

The Christian Spiritualist.

EDITED BY GEORGE SEXTON, LL.D.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING
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THE SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE. Edited by GEORGE SEXTON, M.A., LL.D., F.Z.S., F.A.S.

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"A Lecture was delivered last night in Hope Hall, in the presence of a large audience, by George Sexton, M.D., M.A., LL.D., F.R.G.S., of London, the subject being, 'The Philosophy of Spiritualism,' with criticisms on adverse theories. Dr. Hitchman presided. Dr. Sexton's discourse was a very able one, and very different to the vulgar utterances of 'paid mediums.' He is a speaker of first-rate elocutionary power, and treated his subject in a very able way."—*Liverpool Mercury*, August 7th, 1873.

"LECTURE BY DR. G. SEXTON.—Under the auspices of the Leeds Psychological Society, this accomplished gentleman delivered last night to a crowded audience in the Music Hall, an instructive lecture on the 'Philosophy of Spiritualism, reviewing many of the Sciences, and ably explaining the great basis—Induction. Dr. Sexton made out a good case, and if he did not produce a positive result, he succeeded in fairly sweeping away the last vestige of prejudice and preconceived notions respecting the truth or falsehood of Spiritualistic phenomena, which he and others have classified, and on which they have built the so-called science of Spiritualism. This was, we suppose, the main object of the doctor's lecture; and if so, he completely succeeded. Respecting the phenomena Dr. Sexton spoke about, we hesitate not to say that we know nothing; but this we do say that a more scientific (in the best sense of that term) lecture than that of last night could not be heard from any of our chairs in our universities."—*Leeds Daily News*, Nov. 4th, 1873.

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ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

The substance of a Discourse delivered in the New Hall, Church-street, Islington, London, on Sunday evening, March 7th, 1875.

BY THE EDITOR.

"For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made."—Isaiah lvii. 16.

THE somewhat unusual subject with which I have to deal this evening, I selected in consequence of the intense interest that is being felt in it at the present time. The churches are being considerably agitated just now by a discussion of this very important topic. On every hand the doctrine of eternal torment, so long clung to with such tenacity by even the wise and the good in the churches, is losing its hold upon the minds of the people. The dogma of the total extinction of the wicked, after a certain term of punishment, has been undergone, is being accepted by large numbers of ministers in the Evangelical churches, probably as a sort of easy method of getting rid of the horrors of eternal punishment, without adopting the doctrine of the final happiness of all. When it is borne in mind that such men as Dr. Parker and Arthur Mursell, have avowed their disbelief in eternal punishment, and their conviction that the finally impenitent will be in the end altogether annihilated, it will be seen what interest attaches to this great question at the present time. A still more significant fact may be named: The Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, one of the foremost men among Congregationalist ministers, is just now engaged in the delivery of a course of lectures in his church, three of which have been already given, and the fourth is being delivered this evening, on what he calls the "Miserable Doctrine of Annihilation." These lectures are printed week by week, in the *Christian World*, and are therefore read by thousands of persons, many of whom would have been utterly shocked twenty years ago, at the idea of perusing anything on the subject. Mr. Brown has been induced to take up this question for the same reason that I am discussing it to-night, viz., because of the interest that attaches to it just now in the entire religious world. He calls the doctrine of annihilation a "miserable doctrine," which it most certainly is; and although it is difficult to understand, until the course of lectures is completed, the conclusion at which he arrives, since he does not seem quite to favour the doctrine of the final restoration, yet he is most emphatic in his rejection of the theory of eternal torment. A few years ago, for a man in Mr. Brown's position to have taken the course that he is now taking, would have been not simply to bring upon himself the charge of heresy, but to involve the necessity for his retiring from an Evangelical Pastorate, and casting in his lot with Unitarians, or some other body not usually considered orthodox. This state of things is fortunately changed. Men now dare to face courageously the great religious problems which force themselves upon their attention, regardless of the conclusions at which they may arrive, respecting them. The consequence is, that an increased tone of liberality of thought pervades the churches, sectarianism is considerably diminished, bigotry disappears, and the principles of universal brotherhood, so divinely enunciated by the Great Master, seem nearer their practical realization.

As Spiritualists, it is important that the world should know our whereabouts in these great questions which are agitating the minds of mankind. We are sufficiently numerous to make ourselves heard, and sufficiently important, in point of the intelligence of the leading men in

our ranks, to give to our opinions an amount of interest. Spiritualism is not a religion, nor does it profess to lay down a set of theological doctrines, which it calls upon all its adherents to accept, but at the same time, it must necessarily very largely influence every form of thought, religious thought included. Spiritualism is a science, as to its phenomena, and a philosophy as to the principles springing therefrom, but in no sense is it a religion. It does not claim to enter the sanctuary of the soul, where man stands face to face with the Almighty, nor can it supply those heartfelt wants, which spring from the deepest part of humanity, and which prompt to worship and communion with God. Spiritualism and Christianity are perfectly distinct. Christian Spiritualism, of which I claim to be a representative, does not mean an amalgamation of Christianity and Spiritualism, a fusion of two different sets of principles into one, so as to make a consistent creed out of them, but a Spiritualism that does not—and will not be allowed to run counter to Christianity. In other words, a Spiritualism which puts the teachings of Christ first, and declines to accept the dicta of spirits as it would the dogmas of men in the flesh, when not in accordance with the principles of the New Testament. At the same time, Spiritualism is calculated to throw a large amount of light upon many important questions, that of the future state being amongst them. The consequence must be, that the opinions of Spiritualists upon such topics as that of the duration of the punishment of the wicked, will be deemed by all thinking men, to possess a large amount of interest. This is my reason for taking up this question. Of course, I only speak for myself, and have no desire to bind other Spiritualists by the views that I may express. At the same time, it may be well to remark, that this is one of the few points upon which there is little or no difference of opinion amongst those who accept the Spirit teachings.

I.—THE VARIOUS OPINIONS ENTERTAINED ON THIS SUBJECT. There are a great variety of opinions entertained amongst the different religious denominations upon this question.

1. The Roman Catholic Church recognises three distinct places or conditions hereafter, to which the race of human beings are destined. It has a place of eternal felicity reserved for those who are sufficiently pure at death to enter its precincts—if there be any such—and those who having passed through purgatorial purification are freed from the impurities clinging to them on their entrance to the spirit-world. On the other hand it provides a region of unutterable horror, the torments of which are inconceivable for the finally impenitent. Between these two is a middle place designated purgatory, in consequence of the purpose for which it has been framed. In the fires of this region—for there seem to be fires here as well as in hell—certain persons whose offences have been small, and whose crimes have been venial, are purged from their vices, and thus rendered fit for heaven. I am not sufficiently versed in Roman Catholic theology to know with any great degree of accuracy what class of people is inexorably doomed to everlasting despair, and what other class is more highly favoured by having a provision made for a purification after death, which had failed to be effected on this side of the grave. Suffice it to say that this doctrine of purgatory tends very largely to destroy the conception in those who believe in it, of the reality of hell, because, as a matter of course, no good Catholic is ever anxious about the fate of those persons who are near and dear to him, even although their lives may not have been such as to fit them for heaven, and their deaths too sudden and unexpected to allow of forgiveness being obtained before leaving the body.

There is, of course, purgatory, whose sole object is to make pure and holy this very class of people. To a thinking mind an immense difficulty presents itself in connection with this view, as to why, with such perfect arrangements in the future world for purging men from sin, there should be any necessity whatever for a hell. If it be compatible with the justice and wisdom of God that certain crimes committed here can be atoned for hereafter, and their effects completely wiped away by a certain term of punishment in purgatory, one fails to see why other crimes are of so heinous a character as to be exempt from this process, and to merit eternal damnation. For, bear in mind, it is not a difference between a small sin and a large one—if it be correct to speak of sin in these terms—since that difference will only involve the necessity for a mild or severe, a long or short, punishment in purgatory. It is the difference between salvation after certain sufferings have been undergone, and the horrors of eternal torture from which there is no escape, which, in point of fact, is an infinite difference. Still, this theory of a middle place has much to recommend it. Its existence is not only plausible, but Scriptural—its character and function the Roman Catholic has mistaken completely.

2. The orthodox Protestant churches recognise but two positions after death one of unmixed and eternal joy; the other of unalterable and never-ending torture—in point of fact, the hell and heaven of Catholicism without its purgatory. The disbelief in this latter place is due, no doubt, largely to the abuses to which the doctrine had been subjected in Catholic times, and the efforts of the reformers to cut up Catholicism root and branch. At the Protestant Reformation a large mass of error was swept away, and with it, as might be expected, some truth. And when it is remembered that the doctrine of purgatory had been turned to such vile account in extending the Ecclesiastical dominion of Popery, in augmenting the power so injuriously wielded by the clergy, and in increasing the revenues of the Church, it can hardly be wondered at that it became subject to the energetic attacks of the Reformers. In truth, the theory of purgatory was false in every respect except as to the existence of a middle state.

