement is another token of the ability of its author. For a new Religion which did not commend itself to the moral perceptions of mankind could never hope to obtain the slightest hearing or encouragement. One of the greatest agents in the revolution which is taking place in the popular mind is the power of Conscience. Its growth is thrusting aside the crust of Conservatism as incompatible with true humanity. It arraigns before the bar of private judgment the most sacred principles and most exalted truths, demanding that they prove their consonance with Justice, or straightway depart from us.

Materialism is in this direction as much as any other open to objection, for measured by an ideal standard its imperfections are at once manifest. Virtue and Vice are not in this sphere uniformly rewarded with their deserts. We see many striking examples to the contrary, and cannot find more than a very general and unsatisfactory moral order in our midst. Yet to the existence of such and the desire for it, our consciousness involuntarily testifies. It is acknowledged to be the very backbone of our social Life, and the basis of all Progress, while we must admit that the experiences of earth do not afford any explanation of its all-important functions, or justify the honor which is universally attached to it. Materialism is certainly under no obligation to prove the action of such laws, since by its very nature it recognises only a transient and unfinished power working in Being without feeling or responsibility. But it is bound to account for the peculiar place which ideas like this occupy, and the extreme control they have obtained over the human intelligence. It must educe a consistent theory in which we may behold the operation of circumstances giving birth to such an offspring, acting in a manner notably differing from that of its fellow faculties. When this question is disposed of it would still be compelled to take a lower place as a Doctrine than one which overcame these deficiencies, and presented a plan of the cosmos complete in all particulars. But Materialists are too hard pushed in even more cardinal positions than this, to be able to spare forces for its defence, though still strengthened, as they so often are, by the greater absurdities of their old enemy the Church, which, pretending to preach an order of a very definite kind, has produced hitherto only a grossly Immoral Despotism as supreme over us. The Purgatory of Roman Catholicism is a step in the right path, but the endless torments to which all Christianity has doomed its enemies is a foul libel upon the Divine Love and Wisdom. The result of such a teaching is vicious in

several ways, because it tends to drive those already wrong to the deepest excesses of Despair, and because it requires only a low quality of goodness from its devotees, professing to recognise no distinction beyond bare salvation, after which all gradations are lost in one mass of inanity. Modern Philosophy deprived the clergy of their last stronghold when it utterly repudiated the thought of any Punishment, as such, substituting for it the two requirements of Restraint and Restitution. The prevention of future crime, and reparation made for that past, by these means looking forward to a real redemption which should in time fit the fallen one for reinstatement among his fellows. And if such be the verdict of Earth, what must be the Economy of Heaven, or the Omniscience of a Deity that would deny it? "Is Man more just than God?" asked the eloquent chieftain of the ill-fated Girondins at the famous last supper which preceded the guillotine. "Is Man more just than God?" cry human hearts revolting from the Faith that would so teach them. It is impossible. The inconceivable gradations by which what we name good passes into its lower stages, entitled evil, are an insurmountable obstacle in the path of so glaring an injustice. No line is possible which should thoroughly separate them. The deepest ignominy and depravity of human nature could never merit more than a temporary discipline. Its highest purities are not without some stains. Between these is an almost infinite range wherein mortals mingle the good and less good in their lives. The Theological conception is one that could only proceed from Ignorance and callous Brutality. It shows that the minds of its devotees are still blind to the simplest facts of nature and experience, that its origin was evidently in an age of savage and barbarous bigotry, and that the creed to which it is attached is one morally repulsive and spiritually impure. Other tenets are of the same character, and weighed in the balances of Right, the finest and holiest of the tests of Truth, display the degraded stultification of superstitious frenzy. The whole fabric of the Vicarious Atonement and its supporting hallucinations is a gigantic monstrosity, outraging the most fundamental ethical principles. It imputes imbecility to its God, cowardice to his creatures, fury to its Divine Parent, deception to his Divine offspring, and debases all to despicable parts in a diabolical drama, which leaves the whole inner universe in ruins. Well may it merit the scorn of gifted sceptics who prefer their own incompleteness to the fanatic fables of monkish maniacs.

The Ethical Revelation of Spiritualism takes another and a higher stand, natural to its sacred source. It may be divided into two parts—first considering the Moral Order it discloses, and next the Moral Teachings of those discovering it. The Moral Order so opened to us is *perfect*, proceeding from Perfection. *Rewards and penalties are exactly proportioned to individual necessities*, by an unwavering Justice working outwards from the soul. The vista before us is indeed the complement and completion of this. At Death the physical garment is laid aside, and the spirit steps forth without disguise. If it has devoted itself to sensual indulgences, limited its aims in selfishness, or dulled its intelligence by excess or neglect, it is now unhappy, for deprived of all the means to these lower pleasures, it retains the desire for them engrained by experience now torturing it with the burning thirst for an impossible gratification. Those it has injured it must repay with diminished means. Not that it is by any external force commanded to such reparation, but because sooner or later becoming aware of the possibility of deliverance from its miserable state, or Hell, it seeks to escape, and is then by its own intuitions, or by the direction of those brighter guardians ever endeavouring to rouse the better faculties, pointed to the path by which it may ascend. A rigorous restitution is required, and purgatorial struggles before it becomes freed, and enters that condition which the good do at once. *State in the other World, or rather in the other stages of this World, means place.* The segregation in a vessel filled with pebbles is an example. When shaken the heavier seek the bottom, as stones sink in a stream, and so they arrange themselves in successive layers according to their quality, the least material above.

