

The Christian Spiritualist

"Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone—that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

ST. PAUL.

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FUTURE RETRIBUTION, CONSIDERED AS A FACT: A DISCOURSE BY THE EDITOR.*

I ASK your attention to some thoughts on a subject which may be expressed in the following terms, and to which I intend to return an affirmative answer: "Assuming that man after what we call death, passes into a state of conscious and continued existence, is it rational and moral to believe that the law of Retribution will then continue in exercise, even as we know it to be in exercise in this world?"

My question starts by assuming a future state, partly because I think that instruction may be reaped from a thoughtful consideration of my topic independent of my assumption, and partly because the doctrine of the future, taken as a whole, is so vast that its treatment cannot be compressed within a single discourse. But to those who do feel an intelligent and deep-seated interest in the doctrine of the Future Life, I would refer them to Alger's "Critical History" of that doctrine, published about ten years ago in America, and now sold by Trubner, of Paternoster Row, and Whitfield, 178, Strand. Its "comprehensiveness of plan, carefulness of arrangement, clearness of explanation, poetic life of treatment, copiousness of information, and manifest patience of toil," conspire to render it an epitome of the thought of mankind on the destiny of the race, and as such, a volume which no secularist, no believer, no man indeed, be his position whatever it may, public or private, should omit to read and study with the

greatest care. It will, also, be seen that I pass by any arguments of a Scriptural kind; that I speak of the *law* of Retribution as opposed to any arbitrary inflictions; and that the words "*will continue*," imply that the law of Retribution is in exercise in the present state. So, too, I do not ask *when* the Retribution will commence, or *where* it will take effect, or *how long* it will continue. These are points of no practical moment in the settlement of the question which this discourse is intended to discuss, in the discussion of which I am also bound to add that the form only, and not the matter of the form, will be original. I must say with Montaigne, that "I have gathered a nosegay of flowers in which there is nothing of my own but the string which ties them."

1. There are two things which, in themselves, are perfectly separable, but which are very often confounded, as though they were one and the same thing. They are *character* and *reputation*. A man's character is what the man himself is; his reputation is what other people think of him. Now, my first argument will be founded upon this something which we all call character, and the general nature of which is pretty well understood. By it we know one man from another, so that one man is thought of as ignorant, another as wise, one as virtuous, another as vicious, and so on. All through life, and in each instant of it, we are forming a certain definite character, by what we think, and feel, and say, and do, by every exercise of every power we possess. This, I think, is true, independently of the influences from external circumstances which pour in upon us, and more or less affect us. Yes; whether we are asleep or awake, at home or abroad, in business or at play, and whatever our surroundings or temper-

* This discourse was originally contributed to the *National Reformer*, at the request of the then Editor, Mr. John Watts.



aments may be, silently, quietly, but very surely; we are all through life, moment by moment building up a definite character; our thoughts are taking certain forms and directions, our feelings are running into given and definite channels, our sensibility to all that is good and true, or evil and false, is growing; in fact, that which makes us, not what we appear to be, but what we are; that thing we call character is in a ceaseless course of formation. I merely affirm the fact of the formation, I do not now inquire into man's responsibility in relation to it. He may, or he may not, be responsible; the formation itself is the thing for which I contend.

2. *It is this character, so continuous and definite in its formation, which alone remains to man when he comes to die.* Not what he has had, not what he has done (considering the doing as so much mere action), not what he may possess in acquaintances, friends, relatives, houses, money, lands, books, or aught else; not even the memories of him which may survive his life here: none of these things remain to a man as his own when he comes to what we call death, and when he has to face and realize that most solemn mystery. When the angel clad in dark livery summonses man to enter the future, even though that future were to be ghastly annihilation itself, man has to accompany him, taking with him that character, and that character only, which all through life has been in course of formation. The scaffolding is removed, for the house is built. The scaffolding was a means to an end, that end being a house. And even while the house was being built, the scaffolding was of importance, only in a relative and provisional sense. So too, is it with man at death. By ten thousand circumstances and influences, by unnumbered thoughts, and feelings, and deeds, the formation of character has been accomplished, a poor one, an imperfect one, an evil one, it may be, but still a character. So death finds man, and when it finds him, man has nought else he can strictly and absolutely call his own.

3. *Death, considered simply in and by itself, does not in any manner or to any extent affect the character so formed, and of which when it comes to man it finds him to be the sole possessor.* Indeed, what is there in death that does or can interfere with character? Say that death is the tenant, leaving the house in which he has so long lived; or the jewel, leaving the casket in which it has so long lain; or the worshipper, leaving the temple in which he has so long worshipped. But the tenant is a man, and remains a man; the jewel is still a jewel; the worshipper still a worshipper. Assuming, as of course I do, that man lives again, death is only a mode of transition, and cannot, so far as it has any positive existence, affect the mental and moral in man;

but only that which is physical, that which, so to speak, dies every day, and comes at length to a state of crisis. The atoms of which the body is composed begin at death to liberate themselves from each other, that they may form parts of other existences, and finally form the grass, and flow in the stream, and become the food upon which we live. All this is true enough. Science has proclaimed it, and science has proved it; and in proving it has exposed the absurdity of the common doctrine of the resurrection of the body. But the I, me, myself, the thinking, feeling, hoping, joying, sorrowing, loving man, the human being, with a definite character, is under no such law of decomposition and recomposition. Death seals up the eyes, and closes the lips, and stills the hand, but it does not, and cannot touch the character: over that death has no power.

4. *It is character alone which man carries with him into another state of existence.* Not his body, but his mind. Not his goods and possessions, but his character; that which distinguishes him from every other human being. If this be not so, if a man do not carry his character into the future, he cannot be in that future what he was on earth and here, for to leave his character behind him would be to leave himself behind. The character is, practically, the man.

5. If, therefore, the formation of character be a positive and continuous fact; if it be character alone which remains to us when we die; if death does not, and cannot affect the character, however much it may affect the body, and if it be character, and that alone, which man carries with him into another state; then, *unless the physical, mental, and moral laws of that state be absolutely different to those which obtain in our present state, the law of retribution must there continue to work, even as we know it to work here.* Good must come to the good, and bad must come to the bad. I say the *LAW of Retribution*. I do not believe in, I do not contend for reward or punishment superinduced upon the man from without. I do not believe in God giving happiness to man, just as we might pass any commodity out of our own hands into the hands of another; nor do I believe in any positive infliction of punishment after the same fashion. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, and a good man shall be satisfied from himself." Yes, out of our characters will come, aye, and must come, if law be law, happiness or misery, satisfaction or discontent, good or evil, moral life or moral death.

6. *That function of our constitution, about the exact definition of which mental and moral philosophers are not entirely agreed, but which is very well known by the name of memory, seems to me to secure the continuous action of the law of retribution in the future life.* By this function, or

power of memory, the present is connected, by ties which cannot be broken, with the past, and by it, all the separate details of our conscious existence are photographed, in ineffaceable images, upon our inner nature. Memory is like some picture gallery, where hang representations of all that we have ever thought, or felt, or done ; or like the archives of some institution, which contain records of every minutiae of our lives ; or like some casket, which holds within its limits treasures we would not lose for worlds ; or like some dungeon, in which are imprisoned, sadly against our will, evil thoughts, evil feelings, evil actions, and evil desires, which, ever and anon, sting and goad us well nigh to madness. How much of the happiness and misery of life arise, and take their coloring, and derive their intensity, from the action of memory ! She can bring sunshine to flood the darkest moment, and she can darken the brightest moment with heavy and leaden clouds. We are in the midst of friends, and merry dancers flit before us, and merry sounds float through the air, and strike upon the ear, and merry eyes twinkle with a glad delight, and merry hearts swell with an unwonted rapture. Eyes, and ears, and mind, and feeling are drinking from a cup, all whose drops seem to be blissful, and invite us to drain them to the very last. We live, and move, and have our being, and revel in, the bliss of the present moment. But suddenly, as if by magic, and when painful associations are least of all welcome, memory ascends her throne, and at the touch of her wondrous wand, the graves of the past are opened, and yield up their dead. Some thought, some feeling, some desire, some act, some portion of the past life rises suddenly from its tomb, and passes before us, and while we recognise it, we feel that our tide of joy has received a check, that our own unclouded sky is darkened, and that drops of bitterness have fallen into the cup, which, up to that moment, has yielded nought but sweetness. What is this but suffering in the present, through the action upon us of the past ? What is this but yesterday repeating itself in to-day ? What is this but the roll of the thunder peal, following the flash of the lightning ? When a thought has once been given birth to, when a feeling or desire has once been cherished, when an action has once been performed, when an experience has once been gone through, they do not die, and live no more ; they take their places in the storehouse of memory, there to live on, and follow man wherever he may go ; to stay with him where he stays, to be his constant companions, and the sources of pain or pleasure to him. They may sleep, or seem to be asleep ; they may die, or seem to be dead ; but they do not slumber, nor do they die ; as the spasm which passes over the face, and the quickened beating of the heart,

and the sudden revulsion of feeling, plainly testify. The waves of old ocean mark their undulations upon the sandy shore, but memory makes her marks, not upon sand, but upon adamant. Now not only are these things true in respect to memory, but it is also true that memory is essential to identity, to individual consciousness. If, therefore, we pass on through death into a state of individual consciousness, we must carry our memory with us ; and if we carry our memory with us, we carry that out of which will flow and must flow our happiness or our misery. And what is this, but the law of retribution acting in a future life, through the medium of memory ?