3. The Universalists recognise two states in the future world, one of eternal bliss, and the other of temporal and limited punishment. There are great numbers of men in America holding the Universalist faith, and being perfectly orthodox upon every other point of theological doctrine, but in this country the principles of Universalism are seldom met with except in connection with Unitarianism. The main feature of the Universalist belief is the final restoration of all human beings. Universalists hold that in the end sin will be completely destroyed, all kinds of evil crushed out of existence, sorrow, and pain, and suffering of every grade cease to be experienced, every human being become pure, virtuous, and consequently happy, and God be all in all. The hell of the Universalist very strikingly resembles the purgatory of the Roman Catholic. It is a place where human beings are to be punished for the deeds done in the body, the sufferings inflicted being corrective and reformatory, rather than vindictive. The consequence of this, of course, must be that whether the stripes inflicted be few or many, whether the duration of the punishment be for a day or ten thousand years, it must ultimately come to an end, when the region in which it has been inflicted will cease, and the one place, that of supreme happiness, alone remain.

4. The Annihilationists hold that the wicked will be utterly and entirely destroyed. These are of various

kinds, some believing in the immortality of the soul, and consequently in punishment in the spirit world; others, as the Christadelphians, denying that man is anything more than a material being, and believing, therefore, that the punishment is to be inflicted upon the body of the sinner after the resurrection. These latter appear to me to be the only consistent Annihilationists after all, for if man be in any sense immortal, it is difficult to see how he is to be deprived of his immortality and destroyed. Of course they all hold that immortality is the gift of God, through Christ, but then the question arises, "When is it given?" The Christadelphian maintains that to the wicked it is never communicated, and that consequently they die for want of that very immortality which the righteous receive from God. But the Evangelical Christians who have recently embraced the theory of annihilation, believing in the immortality of the soul, must hold that this gift has been imparted to all mankind, and that the wicked are to be deprived of it again by a sudden and arbitrary act of God. In any case the doctrine is utterly repugnant to reason, and to all the nobler faculties of the human mind. That God should, as one theory maintains, keep alive in the spirit-world human beings for the sole purpose of inflicting upon them unbearable tortures through a series of years, and then blot the sufferers out of existence afterwards; or that He, as another hypothesis asserts, should raise the wicked from the sleep of death, collect together the particles of which their bodies had been originally composed, re-organise these dead atoms, breathe fresh life into the mass, bring back to the form, sense, perception, and memory, and all for the purpose of inflicting a second death upon the offender, is too preposterous to contemplate.

5. The writings of Swedenborg teach that there are a great number of heavens and hells, each adapted to the character of the persons by whom they are inhabited, and an intermediate spirit-world into which people are ushered immediately after death by the process of resurrection, which is the withdrawal of the spiritual body from the natural organization. Hell, according to this marvellous Swedish seer, is not a place created by God in which punishment is to be inflicted upon offenders, but a consequence of the state of mind of the wicked themselves, and selected by them as a matter of choice. It is, in fact, their heaven, and preferred by them to any other place in the universe. This is, you say, to make the remaining in the hells voluntary on the part of their inhabitants, and thus to get rid of the punishment altogether. Certainly, the hells are filled with people who are there because the associations and surroundings are in harmony with their character, and who, but for that, would not be there at all. Are the doors of the heavens shut against these men? No, nor against any human being that has ever lived. After death all men gravitate to the associations with which they are in strongest sympathy, and hence find companionship with people, constituted exactly like themselves. They could, had they the inclination, seek other society, but they have no such inclination, and therefore remain where they are. They do not seek to enter the heavens because the Divine love which prevails there would be unbearable to them. In truth no greater punishment could be inflicted on evil men than to compel them to associate continually with the pure and good. Nor does this law apply simply to the spirit world. It prevails largely here as any one must have observed who has taken the trouble to reflect on the subject. Suppose you went into some of the lowest slums in London, and selecting two or three men, whose whole lives were given up to debauchery and crime, offered them tickets to admit them to a concert

where the most sublime music was to be played, and the divinest harmony of sounds given out that had ever been listened to by mortal ears, think you that such men would thank you for your pains. Not they. They would spurn your offer with contempt, and treat your mistaken kindness with ridicule, and did you compel them to attend and sit out the concert, the sounds which would fill the minds of other men with the most supreme ecstasy would fall on their ears with jarring discord, harrowing up their feelings, provoking disgust, and entailing complete misery. A score of such rough illustrations might be given of the operation of the Divine law from which spring the different states in the great Hereafter. The objection that upon this principle hell is not a place of punishment is a great mistake. In a region where the wildest passions, the deepest malice of which the human heart is capable, the most intense self-love, indomitable pride, bitterest animosity, and unchecked revenge have full sway, where hatred alone is the law of action, and where all the associations spring from the depths of iniquity and sins of the blackest dye, if the very atmosphere of such a place does not involve the most horrible punishment, then human conceptions of what constitutes punishment must be all at fault. In the present world evil passions are restrained by a thousand circumstances, but mainly are they checked by the influence springing from the presence of good men in society. Remove all these checks, and allow wicked men to act from the ruling passions which control them, and the result of society in the hells may be faintly imagined.

These are the principal views that are entertained among mankind with regard to future punishment.

II.—THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, AS POPULARLY MAINTAINED. The doctrine of eternal torment in fire and brimstone, is too frequently made a conspicuous feature in modern theology. The highest play of fancy is employed to depict the horrible sufferings of the damned, and imagination allowed to run riot through the realms of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, and equally reserved for those who die impenitent. Almost everything that partakes of the lovely and the beautiful, is smothered by the murky atmosphere that escapes from the bottomless pit, and many of the kindly feelings that man should manifest towards man, are destroyed by the belief that a large portion of our fellow-creatures are reserved for so terrible a fate. The best and warmest blood of the heart becomes frozen at the sad and sickening spectacle presented in the glowing descriptions that have been given of the regions of eternal despair. I need but to refer to a few of these, to shew you how certain writers appear to have actually revelled in the description of the horrors in store for the enemies of God, which, in too many cases, has been only another name for the enemies of themselves. There is a little work, written by the Rev. J. Furniss, a Roman Catholic priest, entitled the "Sight of Hell," and issued as one of a series of "Books for Children." It is published, *per missu superiorum*, and therefore may be fairly quoted as an illustration of Catholic opinion on the subject. From it we learn that St. Frances of Rome, was taken by her guardian Spirit to hell. What she saw and heard there seems to have been considered adapted to influence for good, children and young persons, and hence the publication of the book under consideration. She states that after passing through hundreds and hundreds of miles of darkness, she reached the gates of hell, and on them was written in letters of fire, "This is hell, where there is neither rest, nor consolation, nor hope." These gates were opened and St. Frances with her angel entered. Here "she saw a sight so terrible that it cannot be told. She saw that

the size of hell was immense. Neither in height, nor in depth, nor in length, nor in breadth, could she see any end of it." This is somewhat curious, because we are immediately afterwards informed that both the roof, floor, and walls were visible. The words are, "Look at the floor of hell, it is red-hot, like red-hot iron; streams of burning pitch and sulphur run through it. Look at the walls, the enormous stones are red-hot, sparks of fire are always falling down from them. Lift up your eyes to the roof of hell, it is like a sheet of blazing fire. Sometimes when you get up on a winter's morning, you see the country filled with a great thick fog. Hell is filled with a fog of fire. In some parts of the world torrents of rain come down, which sweep away trees and houses. In hell, torrents, not of rain, but of fire and brimstone, are rained down. Storms of hailstones come down on the earth, and break the windows in pieces; but in hell the hailstones are thunderbolts, red-hot balls of fire. See that great whirlwind of fire sweeping across hell. Look how floods of fire roll themselves through hell, like the waves of the sea. The wicked are sunk down and buried in that fiery sea of destruction and perdition. . . . The fire of hell burns the devils, who are spirits, for it was prepared for them. So it will burn the soul as well as the body. Take a spark out of the kitchen fire, throw it into the sea, and it will go out. Take a little spark out of hell, less than a pin's head, throw it into the ocean, it will not go out. In one moment it would dry up all the waters of the ocean, and set the whole world in a blaze."

The weeping of the inhabitants is described as follows. "There is in hell a sound like that of many waters. It is as if all the rivers and oceans of the world were pouring themselves with a great splash down on the floor of hell. Is it then really the sound of waters? It is. Are the rivers and oceans of the earth pouring themselves into hell? No. What is it then? It is the sound of oceans of tears running down from countless millions of eyes." One more quotation from this atrocious book, and I have done with it. "The fourth dungeon is 'the boiling kettle.' Listen! there is a sound like that of a kettle boiling. Is it really a kettle which is boiling? No. Then what is it? Hear what it is. The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy; the brain is boiling and bubbling in his head, the marrow is boiling in his bones. The fifth dungeon is the 'red-hot oven,' in which is a little child. Hear how it screams to come out; see how it turns and twists itself about in the fire; it beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor of the oven. To this child God was very good. Very likely God saw that this child would get worse and worse, and would never repent, and so it would have to be punished much more in hell. So God in his mercy called it out of the world in its early childhood!"

These two or three quotations serve to furnish a specimen of the monstrous statements put forth by persons who disgrace the sacred name of Christianity, by applying it to their hideous and worse than brutal dogmas. The effect that such language as this would produce upon weak minds, may be easily imagined, and a Church arming itself with so fearful an instrument of torture—a thousand times worse than any material racks or thumb-screws—is well fitted to crush out all freedom of the people amongst whom it plants itself.

