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Truth fears no task, bows at no human shrine, seeks neither place nor applause: she only asks a hearing.

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Psychometry—Its Development and Scope—A Defense.

BY WILLIAM EMMETTE COLEMAN.

"I mean to show things as they really are."
"Without, or with, offence to friends and foes, I sketch the world exactly as it goes."
"When action rises, pleasing to the eye, Men will believe, because they love the lie; But Truth herself, if clouded with a frown, Must have some solemn proof, to pass her down."
—*Chaucer*.

In the JOURNAL of June 7th last, Dr. J. R. Buchanan assumed to indicate several errors in my remarks upon the psychometric vindication of fraudulent mediums. I, however, re-affirm the truth of every statement assailed, and shall endeavor to prove their correctness beyond reasonable doubt. Dr. Buchanan thinks that I have a "graceful facility" for being "unscientific, unjust, and discourteous" to those whom I criticize, without being conscious of so doing. This is a mistake on the part of "my good-natured and semi-omniscient critic,"—"semi-omniscient" in that he claims a better knowledge of my own mind than I have myself. In criticism I am aware that I do not often sacrifice truth for courtesy; I call a spade a spade, and a fraud a fraud, and an absurdity absurd, and this is done actively and purposely. Honest truth is more important than courtesy; plain matter-of-fact speech is of greater value than a collection of fine words, half-apologetic, half-non-committal. I know at times I have been perhaps over-severe in criticism of error and falsehood;—

"Yet 'twas done, As skillful surgeons cut beyond the wound, To make the cure complete."

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Spiritualism is infested with a host of crying evils, year by year becoming deeper seated, more intractable, and bolder in aggressive warfare upon the good and true in our cause. It is no time for mealy-mouthed speech and writing; the times demand pointed utterances, homely truths, clearly and forcibly expressed. Discourteous, in a sense, my criticisms may be, but rarely unjust and still more rarely unscientific, in my opinion. It is "unjust and discourteous" if Dr. B. charges me with a "graceful facility" for continuous unconscious injustice to others. The "graceful facility" rests rather with Dr. B.; in proof of which it is incumbent to examine the three examples of my unscientific, unjust, and discourteous conduct mentioned by him in the JOURNAL of June 7th,—all three of which are purely ideal. It is with the kindest feelings to Dr. Buchanan that this paper is written; and it is with deep regret that I feel compelled, in the vindication of scientific truth, to point out the errors in statement of one so advanced in years,—one who has done so much for psychometric truth; but the imperative call of duty, the cause of justice and truth, incites me to the work, and to that call I hope never to be deaf, no matter how thorny the road or how perilous the way in which I am bidden to walk. As indicated in a previous paper, of all men Dr. Buchanan should be one of the last to object to full, frank, and vigorous criticism, considering his almost life-long example in that regard.

Despite Professor Buchanan's unfavorable estimate thereof, my remarks upon psychometry and fraudulent mediumship have been warmly commended both by practical psychometers and psychometrical experimenters. A careful philosophic writer upon psychometry (not Prof. Denton) writes as follows: "Your criticism upon those psychometric readings was just the thing. It was so just, and pointed out such important principles relative to the faculty, its abuse, etc., that I was greatly pleased with it. What you said that you are replying to that statement of Miller's on psychometric evidence, etc. I deeply felt how much a reply was needed. The idea of compelling psychometry into the service of fraud, through the ignorance of its advocates, is indeed deplorable. But how is it to be helped? I am inclined to the opinion that the wife of Dr. Buchanan was more cautious than he, and possibly a better reasoner also, and that during her life she tempered his zeal to some extent. Since her death he has given evidence of lack of judgment that is surprising. I know he was preparing for his present indiscriminate endorsement of mediumship, clairvoyance and psychometry before her death; but I am of the opinion that her good sense was, to some extent, a moderator of his intemperate zeal. One thing is evident; since her death, or since about that time, he has been without a greatly needed balance." Another eminent psychometer has expressed his cordial

approval of my Miller article, and says that my allusions to Dr. Buchanan were just and timely. Dr. B. charges me with numerous "gratuitous assumptions," oblivious of the fact that assumptions constitute so large a portion of all his writings. This trait in them is very marked; and well has a scientific writer said: "The assumptive side of Prof. B's character has been known to me since 1854, and one of these days I will have something to write upon it."—C—t to the contrary notwithstanding. One of America's ablest Spiritualists has just written me: "Buchanan proves himself what I have ever regarded him—weak. You met him with annihilation!" Concerning his recent assumptions regarding his being deputed to re-establish the church of Christ on earth, a Spiritualist paper has pertinently remarked: "It would be hard to find in the incitations of any writer or class of writers, more unsupported dogmatism than is crowded into these few paragraphs, on the subject of religion. No pope, high priest, or ecclesiastical patriarch ever enunciated dogmatic theology with greater disregard of reason and propriety than does Prof. Buchanan in laying the theological foundations of his projected church."

My first assertion objected to by Dr. B. is, that psychometry has received "little careful scientific analysis and study"; and in disproof thereof he refers to his lectures and experiments. Now, his lectures, etc., constituted a portion of the "little" to which I referred. Had I said no scientific study, then he might have justly assailed its truth. Mr. Denton and a few others, possibly, have also made some scientific analysis of psychometry; what is that compared with what might have been done in the forty years since its discovery? Out of the thousands of scientists in the world, two or three have tested its claims; and, of these few, only one (Prof. Denton) has given the world any elaborate presentation of its well-attested facts, or of its utility to mankind. It is, therefore, strictly true, that but little scientific analysis and study has been given to psychometry.