7. *The principle of causation, and the inevitable relations between what are called cause and effect, and which develop themselves in constant connection with all human beings, existences, and conditions, prove, I think, the doctrine that the law of Retribution obtains in the Future Life.* What our individual characters and conditions are, what the world is, what our political, social, and religious advantages and disadvantages are, at this hour, are, one and all, the effects of certain causes which have been in activity, and which have developed themselves after their own natures. The present condition of the very globe upon which we live, is the sum total of all the forces of nature and man that have been acting upon it through the past ages. In fact, there can be no effect without a cause, nor can there be any active cause without an effect. All things are under law, and are *thus* or *thus*, according to their distinctive natures. Now this law of cause and effect is as much, and as constantly, bound up with the nature of man, as it is with the world of nature in which he lives. He cannot set certain causes in action, and escape the effects which naturally flow out from them, he cannot sow his life-field with any kind of grain without some corresponding harvest as a consequence. Now, unless it can be proved that cause and effect cease to be, or cease to act in mutual relation, in the future life, it seems certain that the law of Retribution must obtain there, even as it does here. Surely, if we live again we shall do more than exist, as a flower, or a stone, or a raindrop. Surely, if our existence in a future life be a conscious one, and we continue to be mental and moral beings, then mental and moral causes must result in mental and moral effects ; and this is only saying, in other words, that the law which results in good to the good, and evil to the evil, will continue to act in the life beyond death.

8. I have all along admitted, and indeed, contended for, the existence of law, and I have done so because it is a fact, and one which theologians, of all people in the world, ought to be among the foremost to acknowledge. *But*

law, of whatever kind it may be, suggests the idea, and seems to necessitate the existence of a Law-giver; that is, of a Being who is distinct from, and the source of law. For law is not in itself an entity; but a condition of certain things by which it is manifested that those things are what they are, and act in *this* or *that* way. A law, therefore, must owe its existence, nature, and working to some being outside of itself, and to whom it bears the relation which effect bears to cause. Law has no self-knowledge, cannot reflect upon itself, cannot modify its own activity. It is power; but it is blind power; and has no more life in it than the steam engine which bounds along at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and does so because it cannot help it. Law, I think, involves a Lawgiver; and, as respects the subject in hand, a Moral Governor, above man, and to whom man owes allegiance. That Moral Governor, we call God. We who are Theists, do not pretend to clear up all the difficulties which, as it seems to us, must be inseparable from the existence and government of God; although, to our thinking, there is an amount of evidence for His existence, and the reality of His government, which makes it rational for us to believe in them. *Now the very idea of God involves the idea of His unchangeableness;* for He who is infinite and perfect cannot change. But man is now under the moral government of God, and must continue to be as long as he is man. If, therefore, under the present moral government of God, the Law of Retribution obtains, with respect to man, the connection will not cease in any other world to which man may go; for God is the Governor in all worlds, and no mere change of position can dissolve the bond between such a Ruler and His subject. There is the same Lawgiver, the same Moral Governor, in the future life, that there is in the present one, and if so, the Law of Retribution will continue to act in the future life, even as it acts here. Indeed, if it does not, if bad does *not* come to the bad, as well as good to the good, then God cannot be a just Being; and to say that God is not a just Being, what is that but saying that there is no God? I think that the denial of the doctrine that the Law of Retribution obtains in the future life, logically leads to something uncommonly like Atheism.

I have now stated some of the reasons why I believe that the law of retribution will continue in exercise in the future life. I believe that other reasons might be adduced than those I have named, and that the argument might be put in more forcible and convincing form than I am able to put it. But, let that pass: my concluding remarks will be occupied in answering some *objections* which may be made to the views I have propounded.

i. For example, it may be said that "the

Law of Retribution works itself out always and thoroughly in this life, and therefore, that its continued action in the future life would be unnecessary and unjust." The great and good Emerson, in his "Essay on Compensation," has elaborated this objection with all the power and fascination which are so peculiarly his; and any tolerably attentive student of popular literature, will know that the same views are to be found running through its pages also. Now one would think there could be no two opinions about the existence, and actual operations, of a law of retribution in the present life; the evidences are too numerous to admit of a reasonable doubt. But does this law follow man through death, and into another state of existence, *not having worked itself out fully in the present one?* I believe it does. The universal conscience seems to teach that it does so. Go where there are no altars, no religious temples, no priests, where the name of Jesus and the fact of His religion have never been announced, where human beings are living in what some would call a natural state, and you will find not merely that such persons cherish the idea of a future life, but that pain and pleasure are ideas associated with it. The conceptions of such persons are often of the most foolish kind, but the ideas are there, and appear to be inseparable from them. Why is it that the savage, the barbarian, and the semi-civilized, as well as the civilized, connect the thought of reward and punishment with their thought of a future life, if it be not that the "moral nerve" which we call conscience throbs with it? And if this idea be so universal, it does not, I confess, prove that there is an objective reality answering to the subjective thought, but it may be accepted as an implication in that direction. But it is a matter of fact that man does not here, always and fully, reap the results of his doings, whether they be good or evil. Take the case of a *farmer*, who neglects to prepare and plant his ground at the proper season, either because he cannot or will not do so. What follows? The seasons of spring and summer come and go, and at last, the autumn season, with its harvest days, comes, and then, but not till then, does the law of Retribution fully assert itself. Take another case. A *young man* gives free rein to his appetites and passions, poisons his blood, inflames his brain, enfeebles his mind, confuses his perceptions of right and wrong, turns the current of his sympathies into evil channels, pampers his body, neglects the cultivation of his mind, lives like a prodigal, and altogether beneath his dignity as a man. But all the consequences of this wrongdoing do not come upon him at once, and in all their fullness. The feet of the avenging deities are on his track, and he cannot escape them,

but they come gradually, as well as softly, and he may not, until middle life or old age, reap all that he has sown. Then he has to take up the mournful lament of Job and say, "Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth." Take a third fact. Years ago, *the government of a country* perpetrated a political wrong. In its outward form it was a slight one, known by few only at the time, and thought but little of by its perpetrators. That generation passed away, carrying with it those who did the wrong, and it was a long series of years before that wrong had shown itself, and wrought out all its evil effects. If, therefore, the law of Retribution can, and does, so work here, why may it not postpone the full working out of itself to the future life? *Felt Retribution* is also very much a matter of constitution. Physical organisation and strength are relative, as to sensitiveness of conscience. A man through whom the full tide of health runs, whose physical strength is great, and whose spirits are high and agreeable, and who is able to do and bear much, is not often troubled with a conscience so sensitive as that of the man whose organisation is more delicate, and whose nerves are more finely strung. And yet the robust man may be guilty of far more evil than the delicate one. Again: *felt Retribution* in this life depends, to some extent, upon whether a man succeeds or not. Let him succeed, and conscience will not always punish him so severely as if he had failed. So, too, the healthy action of conscience is interfered with by the publicity or privacy of an act. As long as the act is not known to others, conscience will often slumber; but let the act be known and she will rouse herself at once. So, too, public opinion exerts a great force upon the conscience. What it largely approves, conscience is apt to approve; but if it condemn, conscience also will be more likely to condemn. These are some of the things which, as it seems to me, interfere with the free and full working out, in this life, of the Law of Retribution; and unless the law is to become a partial failure, it must have more time than the present, and another sphere than this world, in which to show itself in its entirety. The Law of Retribution works itself out in this life quite as partially in relation to good as it does to evil. The educated and finely attuned conscience will tell a man, if he will but listen to it, that good is rewarded, and evil punished, but it will, also, tell him that the reward and the punishment are often all too inadequate to meet the just demands of the case.

2. Many intelligent and most excellent people, while contending for the reality of a future life, say that that life will be for the good only, and that the evil will be annihilated, and,

as I think, they say so to escape the horrible and blasphemous doctrine of everlasting hell torments. But as there is no reason to believe that annihilation takes effect in the world of matter, matter changing its form merely, it is unreasonable to suppose that God will annihilate mind. A man's child is nearer to him, and must be more valuable in his sight, than any material possession he may have, however costly in itself. If God does not annihilate the house in which His child lives, will He annihilate the child himself? There is, also, no such absolute distinction between the good and the wicked as is here supposed. There are shades of character. We speak of day and night, of knowledge and ignorance, of the rich and the poor; but we do not therefore forget the twilight, or that knowledge and ignorance, as well as riches and poverty, are comparative things. And so in the matter of moral condition. The man who is the least good, and he who is the least evil, may approach each other so nearly, that none but an omniscient eye can detect the difference. We know, also, that none are *all* good, or *all* evil. For these reasons, therefore, I cannot believe in the annihilation doctrine; while it seems but just that the law of retribution, if it work in the future life, and reward the good, ought to punish the evil.