The Catholic Church, however, is not alone in the enunciation of this dogma, and the investing it with such hideous terrors. Protestants—often in other respects, kind and amiable men—have given equally dreadful descriptions of the lake of fire and brimstone reserved for those who die impenitent. Grand old Jeremy Taylor,

whose fame still lives, and deservedly, in the Churches, describes the tortures of the lost in such language as the following:—"The damned persons shall be eternally branded with the infamy of their offences, so that they shall be scorned and scoffed at by the devils themselves; men and angels shall detest them as infamous and wicked traitors to their King, God, and Redeemer. And as fugitive slaves are marked and cauterised with burning irons, so this infamy, by some mark of ugliness and deformity, shall be stamped upon their faces and bodies. (Isaiah xiii.) So ignominious shall be the body of a sinner, that when his soul returns to enter it, it shall be amazed to behold it so terrible, and shall wish it were in the same state as when it was half eaten up with worms. And that which adds misery to their calamity, they shall be banished from heaven, and made prisoners in the profound bowels of the earth; a place most remote from heaven, and the most calamitous of all others, where they shall neither see the sun by day nor the stars by night; where all shall be horror and darkness: a land covered with the obscurity of death; a land of sulphur and burning pitch; a land of pestilence and corruption—into this land shall be banished the enemies of God. The tyrants of Japonica invented a strange torment for those who confessed Christ. They hung them with their heads downwards, half their bodies into a hole digged in the earth, which they filled with snakes, lizards, and other poisonous vermin; but even these were better companions than those infernal dragons of the pit of hell, where into not half but the whole body of the miserable sinner shall be plunged." He then goes on to describe the nature of the torments more in detail; from what source he acquired his information he does not say:—"The eyes shall not only be grieved with a scorching heat, but shall be tormented with monsters and horrible figures," &c. The ears, whilst they are to suffer "from the ever burning and penetrating fire," are to be saluted with "the fearful and amazing noises of thunders, howlings, clamours, groans, curses, and blasphemies." The nose is to be tormented with the most horrible stench, arising from the pent-up brimstone and other poisonous vapours; and even "the bodies of the damned shall cast forth a most horrible stink of themselves, and that more or less, according to the quality of their sins." Hell is, according to Jeremy Taylor, a kind of gigantic cesspool, into which all the filth of the world is continually being drained. "It is," he informs us, "the world's sink, and the receptacle of all the filth in this great frame, and, withal, a deep dungeon, into which the air hath no access," and there is no "vent or breathing." Dr. Watts, whose charming hymns are sung in all the churches, and many of which are redolent of beauty, full of love, and enunciating sound and sterling truths, has yet allowed his poetry to become tainted by the frightful language that he has used in describing the torments of the damned. Take the following as an example.

"Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice has built a dismal hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there.
Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
And darts to inflict immortal pains,
Dyed in the blood of damned souls."

Or notice the following, which is, if possible, still more horrible.

"Tempests of angry fire shall roll,
To blast the rebel worm;
And beat upon his naked soul,
In one eternal storm."

Great God, this is dreadful, even for a strong-minded man to read and contemplate. And the effect of putting books containing these monstrous sentiments, into the

hands of innocent, gay, and mirthful children, whose minds are unformed, and nervous systems weak, is heart-rending to imagine. Amongst modern popular preachers, there are few men who will for one moment bear comparison with Mr. Spurgeon, yet conspicuously in the foreground of his teaching may be frequently seen this monstrous dogma, alike dishonouring to God, and debasing to man. In one of his early sermons, he remarks:—"I shall look through thy hand and flesh, and shall see thy heart within, and how shall I see it? Set in a case of fire—in a case of fire, and thou shalt revolve for ever with the worm gnawing within thy heart, which shall never die. A case of fire around thy never-dying, ever-tortured heart." And again, "The angel binding you hand and foot, holds you one single moment over the mouth of the chasm. He bids you look down, down. There is no bottom. And you hear coming up from the abyss sullen moans, and screams of tortured ghosts. You quiver, your bones melt like wax, and your marrow quakes within you. Where is now thy might, and where thy boasting and bragging? Ye shriek and cry, ye beg for mercy. But the angel with one tremendous grasp seizes you fast, and then hurls you down with the cry, away, away." What is to be said to this? Why, that the angel referred to must be a devil, by whatever name he may be called. There is no language that we could employ, that would half describe the horror one feels in reading passages so brutal, so unfeeling, and so calculated to degrade and to demoralize mankind.

III.—THE TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE ON THE SUBJECT OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT. It is not to be denied that there are passages in the New Testament which set forth, in very forcible language, the terrors that are reserved in the future world for the ungodly. Whatever may be the nature of the punishment to be hereafter inflicted upon those who disobey the commands of God—and in the present life it is perhaps impossible for us to form anything like a definite idea on the subject—it is clear that the pains and penalties arising from it are of no light character. But equally certain is it that no such place is shadowed forth in the pages of the Bible as the "brimstone lake," which some preachers seem to revel in describing. It is impossible for me in a short discourse of this kind to give anything like an exhaustive explanation of the numerous passages to be found bearing on this subject, nor indeed is it at all desirable in a popular discourse. In the Old Testament the word which is translated hell in our version is שְׁאוֹל (*sheol*), and signified literally the grave as the receptacle for the dead body, and afterwards became used symbolically to describe the region of disembodied spirits. In this sense it is used sixty-six times in the Old Testament, in thirty-two of which it is translated "hell," thirty-one "grave," and three "pit." In no case has it the slightest reference to such a place of torment as we have been speaking of. The first time that *sheol* is used in the Bible is in the case of Jacob, who, lamenting for his son Joseph exclaims: "I will go into *sheol* unto my son mourning" (Gen. xxxvii. 35). Next it occurs in the case of Korah, Dothan, and Abiram, of whom Moses said that the earth should open, and they should go down quick into *sheol*, translated the pit (Numbers xvi. 30), which might either mean that they were to be buried alive, or that they should pass thus into the region of departed spirits. In the rejoicing of Hannah at having given birth to a son, she exclaims, "The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave [*sheol*] and bringeth up" (1 Sam. ii. 6). The translators have correctly enough rendered *sheol* "grave" in this passage, but when next it occurred (2 Sam. xxii. 6), they have

erroneously translated it "hell." When David had handed over the government to his son Solomon, he informed him that he was about to die and "go the way of all the earth;" and in charging him what to do he desires him not to let the hoary head of Joab go down to the grave (*sheol*) in peace (1 Kings ii. 6) and to bring down the hoar head of Shimei "to the grave [*sheol*] with blood" (v. 9). In the Book of Job the ways of God are declared to be higher than heaven, and deeper than hell (Job. xi. 8), *i.e.*, higher than the fretted canopy of stars, and deeper than *sheol*, the innermost recess of the earth. Moreover, Job prays to God to hide him in *sheol* till his wrath be passed—a most unlikely wish had *sheol* referred to a place of eternal torment. In the Psalms this word occurs many times, but is always used in the same sense. Take one illustration: "If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell [*sheol*] behold thou art there" (Psalm cxxxix. 8), which Street very correctly translates, "If I climb the heavens there thou art, if I make a bed of the grave, lo! thou art present." The word occurs nine times in the Proverbs—seven times rendered hell, and twice the grave, in all, however the meaning being the same. "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave" [*sheol*] (i. 12). "Her house is the way to hell [*sheol*], going down to the chambers of death" (vii. 27), beautifully rendered in metre by Dr. Hodgson as follows—

"Her house is the way to the sepulchre,
It leadeth down to the chambers of death."

"But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell" [*sheol*] (ix. 18), which Dr. Hodgson has translated—

"But he knoweth not that dead men are there,
That in the depths of the grave are her guests."

In Isaiah the term *sheol* occurs nine times, in six of which it is translated hell, and three grave. "Hell [*sheol*] hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure" (v. 14)—*i.e.*, the famine and disease to which reference is made enlarge the domains of death. In a denunciation of the faults of the people, they are said to have made a covenant with death and an agreement with hell [*sheol*] (xxviii. 15), which was clearly not an eternal one, for it is afterwards disannulled (18). The expression here comes very near that of Lucan when speaking of the Psylli, who were said to be unhurt by the bites of the serpents abounding in their country:—

"Truce with the dreadful tyrant death they have,
And border safely on his realm, the grave."

Hezekiah speaks of going to the gates of *sheol*, the grave (xxxviii. 10). Lucifer is said to have been "cut down to the ground," and "brought down to hell" [*sheol*] (xiv. 12, 15)—clearly not the place of torment, since he is spoken of as being "as a carcase trodden under feet," in contradistinction to the other kings who were to lie in state, each in his own apartment. "Thou art cast out of thy grave כְּבוֹר [kibor] (19). "Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial" (20), are the condemnations passed upon him, in which case the punishment will assuredly be admitted to be temporal. In the other passages, too numerous to quote, in which this word occurs, it has the same meaning.