Death is such a shaking. The lees of Life are at the lowest depths. It is a question of qualities like consorting with and being attracted to like, and the lightest (those most full of Light) take the highest station. Heaven and Hell are therefore States and Places. Heaven signifies that of the harmoniously unfolded mind, and Hell the condition of the more unfortunate. With mathematical precision every spirit gravitates to its peculiar sphere, and is happy or perfect in proportion to the goodness of its earthly Life, and the development it has there attained. Those who have cultivated the intellectual and moral faculties find there a wider scope for their exercise and improvement, in the acquisition of Truth, and the missions of loving kindness. These are their desires, and being satisfied they are in Heaven. There is no division between these two, but they pass insensibly one into another, forming a single flight of stairs. The period of probation corresponds exactly to the offences, but all eventually, and most before any very considerable time, commence that progression, whose ultimate is inconceivably glorious. For every soul there is a swift salvation as soon as it is sufficiently educated, and thereafter Eternity is the field of its Delight. Pain is but the minutest portion of Being, which prolongs itself through more Eons of rapture than the seconds of trial which its preparation for them necessitated. And here we pass into the second aspect, of Truths taught us by those revealing this magnificence of joy. All Evil, so called, ends in good, is indeed good in the making. There is no suffering which is not beneficial to some, no pang which is not needed for the fruition of all. The infinitesimal sorrow of creation is but a child's cry in its darkness, and will cease when it can see. Spirits tell us that there is a very definite Hell for those erring, whose Remorse is far more searching than the fabled flames of Gehenna, and that this is only to be avoided and the opposite bliss attained, by a pure and intellectual life of active beneficence. Yet they do not inculcate the otherworldliness of popular preachers, who would drive men like sheep into the fold by much cursing, and gratuitous gesticulation. Swedenborg's majestic principles are stern to all good that does not spring from a natural love and worship of it. Those who are virtuous only from necessity, honest because untempted, or charitable by custom, will find little accruing satisfaction here or hereafter, but indeed bemoan their nakedness and want. Happiness is a secondary attribute, unsought by the noble. They receive it as a true man does the wages of his work, required for his support, but by no means as the end of his labor, which is for others, and as the old Rabbi said find the reward of one good deed is the power to perform another.

The spirits who attend a modern medium are in by far the majority of cases superior to average minds, and in a properly conducted circle invariably above the sitters. The lowest manifestations are rarely more than mischievous, the highest transcend eulogy. The eloquence of these ascended souls in many cases surpasses the finest utterances of recorded inspiration, as they unroll before us the true cosmogony, in which a Moral Order is all supreme. They are never defiled as are Biblical communications by curses and blasphemy;—they never command such iniquitous acts as those of the Jewish Jehovah, nor, as he did, lay claim to an infallible and omniscient power, which is now the scoff of science. They are wise and loving, gentle and forgiving, patient and pure. Their words breathe Charity and Toleration, their actions are those of great and generous souls. They are very humble, and appeal only to the cautious judgment of their hearers, yet they are so cultured that they have made what is called Spiritualism the grandest system of Rationalism ever placed before the world. Enjoining prayer, and self-sacrifice, study and meditation, they induce an enlightened Faith in a Religion of Nature and of Law, based upon a Scientific Philosophy, which supplants Hope, supersedes Belief, surfeits Knowledge, and surpasses Imagination.

Aware of this, the indignation with which many at first meet the charge of Diabolism, as explaining Spiritualism, soon becomes contempt or mockery. Gloomy believers tell us that their "co-mates and

brothers in exile," on the other side, are deceiving us. Now, we have sufficient knowledge of character to admit that probably minds as undeveloped as theirs, do tend to such erratic courses, but nevertheless rely upon the same power which enables us to overcome their attacks in this world, to repel them on their invasion from the next. We overlook their suspicious knowledge of the ways of their familiars, to point out that if attracted to them by similarity of taste and disposition, it does not follow that they should attach themselves to us. Far from it, the very opposite must be the case. As the clerical party are in constant association with these dark-hued rovers (who, after all then, are not in the pit, but "journeying up and down on the face of the earth"), they would of necessity be entirely repelled from such determined opponents of the Church as we are. If God lets loose the Devils on us, surely some of the Angels can come too, and possess powers no less apposite. The charming inconsistency which forgets the attestation of its own scriptures, and ignores the fact that its creed arose in a similar fashion, is matter rather for amusement than reproach. Inasmuch as these Demons reiterate and extend the teaching of the New Testament in almost all its moral maxims; proclaim the same Religion which Jesus literally did; so far forget their malevolence, as not only to announce an unerring after Justice, which will repay all people in their own kind, but also heal the sick, give sight to the blind, and cause the lame to walk (and in this city continue so to do); moreover, comforting the afflicted, bringing to thousands of Atheists and Materialists a higher light and trust, and last but not least, so supplying the deficiencies of the Theologic scheme, that it has quietly adopted Truth after Truth, proclaimed by Spiritualists in spite of bitter antagonism; furnishing both assistance to the creed and its preacher, who can grow voluminous in pious wrath at his thinning flock; if, after all these things, the Devil still persists, Modern Christianity, which is a Devil Worship pure and simple, will have a higher claim upon the intelligent classes than it has had since the massacre of the Albigenses, and the burning of Dissenters under an English Protestant Queen. Those who despise such palliation may point at it with disgust, as a Mammon worship, whose only God is gold; as a Moloch worship built upon blood of innocence, and still pouring it out in the furnaces of lust and crime before their idol, Self; as a Fetichism, which, after ages of intolerant persecution, bows before the shrine of Custom and Respectability. Its enemies may do this, but we must defend it, for we know that once in its essence it was more pure; it was anciently a primitive form of Spiritualism, and therefore we extend the hand of kindness to its faltering priests mumbling at dumb oracles, and cry, "Come up higher." We forgive them, for they know not what they do, nor surmise that to all futures Spiritualism and true Christianity stand and fall together. They cannot fall, being of God, for the soul of each is Truth and Goodness.