Dr. B.'s first exception is not well taken; but his second involves a series of loose assertions,—and worse,—such as I was surprised to see made by one claiming to be a scientist, and reproving me for supposed scientific inaccuracy. The statement, that Prof. Denton has extended the claims of psychometry far beyond those supposed to be its due by Prof. Buchanan, is denied by the latter; but, as Dr. B. himself is my authority therefor, he thus eats his own words; and this despite the fact that, as he has recently told us, he has never given up his faith in anything he has ever believed,—that is, never changed his mind about anything. He has, in more than one of his printed lectures, or other press contributions, acknowledged that Mr. Denton has extended psychometry into regions beyond what he claimed for it. Now he claims everything for himself, and gives poor Denton credit for nothing except for "verifying" his (Dr. B's) previous claims; and, to sustain this assertion, we have given us a quotation from Denton's "Soul of Things," vol. II, p. 24,—the meaning of which he has entirely perverted to suit Dr. Buchanan's purpose.

"I was not aware," says Denton, "when the first volume of 'The Soul of Things' was written, that many of the discoveries related in that volume had been so fully anticipated by Dr. Buchanan, or I should have been glad to recognize it." Dr. Buchanan says that the passage from his writings quoted by Denton in connection with the above remark "refers to the complete development by psychometry of ancient history, geology, and paleontology." In sorrow he said, that the passage quoted by Denton, from Buchanan's *Journal of Man*, of 1849, refers to no such thing. It refers to the complete development of ancient history, in the human realm; but so far from predicating the development of geology and paleontology by psychometry it expressly excludes it.

What did Dr. B. discover in psychometry?—how far did his conclusions in regard to its scope and power extend, as evidenced by his writings descriptive of his experiments and deductions? Thus far, and no farther: The correct delineation of the mental and physical characteristics of those who have handled or otherwise been in contact with the physical objects experimented upon by the psychometer; and the possible reproduction of the historical or biographical events connected with those persons. He limited psychometry strictly to the domain of human beings, and objects, relics, connected with human beings. Not only an autograph or lock of hair, but any object with which man, woman, or child had been associated could, if psychometrized, unfold the true characters, and it might be the histories of those so associated. He confined his operations exclusively to the sensing of the mind or soul of man,—with him it was simply a branch of anthropology, of inestimable value in solving problems in psychology, physiology, and human biography and history. That it could be employed to advance our knowledge in geology and paleontology, seems never to have entered his mind till after Denton's experiments were made known. Dr. B. made a grand discovery in psychometry; he laid its base, discovered its fundamental principles to a considerable extent; but one man cannot discover everything. In every branch of science and art, original discoveries and inventions are almost invariably improved upon,—carried beyond the thought of the mind to whom their first presentation is due. So in psy-

chometry; Dr. B.'s discovery was taken up by Prof. Denton and family, and through their experiments its domain was vastly extended; it being utilized in fields of research never attempted before, at least in America, yielding results eminently satisfactory and rich in promise.

Dr. B., having perverted the meaning of the passage from his *Journal of Man*, of 1849, wisely refrained from quoting it; but I will do so, however, in its entirety. Let it be read carefully, so that its purport may be clearly perceived; keeping in mind, that Dr. Buchanan, as I have said, restricted the operation of psychometry to mankind,—to the measuring of the mind or soul of man alone. "If, then," said Dr. B., "man, in every act, leaves the impression or dueerotype of his mental being upon the scenes of his life, and subjects of his action, we are by this law furnished with a new clew to the history of our race; and I think it highly probable, that, by the application of this principle, the chasm of history may be supplied, and a glimpse may be obtained of unrecorded ages and nations whose early history is lost in darkness. The ancient manuscripts, paintings, and other works of art, which still exist, the crucifixes, garments, armor, and other ancient relics, still preserved, are doubtless still instinct with the spirit that produced them, and capable of revealing to psychometric exploration the living realities with which they were once connected. At present, these relics are barren of significance; their hidden meaning lies waiting the future explorer; as the hieroglyphics of Egypt awaited the arrival of Champollion to interpret their significance."

The past is entombed in the present. The world is its own enduring monument; and that which is true of its physical is likewise true of its mental career. [Note the word *mental* here.] The discoveries of psychometry will enable us to explore the history of man [*man*, be it observed], as those of geology enable us to explore the history of the earth; and I believe that hereafter the psychologist and the geologist will go hand in hand,—the one portraying the earth, its animals and its vegetation; while the other portrays the human beings who have roamed over its surface in the shadows of darkness of primeval barbarism. As the mental telescope is now discovered which may pierce the depths of the past, and bring us in full view of all the grand and tragic passages of ancient history."