In the Septuagint the term *sheol* is translated *Aδης* (*hades*), one of the Greek words, which in the English version is rendered hell. That it had been selected as a synonym of this Hebrew word is of itself clear and conclusive proof that at that period no such meaning was attached to it as it has since obtained. Hades appears to be derived from *A*, not and *εἶδω*, to see, and means the invisible resting-place of the dead." Like *sheol*,

therefore, it may be translated "the unseen world." It is used frequently in the sense of a deprivation of light, a dark and gloomy habitation. Scapula considered it as a dark place, a house without light; and Hesychius looks upon it as synonymous with unpleasant, disagreeable, giving forth a stench, and quotes Cyrill. Lex. as applying it to a dark habitation, and to a man who had lost his sight. It is invariably used by the poets of Greece and Rome to describe the region of disembodied spirits, which in truth is its legitimate meaning.

The first time that we meet with the term *hades* in the New Testament is in Matthew xi. 23—"And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell" (*hades*)—in which case it is used in the sense of low or desolate, indicative of a state of the deepest degradation. The gates of *hades*, Christ declares, should not prevail against His Church (Matt. xvi. 18), which probably means that neither men in the flesh, nor spirits out of the flesh, should succeed in their efforts to overthrow Christianity. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, frequently referred to in illustration of the use of this word in the sense of a place of torment, we discover no indications of the existence of the terrible lake of fire and brimstone described by the writers already quoted. The rich man and Lazarus were both in the same place, so near to each other in point of fact that a conversation could be carried on between them without difficulty; and although there appears to have been a gulf which it was impossible for them to pass, still it is evident that the chasm could not have been a very wide one. "It is singular," says a writer on this subject, "how a preconceived theory shuts out the plain meaning of a passage. Had *hades* been the name of a city wherein dwelt various persons in very diversified states, and the language had run thus: 'In *hades* Dives lifted up his eyes being in pain from fire, and seeth far down the street a physician, and Lazarus leaning on his arm,' who would have confounded the name of the city at large with the particular place wherein Dives was suffering? Hades can clearly mean no more than the general state of the dead here, including the state of both Lazarus and Dives."

It is however, not so much *hades*, but another word translated hell in the New Testament that has been relied upon mainly for proving the doctrine of eternal torment. The term *Πέρινα* (*Gehenna*). This word can hardly be considered Greek, since it is made up of *Γη*, land, and *εννοια* (*Hinnom*), a proper name, and refers to the valley of Hinnom to the south-east of Jerusalem (Joshua xv. 8). In this place, it is stated, children were burnt in sacrifice to Moloch, an idol of the Ammonites, and a fire was continually kept burning there for this and other kindred purposes. To put a stop to these practices, Josiah is said to have defiled the place by filling it with human bones (2 Kings, xxiii. 10-14). After this it was customary to throw the filth and offal of the city, with the dead carcases of animals, into the valley, to consume which a fire was kept burning. Here, too, were burned the bodies of criminals denied burial, and some are even said to have been burned alive. The valley was also used as a place of sepulture for the poor inhabitants of the city who could not afford tombs or embalming (Jeremiah vii. 32, 33). The place, therefore, was, on the whole, one calculated to excite a feeling of terror, and the Pharisees were long accustomed to designate the future punishment of the wicked by its name. Whatever horrors might, however, be connected with it, they were all of a temporal and material character, and the place, therefore, could only symbolise the future punishment of the wicked.

The term *Gehenna* is not used very frequently in the New Testament, and in most of the cases where it is, it can have no reference to punishment in another life, but where it has, it can only be in a figurative sense. The principal passage relied upon by the advocates of eternal torment is in Mark ix., where, they maintain, a far more terrible fate is pictured than could possibly arise from the burning of the bodies in Hinnom; "And if thy hand offend thee cut it off it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell (*Gehenna*), into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (43, 44). The whole of the references in this passage are clearly to a temporal fire and a material burning, and can only foreshadow, therefore, the future punishment in a figurative and symbolical sense. The principal objection that is urged against this idea is the statement that the fire was never to be quenched. This, however, upon further examination will be seen to amount to nothing. It simply implied that the fire was to be kept continually burning, and the very expression employed to indicate its perpetuity, is quoted from an Old Testament writer who most certainly in its use had no reference to anything more than the valley of Hinnom. "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me. For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isaiah lxvi., 23, 24). Fire and worms were, moreover, figurative expressions long in use among the Jews, to denote temporal punishment. In Judith we read: "Woe to the nations that rise up against my kindred, the Lord will take vengeance on them in the day of judgment in putting fire and worms in their flesh" (xvi. 17). Jesus, the son of Sirach, remarks: "The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms" (Ecclesiasticus vii. 17). The expression in Mark, therefore, cannot be considered as referring to any such hell as that which Mr. Furniss so glowingly describes in the passages already quoted. In the parallel passage in Matthew the fire spoken of is called "everlasting fire" (xviii. 8), which, it might be thought, could not possibly refer to the terrestrial *Gehenna*. The term *αιωνιον* (*aiouion*), translated "everlasting," however, by no means implies eternal. Abraham was to have the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession (Gen. xvii. 8). Moses was commanded to anoint Aaron and his sons to an "everlasting priesthood" (Exodus xl. 15). In the Septuagint the same word *aiouion* is used. A score of other passages of similar import might be quoted. The everlasting (*aiouion*) fire, therefore, was nothing more than the temporal fire of *Gehenna*, and the punishment to be inflicted also limited in its duration. Our Lord told the Pharisees that they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, and that when they had made him, he was twofold more the child of hell (*Gehenna*) than themselves (Matt. xxiii., 15). This expression, "child of *Gehenna*" was a Jewish phrase for a wicked character, similar to child of sin, son of darkness, and other like similes, and probably implied that the persons so described deserved to be condemned to perpetual toil in the valley of *Gehenna*.

Whatever might be the meaning, however, to be attached to the passages which seem so terribly to shadow forth the future punishment of the wicked, one fact is as clear as the sun at noonday, which is that the whole tenor of the Bible leads to the belief that a time will come when sin and death shall be destroyed, and God be all in all.

Numerous passages might be quoted which seem to show, in the plainest possible language, that future punishment is to be limited in its duration, such as the confinement mentioned, to continue till the debt had been paid even to "the uttermost farthing" (Matt. v. 25, 26; Luke xii. 58). The case of the beating with many or few stripes, according to the nature of the offence (Luke xii. 47, 48), but mainly such passages as the following: "He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Micah vii. 18, 19). "The Lord will not cast off for ever, but though he cause grief yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies" (Lam. iii. 31, 32). "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth for the spirit should fall before me, and the souls which I have made" (Isaiah lvii. 16).

Another class of passages speak distinctly of a "restitution of all things," at some period known probably only to God. Paul writes: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4), which is surely only another way of saying that it must be accomplished. Again, he remarks, "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially those that believe" (1 Tim. iv. 10).

Innumerable passages might be quoted to prove that all things were made for God's good pleasure, and that His will is that none should perish, that the benefits arising from Christ's death extended to every human creature; that the promise is that grace shall abound, commensurate with the dominion of sin; that ultimately every enemy of God shall be destroyed; and that in the end God shall be all in all. It is not necessary, however, to enlarge upon these. The one truth which stands out in boldest relief of all in the Bible is that God is love, and that His tender mercies are over all His works. And in the face of this great truth, which forms, in fact, the sum and substance of the Gospel, eternal damnation is impossible.

"What though at birth we bring with us the seed
Of sin a mortal taint—in heart and will
Too surely felt, too plainly shown indeed—
Our fatal heritage; yet are we still
The children of the All-Merciful; and ill
They teach, who tell us that from hence must flow
God's wrath, and then his justice to fulfill,
Death everlasting, never-ending woe;
O, miserable lot of man if it were so!

"Falsely and impiously teach they who thus
Our heavenly Father's holy will misread!
In bounty hath the Lord, created us,
In love redeemed. From this authentic creed
Let no bewildering sophistry impede
The hearts entire assent, for God is good.
Hold firm this faith, and, in whatever need,
Doubt not but thou wilt find thy soul endued,
With all-sufficing strength of heavenly fortitude."

IV.—THE TEACHING OF THE SPIRITS ON THE QUESTION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT. Upon this point, as far as my experience goes, there is no difference of opinion amongst the denizens of the spiritual world, at least, amongst that portion from whom communications are received. There are, doubtless, spheres inhabited by spiritual beings who never, under any circumstances, hold communion with the inhabitants of earth, and these are, in all probability, wiser, holier, and in every respect superior to those who make themselves manifest in our circles. At the same time, those from whom we do receive communications, are many of them sufficiently well informed, at least, upon subjects connected with the nature of their own existence, to instruct us respecting their state and condition, as far as we, with our limited faculties, are capable of understanding them, and suffi-

ciently truthful to justify us in relying on their communications. These all agree upon the question of the duration of future punishment, and never, under any circumstances, admit that evil is eternal. They differ in their opinions upon almost every conceivable subject, whether of a theological, a political, or a social character, but on this one point there is a unanimity of a most marvellous character. And this will appear all the more singular, when we consider that these communications come from persons who in this life were Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, South-econians, Mormons, Annihilationists, Secularists, &c., and that upon most points of doctrine their views have undergone no change in the spirit world. Roman Catholic spirits still cling to the authority of the Old Church, with which they were connected in this life, and ultra Protestants are no less warm in denouncing the pretensions of Popery. The followers of Athanasius, Arius, and Socinus, still differ in their views of the nature of the Godhead; Wesleyans preach Arminianism, and Puritans, Calvinism; and almost every other doctrine taught on earth has its advocates in Hades. On the question of the nature and duration of future punishment, there is no difference of opinion. They all agree that evil is limited in its duration, and that, therefore, the time will come when it will completely disappear from God's universe. The punishment inflicted in that world, they all maintain is corrective, not vindictive, and that therefore, in the course of time, when it shall have performed its proper function, it will altogether cease. Terrible enough in its character, they maintain it to be but limited in its duration—they all most emphatically maintain. The exact mode in which the future punishment is to achieve the result of reforming the offender, is a point upon which spirits can give us very little information. I have put the question to them again and again, as to the motives which should induce a man of an immoral and depraved character to seek after that which is pure and good, but have never received any very satisfactory intelligence on the subject. Every man, they say, contains some latent spark of goodness within himself, some feeble and momentary aspiration after holiness, some cord, however slight, which binds him, spiritually, to God, some small germ of moral and religious truth, and a tendency, therefore, to seek after that which alone accords with the true nature and destiny of his existence.