Spiritualism reveals a Future State, evincing a moral order of the universe in every respect ineffably superior to either that of Materialism, which is really baseless and meaningless, or that of Christianity, which is immoral and unjust. The argument that it has a Demoniacal origin is one ridiculously fallacious, and palpably absurd. Arising from a mythologic and unproved belief, it is a series of contradictory assumptions, severally suicidal, and collectively impotent. The real point of departure between Christianity in its modern form and Spiritualism is Reason—the sect demanding its renunciation, the liberal movement its sovereign exercise. If renounced it is by its own act, and is therefore invalid, if retained it unhesitatingly witnesses to the falsities of the prevalent Theology. It is too late now to unearth the often answered analogies of Bishop Butler under the guise of a "friendly opponent," who might do better to recognise her immediate plagiarism of that able churchman's arguments. Every infant is aware that it is impossible to prove a negative, and to any statement of things outside our knowledge we can only refuse assent. To believe we require positive evidence, and not a tissue of trivial probabilities compounded by the confusion of Sense and Reason.

Faith is folly, Evil is a myth, Pain an education; Reason never contradicts itself, and Experience is the only means of its culture. Nature is the best teacher, and in her we find no creed. Spiritualism is her one interpreter, beholding visible and invisible, material and spiritual things—in Metaphysics equal, in Theology and Ethics superior, to any existing System of Thought.

ASPYRAL.

NOTES OF A TRANCE LECTURE.

CUSTOM.

THE history of human progress has been styled "The Book of Life," in which we may read forward along brightening pages the past and future. Consider these things,—this book,—and behold, an arrangement is manifest in all its parts, similar to that of a thousand other volumes; however new or strange its contents may be. Its pages are numbered, its lines follow one another in a certain order, and are read in a certain way (universally from left to right), it is divided into chapters, its parts are connected in this package fashion, and are, for protection, bound in stronger material, which acts as an external covering. Now, none of these things is done in obedience to despotic command. They follow the pleasure of the Book-maker, yet are always of like character. They are in truth the creatures of that unwritten but mighty Law, called Custom, which, without pomp or circumstance, rules men more than a thousand monarchs. What is the origin of custom? In the first place, the *Invention* of some superior mind, adopted by man from its second parent, *Convenience*, for examine the illustration given, and you will find that all these peculiarities of numbered pages, ordered letterness, and outward covering, were conveniences, by which the Book was rendered more useful. So it is with all customs, they are not the spontaneous generations, but the natural outgrowth of man's nature; changing and changed by the conditions which surround him.

Customs are of two classes, the one *Temporary*, the other *Eternal*.

Recall to recollection the age when all the utterances of Europe, its scientific knowledge, its philosophic wisdom, and its religious belief, were enshrouded in the darkness of what to the masses were unknown tongues. Those languages were the invention of earlier races, to whom they were a convenience, but this custom of expression became in late ages and under other skies the greatest of evils. It limited the range both of the scholar, and the people, hanging like a dead weight upon their noblest aspirations, choking with a foul Pharisaism the growth of mind, chilling with its unnatural lifelessness even the accumulation and spread of knowledge. It was temporary and harmful,—it was swept away, and every nation in its own tongue embalmed the truths it knew, by which the great body of the people were enlightened and encouraged. From this they started onward once again in a triumphant career of Progress, which has never since ceased, and never can cease, for this Custom, dictated by Reason, for Convenience, is *Eternal*. And why? What is it that thus distinguishes the two classes? The answer is simple. We now know that the world moves, that mankind grows, and the universe of to-day is not that of yesterday, nor will it endure to-morrow. Change, now discerned to be Progress, is omnipotent, and omnipresent. All that would endure must bow to it. Temporary customs are those fixed and final, which cannot alter in accordance with their environment. *Eternal* Customs are those which possess the power of adaptation, and march with Humanity. The custom of using Greek and Latin as the only literary speech was a stationary and unchangeable one, therefore it was outgrown, it was cast aside. The custom of each people possessing its intellectual treasures, and disseminating them in its own tongue, is one that adapts itself to all peoples, to all times, and to all tongues, it is forever national, and convenient, and is therefore an *Eternal* one.

