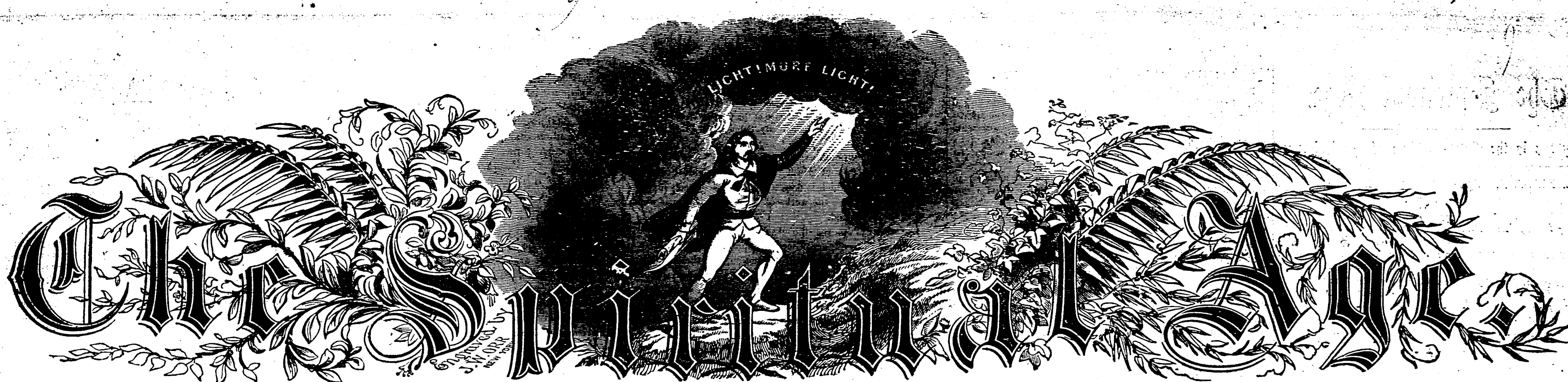




DEVOTED TO RATIONAL SPIRITUALISM AND PRACTICAL REFORM.

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THE STUDENT'S STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "NETTLEBY TALES."

We were visited, one fine September day, at Grimesby Park, by a youthful student, who, after his matriculation at one of the German Universities, was enjoying the successful conclusion of collegiate life, and building up a constitution, somewhat overtaken with study, by a ramble over the isles. Deeply read in the peculiar philosophy of Hegel, and not without an admiration for the refined idealisms of Fichte, he still seemed unconsciously to have wrought, from his own consciousness, many of those truths of the New Church which are supposed by some to have been vouchsafed to none others than the Swedish Sage. He amused us by narrating a tale, not wholly as fact nor yet entirely as fiction; to which the reader may attach whatever importance he pleases, though to me it was not without a rich significance. However, without preface, to the story:

"Thou must know," began the animated and friendly youth, "that in Germany are the remains of extensive forests. In one of these my grandsire resided; his employment being that of a superintendent or steward of a wild woodland district belonging to the Elector. It was in one of these solitary dingles as tradition avers, that, sleeping at the noon-day hour, beneath the shade of a spreading beech, he met with an adventure which not alone produced at the time a deep impression, but, by its consequences, affected all his subsequent life.

"He had gone out for the purpose of levying the tax upon a party of charcoal burners, and was returning home bearing in his girdle the gold. He sat down, somewhat fatigued, for his morning journey had been over hill and dale for several leagues, and, soothed by that concord of agreeable sounds which makes the forest an orchestra and every leaf a musician, sank into a light, and as it seemed to him, a brief sleep. On awakening, the sun had gone down. The dim and dubious glades were lost in the vague uncertainty of star-light. It was equally impossible for him to retrace with certainty his path to the village of the charcoal burners, or what would have been more pleasant, to the rural chateau in which his residence was fixed. There were outlaws too in the forest, and if, being of a stout heart, he feared not the risks of the encounter for himself, he was not without anxiety for the safety of the tax money which he carried. Something there was, however, in the soft rustle of the beech trees, something in the quiet friendliness of the secluded scene, that made him almost content to make the green, thymy sward his couch, and, rapt in his good cloak, to pass the night in quiet. Commending himself therefore to Him whose Heavens above declare His glory, it was not long before my grandfather had forgotten in a pleasing lethargy of the senses, that he had for a place of slumber no spot better than the wood.

He woke at midnight. The wind had gone down, yet, from afar, a sound of aerial laughter was borne, growing clearer and yet more strangely musical and ethereal. Suddenly there was the rustling of pinions, the gleamy light and dancing motion of ethereal beings, and then a song, in which he could not help joining, for it seemed as if the melody woke some latent spirit of music within his breast.