And now if it be true that the Law of Retribution will continue to work, and work more thoroughly in that state of existence upon which man enters after passing through death, then he is a fool, and nothing less, who mocks at the transgression of any natural law, and claims the right to live as he list; while the noblest man is he who searches out and lives in accordance with the laws of his being; that is, with those laws which are to be found interwoven into the very texture of our common humanity. Cause and effect, sowing and reaping, are indissoluble, and a man may as well try to escape his shadow, as try and separate them or fly from them.

OUR WORK AS CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS.

IN our last number we re-printed an article, entitled *Pioneers of Progress*, taken from the January number of a new Spiritualist Periodical, the *Pioneer of Progress*; and we stated, in an editorial note, that we should offer some remarks on the article in our next. This we now proceed to do.

The writer, "E. T. B.," is personally known to us; and we are as sure as we can be of anything that he is a man of genuine principle, and that any speculative error into which he may fall will in no degree affect the goodness of his heart, or the purity of his intentions. We say

this, not only because it is true, but because we wish our readers to understand ("E. T. B." will be sure to do so) that there is no personal *animus* in this article. The free are bound now and again to differ, and they alone can afford to do so.

"E. T. B." takes the position that the new is always persecuted by the old, and that dogma is the inveterate enemy of spirit. We believe it. To mention one instance amongst many: the early history of Christianity is full of proofs of it, so plain that "he who runs may read." Dogma, bigotry, self-interest, and the blindness which is always created where these combine to operate upon the soul, crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and would, undoubtedly, crucify Him again, were He again once more to veil His glory in our mortal flesh. As far as we can remember, no new truth, of the slightest consequence, has met with hearty recognition on its first appearance from those whose creed may be summed up in the words, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen." Between ourselves and "E. T. B." there can be no possible difference of opinion on these matters. Our personal studies, and, what is of more importance as evidence, our personal experiences, have taught us, clearly and unmistakably, that the position which "E. T. B." has laid down as above is a painfully true one.

But from this position "E. T. B." seeks to draw "two lessons," one of which is: "Let us not be too anxious for the conversion of those who stand highest in the estimation of their fellow men; let us rather trust to the leavening influence of the truth diffusing itself among the masses . . . let us not look too much to existing institutions, nor think that we shall gain everything by securing their influence on our side. . . . Every true reformer . . . may take courage from the lessons of the past, and realize that his experiences are no new thing. . . . Let us direct our efforts to the men and women around us, and we may possibly have that grand testimony borne to our labors, 'And the common people heard Him gladly.'"

The truth or falsehood of a statement does not depend upon man's acceptance or rejection of the statement. Truth or fact deals with the thing that is; and, being a reality, takes its place among the eternal things of God. Spiritualism is a fact, Spiritualism is a truth; and if all the Christians, and all the scientific men, and all the men of literature, and every human being on the earth were to disbelieve it, or deny it, it would still remain a fact, a truth. A doctrine is not Christian because a clergyman assents and consents to it: a doctrine is not false because an unbeliever accepts it. He who has the truth, he who plants his foot upon fact,

he who is just as sure of his truth and of his fact as he can be of the continuity of his own identity, need not be *too* careful about who is with him, or who is against him; for, in the long run, as the mind of man is virtuously related to all truth and all fact, man must accept all truth, all fact, whatever form it may assume. But this ought not to hinder us in any efforts we make to win over our opponents to our side, provided our efforts are put forth manfully, modestly, and prudently. Spiritualism is not a falsehood, because nine-tenths of the members of the Christian Churches ignore it or deny it. But surely there can not only be no harm, but it is the duty of those of us who are CHRISTIANS AS WELL AS SPIRITUALISTS, to do what we can, in all fair ways, to show the Christian brethren who stand aloof from us and oppose us, that we are in the right and they are in the wrong. It must always be better to hold a fact, rather than a no-fact; a truth rather than a falsehood; while the *Christian Spiritualist* has at least this advantage over the Spiritualist who is not a Christian, that in addressing Christians he can find a common ground of appeal, not logically possible to the mere Theist. Of course, in appealing to the masses, the Spiritualist, if he be a Christian, has the great advantage of appealing to large numbers of persons who are, at least, nominally Christian, and who would not be found to take a decided attitude against Christianity.

"E. T. B." quotes the saying of the second Gospel, "The common people heard Him gladly." Quite so: but if our friend will refer to the passage itself, he will find that St. Mark's statement applies to a particular period in our Lord's history, when the masses, or "The common people," were almost preternaturally excited in favor of Him, under the impression that He was the Messiah answering to their own expectations, and that His triumphal entry into Jerusalem was but the initial sign of the setting up of the coming kingdom. The "common people" did not always hear Christ so gladly; and it was their voices, preponderant in numbers at least, that carried the day against Christ, when Pilate would have released Him. The universal suffrage of that day and time crucified the very Christ of God. Not only so: Christ taught the common people as such, laid clearly before them the most profound truths, and brought to bear upon them the most powerful and subtle of all His spiritual influences; but He did not neglect Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, and rulers; on the contrary, He constantly addressed Himself to them according to the exigencies of the case, and labored with Divinest wisdom and patience to convert them. We may be well content, in this as in every other case, "to tread in His steps." His cause

triumphed, in spite of all the opposition the ruling powers, and the brutality of the masses could bring to bear upon Him; but, while He was with them, He did not neglect what one might call "the upper" for "the lower" classes, but appealed to *both*, as occasion really needed.

We, as Christian Spiritualists, are not unreasonably, unduly anxious about converting anybody. But he who has a truth ought to spread it: he who believes in his truth ought to sacrifice for it. We believe that the various sections into which the Christian Church is now divided would receive wonderful accessions of light and heat, if they could but be brought to see that the phenomena of Spiritualism are real, and that they are essentially in harmony with those of which record is made in the Bible and the Four Gospels; and, believing thus much, what ought we to do? Not be unreasonably anxious, not be fawning, and, certainly not, be neglectful of "the common people;" but address ourselves broadly to "all who profess and call themselves Christians," asking the minister at the altar as well as the layman in his pew, to examine our statements, and see if they be true; because, if they are, Christianity has found in Spiritualism a new friend and not an enemy, a help and not a hindrance. We must expect, and bear with, "the indifference" and even "the anathemas" of many Christian people; all the while going on with our work, knowing that some day or other the world in general, and the Christian world in particular, must come round to us.

As for scientific men, speaking of them generally, we have very little hope of their conversion to Spiritualism. Here and there has been a stray conversion, but scientific men, as a body, stand aloof. And no wonder. Whether you shall see your picture accurately or not, will depend, not alone upon the position it occupies, but upon the point of sight from which you view it. "The eye sees what it has the power to see: that, and nothing else." Science, as such, knows nothing of God, of spirit, of a future life. If any of her votaries believe in these verities, they do so in spite of their science. When science is a little more humble than she now is, she will, perhaps, enquire; and should she ever come to accept the possibility of some of her own fundamentals being open to fair doubt, she may then come to look into the despised phenomena of Spiritualism, to find a new revelation as real as truth and fact, and of immeasurable value to every soul of man. Until then, it is, we admit, idle to waste words or acts upon men whose God is force, and who consider that "the brain secretes thought much as the liver secretes bile."

We very respectfully submit these friendly remarks to the consideration of "E. T. B.," and those who think with him.

DR. SEXTON AND DARK SEANCES.

ALMOST all of our readers will have heard, with great regret, of the accident which befel Dr. Sexton, on February 8, when he was knocked down by a four-wheeled cab, near London Bridge, severely bruising him, and causing a serious shock to his nervous system. We had arranged with our friend to write an article for this number on *Dark Séances*, but the following letter will show why it does not appear, while it makes the pleasant promise of our having the doctor's views on this important question in a future number. Dr. Sexton says:

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I tried hard to do the article on "Dark Séances," but regret to say that I found myself unable to manage it. The pain in my right arm, consequent on the injury of my shoulder, prevents me from writing much, and my brain refuses to be forced into the labor of thinking. The shock to my nervous system has been somewhat severe. Announce the paper for your April number, and I will see that you have it in good time. With kind love,

Yours affectionately,

GEORGE SEXTON.

17, Trafalgar Road, Old Kent Road, London, S.E.,
19, Feb., 1874.

IS THE NATURAL MAN "PROGRESSIVE?"

BY DR. WILLIAM HITCHMAN.