Mark here, the articles named for psychometric sensing are only those connected with man,—manuscripts, armor, paintings, etc.,—and the results to be derived therefrom are solely the revelations of the characters and actions of the men with whom they had been associated; not a word about geologic or paleontologic specimens being of use in psychometry, or that the past history of such specimens, with that of their surrounding environment, whether human, animal, vegetable or mineral, could be unfolded,—all of which Mr. Denton's experiments for the first time revealed. Moreover, Dr. B. did refer to geology in his closing paragraph above, but in having expressly said so, he has no reference to his geologic experiments. Neither myself, nor Prof. Denton, nor any other person that I have heard of, has been able to find in Dr. B's writings any intimation that he ever supposed that psychometry could be utilized for other purposes than the measurement of the soul or mind of man, and his cognate physical activities, until Prof. Denton's experiments proved its possibility. Mr. Denton's experiments proved, as he claimed, that all the past, not alone that connected with man, but that existing in geologic periods millions of years before man trod this planet, exists in such a condition that sensitive men, by their spiritual senses, can sense it, as we, by our bodily senses, can sense the world around us. Dr. B.'s grand discovery there can be no doubt that Prof. Denton did not, and does not, think that

Dr. Buchanan had the faintest idea till after Mr. D.'s experiments were published.

Upon the same page of "The Soul of Things," as the one above referred to, Mr. Denton speaks of Dr. Buchanan as "one of the most vigorous thinkers, boldest writers, and greatest discoverers of this or any age." (A warm pauceric, truly; but should Mr. Denton, owing to Dr. B.'s more recent extravagances and evident weaknesses, have seen fit to change his opinion concerning the latter's extraordinary merits, I am sure no sensible person would condemn him.) In return for his flattering tribute to his merits, Dr. B. now seeks to claim for himself that to which he has not the least right, but which is justly due to Mr. Denton; and not content with this, goes on to say that he has made grander discoveries in psychometry than those he has given to the world, thereby intimating that his unknown discoveries are greater than those published by Denton. Mark the contrast! Denton lauds Buchanan as a great discoverer, and gives him full credit for all he has done; Buchanan depreciates all of Denton's work, calling it a mere verification of his (Dr. B's) previous claims (though, in truth, he had never made any such claims), and says that he has made other discoveries overtopping those published. If his unpublished discoveries (?) are anywise akin in character and reliability to those of Dr. B., absent the Alfred James spirit-writings, or his re-incarnational life history of George Washington, he does wisely in refraining from their publication; and it is to be hoped, for the interests of truth, rational science and common sense, and for the conservation of Dr. Buchanan's reputation, that they may never see the light.

No further evidence is required in proof that Mr. Denton has extended the claims of psychometry far beyond those alleged in its favor by Dr. Buchanan; but I have still another witness to adduce,—the words of Dr. B. himself. In the appendix to Johnson's *Cyclopedia*, published in 1878, appears a historical sketch of psychometry, written by Dr. J. R. Buchanan for that work. Having had this *Cyclopedia* in my library over a twelvemonth, I was well acquainted with Dr. B.'s sketch therein when I wrote the article criticized by him. In this sketch Dr. B. summarizes the development of what, in my opinion, he named psychometry. (*En passant* it may be well to note that, within a year or two, Francis Galton, F.R.S., has employed the term *psychometry* as indicative of quite a different phase of psychologic experiment, and a work by him on this new "psychometry" is announced as preparing for the "International Scientific Series.")

"The word *psychometry*," says Dr. B., "which etymologically signifies 'soul-measuring,' was introduced by the undersigned in 1843 to represent the science and the process just discovered, by which the soul or mind may measure and estimate correctly any soul or mind, investigated by means of its emanations and the impressions which it has left upon physical objects." (*Johnson's Cyclopedia*, vol. IV, p. 1653.) Dr. B. here confines its use exclusively to the measurement of one human mind by another, from emanations impressed by it to physical objects; no hint being given that anything else than human souls could be thus measured. Dr. B. next gives an outline of what he claims for psychometry, and cites a portion of the quotation from his *Journal of Man*, of 1849, given above, and found in Denton's "Soul of Things," in relation to its value in ancient history, through the sensing of the emanations clinging to manuscripts, garments, paintings, etc., all connected with man; but not a word relative to the examination of geologic or paleontologic specimens. Following this, Dr. B. alludes to Prof. Denton's experiments, and here we have his first reference to its use in geologic and cosmic research. Speaking of Mr. Denton's experiments, he says (and note well his words): "In 'The Soul of Things' he claims that psychometry even emanates from the writer in the way of geologic and cosmic revelations, which he has called 'entific clairvoyance.'" (p. 1684.) He has taken me to task, and charged me with "gratuitous assumption," for asserting that Mr. Denton claimed more for psychometry than he did, when, in truth, I was only repeating what Dr. B. himself had said in a popular *Cyclopedia*. Which Buchanan shall we believe,—the one in *Johnson*, who concurs with myself, or the one of to-day, who eats his own words, and tries to rob Mr. Denton of that which two years ago he affirmed was his due? When Dr. B. said that Denton claimed more than he did in the way of geologic and cosmic revelations, he stated but a half-truth. Prior to Denton's explorations Buchanan claimed nothing at all in the way of geologic and cosmic psychometrization. Dr. B. then gives in the *Cyclopedia*, a detailed statement of the manner in which Mr. Denton made his psychometric examination of mineral specimens, giving it as a new feature in psychometry, and original with Mr. Denton.

What apology has Dr. Buchanan now to make, (1) for misrepresenting my statements, charging me with stating an untruth, when he and every well-informed person knows that what I said was literally true; (2) for having garbled and mis-stated a quotation from Prof. Denton, making it refer to that to which it had no reference; (3) for perverting, in a remarkable degree, his own language as published in 1849; (4) for claiming for himself that of which his writings give no intimation, but which his general purport expressly excludes; and (5) for seeking to deprive Prof. Denton

of that to which according to his own admission, he is justly entitled, thus denying the truth of his own carefully worded statements prepared for a standard work of reference for the present and coming ages? None of the hypothetical "loose expressions" with which my critic charges me can equal the looseness—to use no harsher term—contained in the letter of Dr. Buchanan under review; and, even were I guilty of the looseness attributed, in view of the foregoing, methinks Dr. B. the last one to publicly call me to account therefor.