"Scarcely had this airy throng vanished, which they did with great rapidity, than, gliding with a graceful motion, a green snake dilated upon the emerald sward till she lay at length upon a bed of wild Anemones, gasping as if for life and convulsed with ineffectual struggles. At length the skin of the serpent parted, and, to his astonishment, a graceful, modest maiden stood in its place. Light wings, airy as the pinions of a butterfly, played upon her dimpled shoulders; her abundant tresses flowed in sparkling waves till they met the golden girdle at her waist. Her robes, almost impalpable, yet exhaled an intense fragrance to the night; and the radiance of her veiled bosom burned alternately with an amber and emerald flame. Her features were noble, and, while the cheeks were pale as those of a marble goddess, the lips were crimsoned like some newly-opened rose-bud or oriental shell. But that feature which was most noteworthy, and indeed, which eclipsed all others, was the eyes. Large, dark and dreamy, and full, as it seemed to the gazer, of a bashful, maiden light, to look upon them was to yearn hopelessly, to be filled with strange, impassioned longing, to wish to live and die at the fair enslaver's feet.

"The lady turned, hearing the suppressed sigh, and, for my grandsire was then a noble, comely youth, looked as if not displeased to find a mortal the witness of so wondrous and lovely a transformation. She reached out her hand with a friendly gesture, whispering, in a voice of thrilling sweetness, 'I am the fairy Preciosa. I possess the power of making those who love me, wise, fortunate and happy. Know that it was I who caused thy noonday slumber beneath the beech. This gift of causing sleep at will I am also able enabled to bestow on others. Earth is my play ground, but I reside within the soul of the atmosphere. By the law of my being, if I would pass from

the one to the other, I must assume during the transition, the form of a green snake. This, however, is but momentary.—Say, beloved youth, canst thou love the fay?"

"With these words she fixed upon him a penetrative and tender glance, and he was about to exclaim, 'A thousand-fold better than any mortal woman,' when a wood pigeon flew in circles around the spot, and then seemed by every effort, endeavoring to attract the attention of the fascinated youth. At first the feathers of the bird were of a soft and glossy brown, but they gradually became of a vivid scarlet hue. Still uttering its melodious voice, the winged flutterer pursued its airy circles, wholly bent, apparently, on drawing the mind away with its own mysterious motions.

"The dark eyed maiden, beholding the bird, frowned and cried aloud, 'Karl, I know that thou dost love me. Learn that the pigeon conceals the form of a Magician, the most cruel and dangerous enemy both of thee and the fay. By means of magic he is enabled to becloud the senses, to cheat the fancy and to produce upon his subjects incurable hallucinations. I can defend myself against his arts, and thee too, but thou must sleep while my fingers are laid upon thine eyes. Thou wilt awake endowed with more than human powers, and one of them will be the ability to resist his arts.'

"Saying this, she glided toward him with an airy grace in which the very poetry of motion seemed to live, while at the same time the light of her profound eyes became more soft and ardent. Determined, apparently, to resist her approach, the dove at length spread its wings and flew as if to dart into her breast, whereat the maiden, shrieking and receding, was lost once more in the form of the green serpent, and in that image glided away.

"The crimson dove now seemed delighted, and, fluttering upward, disappeared in a rosy cloud, which overhung the forest glade. In spite of his vexation, the young man drawn by an irresistible yearning of the heart, was compelled to gaze on this new wonder. Beyond it lay the blue night with its innumerable stars, and, from its bosom, emerged a pearly chariot, drawn by swans, and seeming to glide over the bosom of the tranquil ether, as if upborne upon the waves of some ethereal and gently swelling sea.

"In the chariot appeared seated a radiant young man, wearing a purple vesture, starred with gold. His brows were crowned with silver laurel leaves, gemmed with amethysts and rubies. Wonder was lost in a sense of deep delight, too exquisite for the mortal senses, unassisted, to endure, when instead of the beaming but lovely stranger, two appeared in the chariot emerging from one, the bridegroom and his bride.—They were affectionately engaged in reading from the same Book, which lay between them, and, pronouncing the words together, while the sentences formed themselves into embodied thoughts in the atmosphere, scintillant with the bright hues of paradise, and imaging delicious fruits and odoriferous flowers. The crimson dove, at this instant, reappeared, and the young man now perceived it to have, for its abiding-place, no less sacred a spot than the bosom of the beautiful, matronly form, becoming still more angelic in a superhuman loveliness as the organs of vision grew accustomed to the sight.