Yet, again, *Temporary* Customs are divisible into two classes,—those we have styled *Eternal* are one, because they are all good, but there may be *Temporary* Customs, Good and Evil. For instance, in the northern nations strong meats and strong drinks were daily fare. Leading an animal existence, they gorged and intoxicated themselves often. This was temporarily excusable in their imperfection, but only a very modified form of it is permissible in the present day, when some pretence to an intellectual life has been arrived at. What to the present or future spiritual man, are gross excesses, may be pardoned to those who, begotten of ancestors abnormally indulgent, are, as it were, compelled by their inherited organisations to, in degrees, indulge those lower propensities also. These customs then are temporarily good and variable. But the Custom of reversing the Life of Nature; giving up night to revels, and the day to rest, is no more excusable in you, than it was in the orgies of the Saxon Banquet Halls, or those of the licentious nobles of oligarchic times. Such a practice is one unmitigatedly injurious, displaying an utter ignorance of physical and magnetic laws, or such a contempt for them as must unavoidably result in weakness and sufferings. Such are briefly the great classes of Customs, those *Temporary*, because final; those *Eternal*, because adaptable, and of the *Temporary* again there are those belonging to certain stages of development, and those pertaining to no such stages, being indeed directly subversive and contradictory of them.

(After a pause the same intelligence resumed.)

I would desire to direct your attention to an interesting feature in History. The Progress of Man is insensible, and like that of a crawling thing, whose means of motion we are unable to discern; or still more, after observation, does it resemble, that of those many-footed insects, which make use in their advance of almost innumerable limbs. First the head or intellectual portion is projected, after a slight pause that next it follows, and so the wave of motion passes along till all has progressed, and when these waves are continuous, several parts of the creature move simultaneously. Dividing Man's Progress largely into *Mental* and *Physical*, we can on the one hand trace the history of an idea, received, but not comprehended, by some inspired mind, and then drifting up and down the literature of a people perhaps for centuries, repeated, sometimes extended, by its highest thinkers, but still speculative, dim, and inefficient. At last moved by these, the man arises, probably himself inspired, and perhaps ignorant of its previous reception, and from him it goes out into the conflict of opinion. Distorted, apparently destroyed, or forgotten, moves, maimed, burdened, and broken, ever resuscitates its parts, until at last it becomes an universal Truth, a basic Principle. On the other side, take the encroachment upon the wilderness by settlers, another and another disturbing the reign of its native denizens, clearing its forests, penetrating its depths. Coarse and uncouth men, without perception of the end of all their deeds; women, without refinement; children, without education; labor, without recognition; Death, without higher aspiration. Yet from these hard hands, sinewy frames, and narrow intellects; in the felling of a tree, the bridging of a stream, the holding of a plough, the reaping of the Harvest, the beginning of a Civilisation are laid, which after a few years makes itself Lord of all that region, and sends its Cities smoke and Railway scream over the conquered territory.

On so little, and on so many feet, does the creature move. And the intellectual part moves first, though never too far for its grosser connections, by-and-bye to follow it. Far back the intellect of Pythagoras, and Buddha, grasped the Truths which we have scarcely learned, and after which even now the Race, slowly drags itself. Jesus and Confucius, still remain above the high-water mark of Hebrews or Chinese, crawling after them, and where they are now,—even to that height of glory, these must come. For though the intellect moves first, it draws its kindred after it. How pitiful, how meagre, how unsatisfactory, materialistic History lies,—yea literally lies,—seeing but the scantiest surface of the winding stream, and then dazed and dazzled by the

Light reflected from it. Materialists cannot understand how in the darkness of those antique days, amid the ignorance of a savage world, such stupendous Seers arose, who mock our boasted Progress even now to rival the lowest of their deeds. They cannot understand how infants lisp Truths which the Angels cannot add to—truths of the great God guiding all to good, of the everlasting angel ministry, of the eternal growth here, and more hereafter. They cannot understand these things—for these are spiritual. Tho' ages back the world was barbarous,—the spirits from higher planets, or our own perfected, could whisper those great truths, which have till now upheld Humanity. The royalty of soul rises above the covering, and makes the child a prophet. These things they cannot understand, and while they do not, History is unknown.

Spiritual History has yet to be written, but it shall be, and that fully. Given from the remotest epochs, even from the world's birth it shall reveal to future ages all that has been in the past. The light reflected on the stream behind us, shines on us now, and gilds all ways before. In that light, and with Inspiration of a hundred spheres, the curtain shall be uprolled—God's dealings with the Universe and Man, through his resplendent angels, shall be the theme, which shall make all things new.

H. T. B.

REVIEW.

LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE, DESCRIBED BY A WRITING MEDIUM. LONDON: ALLEN, 1876.

FROM time to time books appear that make an epoch in Spiritualism. First of all came the great work of A. J. Davis, "Nature's Divine Revelations," which showed that profound and wide-ranging thought was not incompatible with a belief in spiritual phenomena. Some years later followed the two volumes of "Spiritualism," the joint production of Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter—a work that is, and will ever remain, one of the most perfect classics of the "new learning;" this went a step further, for while the earlier writings of Davis had chiefly to do with the earth, those of Edmonds unveiled a "New Heaven," and one not only new but rational also. Still later, in "The Soul of Things," Professor Denton showed unimaginable powers in the human mind; and the logical sequel of this work appeared in that much-abused and very much mis-read book "Art Magic." So that, attention having been forced by a purely scientific work that no man of science then or now living could have written, the grand divisions of the spiritual world having been pointed out, and the mind having been shown to possess objective power, we are prepared to conceive the spirit world—at all events approximately—and the epoch of monographs has begun.