"NO greater error was ever committed," said Dr. Robert Knox, "than that of supposing that the mass of men change or progress morally and materially." In consonance with this scientific opinion was the expressive but satirical phrase of Voltaire—"Le peuple n'est rien!" In fact, this disastrous view reaches its climax, in the estimation of almost all experienced practising physicians, who firmly maintain that progressive degradation in psychical and physical phenomena is characteristic of the generation—will be of succeeding generations, of all time and space, on this our terraqueous ball—the third in order from the sun—at present. It can hardly be said, in regard to the *ex parte* philosophical writer of "Creation, or Evolution?" that the severer mental qualities of a hard-headed materialist are considerably softened by the glowing inspiration of the great poet whose sublime language he quotes. Archimedes-like—*unruffled by the rising current of spiritual philosophy around him*—he has sternly worked at his physical problem—with him, at least, a labor of love—and arrived at a solution diametrically opposed to that which might have been anticipated from an impartial judgment of the whole truth. His solution, if such it can be logically termed—and the late Mr. J. W. Jackson eloquently advocated the same exaggerated or mesmeric views—stands thus:—Man, as a species, elaborated during the lapse of countless millions of years by continuity of forces, molecular genesis, natural selection, bioplasma, and the chief ingredients of organic growth, is capable of endless perfection on earth! That, in point of fact, human nature, when tested by the touchstone of physical science, is not only susceptible of vast improvement, altogether beyond any standard of free light now or previously attained, but that there is really *no* limit to this sort of human perfecti-

bility—that intellectually, morally, and materially, man's future organic being promises an amount of stupendous proficiency, and freedom from defect, which the mental faculties of this, our scientific day, are almost incapable of even imagining an outline, much more of grasping in detail. Does the reader seek to watch these evolving wonderful agencies in unsophisticated operation, and trace them to a demonstrable issue, or probable ultimate cause, in each individuality of animated existence—the original stock, in tribes, nations, or the whole *genus homo*, and divers *kinds* of races—let such intellectual observer forthwith betake himself to some chemical laboratory, and study the science of nitrogenised and non-nitrogenised aliment—the special growth of vegetables, proteine, albumen, fibrine, and caseine, together with the principles of biology, respiration, animal heat, digestion of food, circulation of blood; the influence of carbonic acid when decomposed, and its oxygen given off pure to the surrounding atmosphere, or “cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd” chemically—“bound in to saucy doubts and fears”—and that, too, it may be, at the hands of Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, whilst the elements of ammonia and water remain to form the various structures of the next ovule of a plant, ovum of an animal, or the morbid conditions of a bad human heart. When animal or vegetable albumen, caseine, or fibrine is dissolved in a moderately strong solution of caustic potass—to give only one of many such brilliant demonstrations of Liebig as witnessed by myself in the University of Giessen—and the solution is exposed to a high temperature, *the substances are decomposed*. The simple addition of acetic acid to the solution in question causes, not in one merely, but in all three—mark, O reader!—the entire separation of a gelatinous, translucent precipitate, which has exactly the same scientific characters and natural composition, *from whichever of the three it may have been chemically obtained*. Now, this substance may be expressed, like the very protoplasm or germinal living matter of man's constitution, by the formula C 48, H 36, N 6, O 14—human blood and animal flesh giving exactly the same equivalents of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon as proteine itself, with about four per cent. of dust and ashes. As thirty-three millions of human souls—to say nothing of the rest of animated nature—throughout all worlds, perish annually in the midst of everlasting “creation or evolution,” *meanwhile the ancestor of the whole human race lives on the tops of trees, in the island of Borneo*, in full enjoyment of his park—thousands of square miles in extent—and his proud offspring, the lord of “creation or evolution,” is roving about the same woods, a wilder beast than his most lovable forefather, or other Dyaks, in the continuous adjustment of their internal relations of spirit to external matter, and, moreover, when the immediate influence of mere secular sensational—physical and prosaic pleadings has passed away, the practical inquirer, scarcely less than the warm-hearted lover of true spiritual philosophy, may perhaps be disposed to ask—*Is this astounding fabric of evolving beatitude all earthly reality?* Is there even a fair share of scientific-truth in it? Or is it all a very dream of mesmeric imagination, during some exalted development of the phrenological organ, Wonder? Shall it not be said, in reply, that there is *no* sensible probable amelioration of human existence—intellectual, moral, physical, of man's whole being—when accurately judged, from beginning to end, except in Christian Spiritualism? In intellect, humanity has stood still; in morals, retrograded; in physique, degenerated—absolutely! Having long considered this question, anthropologically, as well as universally, in its spiritual and material aspects, the general bearing of such philosophical observations, at home and abroad, is irrefragably conclusive, *yiz.*, that, whilst the actual dynamism of the cerebral organ, in all varieties of mankind—of whatever form, kind, and complexion, red, white, black, or yellow, Australoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, Xanthocroid, or Blood—is *essentially the same in each ethnic area, or geographical distribution, from pole to pole,*

its scientific achievements, to which the author of “Creation, or Evolution?” so proudly adverts, is simply owing to the larger experience upon which it has subsequently wrought. *The starting point of spiritual action has alone differed!* And in social utilitarian advancement, therefore, if at all, have we left the ancients far behind in the race of human progress. At what cost? The “creation or evolution” of hydra-headed causes of disease, which no modern Hercules of the physical sciences is adequate to destroy!

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DEMONIACAL POSSESSION, PAST AND PRESENT.

IT is, of course, easy enough to cut short the whole inquiry, and to leave no question at all, by saying these demoniacs were persons whom we at this day should call insane—epileptic, maniac, melancholic. This has been often said, and the oftener perhaps, because there is a partial truth in the assertion that these possessions were bodily maladies. There was no doubt a substratum of disease, which in many cases helped to lay open the sufferer to the deeper evil, and upon which it was superinduced: so that cases of possession are at once classed with those of various sicknesses, and at the same time distinguished from them, by the Evangelists; who thus at once mark the connexion and the difference (4 Matthew 24v., 8c., 16v.; 1 Mark 34v.) But the scheme which confounds these cases with those of disease, and, in fact, identifies the two, does not, as every reverent interpreter of God's word must own, exhaust the matter; it cannot be taken as a satisfying solution of the difficulties it presents; and this for more reasons than one. And first, our Lord Himself uses language which is not reconcilable with any such explanation. He everywhere speaks of demoniacs not as persons merely of disordered intellects, but as subjects and thralls of an alien spiritual might; He addresses the evil spirit as distinct from the man; “Hold thy peace, and come out of him” (1 Mark 25v.) And the unworthy reply, that He fell in with and humoured the notions of the afflicted in order to facilitate their cure, is anticipated by the fact that in His most confidential discourses with His disciples He uses exactly the same language (10 Matthew 8v.; and especially 17c., 21v., “This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”) The allegiance we owe to Christ as the King of Truth, who came, not to fall in with men's errors, but to deliver men out of their errors, compels us to believe that He would never have used language which would have upheld and confirmed so serious an error in the minds of men as the belief in satanic influences, which did not in truth exist. For this error, if it was an error, was so little an innocuous one, such as might be left to drop naturally away; did, on the contrary, reach so far in its consequences, entwined its roots so deeply among the very ground-truths of religion, that He would never have suffered it to remain at the hazard of all the misgrowths which it could not fail to occasion. And then, moreover, even had not the moral interests at stake been so transcendent, our idea of Christ's absolute veracity, apart from the value of the truth which He communicated, forbids us to suppose that He could have spoken as he did, being perfectly aware all the while that there was no corresponding reality to justify the language which He used. And in this there is no making a conscience about trifles, nor any losing sight of that figurative nature of all our words, out of which it results that so much which is not *literally* true, is yet the truest, inasmuch as it conveys the truest impression—no requiring of men to examine the etymologies of their words before they venture to use them. It would have been quite a different thing for the Lord to have fallen in with the popular language, and to have spoken of persons under various natural afflictions as “possessed,” supposing He had found such a language