"The voice, proceeding from the chariot, seeming to reach the heart by a process wholly its own, and to awaken there a response in the very language of the first-born affections, thus addressed the astonished, bewildered watcher:

"Young man, learn that Heaven, from the moment of birth, bestows on every human spirit Angelic Guardians. We are thine; our office silently to watch the unfolding affections, to quicken the conscience into a noble activity, and, without trespassing on the domain of the will, to nourish the germ of every latent virtue.

"The phantom from whom thou wert attracted by the dove, is one whose dangerous arts have ruined many like thyself.—Learn that she but personates a gentle fay, a race incapable of guile; as she is utterly devoid of any element by which to honor God or serve mankind. At once a demon and a haunter of the earthly world, she assumes a shadowy and impalpable but material form, supplied by the life which she absorbs from human beings in their sleep, the better to obtain the confidence of those whom she designs at last to make her slaves. Had you been permitted to become a captive, reason would have left you,—that better reason which discriminates between the Beautiful in thought, in feeling and in action, and its base, repulsive opposite. Absorbing into yourself her own forever burning passions, your peaceful life would no more have sufficed as a means of happiness, nor would the calm delights of the domestic circle have fed the heart.

"You shall have, ere many days, an illustration of the lesson which we would now enforce. When thou returnest to thy home thou wilt find there a missive, from the Count of Odenheim, requesting thee to visit him at his castle. On doing so thou wilt find two maidens there, one in the image of the Siren who has endeavored to delude thee; the other of humble birth, the daughter of the forester, and only beautiful to the inner eye, which penetrating the mask, discerns the soul forever young. Take thy choice, for both will be presented, by those circumstances which are rightly called the ways of Prov-

idence. Yet remember that with the former, thou takest the Siren, with the latter the Angel,—that the proud beauty hides the serpent in her bosom, while the humble damsel nurtures the dove within her heart.'

"The rest of the narration," continued the student, "is only of value as affording a singular corroboration of this mysterious and two-fold apparition. Arriving in the early morning at his residence, my ancestor found there a missive inviting him to the castle of Odenheim without delay. A notice of the Count, a lady of singular beauty and amply dowered in her own right, met him as with the very smile and voice of the phantom who had called herself Preciosa. Despite the warning, he had well nigh succumbed to her charms. The deep magnetic glance, in particular, was possessed of a power not far short of enchantment. This dangerous creature, as he learned afterward, had driven one noble knight to suicide and caused the madness of another. Her glances seemed to possess the power of inducing a frenzy in the brain, while her singular demeanor, now bold, now bashful—to-day warranting the wildest hopes, to-morrow blighting every tender affection, served to produce at last a state bordering on despair. Ere many days he beheld the Serpent Phantom, in the twilight hovering over her, and saw the green viper nestling apparently in the folds of her dainty robe.

"Recoiling at this fearful confirmation, he sought the forester's daughter, and found her a plain and unpretending girl, with no claims to beauty other than those which light up even the irregular features of the good and innocent with a something holy, inexpressibly attractive for the incorrupt. Her he married. Perhaps the most singular portion of the legend is the conclusion. In her sleep she seemed transfigured. Often a rosy lustre played upon her face. The melodious language of some Celestial Country dropt in gentle murmurs from her lips, and a radiant, fluttering visitant, visible sometimes as a dove, with plumage of a bright crimson, was observed disappearing in her breast.

"They lived long and happily together, crowned with nuptial felicity such as few enjoy; and, over the old lady's death-bed, in her departing hour, was heard the rustling of invisible pinions and the chorus of celestial voices; while more than one present beheld, as the eye closed and the bosom heaved its last sigh, a splendid light, which, arising from the breast, receded from their vision, wearing the likeness of the crimson dove."—*Harris' Herald of Light.*

"I HOLD STILL."

Pain's furnace heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,
And all my heart in anguish shivers
And trembles at the fiery glow:
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And in his hottest fire hold still.

He comes and lays my heart, all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so
Into his own fair hammer to beat it
With his great hammer, blow on blow:
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And at his heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it;
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o'er and o'er and heats it,
And lets it cool, and makes it glow:
And yet I whisper, As God will!
And, in his mighty hand, hold still.

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
Its end may come, and will, to-morrow,
When God has done his work in me:
So I say trusting, As God will!
And, trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles for my profit purely
Affliction's glowing fiery brand,
And all his heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a Master-hand:
So I say praying, As God will!
And hope in Him, and suffer still.

From the German of Julius Sturm.