Reformation in the future world is unquestionably difficult to accomplish, and he who postpones regeneration, thinking it will be more easily effected in that state than in this, makes a mistake of a most fearful and alarming character. Here the worst men are more or less controlled and held in check, by many circumstances to which I have already referred in the earlier part of my discourse, and they are largely influenced by the presence of good men in their midst. In the hereafter, the wicked congregate together into societies of their own, and urge each other on to all kinds of vicious actions. Under these circumstances, reformation is difficult beyond conception. In truth, it is not much to be wondered at, when the fact is looked at exclusively from this point of view, that men should have come to believe in eternal torment. When, however, a broader view of the question is taken, the reflecting mind will see that evil is inverted good and foreign to the nature of the spiritual being itself, the gratification of evil passions therefore can never produce any permanent satisfaction even to the worst men. In the end this must pall on the appetite, and disgust even the most depraved. At this point there probably begins to develop itself the germ of truth and goodness, which

has never been altogether destroyed. At all events, we have the plainest testimony of the spirits themselves, both those who inhabit the lowest spheres, and those who occupy the highest positions from which communications can come to earth, that sin and its consequent punishment is limited in its duration.

There is a fact connected with Spiritualism, which is, in truth, one of its distinguishing characteristics, that must never be lost sight of. Spirits are human beings, with human thoughts, feelings, passions, conceptions, &c., and as such, are subject to influences very much analogous to those which operate upon us here. The consequence of this is, that those social faculties which have tended on earth so largely to add to our happiness, in that world, will be found operating in their full force. Especially is this the case with the pure and virtuous. One of the results of this, must be, that the love prevailing among members of the same family, or the same social circle, must be largely increased; and therefore any interruption to the constant social intercourse between those who were bound here in the bonds of sympathy, must considerably mar the happiness of those concerned. The doctrine of eternal torment is frequently set forth in the Churches in such a form, that it would be impossible to be endured by the pure and good in the spirit world, unless all the social faculties were completely rooted out of the nature of its inhabitants. Good old Jonathan Edwards once said, "However the saints on earth may have loved the damned when here, their eternal damnation will only serve to increase a relish of their own enjoyments," and an American poet once wrote—

"The godly wife conceives no grief,
Nor can she shed a tear
For the sad fate of her dear mate
When she his doom doth hear."

This is so frightful, that it makes one's blood run cold to think of it, and certain it is that no advocate of the doctrine can ever thoroughly realize what this kind of language truly means, or it would be sufficient to drive him to raving madness. The language of President Edwards is, in all truth, strong enough, but Mr. Spurgeon has out-heroded Herod, on this point. He remarks in one of his sermons:—"Young man, what will you think when the last day comes, to hear Christ say, Depart, ye cursed, and there will be a voice just behind him saying amen; and as you inquire whence came the voice, you will find it was your mother. Or young woman, when thou art cast away into utter darkness, what will you think to hear a voice saying, amen, and as you look there sits your father, his lips still moving with the solemn curse?" What should we say to this? Why, that the father and mother who could so act, had become brutalized fiends instead of angels. Persons who indulge in language of this kind, must surely have a notion that the redeemed in heaven have become so changed that they have ceased to be human, for no human being, even though he were one of the worst that ever lived on earth, could experience such feelings as are here ascribed to the pure and good. And if Spiritualism had done nothing else than show men that they remain human in the spirit world, and still retain, therefore, all the sympathy and affection of their nature, it would have accomplished a result for which we could not be too grateful. The apparent selfishness contained in such a passage as the following, from Mr. Spurgeon, it is impossible to understand. "For me there is no hell. Let it smoke and burn. If I am a believer, I shall never have my portion there. For me there are no eternal racks, no torments. . . . We are free from punishment, and we never quake on account of it. However horrible it may be—if

it is eternal, as we know it is—it is nothing to us, for we can never suffer it.” Which really means:—What care I who suffer and writhe in everlasting flames, so long as I am safe? Yet Mr. Spurgeon is not a selfish man, but kindhearted and generous. What construction, then, can be put upon language of this kind? Why, that those by whom it is employed can either never thoroughly realize what it means, or must suppose that spirits in heaven have ceased to be human in every sense of the term. Professor Moses Stuart, dealing with this very question, on one occasion, said the immense difficulties connected with it, and remarked:—“That the subject is one of fearful interest, none will deny who believe in future retribution. That there are difficulties pressed by it on the mind, when one thinks of his own condition, that of his beloved friends, or of his brethren of the human race, it would be mere pretence to deny. But it is a consolation to believe that behind any clouds, however dark, that interpose between us and the light of heaven, its beams still shine clearly. All will be clear in the light of heaven. If parents, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, must see those dear as their own life perish at last, while they themselves are saved, heaven in mercy will either extinguish their social susceptibilities, or else give them such a sweet and overpowering sense of the justice and goodness of God, as shall not permit the joys of the blessed to be marred, nor the songs of the redeemed to be interrupted with the sighs of sympathetic sorrow.” This is a way out of the difficulty, however, of a most unsatisfactory character. The more sweet and overpowering the sense of God’s goodness to ourselves, the more intense would be the pain we should experience in seeing those near and dear to us perish. And a region where social susceptibilities are to be extinguished, is clearly no place for human beings, call it heaven, or by any other name. Spiritualism clears away all these difficulties, and the Bible interpreted in the light of spirit communion, is as clear in its teaching as the sun at noon-day. The time will come when good shall triumph over evil, and Tennyson’s noble hope will be realized,

“That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete.

“That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire,
Is shrivell’d in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another’s gain.”

Assuredly, my brethren, the day will come—however far it may be in the unknown future—when God, whose essence is love, shall be all in all; when the great and divine work of Christ shall be finished, and not one stone remain out of the everlasting temple of his triumphant Church—when the Holy Spirit shall fill every human breast—and when peace, love, truth, and righteousness, shall be experienced universally for ever and ever. A foretaste of this time we may experience to-day, but the realities we can only faintly picture, hope for, and pray for. Yet even the anticipation of it brings joy unspeakable to the loving soul, and consolation amidst the suffering, sorrow, and woe by which we are surrounded here. As a poet has it—

“And, oh! there lives within my heart
A hope long nursed by me;
(And, should its cheering ray depart,
How dark my soul would be!)

That as in Adam all have died,
In Christ shall all men live;
And ever round his throne abide,
Eternal praise to give.”

A SLEEPLESS bed is a haunted place.

Provincial Intelligence.

BIRMINGHAM.

LITTLE is talked of amongst the Secularists and Spiritualists here but the recent tricks of Messrs. Reddalls and Russell. The Secularists are making much of this affair, which was to be expected. It will, however, not serve the purpose of propping up their falling cause, and can certainly do no permanent injury to Spiritualism.

BLYTH.

SINCE Dr. Sexton’s lecture in this northern town, Spiritualism has been making considerable progress. A church of England clergyman who was very attentive on the occasion of the lecture, has, it appears, developed into a seer, and several Methodist local preachers are also actively engaged in investigating the subject. Of course there is much opposition, but that is to be expected, and will in the end do no harm.

BRIGHTON.

WE learn that Mrs. Fay has been giving very successful séances at the house of Mr. Marthese. Arrangements are being made, we believe, for Dr. Sexton to go down and give another lecture.

LEICESTER.

SOME time since we recorded the formation of a Spiritual society in this town. It appears to be flourishing most satisfactorily. A tea-meeting and *soirée* was recently held, presided over by Mr. John Wonfor, and meetings are being convened regularly three times a week. Mr. Burdett, the secretary, writing to the *Medium* remarks: “I may say that the formation of the society is mainly owing to the able and demonstrative orations of Dr. Sexton, delivered in the Temperance Hall of this town.

NEWCASTLE.

MORE successful séances have been held in this town, at which have occurred materialisation of spirits of a most satisfactory character. We learn also that Mr. P. M. Laws, a well-known photographer, has succeeded in taking spirit photographs through the mediumship of Miss Fairlamb, one of the local mediums. We have received some specimens of these photographs of a very interesting character, taken by means of the magnesium light. We believe Mr. Blake has copies for sale at 1s. each.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES.