Independently of Messrs. Buchanan and Denton, Prof. Gregory, of Edinburgh, arrived at some of the same general conclusions regarding clairvoyant perception through the sensing of physical objects, and, it seems, antedated Dr. B. in some particulars. So far as can be determined, it was in 1849 that Dr. B. first published the suggestion of the application of psychometry to the purposes of historic reminiscence, through the use of clothing, painting, and other human relics; but in 1847 scenes in the life of Mary Queen of Scots were vividly reproduced by a sensitive, by having placed in his hand a ring once belonging to that unfortunate queen (Gregory's *Animal Magnetism*, edition of 1877, page 100.). Drs. Gregory and Buchanan were experimenting simultaneously, but independently, it appears, and each arrived at the same general conclusions, in some respects, regarding sensitive clairvoyance (see Gregory's *Am. Mag.*, pp. 44, 45, 183, 184, 185). Dr. B. limited the scope of psychometry to the reproduction of events connected with the human race; but Dr. Gregory in 1851 published the following, which goes far beyond anything Buchanan had then said: "This power of seeing the past is truly remarkable, and deeply interesting. It would appear to indicate, that what has once existed, or happened, leaves a trace of some kind, perceptible to the inner vision and soul of man, when no longer obscured or overpowered by the coarser impressions conveyed to the sensorium by the external senses." (*Am. Mag.*, p. 45). Dr. Gregory, we see, includes everything that ever existed or happened, not restricting it to things pertaining to man.

The third and last "gratuitous assumption" attributed to me by Dr. B. is, that his "psychometric experiments are mere reproductions of my (his) own thoughts by passive agents." This is another "loose expression" of my critic, as I have never made such a broad, unqualified statement. I advanced proof that some of his experiments, as published, indicated that the results obtained were a reflection of his mind; never intimating that such was invariably, or even usually, the case. My remarks were not meant as a reflection upon Dr. B. or his psychometers, but as suggestive of the great care requisite in such experiments to eliminate all emanative influences save those of the object examined. Unconsciously to Dr. B., or other experimenter, the influence of his mind may affect the character of the delineation given. Dr. B. sets up a man of direct—the idea that I asserted that magnetic sympathy was paramount in all psychometric investigations,—and, to overthrow his imaginary enemy, produced proof of correct psychometric readings, independent of the influence of other minds,—a truth I have never called in question. Dr. Buchanan, and Mr. and Mrs. Sloucton, insist upon attributing to myself and other psychometric critics conclusions and propositions never thought of by us, and which certainly our language does not involve. It seems impossible for them to perceive the difference between denying the absolute infallibility of psychometry, coupled with indications of probable sources of error therein, and the total denial of its truth or value. To me it is a great truth, and of inestimable value; but it is liable to misapprehension and careless, unscientific, and fluctuating, besides being in itself fallible and fluctuating. In place of a "Thus saith the Lord," we want no "Thus saith Psychometry," "Thus saith Clairvoyance," or "Thus saith Spirits;" but, in every case, we desire a careful sifting of the facts and conclusions presented, so that, as far as possible, truth only may be elicited.

When Dr. B. says that in his experiments the influence of his mind never affects the results, and that it is immaterial whether the subject matter is known to him or not, he thereby demonstrates that he is lacking in wise discrimination in this regard as he is in the acceptance as genuine of fraudulent, suspicious and apocryphal Spiritual phenomena,—that he is "unscientific" and "un-scientific" in his experiments. In my former paper I submitted two instances which either the mind of Dr. B., or that of the investigator submitting the object for examination, had undoubtedly affected the psychometric reading. In the case of the reading, from a lock of hair, of George Washington, by one of Dr. B's sensitives, in which the character, etc., given coincided most accurately with the peculiar views of the lady sending the lock of hair, her opinions being coincided to Dr. B. previous to the examination, no doubt can exist rationally but that the reading was a reflex either of Dr. B.'s mind or of that of the lady-sender, or of both combined. The reading was manifestly incorrect; it represents Washington as having lived some four or five times on earth, in as many different countries and epochs; which was in exact accordance with a supposed spirit communication from Washington previously received by the lady-sender. No sensible

Continued on Next Page.

FREE-THOUGHT.

Further Criticism of Dr. Fishbough's Lectures.

BY E. F. UNDERWOOD.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: In his remarkable discourses published in the JOURNAL of August 2nd, Mr. Fishbough says that Spiritualism is a word which "must not be prohibited by an application of any grovelling, materialistic or sensual doctrine."

unless it can be shown that the immorality is in the lectures themselves, or in the views and aims of the lecturer. It is a large proportion of "atheists, materialists, infidels," who are in the habit of practicing, in the most vicious and unchristian manner, the most unchristian practices, than can be found among religiousists, let the evidence be given, but in the absence of all proof, such statements will only indicate to many readers the power of religious prejudice to narrow and distort the mind.

tendency of a doctrine or theory is sufficient to warrant its suppression by law, from his standpoint, the State has a perfect right to exclude from the mails, and to prohibit the sale of all "infidel" works. I am not among those who applaud Mr. Bennett for circulating Heywood's pamphlet after the author himself had been convicted for the same thing.