current, but now no longer, however it might once have been, vividly linked to the idea of possession by spirits of evil. In this there had been nothing more than in *our* speaking of certain forms of madness as *lunacy*. We do not thus imply *our* belief, however it may have been with others in time past, that the moon has wrought the harm;* but finding the word current, we use it: and this the more readily, since its original derivation is so entirely lost sight of in our common conversation, its first impress so completely worn off, that we do not thereby even seem to countenance an error. But suppose with this same disbelief in lunar influences, we were to begin to speak not merely of *lunatics*, but of persons on whom the moon was working, to describe the cure of such, as the ceasing of the moon to afflict them; the physician to promise his patient that the moon should not harm him any more, would not this be quite another matter, a direct countenancing of error and delusion? Would there not be that absence of agreement between thoughts and words, in which the essence of a lie consists? Now Christ does everywhere speak in such a language as this. Take, for instance, His words, 11 Luke, 17—26 v., and assume Him to have known, all the while He was thus speaking, that the whole Jewish belief of demoniac possessions was utterly baseless, that satan exercised no such power over the bodies or spirits of men, that, indeed, properly speaking, there was no satan at all, and what should we have here for a king of truth? And then, besides this, the phenomena themselves are such as no hypothesis of the kind avails to explain, and they thus bid us to seek for some more satisfying solution. For that madness was not the constituent element in the demoniac state is clear, since not only are we without the slightest ground for supposing that the Jews would have considered all maniacs, epileptic or melancholic persons, to be under the power of evil spirits; but we have distinct evidence that the same malady they did in some cases attribute to an evil spirit, and in others not; thus showing that the malady and possession were not identical in their eyes, and that the assumption of the latter was not a mere popular explanation for the presence of the former. Thus, on two occasions they bring to the Lord one dumb (9 Matthew, 32 v.), or dumb and blind (22 Matthew), and in both instances the dumbness is traced up to an evil spirit. Yet it is plain that they did not consider all dumbness as having this root; for in the history given by St. Mark (7 c. 32 v.) of another deaf and dumb, the subject of Christ's healing power, it is the evident intention of the Evangelist to describe one labouring only under a natural defect; with no least desire to trace the source of his malady to any demoniacal influence. Signs sufficiently clear, no doubt, distinguished one case from the other. In that of the demoniac there probably was not the outward hindrance, not the still-fastened string of the tongue; it was not the outward organ, but the inward power of using the organ, which was at fault. This, with an entire apathy, a total disregard of all which was going on about him, may have sufficiently indicated that the source of his malady lay deeper than in any merely natural cause. But, whatever may have been the symptoms which enabled those about the sufferers to make these distinctions, the fact itself of their so discriminating between cases of the very same malady, proves decisively that there were not certain diseases which, without more ado, they traced up directly to satan; but that they did designate by this name of possession, a condition which, while it was very often a condition of disease, was also always a condition of much more than disease. But what *was* the condition which our Lord and His Apostles signalled by this name? In what did it differ upon the one side, from madness—upon the other, from wicked-

ness? It will be impossible to make any advance toward the answer, without saying something, by way of preface, on the scriptural doctrine concerning the kingdom of evil, and its personal head, and the relation in which he stands to the moral evil of our world, alike excluding, on the one side, the Manichean error, which would make evil eternal as good, and so itself a god—and the pantheistic, which would deny any true reality to evil at all, or that it is anything else than good at a lower stage, the unripe, and, therefore, still bitter, fruit—the Scripture teaches the absolute subordination of evil to good, and its subsequence of order, in the fact that the evil roots itself in a creature, and in one created originally pure, but the good in the Creator. Yet, at the same time, it teaches that the opposition of this evil to the will of God is most real, is that of a will which does truly set itself against His will; that the world is not as a chess-board on which God is, in fact, playing both sides of the game, however some of the pieces may be black and some white; but that the whole end of His government of the world is the subduing of this evil; that is, not abolishing it by main force, which were no true victory, but overcoming it by righteousness and truth. And from this one central will, alienated from the will of God, the Scripture derives all the evil in the universe; all gathers up in a person, in the devil, who has a kingdom, as God has a kingdom—a kingdom with its subordinate ministers—"the devil and his angels." This world of ours stands not isolated, not rounded and complete in itself, but in living relation with two worlds—a higher, from which all good in it proceeds, and a lower, from which all evil. It thus comes to pass that the sin of man is continually traced up to Satan; Peter says to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" (5 Acts, 3v.) and St. John, of Judas Iscariot, "The devil having now put into his heart to betray Him" (13 John, 20v.; c.f., 1 John, 3., 1; John 8., 44); the Scripture not by such language as this denying that the evil of men is truly *their* evil, but affirming with this, that it grounds itself on an anterior evil. It is *their* evil, since an act of their will alone gives it leave to enter. To each man the key is committed, with the charge to keep closed the gate of his soul; and it is only through the negligent ward which he has kept that evil has found admission there. At the same time it is the existence of a world of evil beyond and without our world, which attaches to any negligence or treachery here such fatal and disastrous results. This being so, the question which presents itself is this, namely, what peculiar form of satanic operation does the Scripture intend, when it speaks of men as possessed, or having devils. Is their evil ethical, or is it merely physical? Merely physical it certainly is not. Doubtless the suffering of the demoniac often was great; yet we should err, if we saw in him, as in the victims of ghastly and horrible diseases, *only* another example of the mighty woe which satan has brought in upon our race. Nor yet, on the other hand, is his evil purely ethical; we have in him something else than merely a signal sinner, a foremost servant of the devil, who with heart and will and waking consciousness is doing his work; for this, whatever his antecedent guilt may have been, and often, I should imagine, it had been great, the demoniac evidently is not. But what in him strikes us the most is the strange confusion of the physical and the psychical, each intruding into the proper domain of the other. There is a breaking up of all the harmony of the lower, no less than of the higher life; the same discord and disorganization manifests itself in both. Nor does the demoniac, like the wicked, stand only in near relation to the kingdom of satan as a whole. It is with him as if of the malignant spirits of the pit one had singled him out for its immediate prey; as when a lion or a leopard, not hunting in the mass a herd of flying antelopes, has fastened upon and is drinking out the life-blood of one.—*Archbishop Trench on Miracles.*

(To be concluded in our next).

* There are cases of lunabulism, in which, no doubt, it has influence; but they are few and exceptional (see Schubert, p. 113). I am speaking of using the term to express all forms of mental unsoundness.

VERIFICATION OF DEATH.

THE *Journal des Connaissances Medicales* publishes a report read to the Academy of Medicine by Dr. Devergie on 102 essays sent in on the subject of ascertaining beyond a doubt whether a person is dead or not. The late Marquis d'Ourche, who had himself witnessed the burial of one of his friends while still alive, had left the Academy 20,000f. to be awarded to the discoverer of a simple and easy process by which any illiterate person might satisfy himself that death had really and irrevocably taken place. Another prize of 5,000f. was to be given to the inventor of a scientific method for obtaining the desired certainty. Dr. Devergie, who has acquired great reputation in forensic medicine, gives an account of all the suggestions sent in, some of which, proceeding from persons unacquainted with medicine, are absolutely ridiculous. One of them advocates a coffin which will open by touching a spring inside; another an electric bell; a third, a trumpet to be blown by a person prematurely interred, &c. Altogether thirty-two essays were considered worthy of serious examination. The reporter states that the provisions of the law are exceedingly defective, and a dead letter in the country. The indications afforded by the glassiness and other appearances of the eye are insufficient; the eye may appear dead, while the body is living. The heart does not die last, as has been supposed; after it has ceased throbbing, the nerves will continue to live, the arterial systole is not interrupted and capillary circulation goes on. Death is certain when the muscular fibre ceases to be irritable by Ruhmkorff's machine; but that is a scientific process that does not fall within the compass of the 20,000f. prize. The same may be said of the thermometer placed under the armpit. If the mercury falls below 20 degrees Centigrade (68 Fahr.), death may be considered certain, but in hot weather the instrument is not to be trusted. The 5,000f. prize has been divided among four competitors; the larger one has not been awarded, though some of its suggestions caused great hesitation among the Commission. Thus, a certain sign of death is afforded by the skin. If it becomes livid; if touched with a piece of burning charcoal it blisters without revealing any serosity or trace of re-action, while the blisters are filled with vapours, death is complete. Putrefaction is also an indubitable evidence, but it cannot be waited for. If a part of the body be rubbed with a coarse wet handkerchief, or with the back of a knife, and then be left exposed to the air, in the course of a few hours the skin will have become transparent and like parchment if death has really occurred. Again, if a light be held to the top of a finger at a moderate distance, a blister will be formed; if this contain serosity, there is still life in the body. Dr. Devergie concludes with hoping that the law ordering that death be medically ascertained be enforced everywhere, there being now 25,000 communes in which it is totally ignored.—*New Era* for January (London: James Burns).

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the *Christian Spiritualist*.

DEAR SIR,—We had a sitting at our house this evening, when there were present Mr. G. H. Whiting, of 224, Kentish Town Road, N.W.; Mr. Wm. Dixon, 88, Caversham Road, N.W., my daughter and her husband Mr. Barry (both of whom reside at this address), my wife, and myself.