MR. FOOTE has been lecturing in this town on “Modern Spiritualism Examined and Exposed.” We learn that several Spiritualists attended and put to him many questions which he found some difficulty in answering.

ON THE LATE CANON KINGSLEY.

Few men like thee in this sad world have been,
The manliest man whom this our age hath seen;
So clear in head, so pure in heart, so wise,
Scorning all Mammon-worship, cant and lies;
So resolute the poor man’s cause to plead;
So quick in sympathy with all who need:
Christ’s faithful soldier, smiting with His sword
Earth’s giant evils, valiant for the Lord!
Preacher and poet—thine the fire, the glow
That burns upon the altar-hearts, that know
That every gift and talent God hath given
Is but a trust—a mission from high Heaven!
No words that I can speak could fitly tell
The work for England thou hast done so well!

T. S.

Letters & Communications.

LETTERS for the Editor, Contributions, Subscriptions, Books for Review, and all communications having reference either to the literary, or the business department of the CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST, must be addressed to the Editor, 75, Fleet-street, London, E.C.

All correspondents who send articles relating to sittings, entrancements, or spiritual phenomena of any kind, must give dates, localities, and names of the persons present for publication. Unless this rule be strictly complied with the communications will not be inserted. It is due to the public, who, from whatever cause or causes, are more or less sceptical about Spiritualism, that they should be furnished with details which they can trace and verify; and if Spiritualists are not willing to submit their statements to this ordeal, they are requested not to send them to the CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST.

Communications of every kind must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer. In the pages of the CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST as a rule, every article is signed by its respective author. For such articles as are unsigned the Editor alone is responsible.

REJECTED MS. cannot be returned, or letters answered through the post, unless stamps are forwarded to cover the expense.

CONTRIBUTORS are requested to write in a legible hand and on one side of the paper only, and to condense their remarks as much as possible.

THE

Christian Spiritualist.

SPIRITUAL FORCES MOVE THE VISIBLE WORLD.—EMPEDOCLES.

APRIL, 1875.

THE "INFIDEL MEDIUMS" AND THEIR TRICKS.

THERE is a fable recorded somewhere which states that on a fine summer's day in the distant past Falsehood proposed to Truth that they should together take a walk into the meadows and refresh themselves by bathing in a well-known and highly appreciated stream, and that, on this proposition being carried out no sooner had both undressed, and Truth taken her first plunge into the water, than Falsehood dressed herself up in the apparel of Truth, which she has ever since worn, leaving her companion to roam over the world in a state of nudity. This is the reason that falsehood so frequently simulates truth still, that the one becomes mistaken for the other. We have heard a good deal lately about the two "Infidel Mediums" at Birmingham, whose doings were said to throw the ordinary phenomena of Spiritualism completely into the shade. Table moving, the levitation of musical instruments, the bringing fruit and other articles into rooms whilst the doors remained closed and fastened, were amongst the most trifling manifestations that were stated to be of frequent occurrence in the presence of Messrs. Reddalls and Russell. So nearly did these phenomena

approach to the real genuine thing that many persons mistook the one for the other, and we believe that even some Spiritualists were deceived by the admirable get up of the spurious article. The "Infidel Mediums," as they called themselves—although for what reason it is difficult to say, since Secularists always object to the term "infidel" when applied to them by others—declared that they did not know how the manifestations were produced, that they could not account for them, and had no hand in their production. A few simple-minded men amongst the Birmingham Spiritualists were foolish enough to take for granted that Messrs. Reddalls and Russell—*par nobile Fratrum*—spoke truly, never dreaming that public men with a character at stake, and a reputation to lose, would tell a deliberate lie for the purpose of imposing upon honest enquirers after truth. Alas, how little they knew of human nature! The "infidel mediums" now turn round and laugh at their dupes—that is at the men who were so unsuspecting as to give them credit for truthfulness—and declare that the whole thing was a trick, and that all the phenomena were produced by themselves for the purpose of deception, despite the fact that they had again and again declared that they no hand in it whatever. Secularists in every part of the country are, of course, chuckling over what they consider the victory of their champions—a victory, if there be one at all, gained by deception, imposture, and lying. There should not be very much to be proud of in such a triumph.

Accounts of these sham *seances* were sent to us again and again, but we declined to take any notice of the affair. Then came newspaper reports telling of the wonderful tests that had been given; ultimately private letters followed, assuring us that the manifestations were really genuine. We replied: "Wait a little, and see the end," fully expecting the matter to terminate as it has done. Some of our spiritual contemporaries, we regret to say, were imposed upon, and no wonder with such assurances on the part of the *soi disant* mediums that they had no hand in the production of the phenomena. For ourselves, however, we never so much as named these sham *seances* in our pages because we suspected all along what was the true state of affairs. Had we visited Birmingham we should have asked for permission to attend one of those sittings, and if that had been granted—which we by no means expect it would—should then have been in a position to declare the manifestations genuine, or denounce them as impositions. We do not believe that Messrs. Reddalls and Russell could have imposed upon us, knowing, as we do, exactly what conjurors can, and what they cannot do. However, the opportunity did not present itself for us to see for ourselves, and so we remained silent. The "Infidel Mediums" have now their small triumph at the hoax they have played upon simple-minded, unsuspecting people who were foolish enough to believe in their veracity, but it is a triumph which has been won by wading through so much dirt and mud that no one with any moral principle about him will envy them their small and discreditable victory.

The *Secular Chronicle*—edited by Mr. Reddalls—has an article on the subject, chuckling immensely over the “sell,” as it terms this imposition. It has the following reference to the editor of the *Christian Spiritualist* :—

Dr. Sexton, in his “Spirit-mediums and Conjurors,” published last year, laid down the proposition that “*Professional conjurors are utterly unable to produce anything like the spiritual manifestations, if subjected to the conditions imposed on the medium,*” and he also made the additional statement, “Even the simple phenomena—the simplest of all—of table-rapping can only be produced with the aid of elaborate machinery. Messrs. Reddalls and Russell—who are not “professional conjurors”—have proved in the most practical manner the falsity of both assertions. They have, without the aid of elaborate machinery, produced not merely the table-rapping, but every kind of so-called spirit phenomena. They have done this under conditions which Spiritualists admit professional “spirit-mediums” never submit to, and yet their sêances have been successful.

All this is just so much braggadocio, and for truthfulness, probably on a par with the statements so often reiterated, that the phenomena, however they were produced, originated in some cause unknown to the *pseudo* mediums. We are prepared to stand by every word uttered in the lecture on “Spirit Mediums and Conjurors,” and consequently we defy Messrs. Reddalls and Russell to produce their manifestations under the conditions which mediums submit to as a regular occurrence. Conjuring tricks can only be done in two ways, viz., by sleight of hand, and by the use of apparatus, and if these “Infidel Mediums” are jugglers, they must have recourse to one or the other of these methods, or both. Now sleight of hand would not be sufficient to accomplish all that they lay claim to be able to perform, even had they the skill of Herman or Frikel, to say nothing of the fact that it could be at once detected by a person who had any knowledge of the subject. The conclusion is therefore obvious, apparatus must have been employed, if any such results were achieved as table-rapping or moving without contact, levitation of instruments whilst the mediums were held, or so fastened that they could not move. Mind, we do not say that any apparatus was employed, because we have very serious doubts whether any manifestations took place, except those of a most simple character, that could be easily accomplished. We merely say that such phenomena as are spoken of in the article cannot be produced without machinery of some kind or other, except in the case of genuine mediumship. A gentleman well known in Spiritual circles, offered about two years ago, £1000 to Dr. Lynn, Maskelyne & Cook, or any other conjurors who would produce phenomena under the same condition as those submitted to by mediums: and although he advertised his challenge in the public papers, and printed it in a separate form, with the correspondence that took place between himself and several conjurors, on the subject, no one has, as yet, put in a claim for the money. If the boast of Messrs. Reddalls and Russell be based upon the smallest possible modicum of truth, they can have no difficulty in earning this £1000 some morning before taking their breakfasts. Here is an opportunity for them to make good their much vaunted pretensions, and secure a good round

sum for so doing. We await your decision in this matter, Messrs. Reddalls and Russell, known to fame as “Infidel Mediums,” whatever that may mean, and look forward anxiously for the result. Till then, *Favete Linguis.*

Leaves from Editor's Note-Book.

—:O:—

DURING the past month I have done so little of what may be called public work that there is not much to extract from my note-book that would prove interesting to the reader. I was called away to Norfolk, towards the end of February, to see my father, who was ill, and returned to London the first week in March. I heard very little of Spiritualism in Norwich, and fancy that the movement has not made much progress in that antiquated city. Norwich people are usually very slow to accept anything new, and it will probably, therefore, be a long time before a flourishing Spiritual Society will exist in its precincts. Nevertheless, some seed has been sown, and it is certain in the end, to germinate and grow.

I have received during the month several complimentary and cheering letters from eminent Spiritualists abroad, from which I select the following for publication, from the Baroness Adelma Von Vay.

Gonaobitz, Feb. 15th, 1875.