Of this epoch, that in which real and definite knowledge may be communicated partly, if not in whole, we now offer the first fruits. Hitherto it has been chiefly by types and figures that our friends have spoken, and only those who have made a serious and careful study of spiritual literature—a study at least as grave as that for an M.A. examination in Greek—those only can realize the difficulty in separating position from symbolic assertions. In "Life beyond the Grave," however, we have a monograph of the condition of spiritual life that is nearest to our own, and we have no hesitation in stating that though glimpses of the information here given may have been obtained by students, the appearance of this treatise is of sufficient importance to constitute an era in spiritual knowledge.

It is not every one who dies that is taken up at once to what Spiritualists have fallen into the habit of calling "The Spheres." To many the surface of the earth presents the only interests they care about or believe in, and in all there is something analogous to specific gravity that keeps them down. The purer, the freer from

earthly passions and stains that the spirit is, the higher, the more easily it rises; but if we examine ourselves, if we observe those with whom we are brought into contact, we shall see that there are but few who are free from that earthly gravitation. Many, indeed most of us, are thus attracted to the earth, and reside on its surface for a longer or a shorter term; and it is with these that this volume has to do.

The great difficulty, that material things are invisible to spiritual eyes, and yet that spirits see and can enjoy the scenery and the business of earth, is explained with admirable clearness; and we only regret that the length of the demonstration prevents us from transferring it to our pages. Perhaps more interesting is the description of the appearance which a modern city presents to spiritual eyes. The key to it all is the fact that objects are twofold; that wherever there is a material body, there also is a spiritual body, and that the two *are separate*. Thus, a house is built and with it rises a spiritual house, but let us suppose that the material house is burned down; now, the operation of burning makes a division between the two houses—the material one disappears, the spiritual remains; a new material house is built, and with it the new spiritual, while the old spiritual one remains. It is easy to conceive the confusion that is the result, especially when it is considered that all reconstructions have a similar though far less typically complete effect.

Spirits do not hear our voices; they hear our thoughts, and the sharper and stronger the thought, the greater is the impression it makes on what corresponds in them to our organ of hearing. This is the cause of a strange difficulty that they have in listening to human conversations. Very frequently, persons in speaking have very different thoughts to those they express, and this without intentional falsehood. But both sets of thoughts—the spoken and the unspoken—are equally audible to spiritual organs, and the confusion that results, though sufficiently amusing to the new-comers into the spiritual land, quickly becomes wearisome or worse. It is when people are talking excitedly, and do not give themselves time to talk much to themselves between their different remarks, that their conversation is more interesting to spirits. "As a rule, however, it is not profitable to listen to the conversation of people in the flesh—not merely on account of the difficulty in making out what you really meant to say to one another, but because of the objectionable nature of a good deal that is *not* uttered aloud for others to hear."

On the subject of prayer, our author is nearly "orthodox," though he gives it developments that will be very strange to most. Prayer, he says, should be addressed to God: for, though spirits are the agents, and though they may answer in some way requests directly made to them, yet it is from the awful depths of the hidden divinity that the impulse of answer comes. Will and longing are also modes of prayer, and the description of the manner in which they act in different circumstances—in war for instance—is extremely curious and interesting.

The subject of marriage occupies several pages, and is perhaps the saddest part of the book. The pictures of mis-matched pairs are gloomy indeed, and fortune-hunting on either side is shown as it really is—a legalised prostitution. We have not space, however, to enter into this subject, and can only refer our readers to the work itself. The condition of persons drowned at sea, and of those destroyed by fire, is well narrated; evidently the same things are described here that were pictured some little time ago in a curious pamphlet by a medium since dead (Diakkaism, by A. Gardner), and a comparison of the two works shows singularly well the difficulty of clearly describing spiritual things in earthly language.

Finally, we offer our warmest thanks to the medium to whom we are indebted for this work, and heartily recommend it to our readers.

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WE have the satisfaction to report that Mr. John Tyerman is progressing favorably under magnetic treatment, and confident hopes are entertained of his thorough restoration.

ORGANISATION AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE

By J. M. PEEBLES.

If order is one of Heaven's first laws, organisation is certainly a help, if not an absolute necessity, to the desired consummation. The human body, so full of life and activity, is a striking symbol of organisation, while a putrid corpse aptly illustrates non-organisation and death. It is painful to see persons taking the corpse-side of this question. Spiritualist editors in America, generally if not *all*, favor organisation.

Rioters, mobs, egotistic individuals, and Ishmaelitic irrepressibles as a rule oppose organisation of all-sorts. With this class liberty is the equivalent of license. But the family relation, the public school, the library, enterprise, the University institution, the village corporation, the city government, and especially the Colonial Government, guaranteeing personal liberty, as well as protecting life and property—all testify to the utility and necessity of a sound and well-officerd organisation. To this the Church of Rome largely owes her success; and wherever John Wesley preached in the early days of Methodism, he established some kind of an organisation. While not adopting the follies, we may learn from the methods of our sectarian enemies.