We began, as usual, with prayer and singing, and, after several questions on family matters

had been put and answered, the following poem was rapidly written through Mr. Barry:—

Growing upward—all Creation—
From the valley of this earth
To the higher sphere and nation,
Where eternity hath birth;
Where ethereal streams meander
Amid fields of fadeless green,
And the spirit footsteps wander
In an atmosphere of sheen;—
Pearly flowers growing brightly
Everywhere around their way,
While their airy feet tread lightly
Over rocks of purple Day.
'Tis a realm of sunlight deathless,
Where the song-birds never tire,
And the harps are never breathless—
Like some sweet Æolian lyre.
And the rainbow-vestured creatures,
Softly passing to and fro,
Sometimes show their misty features
To their cherished friends Below.
Only seen in highest fancies
Is the spirit's lovely home;
And the thought man's life enhances
With the hope of joys to come.
Life is wov'n of sombre shadows—
Without gleams from realms above,
From the ever-radiant meadows
Of the land where all is Love;
But the sun is ever shining,
Though the shadow dwelleth here,
And the cloud of golden lining
Hath a rent to raise and cheer,
For the light that faintly streameth
On the toilers of the night
Is an earnest of what beameth
On the mountain-peaks of Light.
Ever lead them! Father, lead them
From the valley of earth's strife
To Thy pastures! Shepherd, feed them
With Thy precious Bread of Life! Amen!

Mr. Dixon: "I should like to know the name of the spirit who has given us these beautiful lines."

The following was immediately written:—

'Tis the echo of a measure
I have sung from realms above,
You shall have my name—with pleasure—
It is EVERLASTING LOVE.

Mr. Dixon: "Have you no earth name we could know you by?"

Answer: "Would you know me by another
Name than that of spirit birth?
Hear me, each one—sister, brother,
I was *Hemans* on your earth."

I send you the foregoing, thinking it may interest some of your readers.

Yours truly,

J. S. LOWE.

6, Dartmouth Park Road, London, N.W.
Monday, Feb. 16, 1874.

Manchester, 18th Feb., 1874.

THOUGH there is nothing new in Spiritualism to report upon, it is quietly progressing here, and there has been a decided increase in the numbers who attend the meetings on Sundays, at 2.30, in the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor

Street, since Dr. Sexton's lectures in Manchester. Quite a little band assemble each Sunday, and, to all appearance, are as happy and united as a loving family would be with all the endearing ties of relationship to bind them together.

Mrs. Butterfield, trance speaker, of pleasing personal exterior, plain and homely in manner, with no assumption of any kind about her, and I believe almost without education, delivered in the Temperance Hall, January 25, two powerful and trenchant addresses, which in matter, elocution, and action, were almost faultless; and, with the exception of a trip now and then in grammar, such as the substitution of *have* for *has*, would have done credit to the most accomplished theological or philosophical orator. She is a native of Yorkshire, but while under control she spoke with a slight Scottish accent, well sustained from beginning to end, which certainly lent an additional charm to her oratory, and increased the pleasure and agreeableness one felt in listening to her discourse. Her subject in the afternoon was, "What is Man?" She began by stating that all the means which society has at its disposal are being used to find out what man is, but without success. She then drew a by no means flattering picture of man's depravity, as portrayed by *very* orthodox theologians; and to demonstrate that this vivid picture had received an abundance of false coloring, she appealed to each one's consciousness with an earnestness of manner even more emphatic than her words, while she said, "You know very well you are not a vile creature; you all feel you are not very good, but you are better than you were; you feel that you progress every day; your heart grows better; you see things in a truer light, and know that you, even you, are something that angels love to gaze upon. Then never again allow the nobility of your nature to be crushed out under the fancied degradation that you are a vile and loathsome reptile, crawling on the ground, ever ready to insert your poisonous fangs and venomous stings into all that have the terrible misfortune to cross your path." With a power of graphic description truly wonderful, she next explored the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, showing how all concentrated in man, who is not merely related to angels, but is himself an angel in embryo, and next to God, the centre of all being! She then briefly sketched man's spiritual nature, in contra-distinction to that of animals; and to establish man's superiority, as well as to convey some idea of his immense and varied powers, she travelled, with unabated eloquence, through his surprising scientific discoveries and inventions, and declared that the progressive being whose mighty intellect had achieved all that, was but a baby in baby's clothes, paddling by his father's side in a baby

world, but it is his high destiny to pass on and develope into a man of mental stature. She impressed upon her audience the necessity of studying themselves and nature around them; and concluded with a brilliant peroration on Spiritualism, in which she incidentally but skillfully inculcated upon her hearers the urgent necessity of living out its exalted principles. In the evening of the same day her subject was "What is Religion?" which she handled in a practical manner, noticing one by one the evils that afflict society, and pointing out how powerless most of the religious systems of the day were to remove them. But I must respect your space, and leave this discourse without further notice, except just stating that the episode of the woman taken in adultery was touched off with a master hand. She alternately appeared as the very embodiment of scorn and commiseration, as she now pleaded in strains of tender pity for the guilty one, and anon hurled withering denunciations on the hypocrisy of her accusers, "who were themselves steeped to the very lips in crimes of blacker dye." This was brought to bear with telling effect upon modern society, and during the delivery of it many were moved to tears.

In a wild part of America, several miles away from any human habitation, in a log hut, on a bed of rotten straw, surrounded by a wife and four small children, all seriously ill, was literally starved to death, on the 11th December, 1873, poor George Hulme, a man of whom I can never think without being reminded of Pope's celebrated line,

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

He was a thoroughly consistent spiritualist; and a working-man in easy circumstances, before he left Manchester, only about 18 months ago. He was lured away by the fair promises of a worthless adventurer, from the other side of the Atlantic, who delivered in London a lecture, all or part of which appeared at the time in the *Medium and Daybreak*, where my friend Hulme first saw it, and immediately wrote to J. J. Botfield, the lecturer, whom he expected to have means to carry out what he had put forth in his address. Hulme, being an anti-vaccinator, had been harassed and fined several times for not complying with the law. In consequence, he was, perhaps, too ready to clutch at any straw which promised to land him beyond the reach of persecution. Botfield represented that he had an estate in America upon which he could employ Hulme, and he actually accompanied the deluded family thither, where they discovered the estate was a myth. Space will not admit of my following this disappointed family through all its terrible sufferings up to the time of the death of its head. One may easily imagine the desolate condition of the poor wife when that event took place.

She started without means to make her way back with her children to Manchester. They arrived at Mount Lebanon, the Shaker settlement, one evening at dark. For assistance, she applied to one of the Elders, who consulted Elder Evans, who gave orders that she could not stay all night, though he well knew there was no probability, in her utterly destitute condition, of her obtaining lodgings for herself and children elsewhere that night. The sad case fortunately reached the ears of a Mr. Tilton, who, I have every reason to believe, judging from what I have been able to gather from Mrs. Hulme herself, is no other gentleman than the well-known Theodore Tilton, the able Editor of the *Golden Age Tracts*. By his influence, lodgings were found, at which she stayed with her children while Mr. Tilton made arrangements for her departure to England. On the day before, Sunday, she left, Mr. Tilton, finding she and the children did not possess sufficient clothing, coaxed some young ladies, who were about going to a Baptist Chapel, to make some, telling them they could not do better, or serve God more effectually. They stayed away from chapel, sewed all day far into the night; and, to use Mrs. Hulme's expression, "their very souls seemed in their work." Mr. Tilton bore all expenses, and paid the passage of Mrs. Hulme and children to England. Should what I am writing now ever meet his kindly eye, he may have the satisfaction of knowing that the heart of every true and earnest spiritualist in Manchester teems with gratitude towards him for his noble and humane conduct in succouring the widow and the fatherless, after they had been, as it were, spurned from the gates of those from whom one might have expected they would have met with a little charity.

Letters have recently appeared in the *Medium* respecting the financial aspects of this case.

F. SILKSTONE.

27, Leaf Street, Hulme, Manchester.

CONCERNING TITTLE-TATTLE AND TALE-BEARING.

ONE of the meanest, paltriest, and most mischievous things in this wicked world is a habit of tale-bearing; a small, insipid, shallow love of tittle-tattle. It is the wasp-nest of society, the frost-bite of friendship, the curse of the church, and the "abomination of desolation" everywhere. It is really wonderful that such huge results can follow such a trivial cause; and one can only account for it by reckoning it among those freaks of nature that allow any silly wasp to plague a lion into madness, or sting an elephant almost to death.

It takes a wise man to build up, but any shallow-brained, insipid meddler can pull down. It takes an artist to paint a true picture, but any miserable make-believe can smear and spoil it with his unsanctified thumb. Have you anything to say about any one that you do not like, or do not dare to say before his face? Be you sure that is just the thing you ought not to say at

all! A candid, healthy, noble nature, that delights in realities, and loves to be real, is sickened to live in an atmosphere of whisperings and innuendos—of romantic tales and foolish small-talk. And yet how we dote on a bit of real scandal—not bad enough to be positively disreputable, and yet not good enough to be likely or lovely? How we glory in a secret when it is told us in the ear? and how we exult to carry it off to the nearest friend, all tinged with our poor little imaginings, and charged with our panting surmises, wonderments, and scarlet exaggerations. How we slide into magnification, and slip into falsehood, and glide into multiplication, long before we are conscious of it? And when it strikes us—if it ever does—how we have tinged, distorted, and exaggerated the tale, how we bolster up our little castle of evil with the very charitable and consoling reflection that after all, we dare say it is true, if we only knew; or, most likely if *that* is not true, something else is; or some other paltry huckstering with conscience of the same kind; all along forgetting that the worst of all falsehoods are those that have only a shallow heart, a silly head, a neglected conscience, and a prating tongue to thank for their being:—the worst of all falsehoods, we say, because there is no excuse for them, and because no one knows what mischief may come of them. They do damage of the worst kind. They injure the conscience, and sully the soul of the tale-bearer; they degrade the spirit of the listener; they wrong the character of the absent, just in a way they can least know of and meet. They have the essence of a libel without its courage, the sting of slander without its spite, and the poison of lying without its shame.