ASPIRATION AND FAITH.

"Oh," says the weary worker who drops his chisel before the marble, "I can imitate the natural object but it does not answer my ideal; I want to achieve something better and nobler, and I can do it." "Oh," says the poet, "I can sing a still sweeter song." "Oh," says the philosopher, "there are more boundless depths of thought down which I can drop the plummet of my searching intellect." There must be something beyond man in this world. Even on attaining to his highest possibilities, he is like a bird beating against his cage. There is something beyond. Oh, deathless soul, like a sea-shell moaning for the bosom of the ocean to which you belong.—Tell me not of a limitation, says the weary broken heart, over the grave of its hopes. Tell me not that this world is all, says the bereaved mother. Tell me not that death is an eternal sleep, says the broken shadow of humanity. And feeling this great need of the soul, we cling to the cross and to faith in immortality.—*Chapin.*

CHAPIN ON "SHAMEFUL LIFE."

In his discourse on "shameful life," Mr. Chapin in his earnest and impressive style, speaks of the alarming extent of the vice in question, assuming as it does, disguises that secure it a place in every rank and grade of society and making dread wreck of all that is noble in manhood and womanhood. After drawing a fearful picture of the victims of debasing passions he says:

The silence and apathy which exist in regard to this evil, are not justified by any motives of delicacy or dread. The evil is in having a social cancer, not in talking about a cancer. The only possibility of curing or limiting a wrong, is to become clearly conscious of the wrong. "We have no right," says one of the able women of our day, "we have no right to shrink with sanctimonious ultra delicacy, from the barest mention of things we must know to exist. If we do not know it, our ignorance is at once both helpless and dangerous, narrows our judgment, exposes us to a thousand painful mistakes, and greatly limits our powers of usefulness." To prevent all talk upon this subject, there is on the one side a morbid, sensitive delicacy, that, after all is more closely allied to a base consciousness than a genuine virtue; and, on the other hand, there is a frivolous spirit of worldliness exhibited by men, who, on mention of this class of facts, find only occasion for a jest, or sneeringly insinuate that the reformer, the philanthropist, or the clergyman who even so much as alludes to this shame, knows more of such things than he ought.

In the matter of which I am now treating, the woman is the conspicuous sinner. Upon her falls the blight of the public shame. I ask not, now, is this merciful? I ask, is it just?—but I ask, what justice is there in our modern custom, that scarcely frowns at the guilty man—sometimes laughs at, and even patronizes him—and pours all the vials of wrath and condemnation on the guilty woman—her guilt itself often the result of his falsehood and his meanness. What justice, what honor, what delicacy, O, refined woman! who recoiling with virtuous scorn from that fallen sister, will welcome with brilliant homage him by whom she fell. I suppose the mantle of Christian Charity should cover everybody. But, perhaps, we ought to allow for a little natural shrinkage; and if there is any body that it won't cover, and that ought to have the privilege of lying outside the hem of it, in the cold blast and biting frost, it is that man who trades in woman's affection—who drags her down to ruin—who leaves her to suffer the guilt—who goes on, smiling to new conquests, and boasts of his victory. Smooth, flattering, honored, welcomed in refined society, entertained in respectable homes—when his only use in the world seems to be to make men believe in a devil, or rather to feel that a particular devil is necessary.

Indelicate! Is it indelicate to starve—indelicate to die—indelicate to remind you of your responsibilities? We are connected with this matter very closely by our opinions concerning woman's sphere of work. There are those who immediately associate this idea of an extended sphere for female work with "strong-minded woman," and with "woman's rights," or some other subject of cant or sarcasm. In this lies one great cause of this phase of social evil.

If we would create a wider sphere of employment for woman, it would no doubt, rectify a large amount of this evil—not all, by any means—but more than we may suppose. And woman must have better wages. Out of two thousand women who work for their daily bread, 534 receive \$1 per week, 336 receive \$2 per week. Surely this is a comfortable equipment with which to keep off death and conquer the devil! How many of you would do it? One woman had to do it by making caps at two cents a piece! What a beautiful halo shines around such an employer—his path of charity paved with penny pieces! I wonder if this magnificent benefactor of the human race would be willing to show himself. I should think, in the light of such a revelation, he would need all the caps the women ever made to cover his own head, and *hide his humble sense of merit!*