HONOURED DEAR SIR,—Your dear lines, and, above all, your writings in the *Christian Spiritualist*, quite enrapture me, I must repeat it again—the freshness, youthfulness, of your language, mingled with deep feeling, wisdom and science, is strengthening to every mind. Oh, may God bless you for all you do and say! Surely you are an instrument chosen by God, for the promulgation of truth. May God's light rest for ever upon you, and may you be a blessed warrior in this time of spiritual battles. In Austria, Spiritualism seems to me like a poor frozen flower, living only through the care of few persons. Science and religion are very much against it—so is Indifferentism, too. We have spent a few days at Pesth, took the medium, Mrs. Pucker, with us, for the refreshment of our poor forlorn Spiritualists at Pesth. I hope our visit did them good. My husband held two large sêances for the re-organization of our society, as it was full of all sorts of quarrellings. Now peace is come. Women were unanimously voted as “*Stimmungsfähig*,” they get the same rights now in the Society as their brothers have. We held a large circle in our own Hall one Sunday. The spirits wrote through my mediumship, a trance speaker spoke; then we arranged a screened recess for Mrs. Pucker, covered with a plaid, and her guide Constanz (as you perhaps read in the *Spiritualist*), gave us beautiful light manifestations, before an audience of 60 persons. A luminous arm and hand—then a golden staff appeared at the aperture. Such phenomena never were yet seen here in our countries; so you can imagine what uproar and wondering it called forth!

Here, I send you, dear sir, our photos., be so kind and give me yours, too. I will value it most highly. Each time I get your *Christian Spiritualist* I feel a deep joy in reading your articles. With my husband's and my best love, I am, dear sir, truly yours,

ADELMA VAY.

From Naples I recently received a communication of a most gratifying character, since it added one more to the many evidences already existing of the high estimation in which my abilities and attainments are held in foreign lands. A distinguished honour—rarely indeed, bestowed upon foreigners, and, in truth, not very often upon any one—was conferred upon my much-prized friend, Dr. Hitchman, and myself, on the first ult., by electing us Honorary Professors in the Royal Galileo Academy. The

following account of the election, I copy from the *Liverpool Mercury* of the 13th of March:—

HONOURS TO MRS. HITCHMAN AND 'SEXTON.—Dr. William Hitchman, of this town, and Dr. George Sexton, of London—who have long been Fellows of the Royal Society of Italy, &c.—were unanimously elected, on the 1st inst., Honorary Professors of Natural Philosophy (department, Science of Man), in the Royal Galileo Academy of the University of Naples. The English doctors, it is expected, will deliver their first course of lectures in the Latin language, on "Continuity of Life in its Relations to the Philosophy of Celestial and Atomic Dynamics."

On Sunday evening, the 7th, I delivered a discourse in Mrs. Bullock's new hall, Church-street, Islington, for the purpose of assisting that lady in establishing regular Sunday services in that part of London. The night was unusually wet, the rain coming down in torrents during the entire evening. It could hardly be expected that anyone would venture out in such weather who did not feel the greatest possible interest in the subject. Nevertheless, the lecture-room was well filled. The subject of my discourse was "Eternal Punishment"—a topic which is just now creating immense interest in the orthodox churches. The audience appeared much pleased with the mode in which I treated the subject, and expressed a wish that a place might speedily be secured in which I could hold regular Sunday services in accordance with the suggestion made in the February number of this journal. I promised Mrs. Bullock that I would deliver another discourse in her hall on the first Sunday in April. On that occasion I shall take for my subject, "Metempsychosis on the transmigration of Souls," and as I shall have something to say on the doctrine of re-incarnation—a theory that appears to be finding favour just now with a portion of the English Spiritualists—I should like to see a full attendance. It is very important that the public should understand our whereabouts on this question.

I did not visit Lancashire and Yorkshire last month as I had intended doing, owing partly to the fact that I was not at all well in health, and partly to the circumstance that I did not receive applications for lectures from the towns where I thought my services would have been acceptable. I shall endeavour to visit these counties during the present or next month, and shall be glad, therefore, if societies requiring lectures will communicate with me without delay. If a few gentlemen who can afford it will send subscriptions to the "Propagandist Fund," I shall be able during my next tour to visit some of the towns where no societies exist, and give free lectures. This is one of the very best means of propagating the great truths of Spiritualism.

At Northampton Mr. Thomas Barber who went to Leicester to oppose me on the occasion of my lecturing there, and an account of whose conduct I gave in the *Christian Spiritualist* for December last, has written a letter in one of the local papers, entitled the "Deceits of Modern Spiritualism," in which he charges me with cowardice, in not accepting a challenge from him to discuss with me. My Northampton friends wished me to write a letter for insertion in the paper, in reply, but I considered the so doing would be attaching more importance to Mr. Barber than he deserved. A copy of the *Northampton Mercury*, however, having found its way to Leicester, where the circumstance occurred, the *Leicester Chronicle* took up the subject, with a view of putting the real facts of the case before its readers. In its issue of the 20th ult., appears the following short article:—

DR. SEXTON IN LEICESTER.—In the *Northampton Mercury*, of March 6, a letter was inserted, signed "Thomas Barber," in which the following sentences appeared. "That I am not

afraid of discussing the subject [of Spiritualism] is clear from the fact that I went to Leicester for three nights, and opposed Dr. Sexton. On that occasion he proved himself a coward, refusing to answer questions, and when challenged to a public debate beat a hasty retreat." That Mr. Barber did attend the three lectures of Dr. Sexton is true; but it is equally true that in violation of the terms accompanying their announcement, which invited questions at the close, but did not warrant discussion, Mr. Barber persisted, despite the remonstrances of the respective chairmen, and the loudly-expressed and general disapproval of the meeting, in making short speeches, and putting irrelevant questions to Dr. Sexton. He did also challenge the learned gentleman to a public discussion; but Dr. Sexton replied that, while ready to debate with any recognized representative of the Secularist or any other public body, he could not undertake to meet on the platform indiscriminately any person who might insist on his meeting him in public discussion. Dr. Sexton concluded his three lectures, after having answered numerous questions, put by Mr. Barber, until the patience of the audience was exhausted by their multiplicity, and irrelevancy to the subject of the lectures—without seeking any "retreat" whatever—and finally receiving a vote of thanks, seconded, in complimentary terms, by Mr. Barber himself! Had Mr. Barber doubted Dr. Sexton's "courage," he would have shown himself in possession of that quality of mind by saying so in presence of Dr. Sexton, at the conclusion of the lectures; but instead of doing so, he is mean enough to bring his accusation four months afterwards behind Dr. Sexton's back, in a letter in a newspaper; having not only not even whispered any imputation at the time upon the learned gentleman, but actually seconded the vote of thanks to him for his able and interesting lectures! We wonder what the people of Northampton will think of such shabby and discreditable conduct.

Arrangements have now been completed for me to deliver discourses regularly in London on Sunday evenings. Goswell Hall has been secured for that purpose. I shall commence these services on April 11th, with a discourse on "Nature, and the Supernatural," which will be followed on consecutive Sunday evenings by others on subjects of such a character as to meet the wants of those who endeavour to grapple with the great problems of the age. I trust my London friends will support me by their presence, and those who live at too great a distance from town to attend regularly, may assist by small donations to help to cover the necessary expenses. One of the four monthly discourses will be printed in full in the *Christian Spiritualist*, and most of the rest will be issued in a separate form. Any London friends who can assist in the formation of a choir will kindly send in their names.

GEORGE SEXTON.

SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT.

TWENTY-TWO thousand persons were in the Agricultural Hall on Tuesday evening, the 14th, and ten thousand were outside who could not get in; and when Mr. Moody spoke out to the mass of humanity before him with the terse sentence: "Let us all sing—'Praise God from whom all blessings flow,' and so praise Him for what he is going to do for London," the people rose and sang earnestly the verse to the tune Old Hundredth. The volume of sound rising and rolling throughout the immense building was grand. The words came out clear. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." About two-thirds of that throng were men, the rest women. Their appearance mainly was that of the tradesman, and well-to-do workman. What was it that moved the thousands in our leading cities—Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow? What is it that is so moving London? It is the under-current of mental consciousness that the spirit world is fact. That happiness in that world depends on ourselves. That the grand, simple, living principles as

developed in New Testament Christianity, are in harmony with our conceptions of what the Lord God Almighty must be. All nations sing, "He hath ordered all things well."

As a rule, men and women have no time to study theological twistings, and heathen mythologies. Their innate perceptions, their inner life, their dream; vision warnings, their visible evidences of a supernatural oversight are to them evidences that a Divine being lives and guides, and that there is a reality in worship. The Divine machinery is not understood, is as little known, as electricity and magnetism by the cleverest of our "men of science," as they are called; and we all know that while they wrangle, and call each other's assertions untrue, electricity, magnetism, and other unseen powers, take no heed of those wranglings, but sweep on, over and round our world with the majesty of an almost infinite influence. Those who apply thought to their surroundings, know, without seeing them manufactured, that the chairs they sit on, the tables they sit at, and the carpets under their feet, did not manufacture themselves. That intelligent perception of combinations by unknown unit minds, produced the results, no matter how many assistants were employed to produce those results. In like manner, the mind taught by its surroundings, is led to the consciousness that the carpets of nature, the conservatories of our tropics, the simple and effective machinery of heat to draw up and absorb daily, millions of tons of sea water from the mighty Atlantic; that those etherialized masses are floated over earths, condensed into shower baths, hither and thither, causing the flowers and fruits to drink in, and yield fragrance and food to all animated nature; leave the heart to feel, and the head to perceive, that a loving, providing power, conceived and developed in majestic affluence our lives, our states, our surroundings; and made us open to the inflow of knowledge respecting that unseen but felt intellect, who ordereth all things well. Therefore it is, that when the Divine power was manifested in the form of human powers, but saturated with purity, humanity perceived and often laid hold of power that could be understood and accepted as the ideal from which to pattern ourselves while in the flesh, and to mould ourselves for the unseen state of life we cannot avoid entering.