Down in the Deep Valley with High Mountains All Around. BY A. J. DAVIS. An esteemed gentleman correspondent sends me the following note of inquiry, which fully explains itself: "Reading your answers in the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL encourages me to seek of you a solution of some of my own mental experiences."

tion to any person, and informs him that the medium was born on a certain day of the week and month, he will, on seeing that person months afterwards, speak of and say that that man's birthday fell on a certain day, which he dates he was casually told so long before. Not a great while ago he walked to one of his relatives and informed him that it was so and so's birthday, the date of the person's birth having been told him long before.

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JOHN C. BUNDY, Editor. J. R. FRANCIS, Associate Editor. Terms of Subscription, Strictly in Advance.

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The "Times" Objects to a Scientific Basis.

A writer whose style, though somewhat hazy, is easily detected, undertakes to controvert some recent remarks of ours, which he quotes as from "a religious journal." We think we can detect a motive for his failure to designate our paper in such a way that the public might distinctly know what "religious journal" was meant.

The remark of ours which excites the potent sarcasm of this writer, is the following: "The cause of the prevailing unbelief in systems of theology, sectarian creeds, and historical assertions in regard to immortality, is that the advanced intellect of the age craves a scientific basis for its faith in spiritual realities."

Now in our remark we spoke of "systems of theology, sectarian creeds, and historical assertions," but not one word of religion; not one word of demonstrating religious dogmas. In the whole of our editorial, from which the writer culls his extract, the word religion is not once mentioned.

"To what religion do I belong? To none of all you have named! And why? Because of religion!" Such is the pith of one of Schiller's epigrams; and it well shows the irrationality of the vulgar notion of what constitutes religion.

The definitions of religion surpass our reckoning. Our own postulate is, that religion has its root in the belief, or feeling, that within us or external to us, is an intelligent, supersensuous power that can affect us for good.

Surely under the definition here given, any scientific confirmation of such a belief must be a new force added to it. Thus, by our critic's own showing, the craving for a scientific basis has its reason. If we can justify so important a belief by an appeal to actual phenomena, it is a gain which no sane man not desiring annihilation, would forego.

If our critic errs in his estimate of religion, still more does he err in his notion of what constitutes science. He makes these extraordinary assertions in regard to it: "To ascertain it will find out that what is considered truth yesterday is error."

Here the writer confounds hypothesis with science. The blunder is obvious. Science consists in an infallible and unchanging knowledge of phenomena. This writer would make it an ignis fatuus. He alludes to its "shifting sands," as if it were something here-to-day, and gone to-morrow. His whole argument rests on a palpable misconception, and falls when that is exposed.

"There are some people," says Professor James, "who seem to think that any vague or whim, however unverified, of a scientific man must needs form an integral part of science itself; that when Huxley, for example, has ruled feeling out of the game of life, and called it a mere bystander or super-numerary, the matter is settled. I know nothing more deplorable than this indiscriminating gulping-down of everything materialistic as peculiarly scientific. Nothing is scientific but what is clearly formulated, reasoned, and verified."

Improvisation is a common gift among the Italians; but we have never heard of their crediting it to spirits. There may be instances where this has been done; but we think they must be rare. Mrs. Richmond, assuming to be influenced by Adin A. Ballou, gave an address in Chicago, April 3rd, 1879, in which she refers to the commonplace character of most of the communications. She says: "If you take up a daily paper and see that George Washington has been imprisoned for horse-stealing, or that Benjamin Franklin has been sent to the penitentiary for some trifling offence, you do not straightway associate it with the great departed of those names."

Here the real difficulty is overlooked. The question is not whether Washington, the colored barber, is speaking, but whether the "control," who claims to be the Geo. Washington, is to be received as such in spite of his bad grammar and bad sentiment. From another sentence it would seem that Mrs. Richmond's control entertains views precisely similar to our own on the subject, for he says: "If some one chances to have or to assume a lofty name, it is, therefore no credential unless the message itself and knowledge conveyed be equal with the source whence it is said to come."

Here one of the points that we have been contending for, is yielded. There remains the question, May not the medium himself often give out his own utterances, when he claims they are those of a spirit? We hardly think that Mrs. Richmond's control would differ from us in giving to this inquiry an affirmative answer. If a Corinna in Italy can improvise verses upon any subject allotted to her by an audience, why may not a Cora do the same in America? It is not necessary that she should be normally conscious of what she is doing. We have already referred to the cases in which persons have improvised very tolerable poetry in their dreams.

But are there no cases where we can have a reasonable assurance that the spirit professing to speak, dictate or write, is the genuine individual he claims to be? Yes, there are many such cases. Mrs. Brown (formerly Mrs. Fish), when in New York (1852), used not unfrequently to give messages which bore the stamp of genuineness. One evening, while Mr. Capron was visiting Mrs. Brown, two young men from Tennessee came in. One of them asked if a spirit could communicate with him; and was answered in the affirmative. "What spirit is it?" "Your father." The young man then wrote down on a piece of paper the following question: "By what means did you die?" Immediately the alphabet was called for, and the word Poisoned spelled out. The young man started with evident astonishment, for he did not anticipate so prompt and correct a reply.

The young man then said that his father was murdered by poison administered by a brother, who had escaped the penalty of the law. The son declared that he had been for years determined on avenging his father's death. Unlike Shakespeare's Hamlet, the father advised him to dispel such feelings, and the son declared that from that hour his schemes of revenge would be given up.