But some may still ask, "What have we to do with this matter?" We have, first and foremost, to rectify our opinions concerning woman's sphere of employment. A great many women, honorable, respectable women—have much to do with this evil, by the manner in which they deal with poor women who, directly or indirectly work for them; pure and honorable women, who glory in "buying cheap." They may look to themselves for much of the misery consequent upon such destitution as results to these ill-paid sisters. When they dress themselves they may think whether they have not helped to dress a soul for sacrifice, or to borrow Hood's simile, "to sew a thread in a shroud." Or, to use the language of the great master of modern English eloquence—"If, for a moment, the spirit of Truth and Terror, which walk invisibly among the masks of the earth, would lift the dimness from out erring thoughts, and show us how 'many' have literally entered into partnership with Death, and dressed themselves in his spoils!—Yes, if the veil could be lifted not only from your thoughts, but from your human sight, you would see—the angels do see—on those gay, white dresses of yours, strange dark spots, and crimson patterns that you knew not of, spots of the inextin-

guishable red that all the seas cannot wash away; yes, and among the pleasant flowers that crown your fair heads, and glow in your wreathed hair, you would see that one weed was always twisted which no one thought of—the grass that grows on graves."

For the Spiritual Age.

COME AND LET US REASON TOGETHER.

Science and the Pulpit, in our day, are understood as agreeing to the proposition that the progress of the earth's organization as a planet, and the successive unfoldment of mineral vegetable animal and human kingdoms thereon, may be regarded as embracing six indefinite ages or epochs of time. Thus Theology, by repudiating the contracted dogmas of our fathers, is able to harmonize the Genesis account of creation with the researches of science, and find in this enlarged comprehension of the teachings a confirming evidence of their alleged origin in inspiration. It seems to me that Science and Religion are being drawn into a closer harmony, though it involves death to the prevailing sectarian theologies; but this closer harmony depends greatly on the free and natural exercise of Reason, and its demands must be respected by the schools of both Science and Religion.

The philosophy usually termed the Development Theory, involves some difficulties demanding the critical attention and detailed explanation of its advocates and supporters. It substantially ignores the idea of any special or arbitrary action of an intelligent creating power, while it concedes there is an intelligent or supreme First Cause, and alleges that the universe, as existing to-day, is the necessary result of perfect, devised, immutable laws, expressive of the Divine will and purpose for which creation was instituted.

But along with this general proposition, Science also asserts some dogmas it is difficult to reconcile therewith, and it is to these I desire to invite attention. She teaches, as a part of the established and immutable economy of Nature, or Deity, that all organic life, whether vegetable or animal, originates in and results from a preliminary union of male and female principles, and that the product thereof is defined and limited by what is termed the law of "Like begets like." Hence, wherever a blade of wild grass is found on the new mud-bank, or an oak succeeds the demolished pine tree, or a fish is found in the newly formed pond, the dogma is asserted that seed or eggs were deposited and gave origin thereto.

This dogma finds plausibility in the fact that the economy of multiplying and perpetuating the different genera of organic life embraces the due production of germ-seed and eggs. But all our experience of such economy teaches the immutable operation of like begets like, and ignores the idea that a vegetable seed is a germ from whence any form of animal life could originate, or that the egg of any animal is a germ from whence the human form, or man, has an origin.

But the development theory affirms directly the opposite; for it assumes there was once a time when the vegetable was the highest or only form of organic life on earth, and that it in time became the parentage of rudimentary forms of animal life. It also affirms, that, in time, brute animal forms became the parentage of the higher human form, or man. This alleged successive birth of advancing forms of organic life is inconsistent with the dogma that all organic life must originate in produced seed or eggs, and is defined and limited by like begets like.

The advocates and expounders of this philosophy should meet this point, and explain how, in harmony with like begets like, such results could occur, or abandon the dogma that like begets like and the preliminary union referred to, embrace and constitute all of the economy of nature.

I am free to say I believe there is another principle of law in the economy of Deity, which we may term Progression, that will meet this point, and explain it; but if I am right in this, then I must claim an abandonment of the authoritative dogma ignoring the possibility of spontaneous life in our day. I go further, and say, if I am right, then we may find a sounder solution of the phenomena of insects in our grain and our fruit trees, as well as an explanation of the alleged myths describing the miraculous conceptions resulting in the birth of those who are regarded as founders of new religions. But all this in its proper time. Let our savans first meet the point raised and presented to them.

A SPIRITUALIST.

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S RELIGION.—When Mr. Jefferson was asked respecting his religion, his memorable answer was:—"It is known to God and myself alone. Its evidence before the world is to be sought in my life; if that has been honest and dutiful to society, the religion which has regulated it cannot be a bad one."

Let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay the precept well to heart: Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty—thy second duty will already have become clearer.

Theologians resemble dogs that gnaw large bones for the sake of a very little meat.