Can Spiritualists reasonably expect to rapidly disseminate their beautiful truths and achieve spiritual victories—expect to plant the standard of angel-ministry in all lands—expect to successfully cope with, by presenting a solid front to the older religious institutions of the world, without unity of action and good local organisations, working in harmony with a well-officerd General Organisation?

When thus writing and speaking, as I often do, of organised effort, I have no reference be it remembered to a Church-like creed, for I dislike loathe, *abhor* all creeds that cramp, and all chains that fetter the human mind. The soul, to grow, must bask in the sunlight of a rational freedom. To say "thus far and no further" is to pronounce the sentence of death!

All cultured and rational Spiritualists can easily agree upon a declaration of general principles; such, for instance, as the reign of absolute law; the certainty of retribution; progress here and hereafter; the present ministry of spirits; the necessity of a good life to secure happiness, &c.

Some of the leading Spiritualists in America met in Philadelphia on the 3rd of last July, for the purpose of taking the initiatory steps towards forming in America a National Association. This body, when assembled, announced their purpose in these words:—

"We seek after all knowledge, scientific, moral and spiritual. And while we study the truth and dare maintain it, our immediate objects are to organise Spiritualist Societies upon a financial and religious basis; to cultivate love and charity towards all humanity, and to become mutual helps in uniting our scattered forces." And they further said we unanimously vote to call ourselves "The National Conference of Spiritualists."

This movement, denominated the "New Departure," met with considerable opposition; not from such minds as Robert Dale Owen, Prof. Brittain, Prof. Denton, Dr. Watson, and others of this stamp; but from some of our destructive and iconoclastic class of workers. The "New Departure," as it was stigmatised, meant *this*, and nothing more—organisation, energy, and enthusiasm in the dissemination of truth—meant departure from death, and stolid indifference to life and spiritual activity; from frothy words to generous deeds; from demolition to judicious construction; from a snarling scoffing to religious aspiration and culture; from curiosity-seeking to practical right-doing; and from suspicions and slanders to the practice of those nobler virtues that dignify and adorn humanity. A departure from old worn-out methods, from useless memories, from thread-bare issues, from old feuds, old grievances, old disputations, old theological taints, and the dry, plague-stricken fields of thought, into the sublime principles and heavenly practices of the Harmonial Philosophy!

Since the late persecutions in America, and of Dr. Slade in England, even the most radical and iconoclastic of Spiritualists have looked more favorably upon organisation, and the necessity of having organisations and spiritual séances partake more of a religious nature. The moment that both spiritualists and mediums say that our Spiritualism is our religion, that moment the civil law that protects all religionists protects them.

Religion, however, must not be confounded with theology or superstition. The black men of these colonies have certain theological notions. The savages of the stone age were more superstitious than religious. It is impossible to write or vote religion out of the human soul; for down deep in the divine depths of every cultured personality there is a sense of the Infinite—a consciousness of the immortality that links humanity to the very heart of God.

Spiritualists need more religion—not sectarian theology—but religion, "pure and undefiled." If men's heads, like animals' were flat upon the top, religion would be to them a meaningless term. Man more than a brute, is an aspirational and worshipful being. And while intellectual truth satisfies the reasoning faculties, it does not feed the spiritual affections. A geological lecture would be sadly out of place upon a funeral occasion. Religion, derived from two Latin words, means to bind anew—to bind fast—or otherwise to spiritually attract the soul to the principles of truth and justice, love and holiness. There is a very close relation existing between religion and inspiration. It is as natural for inspirations to touch and gild the life-lines of the unselfish, as for jewels to glitter along the starry paths of the interstellar spaces. But, though inspired, the best, the most royal-souled, sigh for more completeness, more wisdom, more love. There are seasons in our lives—hours of inspiration, when the loves of the angels baptise us into an ecstasy akin to that known among the martyrs and the white-robed in paradise. Those souls are happiest that love most; that love purely; that love unselfishly; that love *all*! This I denominate the love-fellowship of the spirit. And those who have come into this clear, pure atmosphere, through the teachings of a rational and religious spiritualism, can look through idiosyncracies, through diverse opinions and opposing methods, finding the character, the manhood, the angel that is to be. There is in the world too little appreciation of noble endeavor, if that endeavor chances to be made among those who conscientiously differ in their opinions from us. Bigotry is just as unwarrantable in a "Liberalist" as a Romanist, and superstition is just as hideous in a Spiritualist as in a sectarian. The coming Saviours, whether men or women, must be constructionists; builders of better things; fraternal lovers of the races; brothers and sisters of the humanities. Jesus was very sensibly termed our "elder brother," and the "brightness of the Father's glory." Aflame with the principles of love and toleration, he comprehended the moral grandeur of the universal religion, and voiced it in these words,—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS AT CHILTERN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Perchance the following account of a seance that took place here last Friday might interest your readers, and may tend to further investigation of the grand phenomena of Spiritualism