Here we have all the elements of a genuine communication: remarkable clairvoyance, noble, christian advice, forgiveness of an injury, good plain English and marks of affection. A little girl was present with her father; both unknown to Mrs. Brown. The little girl's hand was moved, and she gave signs of being a sensitive for writing. The following kind admonition was then spelled out to the father through Mrs. Brown: "I feel deeply interested in your little daughter. I want you, therefore, to be led according to your own good judgment and reason in regard to taking her into prominent parties. She should not always be led by advice which she thinks comes from pure and elevated spirits. My dear David, I will give you a rule by which you and Mary shall always be guided, as you are responsible for the protection and elevation of your children. When a spirit assumes authority in giving directions, follow not such direction. God made you a freeman, and he has given you light and liberty to act accordingly. When a spirit speaks unreasonable things, he bids to him, but maintain your own ground, and gently lead him along in the path of progression."

In this case, the names of "David" and "Mary" were entirely unknown to the medium, or to any of the company present except the ones to whom the message was delivered. Instances like these are not so rare as many may suppose. The intent is good, the advice excellent and the language unexceptionable. The clairvoyance implied in the knowledge of the names of father and daughter, is another reason why the communication might be safely accepted as genuine. The internal evidence in both these cases is very strong, and would justify the parties receiving the messages in having faith in their genuineness.

Was It Swedenborg?

Some not very brilliant wag has got up a story of a "Divorce in Spirit-Life," as a burlesque on Col. Eaton's account of the spirit wedding in which his deceased daughter was a supposed party. The burlesque had been copied in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, the Chicago Tribune and other papers, and will no doubt be accepted by many persons as a genuine spirit narrative, but the shoulders of Spiritualism are broad, and can bear these and many similar impositions.

If Col. Eaton was misled, it was by phenomena which were undoubtedly of spiritual origin. He is a bold and careful investigator, and if he has been imposed upon, it has not been by human cunning. At Mott's, where he went an unbeliever in materialization, the manifestations were irresistible. His father and mother, his brother-in-law, Gov. Shannon, and several other friends, presented themselves visibly to him and his wife, and in every instance the identification was complete. In conversation the identified spirits showed a knowledge of which the medium could not have been possessed. On Col. Eaton's asking Shannon to give him his hand, it was given, and two fingers were found wanting, as in earth-life, and this hand was held till it melted away; allusions were made, and information was given, the details of which justify Col. Eaton in his confident belief that these spirits were the persons they appeared to be. His supposed daughter, too, showed a degree of clairvoyance in referring to family incidents, which indicated spiritual powers, if it did not conclusively settle the question of identification.

With regard to the communications said to be from Swedenborg, the internal evidence, in our estimation, falls; and we do not believe that the mind of Swedenborg is represented in them. But the materialized spirit identified by Col. Eaton as his father, seems to have shared his son's impression that Swedenborg was his guide and teacher. We think that much more evidence than has yet been given will be required, however, before it can be made credible that Swedenborg had anything to do with the letters addressed in his name to Col. Eaton.

Was the Colonel deceived, then, by the spirit manifesting itself as his father? That does not necessarily follow. Spirits are fallible; often quite as fallible as mortals; and the spirit-father, impelled by his affections, and influenced by the strong impression, fixed in the son's mind, that Swedenborg was his guide, took it for granted that the fact was such as was desired. The spirit was affected by the thought-sphere of the son, and accepted as a belief what was merely a wish in the mind of the latter. A spirit, brought back to earthly conditions and limitations, often comes with a consciousness quite distinct from that of his normal spiritual state. He has parted for a time with much that is peculiar to that state, and entered into much that is repressive, if not illusive. With every desire to be truthful, he may be misled by what he gets from the mind of his questioner, or from the sphere of another, though distant spirit, yet in the earth-life.

These considerations show how cautious we should be in accepting as infallible the word of any spirit—even of one whom we know to be sincere and upright, and in whose wish to help us we fully trust. The internal evidence of the communications through Dr. Mansfield is, we think, decisively against their having come from Swedenborg. The remarkable clairvoyance manifested by the doctor may prove nothing but his own well developed psychical powers; and the co-operation of an independent spirit, and that spirit Swedenborg is not needed for a solution of the actual phenomena.

Mr. Henry Kiddle and son accompany our contributor, Mr. S. B. Nichols, to the Lake Pleasant camp meeting this week. We learn that the School Commissioners are anxious that Mr. Kiddle should withdraw his resignation as superintendent of schools, and we hope he will do so.

Decease of Fichte, the Spiritualist.

The last intelligence from Stuttgart, Germany, informs us of the death of Immanuel Hermann Fichte, the celebrated philosopher, co-editor for many years, with Ulrich, of the leading philosophical journal in the German language, and author of numerous works which have won for him high distinction. Born in 1797 he was the son of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, who was born in 1762, and for whom, at his baptism, an aged relative of the mother predicted future eminence. The prophecy was abundantly fulfilled; J. G. Fichte is in the front rank of German philosophy along with Leibnitz and Kant.