About this matter, then, of tittle-tattle and tale-bearing, these two very plain and understandable rules will be observed by all healthy sensible people:—

1. Never to listen to it.
2. Never to practice it.

Never to listen to it, because to do so is only to encourage suspicion, falsehood, envy, and strife; and never to practice it, because it is mischievous, cowardly, faithless, and mean.

J. PAGE HOPPS.

The Truthseeker.

THE GLEANER.

The Marylebone Association of Spiritualists will hold a Musical Festival, at the Quebec Institute, on March 4.

The *Edinburgh Courier*, for Feb. 13, has an interesting account of Miss Lottie Fowler's Life and Experiences.

The *South London Press* has an article on *Dr. Sexton, the Spiritualist*, derived chiefly from *Human Nature*, for January.

An article, by Dr. Spencer T. Hall, promised for our present number, had not arrived at the time of our going to press.

The price of the *Medium* would seem permanently altered to three half-pence, the publisher giving a double sheet.

The hard work of an election contest, and Dr. Sexton's illness, must plead our apology for any defects in our present number.

The front page of the *Medium*, for Feb. 20, has a well-executed wood engraving of Dr. Van Namee, transferred from *Human Nature*, for August, 1873.

There is a curious article in the *Glasgow Herald* for January 31, entitled, *Extraordinary Encounter with a Witch*, sent to that paper from the Isle of Skye.

There is a curious article in the *Spiritualist* for Feb. 6 on *Home Experiences in Spiritualism*, by the Baroness Adelina Vay, a believer in the re-incarnation doctrine.

We beg to thank Mr. Charles Hollinsworth, of Birmingham, for two very singular pamphlets by "Zion Ward." We shall bind them up with other curiosities.

We have received papers from Dr. Newton, for which we thank him. He is now residing in Sacramento, California, with the intention of remaining there for about a year.

Have our readers seen a letter in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 13, on Mr. Crookes's testimony to Spiritualism? The writer thinks Spiritualism should be met by ridicule, but his testimony to Mr. Crookes' ability as an inquirer is valuable.

The Rev. F. W. Monck has been lecturing in Birmingham, and the *Medium* says that he intends giving other lectures in that town and neighborhood, and then to go farther North.

The January number of *London Society* contains an article, by Mr. Henry Dumphy, Barrister-at-Law, on *Modern Mysteries*. The article refers chiefly to Miss Florence Cook and her *séances*.

The Committee now "farming" Mrs. Tappan and her Sunday lectures and Mr. James Burns are at loggerheads. "It is a very pretty quarrel as it stands," as Sir Lucius O'Trigger says in the *Rivals*.

The *Spiritualist*, for Feb. 20, copies from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, of Jan. 22, and the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, of Feb. 3, narratives of the recovery of property through a spirit message.

There is an account in the *Peterborough Advertiser* for Feb. 14, of a Spiritualistic *séance*. It is signed "G.S.," which, being an anonymous signature, does not carry the requisite weight with it for strangers.

Dr. Joseph Parker, of the City Temple, in his *Christian Shield*, has been libelling Spiritualism; and Mr. Enmore Jones has taken up the cudgels against him. Dr. Parker is nothing if he is not sensational.

Mr. Farmer, the Editor of the *Pioneer of Progress*, has taken premises at 205, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, as an office for his paper, and a bookseller's shop, where Spiritualistic literature may be procured. Success to him!

The *Medium* for Feb. 13, speaking of Mr. William Howitt, says "He is a true prophet." Considering what Mr. Burns has said about Mr. Howitt, we hope the latter gentleman will feel highly flattered, and bow his acknowledgments.

The *Spiritualist* for January 30 and February 20, quotes the continuation of an account, entitled *Five Weeks in a Trance*, from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. Sensational as the account is, it may be true. We refer our readers to it.

The *Spiritual Magazine* for February opens with a summary of Mr. Crookes's now famous article in the January number of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. There is also an article criticising Lord Amberley's ideas of Spiritualism.*

It seems that Herr Döbler has been "eating bumble pie" in the North. He and Mr. Monck have met at Darlington, and have done the amiable before the public. If Döbler will visit Swindon again, we can promise him a piece of pie there.

We have to thank Miss Mary Hay, of Brighton, for an interesting letter received from her on Mrs. Woodhull's opinions, and for a speech by that lady on "Social Freedom." At present, we prefer debating the matter by private correspondence.

On February 3, a meeting of the London Anthropological Society was held, at which a paper was read by Mr. George Harris, F.S.A., on *The best method of determining the reality of Spiritual Phenomena*. A lengthened account of the proceedings appears in the *Spiritualist* for February 13.

LETTERS RECEIVED FROM: London, Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin, Reading, Burnley, Derby, Budleigh Salterton, Carrickfergus, Baintree, Bath, Brighton, Swansea, Blackburn, Cape Town (South Africa) Halifax, Paris, Birmingham, Newry, and Peterborough. Correspondents will please to note this.

* See in our last number an article by Dr. Sexton.

The *Pioneer of Progress* for February 15, has an interesting article, by "E. T. B.," on *Aboriginal Spiritualism*, taken from the "Missionary Labors of the Rev. John Williams," and "Grahah's Voyage to Greenland." The same number gives an article, signed "H.," having reference to some extraordinary circumstances in the life and death of Marshal Blucher.

The *Birmingham Sunday Reporter*, No. 5 (London: F. Pitman), contains a sermon, by Mr. E. W. P. Taunton, on Spiritualism. We don't mean to be impudent, but, for the life of us, we cannot help speaking of the sermon as "a very silly production." Mr. Taunton's knowledge of Spiritualistic literature is very limited and one-sided.

With reference to the widow and children of the late Mr. George Hulme, whose case is mentioned in the letter of our Manchester correspondent in the present number, we may say that any contributions our readers may be willing to make to aid so deserving a case, can be sent to Mr. F. Silkstone, 27, Leaf Street, Hulme, Manchester, who will take care that they are properly appropriated.

Dr. Sexton's accident, which has been a rather serious one, and has laid him aside from literary labor, has prevented our giving any notice in the present number of Mr. Crookes's recent remarkable paper on his enquiries into the phenomena of Spiritualism. It is a subject which Dr. Sexton, better than any other man we know, is competent to treat, and in his hands we must leave it for the present.

There is in Liverpool a "Society of Free and Unconditional Spiritualists," who met at the Caledonia Hotel, 6, Stafford Street, on February 12, to discuss the following question:—"Is a medium to be deemed guilty of impersonation when voting under control?" We received an invitation to be present, but the officers of the society must have forgotten that it is nearly 200 miles from Swindon to Liverpool.

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of a letter from our respected correspondent, Mr. W. L. Sammons, of Cape Town, dated November 12, 1873, and introducing what he calls "a brace of strange birds" to us. We have helped the birds to fly in the region of English Spiritualism, and shall be glad to render the same office another time. We sincerely regret our African friend's "anxiety and sorrow," and wish it were in our power to help him.

If we may credit a sonnet in the *Medium*, for Feb. 20, signed "C. N.," Christianity, or, what the writer calls "Christianism," is dead. Perhaps so; but the Christianity of Jesus Christ was never more alive and active than at the present moment. The same number of the *Medium* asks the unanswerable question, "Is the *Medium* edited in the spirit world?" Perhaps so; and that may account for a number of things, otherwise not understandable.

Mr. Thornton Hoskins, writing in a recent number of the *East Sussex News* on the subject of Spiritualism, states his decided conviction that "Christian Spiritualism is destined, and that speedily, to crush both priestcraft and materialistic infidelity, and become the universally accepted religion of the near future." Amidst so much vulgar and shocking blasphemy, the offspring of sheer impudence and profound ignorance, cultured testimony of this kind is truly refreshing.

Mr. George Ruby, healing medium, 21, St. Jude Street, Mildmay Park, Kingsland, London, is very greatly in want of a little money aid. We have known him for more than twenty years, and can testify to his goodness of principle and life. A subscription is now being made for him through the *Medium*, and we earnestly ask our readers to contribute something towards making the last days on earth of this poor, afflicted, solitary man, as comfortable as possible.