There were twelve of us, viz.—Mr. Robt. Scott and his two daughters, the latter powerful mediums; Mrs. Stubbs, Mr. Henry Nickless, Mr. Fiddes, Mr. Robt. Brown, a wonderful medium; Mr. McCape, a strong medium; Mr. Paul Pringle, my wife, daughter, and self. We formed the usual circle round a table four feet in diameter, and joined hands. In a few minutes we had five loud raps on the table asking for the alphabet. The message was.—"Put out light; Robert get on table." Instantly we were all touched on the hands by a distinct well-formed hand. Our controls were John Barlow, late a miner, and George Brown,

who was killed in a mine here, brother of our medium, and a nephew of Mrs. Stubbs. Then Mr. Nickless was patted and caressed a great deal. When he was singing, George put his arm round his neck, and said, "Henry, I love you." Mrs. Stubbs said, "Is that you, George?" Answer: "Yes, my dear aunt. Will you give me a kiss?" And she did. I was sitting next her, and I could feel his beard on my face. Then he caressed and patted Mr. Pringle, saying, "My friend, Paul, I love you." Barlow patted Miss Scott on the head often, and said, "You are a good girl." There had been a thick shawl pinned up at the window to exclude the light. Miss Janet Scott sat with her back to it. Barlow rolled her head and shoulders in it, which left part of the window exposed. Then we saw his head and hands. When Mr. Scott was singing, Barlow made comments on his song, and when I sang he did the same, and patted me on the back nearly all the time. He then said, "My friend, Mac, pray;" so they put Mr. McCape on the table in a kneeling position, and he repeated a prayer, they did the same thrice during the evening. Barlow said, "I intended to have read you a lecture on spiritualism to-night, but I feel I am not able. I condemned it many years ago." Robert saw an open book in his hand. Barlow and George speak as distinct as either you or I. The above are all facts, without the slightest embellishment.

All the circle have been intimately acquainted for many years. There is no deception; in fact, it could not be done without detection.

I have heard persons say, and even clergymen, that "this is all the work of the devil;" but even granting that there is such an individual, I should imagine it would hardly be his province to ask a sinner to pray to God.

WM. PINKERTON.

Chiltern, 16th April, 1877.

SPIRITUALISM AT MURRURUNDI, N.S.W:

MR. TYERMAN has kindly handed to us for publication the following interesting letter, recently received by him. There appears to be strong mediumistic power among the investigators:—

Murrurundi, May 2nd, 1877.

Mr. John Tyerman, Sydney.

Dear Sir,—Thinking that perhaps it would interest you to know that Spiritualism is making some progress here, I beg to send you a few particulars.

In January last, in accordance with the "rules" given in your "Guide to Spiritualism," myself and a few friends formed a circle for investigation. We sat for perhaps more than a week without any result, and were beginning to despair of having any manifestations, when we were blessed with results that thoroughly convinced us all of the truth of spirit-communion. We have now, at every sitting, some very remarkable evidences of spirit power. In one instance, we had a message in *direct writing* from a spirit giving the name of "Flora," urging us to purity of life, and telling us to persevere. Flowers have been laid upon the table on several occasions, and we have observed beautiful lights floating about the room. I am already somewhat developed as a writing medium, and receive some very intelligent and useful messages from various spirits through the planchette. But the most remarkable thing in regard to my mediumship, is the writing of messages in French and German—languages of which I am entirely ignorant, and which messages have to be translated for me by those present, who understand those languages. Spirits professing to be those of "Jean Jacques Rousseau," "James Watt," "Charles Cowper," "W. C. Wentworth," "Andrew Arnold," "Valentine D. Dixon," "Zellalla," and many others, manifest both by the table and planchette. We have had rappings (as of knuckles) on top of the table in

good lamplight, chairs have moved about the room without human contact, and, on the whole, we have, for a young circle, witnessed some very wonderful phenomena—phenomena which nothing but the spiritual hypothesis can satisfactorily account for, and eminently calculated to convince the veriest sceptic of this great truth of God. We have recently tried dark seances with a view to materialisation, but, as yet, without success. At our last sitting we had a perfect volley of stones (small pebbles) showered about our heads, and had some beautiful lights. A lady, who is developing as a clairvoyant, observed two intensely luminous star-like lights in the centre of the circle, and fancied she saw a hand near them. This phenomena was invisible to the rest of the sitters. I may state that these things have been witnessed amongst a circle of honest investigators, when there could not be the slightest chance of trickery or deception of any kind.

Dear sir, a word of advice or encouragement from you would be esteemed by us all as a great boon. We have no Spiritual literature, and would feel thankful if you could recommend us to a publication that would place us *au courant* with the progress of the movement in various parts of the world. If you would kindly send us a few old Spiritual newspapers, we would indeed feel thankful. We do not know how, or where, such publications are to be procured.

Wishing you every prosperity, and trusting that your efforts for the advancement of the cause may be crowned with success, I remain, dear Sir,

Yours fraternally,

P. JEFFERSON WALLACE.

P.S.—You can publish this letter if you think proper.

MRS. WILLIAMS' LECTURES.