I. H. Fichte, the son, has won a renown equally imperishable; but it will be much greater in the future than it is now. One of the earliest papers in which he fore-shadows his Spiritualistic stage of thought, was an article on "Soul, Spirit, and Consciousness from the stand-point of Psychophysical Science." In this, he argues (consistently with the teachings of Spiritualism) that the notions of time and space have their origin in a peculiar feeling of duration and extension which is inseparable from the soul's consciousness of itself; that they have their basis in the objective nature of the soul itself; and that time and space are simply the accompanying qualities or, more explicitly, the phenomenal effects of all real things, as such. This solution of the question as to the nature of space and time, and as to the subjective and objective significance of our conceptions of them, is regarded by Fichte as forming the basis of a sound and firmly established philosophy of realism, which yet diminishes in nothing the just priority in rank of the ideal nature of the human spirit, nor takes in the least from the significance and importance of a priori truths.

In 1859-60, I. H. Fichte became a convert to Spiritualism through his opportunities of witnessing the pneumatographic and other phenomena which occurred in the presence of his friend Baron Guldenstube, a medium, a scholar, and a man of position, whose ample means permitted him to give the manifestations gratuitously to all seekers for the truth. From that time up to the period of his decease, Fichte has been a devoted student of the great subject of pneumatology, and in a work first published within the present year, and entitled "The Worth and the Illusions of Spiritualism," he has presented such a defence of the science as only ignorance can contest. He avows himself explicitly a Spiritualist, and says that the cause of Spiritualism is secure in Germany; that the experiments of Zöllner, Weber, Fechner, and others, have settled the question conclusively for science.

It was a great gain for Spiritualism to have a man like Fichte thus intrepidly, in his old age, enter the breach and bear the banner of truth where so many, under the flag of a pseudo-science, were our scornful opponents. With Hoffman and Fechner he has been the leader in introducing into philosophy the great facts of Spiritualism. The revolution which the infusion is destined to cause, can hardly yet be estimated. The heaven is working, and the signs are most auspicious. Even Hartmann, the famous atheistic and pessimistic philosopher of Berlin, has been forced to admit our phenomena. That they will remain barren in so active a mind, is not probable.

With the exception of the Boston Herald and some few other journals, which are not afraid of unpopularity, the secular newspapers, in noticing Fichte's decease, make no reference to the fact of his Spiritualism and his writings in support of the science. We are not surprised at this. But we can bide our time; and so can the fame of Immanuel Hermann Fichte.

A Spiritual View of Diet.

Mr. J. T. Markley, (Eng.) in a late number of the Psychological Review, has an article on the above subject which contains many suggestive ideas. He says: "It is an open question whether eating has not upon the whole a vulgarizing effect upon society in general. Indeed it is a misfortune that man cannot live by faith, and prolong his existence by a constant flow of beautiful thoughts and conceptions."

This may be highly drawn, but we sympathize with his disgust as the gross butcher's fare furnished us in place of beautiful fruits and cleanly cereals, is contrasted. It is also true that spiritual inspiration does not thrive on "the greasy smell of chop-houses and the vulgar fumes of hot-grog." No class of people understand better the influence of diet than Spiritualists, yet they do not sufficiently comprehend its effects on body and spirit, to make their diet conform to their knowledge; a healthy body is essential to healthy spiritual growth, and this can only be attained by attention to the food partaken. After all has been said, it is not so much the quality as quantity of food taken into the stomach that is most injurious. Scarcely a single person in this land of plenty but takes much more food than the wants of the system require. The results are waste of vital power in digestion, and a storing of imperfectly digested material to furnish fuel for disease, or stimulants to the gross desires and appetites.

Mr. Markley well remarks:—"There is something truly artistic and imaginative in all kinds of garden produce. But the smell of the butcher's slaughter-house, and the premature destruction of calves, seems to me to have a very unfavourable effect upon the part of those to whom fresh-meat is a daily necessity. The majority of mankind merely live to eat. They never count the moral and intellectual disadvantages of a habit of over-eating. Hence the injury to health and to the refined spiritual faculties of the soul, by greasy, ill-digested, and indigestible meals."

"A Form of Religion."

Mr. B. F. Underwood writes: "I will show the utter untenableness of the position that morality is dependent for its existence and support on Spiritualism or any other form of religion." It goes without saying, that a formal morality may exist independently of religion or religious emotion. A man may be strictly moral and have no religion; and a religious man, trusting to his religion for salvation, may be somewhat too careless as to his morals. It needs no long argument to prove all this. It is quite obvious as revealed in actual facts and in the nature of things.

What we would correct is Mr. Underwood's reference to Spiritualism as a "form of religion," whereas it is simply the science of pneumatology. It is not a form of religion, though belief in a Love and Intelligence beyond these visible or demonstrable phenomena of the external world, is the very life-spring of all religion worthy of the name. Spiritualism gives a ground and a reason for religion, though it is not a form of religion in itself. This may seem an obvious distinction, but it is one that is too much overlooked. Mr. Underwood overlooks it; the Alliance has overlooked it in its recent arguments with the JOURNAL.

The Chinese are a nation of Spiritualists, though they can hardly be called a devout or religious people. We must believe in an absolute principle of goodness and truth, and in a rational Omnipotence through whom that principle is eternalized, if we would unite religion with morality. If we are at the mercy of a Blind Chance, under what is right to-day may be wrong to-morrow, the cosmos is not likely to be a pleasant abiding place for an eternity to truth-loving and justice-loving souls. An enlightened Spiritualism conducts straight to an enlightened Theism—one liberal as the sun and all-embracing as the universe. The sphere of science, as science herself declares, is the sphere of demonstrable phenomena. Beyond that she does not assume to penetrate. Our atheistic and Sadducean friends, however, do not hesitate to enter this forbidden Beyond very confidently, as if they were qualified to teach us as to the existence or non-existence of First Causes. As far as they do this, they are, indulging in mere speculation; going in direct violation of scientific methods, which it is the boast of materialism and positivism to follow. Spiritualism differs from these systems in being able to point to a mass of thoroughly attested phenomena as its reason for being; and it is from phenomena only, combined with the postulates of reason, that all our science is derivable.