The widow of the late Mr. J. W. Jackson is open to engagements for lecturing on Spiritualism. Her address is 3, Torrington Square, London, W.C. The editor of the *Pioneer of Progress* is in the same position. His

address is 25, Wilton Road, Pimlico, London. This gentleman is selling a well made and certainly very cheap Planchette for one shilling, postage free 1s. 3d. Planchette paper one shilling a packet.

We have received copies of *A Full Report of the Blackburn Seances of the Rev. Dr. Monck*, by John Walker (late) sub-editor of the *Blackburn Times*, price one penny, published by John Heywood, 141, Deansgate, Manchester. The only portion of the tract which is of vital importance to Spiritualists, is the concluding paragraph, where reference is made to W. Alfred Rollings, Mr. Monck's nephew, not "brother-in-law," who accompanied him, and gave contradictory accounts of himself to those who were naturally anxious to verify his *bond fides*. Mr. Monck ought, as a matter of fairness, to explain this paragraph, if he can.

Mr. Samuel Chinnery, 52, Rue de Rome, Paris, has sent us a letter on Madame Louise's mediumship, of whom he speaks as "Mrs. Firman," although why we do not know. We would gladly have printed his letter, for the sake of some interesting particulars it contains, only that he has not complied with our "Standing Notice" to give exact names, residences, and dates. Mr. Chinnery says, speaking of this lady medium, "It is not at all incompatible with good mediumship for the active agents to cheat, and make up for what the spirits cannot or do not intend to do." Would Mr. Chinnery kindly send us a fresh account of the phenomena mentioned in his letter, giving the exact particulars we need?

In the *Medium* for Feb. 13, Page 109, there is a paragraph beginning "Mr. John Stubbs, Gateshead." The writer says that the abuse of mediums, especially when they are called "impostors," is sure to bring people to see them; and he adds that some attacks made by a newspaper writer on himself have put several hundreds of pounds into the resources of the Spiritual Institution. The paragraph ends thus: "Unfortunately he" (that is the newspaper writer) "has just enough sense to discover his mistake, and we regret to learn that he is about to shut up. Our sorrow is sincere at the loss of such a trumpeter." In other words, the writer is sorry that the man is ceasing to do evil, because doing evil brings money to the "Spiritual Institution!"

We said in our last number, that we should take some notice of a sermon on Modern Spiritualism, delivered in November last, by the Rev. Thomas Worrall, Free Church of England Minister, Liverpool. After a careful examination of it, we can, however, only state that Mr. Worrall objects to many things in Spiritualism to which we ourselves equally object, and that he seems to be altogether oblivious of the fact that there are persons in the movement who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as really and as strongly as he himself can do. We shall send him through the post two or three numbers of this periodical, and trust to his known spirit of fairness to read our side of the question. At the same time, we are bound to add that the text of his sermon (1 Timothy, iv., 1 to 5) has no necessary reference whatever to Modern Spiritualism. It was written under the tremendous pressure of a belief in the second coming of our Lord during the writer's own lifetime.

NEWSPAPERS, BOOKS, &c., RECEIVED WITH THANKS.
—*The Second Death and the Restitution of all Things*, by Andrew Jukes. Third edition. No price given. London: Longmans, Green, & Co. — *New Era*, for February. — *Home Journal*, vol. 2 part 5. — *Christian Shield*, for Feb. 13. — *San Francisco Daily Post*, for Jan. 17. — *Newcastle Critic*, for Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14 and 21. — *Birmingham Sunday Reporter*, for Jan. 31. — *Christian Leader*, for Jan. 10, 17, 24 and 31. — *Banner of Light*, for Nov. 22, Dec. 6, 13, 20, and Jan. 3. — *Contemporary Review*, for April, 1873. — *Peterborough Advertiser*, for Feb. 14. — *Pall Mall Gazette*, for Feb. 11. — *East and South Devon Advertiser*, for Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14 and 21. — *Pioneer of Progress*, for Feb. 15. — *Theological Review*, for January.

POETRY.

THE HOUSES OF DEATH AND LIFE.

To walk in darkness and deem it day,—
Awake yet dreaming,—to cast away
Wisdom's wealth into folly's cap,—
(Hoarding hell in a harlot's lap),—
Staking Peace with a drowsy eye
In a match with Folly for Phantasy,—
Gaining nothing but only loss,—
Buying with store of crowns a cross :—
And when all the price of the Pearl is spent
In winning Remorse to lose Content ;
Mortgaging Hope to buy Despair,
The broth of Hell for the right of Heir,
Sucking in poison at every breath,—
This it is to dwell in the House of Death.

To see in the vision of things that seem
The Thing that is : In the fevered dream
The soul surrounding, the Truth to catch ;
To play with the World an equal match,
And to win in the game a world to come,
Yet never stray from the hearth and home ;
The wealth of Life instead of the name
Of riches ; in lieu of the form of Fame,
With the weary pinion and ruffled wing,
To soar to the skies on the real Thing—
That is Fame indeed ! This it is to live ;
This it is to be gainer ; and not to give ;
This it is to breathe in the furnace of strife,
In the House of Death, the breath of Life.

OUTLINES OF SERMONS.

No. 40.

"Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."—2 ROMANS, 4 v.

1. On the general subject of repentance, see an outline of mine in the *Christian Spiritualist* for March, 1873.
2. Repentance being what it is, is necessarily a personal and a constant duty, which, sooner or later, in this world or the next, will have to be done. The text presents us with the *great motive* which God places before us, to the performance of this duty.
3. The text, without positively asserting it, implies the idea that all true repentance has respect to God ; although where the repentance is a "godly sorrow," it will lead a man to do the right thing towards those human beings whom he has wronged.
4. God has power to punish, and that fact might, of itself, operate as a motive to repentance ; but the motive here presented is the Divine goodness, or kindness, which goodness is wise, and not mere softness, and comprehensive, and, therefore, not partial.
5. When the text places the goodness of God before us as a motive to repentance, it thus appeals to man's higher nature, implies the baseness of all voluntary wrong doing, takes into account and respects man's freedom of will, and brings to bear upon a being endowed as man is the only motive to repentance, which it is supremely worthy of a Being like God to present.
6. How many know nothing of this ! Many who know it intellectually, pay no attention to it ; and even the best of men are only imperfectly affected by it. This is the season of Lent. One may hope that "the goodness" rather than "the terrors" of the Lord, may be presented by our teachers to those whom they desire to bring into a new and living way.

F. R. YOUNG.

(Preached at Swindon).

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Other names, if sent to us by readers or booksellers, will be inserted. Readers and subscribers would greatly oblige us if they would make inquiries of booksellers and newspaper agents, as to their willingness to allow their names to appear as selling the *Christian Spiritualist*. Show bills can always be got direct from our Publisher in London, and should be asked for by trade collectors of country parcels.

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2. The names and addresses of contributors must be sent to the Editor, for publication. The rule by which anonymous contributions will be excluded will be absolutely obeyed; indeed, all communications, of whatever kind, which are of an anonymous nature, will be at once consigned to the waste-paper basket.

TO INQUIRERS.

Persons who desire to inform themselves of the fundamental principles and evidences of Modern Spiritualism, are recommended to read, first of all, the following works:—

"Where are the Dead?" by Fritz.

Howitt's "History of the Supernatural."

De Morgan's "From Matter to Spirit."

Sergeant's "Planchette."

Brevior's "Two Worlds."

Owen's "Footfalls on the Boundary of the Other World."

Owen's "Debateable Land between this World and the Next."

Massey's "Concerning Spiritualism."

Alexander's (P.P.) "Spiritualism: A Narrative with a Discussion."

Phelps's "Gates Ajar."

Gillingham's "Seat of the Soul."

Gillingham's "Eight Days with the Spiritualists."

Carpenter's "Tracts on Spiritualism."

Fudge Edmonds' "Spiritual Tracts."

*Home's "Incidents in my Life."

*Ballou's "Modern Spiritual Manifestations."

*"Confessions of a Truth Seeker."

Wilkinson's "Spirit Drawings."

"Hints on the Evidences of Spiritualism," by M.P.

Dialectical Society's "Report on Spiritualism."

The above works can be obtained of, or through, Mr. James Burns, Publisher, 15, Southampton Row, London. Mr. Burns, however, writes to tell us that the items in the above list marked with a star (*), are "out of print." We are very sorry to hear such bad news, but hope that persistent search after them may, at length, be the occasion of "out of print" being exchanged for "second edition now ready." There are none in the above list that should cease to be published. The Editor of this periodical does not, of course, pledge himself to every single statement made in any one of these books; but he does consider them to be worthy of perusal, and most of them invaluable aids to those who do really wish to know what Spiritualists have to say for themselves, and the grounds upon which their belief reposes. If it be said that this list gives the names of those works only which are on the side of Spiritualism, omitting those which are against it, we have only to say that the public are better informed of what our opponents have to say than what we ourselves have to advance in reply. It is a comparatively easy task to get a man to read what is thought to be an exposure of Spiritualism; but it is not so easy to get what we have to say read, and read with candour.

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