DURING Mr. Peebles' absence at Sydney, the above-mentioned talented lady has filled the hiatus, by delivering a series of excellent lectures on Spiritualism at the Apollo Hall, and has attracted numerous, attentive, and highly respectable audiences. The following are abstracts of the two first lectures:—

The first, given on the 13th May, was on "Our Work"—meaning, of course, as the title of the series of lectures is "Spiritualism, the Future Religion"—the work which Spiritualists have to do in making their faith the religion of the future. The speaker began by disclaiming all intention of assuming to teach other Spiritualists, but hoped to be able to warm and encourage the hearts of others engaged in the same work as herself. This work she defined to be the making more definite and accurate our knowledge of the realities of Spiritualism by constant experiment, and the spreading of the good tidings which it brings, to those whom it has not yet reached. The lecturer reviewed the character of our position, the nature of the attacks and misrepresentations, to which we are subject from those who are either ignorant of our real beliefs and practices, or who wilfully malign us, and claimed that self-defence required us to speak out the truth about ourselves and our opinions, as much as the nobler impulse of wishing to carry truth to others. She then gave two sketches—one of the man who sacrifices much as an avowed Spiritualist, and the other of the man who chooses to sacrifice all truth to worldly ambition and success. At the same time she admitted fully the great difficulties that are in the path of those who are among the heralds of new truths—the difficulty of not slighting too much the opinions of those around them, the difficulty of placing their own minds in a receptive condition, the difficulty of obtaining conclusive and certain evidence on which to rest their own belief. These difficulties, she claimed, might be met by continued personal investigation, and by wide charity, harmonious relations, and united action among ourselves.

The second of the series, given on Sunday evening, 20th May, was on "Our Mediums," and depicted some of the many trials and troubles of mediums, assuring them that most of these were incident rather to the

early stages of their development, and that peace and happiness lay before them in the exercise of a well-developed orderly mediumship. Mrs. Williams also pointed out the great danger and frequent occurrence of attributing to mediumship any divine or infallible authority. She also quoted passages from books and incidents from lives of persons of our own day to show that these would-be prophets are as dangerous and as extravagant in their claims now as they ever were, and contrasted them very favorably with the simple, faithful mediums, who fulfil their mission unostentatiously. She claimed for our mediums the staunch and cordial support of all Spiritualists, and urged that they needed it, as by their peculiar position they were inevitably more exposed than any other Spiritualists to misrepresentation and persecution. She asked, "If any army ever yet went forth to battle with its vanguard and forlorn hope made up of children, young girls, delicate women, and all its most highly nervous and sensitive organisations in the front of the battle. Yet such are our mediums, such is their inevitable position; and we are an army going forth to battle with error, with ignorance, and with vested rights."

PROPHETIC DREAMS.

WE extract the following from an article by the Rev. W. Stainton Moses, M.A., which appears in the *Spiritualist*, of March 9th.—

"Sir Humphry Davy dreamed that he was ill in Italy, in a particular room, the furniture of which he noted, nursed by a young girl whose face he remembered. Some years after he was travelling in Italy, was taken ill, laid up in the very room, and nursed by the very girl whom he saw in his dream. Moore, on his work on *Body and Mind*, relates that an intimate friend of his own, a diplomatist, had engaged a passage to South America by a steamer which was to leave May 9th, 1856. A few days after the passage was taken a lady, well known to both, dreamed of the loss of the vessel. The dream was very vivid, and was twice repeated. Circumstances prevented M. de S. from going by that particular vessel, which was lost in accord with the dream. This was told to Moore some weeks before it was verified. Here is a case of a dream occurring to two persons. A lady, residing with her son in one of the Eastern States of America, dreamed that her daughter, then resident in New York, was taken suddenly ill. Her son had the same dream on the same night. They were greatly impressed, and compared their respective dreams, which tallied exactly. In due course came a telegram, and the mother went to New York, to find her daughter ill precisely as she had dreamed. Not to multiply cases, which I might do *ad lib.*, these are sufficient to establish my proposition that dreams do show action of spirit, and are at times employed for purposes of warning. All that I have quoted come from authentic sources, and I might detain you for hours with experiences similar in kind. Probably the experience of most of us contains some such fact. It is so with me at any rate, and I know many persons who corroborate that statement. Gerald Massey, in a lecture reported May 17, 1872, says—'On waking-up at seven o'clock my wife informed me that my mother was dead. I asked how she knew? She said she had seen in a dream the black-edged envelope put under the bedroom door. At eight o'clock the veritable letter came.' A personal friend of my own, to whom I mentioned this subject says that she lately dreamed of a letter written to her husband from a relative with whom he had for a long time had no communication. She saw it most clearly, and noticed that it ended on a particular spot of the third page. The letter came; she looked over her husband's shoulder, and saw the very counterpart of the letter of her dream. The first thing that drew my attention to this matter was an occurrence that came before me while I was at Oxford. I had a very intimate friend who was on terms of closest intercourse with me. One day he came into my rooms with an open letter, which he had evidently received with much concern. He told me that his mother had written in great distress, having, as he said, 'again had one of her horrid dreams.' He told me that he had originally had three brothers and a sister, of whom the

sister alone survived. The others were dead, and before the death of each his mother had had a particular dream foreshadowing the event, and even the date. I regret that I cannot now say positively whether she had actually dreamed of the day of death, but that she had warning I am sure. In all cases the warning had been fulfilled. This letter led him to believe that his mother had now dreamed of the date of his sister's death. Hence his disquietude. His own death he had a premonition of himself. The date is past; but he went to Australia, and has passed out of my ken. Is it strange that I believe in prophetic dreams?"

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