"Science," says John Stuart Mill, "is a collection of truths. The language of science is, This is, or This is not; this does or does not happen. Science takes cognizance of a phenomenon, and endeavors to discover its laws." This definition justifies conclusively our claim that pneumatology is a science. What "form of religion" may spring from it depends altogether on the character mental and emotional, of the recipient of the truth. He may be an atheist; for, as Bishop Butler has truly remarked: "That we are to live hereafter is just as reconcilable with the scheme of atheism, and as well to be accounted for by it as that we are now alive is; and therefore nothing can be more absurd than to argue from that scheme that there can be no future state." As pneumatology is a science, Sadduceeism is doomed, and its extermination among scientific minds is merely a question of time.

"Willful Misrepresentation."

Under this head our brother of the Banner of Light grows exceedingly wrath over the line, "the Philadelphia organ of our harmonious Boston contemporary," appearing in our issue of the 16th in connection with a slight allusion to the impotent attacks upon us in a weekly publication printed in Philadelphia. For the comfort of our kindhearted though somewhat impulsive elder brother, we will say that we did not intend to be understood as meaning that there was any formal, written, business agreement between the parties. Neither do we imagine that any other reader so understood the line.

We only intended to indicate the very warm accord existing between our Boston contemporary and the blackmailing sheet. Like little dog Tray, our Boston brother is keeping bad company, and when the public see such evidences of cordial sympathy existing between the Boston paper and the Philadelphia sheet, it is justified in holding the suspicion that the vile and idiotic course of the latter meets the approval of the former.

We do not intend to be unjust, and if our Boston brother feels aggrieved we regret it, and trust this full and frank explanation will be considered by him as a complete amende.

Prof. Wm. Denton.

It is, indeed, an encouraging sign, both of the intelligence of the people and returning financial prosperity, when such able men as Prof. Denton find their engagements pressing for them. Mr. Denton will attend the Liberal camp-meeting at Lawrence, Kansas, from September 3d to the close, and will afterwards give courses of illustrated scientific lectures in Lawrence, Topeka, and Kansas City. Committees and lecture associations desiring to secure his services the coming season, should lose no time in corresponding with him. His permanent address is Wellesley, Mass.

Blind Hypercriticism.

We recently quoted the following words from a published prayer written by the late Prince Imperial of France: "Grant, O God, that my heart may be penetrated with the conviction that those whom I love and who are dead can see all my actions. Help me that my life shall be worthy of their witness, and my innermost thought shall never make them blush."

Here is an utter perversion of the whole spirit of our remark. It shows how much more anxious the Alliance is to pick a flaw, than to be sure it is right. The quibble seems intended to convey an obviously false impression.

To whom is the "aspiration" addressed? Surely not to any finite being! It is addressed to the Father of Spirits—to the Infinite God. "Religion," we are told by the Alliance, "relates to God and not to departed friends."

We hope the clergy generally will remember this in their prayers next Sunday, and take heed to their words. Indeed the Episcopal Book of Prayer will now have to undergo an entire revision to meet the requirements of our friends of the Alliance.

Trance Poetry.

An estimable Australian correspondent objects to our somewhat sweeping condemnation of these-called "trance poetry," extemporized by trance speakers.

This may be; one man may rattle off disjointed nonsense much more fluently than another; but it will be nonsense still, and we do not see why the fact of its being impromptu should make it in the least remarkable or acceptable.

The Ottawa (Kansas) Gazette gives the particulars of a very sad case. July 13th, Mr. Oliver Mottier was married to a very estimable young lady. Two days after the marriage she commenced acting strangely.

An Important Work.

The following is the title of a book to be issued from the press in September: "The Modern Bethesda; or, The Gift of Healing Restored," being some account of the Life and Labors of Dr. J. R. Newton.

The fame of Dr. Newton as a healer of the sick, during the last twenty years and more, has spread throughout the civilized world, and many thousands of sufferers, afflicted by all manner of diseases, in this and foreign lands, have borne eager and grateful testimony to the relief, more or less marvelous, that they have received literally from his hands.

Besides all this testimony, the work contains, in its introduction and elsewhere numerous citations from ancient, mediæval and modern history, to show that healing by the laying on of hands, etc., has been practiced to some extent not only in various branches of the Christian church ever since the days of the Apostles, but also in the so-called heathen world long before as well as since the beginning of the Christian era.

Its editor, Mr. A. E. Newton, has a high reputation as a scholar, writer and advanced thinker, which gives additional value to the work, which will embrace about four hundred pages octavo.

The Essential in Christianity.

The Chicago Times says:—"A Christian who desires to retain his belief in revelation, and who cannot deny certain hypotheses of science inconsistent with revelation, must suffer some pang of conscience and live in a gloomy and belated intellectual state."

The Christian who is disturbed by any of the discoveries or hypotheses of science is yet in the externals, and it is the letter that killeth him. The science of Spiritualism has made possible and reasonable in a scientific respect, the re-appearance of Christ after his crucifixion, the most incredible event in his history.

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