Instead of fooling our time trying to understand, and in adopting the gods many vagaries of clever sensual poetic minds, we accept the simple Sermon on the Mount as the model for moulding ourselves; and the many mighty miracles effected by the "I Will" giver of that sermon, who descended from the heaven of purity, surrounded by angelic throngs, hymning "Peace on earth, and good will to men"—destroy conjecture, and give the—I know my "Pattern" liveth, call him Christ, or Saviour, or Redeemer. The Infinite takes up and absorbs all the finite in me.

No wonder that educated men, with all their educated knowledge and inner perceptions; so crave to let the people know that they have given, and are giving, of their time, their talents, and their purses, to rouse the Christian churches—to rouse the inert atoms of human life around them; to front the sad, sad rugged Sadducean teachings of men from the chairs of our science colleges.

Trying to see human cause for the effects, I think that the human root is "The Evangelical Alliance." That Alliance was the first effort to join in a oneness of action, all the ministers of the Christian-sects in a grand, glorious, and effective attempt to Christianise Christendom. The effort banded Churchmen and Dissenters. Their laymen became active as meeting-holders. Nations were conferred with, and unity more or less was achieved.

The two Americans now amongst us, are not of us, but with us, therefore no cause for jealousy exists. Those two men are neutrals, and are, therefore, accepted as having no special sectarian purpose to serve. When Mr. Moody's Chicago New Church is finished, he returns to his home. Little did he think when his church was in a blaze in the great Chicago fire, that the unmitigated misfortune was to turn out the method to force him into Great Britain, and be a leading instrument in the power of God to stir the churches, and fill the minds of millions of our people, through our newspapers and platforms, with straightforward knowledge of the groundwork of Christian theology.

The angels of heaven! Have *they* no hand in this mighty heaving of the nation? As well say that Moody and Sankey, and other prominent workers, have no hand in it.

In the closing up of the record of that great, grand outcome of Divine principles, and illustration of the Divine mannerism towards man, the New Testament; we have clearly, by an angel to the man John, the declaration, "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his *angel* to show unto his servants [plural] the things which must shortly be done." Spirit speech, spirit touch, spirit foretellings, and spirit guidance, to those who love the Lord God Almighty, and who crave to be his servants, is the heritage of Christ-like Christians.

Enmore Park, S.E.

J. ENMORE JONES.

Reviews of Books.

—:O:—

All the books and publications reviewed in these pages may be obtained at our office, 75, Fleet-street, London, E.C., or will be sent by post on application by letter enclosing published price.

SIGNS BEFORE DEATH.*

human nature than matter and her laws, and other beings in the universe besides those clothed in material organizations. Apparitions occurring so frequently as to remove all doubt of their reality, and communicating intelligence which unmistakably establish their identity, dreams revealing more than mortal knowledge, signs, prognostications, and omens in abundance, all pointing to the one grand fact that Spiritual agencies operate on man, form the sum and substance of this book. It is, in fact, such a volume as might have been issued by a Spiritualistic publisher, and have thus taken its place in the literature of our movement. The facts which it contains are, as a rule, most telling and conclusive, and although some of the cases recorded might be objected to on the ground that the testimony by which they are supported is insufficient, yet the great bulk of them are of such a character as to set scepticism at defiance.

The object had in view by the publisher, in issuing this volume, is to meet a demand for books of this character, which every day becomes larger, in consequence of the increasing spread of Spiritualism. No better evidence, perhaps, can be furnished of the growing interest felt in spiritual phenomena, on the part of the public, than the fact that books similar to the one under consideration, have recently come from the press in shoals, after a dearth of them had been experienced for at least a generation or two. "Signs before Death" is a most admirable work, and got up in a style calculated to please the eye by its external appearance, as well as to satisfy the mind by its internal contents. It is beautifully and tastefully, although somewhat fantastically bound, and forms on the whole, a most handsome looking volume. So far, we have great pleasure in recommending it to our readers. We have one fault, however, to find with it, and that a serious one. It has been entrusted to an editor who is thoroughly sceptical on the subject to which it is exclusively devoted. This is an anomaly which puzzles us very considerably. In the preface, the editor makes no attempt to disguise the fact, that he believes modern Spiritualism to be a delusion and a superstition, communion with the dead impossible, what are called supernatural occurrences, to spring from purely natural causes, and "the only super-humanity there is any need to recognize now," to be, "the super-humanity of science." He quotes Dr. Carpenter, as though he believed him to be a great man, this book, which is most elaborately got up, is mainly based upon a very old work, with the same title, by Horace Welby, and contains a large number of instances of manifestations of the supernatural. Very many of these have been already copied into our modern Spiritual literature, and the effect of them all is to shew clearly that there is something more in authority upon questions of this kind, talks about "Latent Thought" and "Unconscious Cerebration." and in other

*Signs before Death. A Record of Strange Apparitions, and Remarkable Dreams. London: William Tegg and Co., Pancras-lane, Cheapside.

respects gives indications that he has paid very little attention indeed to the subject about which he writes. The sceptical tenor of his mind is apparent in every line. To all this we should have offered no objection whatever, had he not appeared as the editor of the book under consideration. Had his preface been published separately, or had it appeared in connection with some book written for the purpose of denying the supernatural, no fault need have been found with it, but here it is so terribly out of place, that we fail to understand either the object of the publisher, in handing the book over to such a man, or of the editor himself, in undertaking the task. For clearly, if the views expressed in the preface be correct, the book itself should never have been published, since it cannot fail to tend to keep alive, what under these circumstances can only be designated a vile superstition. We trust the book will have a large circulation, and that many a future edition may be called for, but we would certainly suggest to the publishers, that in the next issue they should erase this preface, and employ another editor—one who is at least not thoroughly sceptical of the truth of the narratives which he brings before the world.

REASONS FOR ATHEISM.†

This short compendium of reasons for Atheism, is as good as most of the popular publications upon the same subject, although we think that the most orthodox Christian might read it without being in any danger of having his convictions unsettled. The reasons given by Mr. Watts for his Atheism, are, in our opinion, exceedingly defective, frequently proving nothing to the purpose, and in some cases contradictory of each other. As an illustration of this latter fact, we may mention that on page three, the objection urged against the existence of God is, that the conception of an Infinite Being is impossible. The writer here mainly bases his arguments upon the views of Sir William Hamilton, that to think of a thing is to condition it, in other words, to limit it, and thus get rid of its infinity. On page ten, however, the writer says, in illustration of the fact that nature comprises the totality of existence—another of his reasons for not believing in God—"The universe I regard as boundless, and can therefore form no conception of its having a terminating point." Why, what is this but that very infinity of which we have before been told the writer can form no conception? In truth, we are first asked to disbelieve in God because we cannot conceive of infinity, and next, to become atheists, because we cannot imagine the universe to be limited, which is another way of saying not only that we can conceive of infinity, but that that very conception is to be made the basis of an argument. How common it is for these writers to quote Sir William Hamilton, without having a clear idea of his meaning, for certainly nothing could be further from his thoughts than to furnish an argument against the existence of God. In any case, however, those who profess to adopt his reasoning should be very careful to avoid talking about the boundless universe, and so on. We recommend Mr. Watts to read carefully, Mr. Gillespie's book on the *a priori* argument, before he again attempts to enlighten us as to what we can and what we cannot conceive of the infinite. How passing strange it is that popular atheistic writers, as a rule, avoid even the very mention of this book. The rest of the pamphlet under consideration is occupied with a discussion of the Design Argument, the Existence of Evil, and other questions too extensive to be dealt with here. We may just say in conclusion, that the pamphlet is carefully written, and displays considerable ability. For ourselves, we have no fear of the result likely to arise from the circulation of such publications. Atheism is so utterly repulsive to the great heart of humanity, that it is never likely to take deep root in society, whatever may be said in its favour.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S ALMANACK.‡

This almanack contains a vast fund of information upon

† Why am I an Atheist? or, Theism Criticised. By Charles Watts. London: C. Watts, 17, Johnson's-Court, Fleet-street, E.C.

‡ The National Secular Society's Almanack for 1875. London: C. Watts, 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

many important topics. Appended to it are some papers by Mr. Trevelyan, of Tyneholm, on Vaccination, Medical Reform, the United Kingdom Alliance, and other subjects which of themselves are worth the sixpence charged for the almanack.

THE MEDICAL ENQUIRER.*

Just before going to press we received a copy of this new candidate for public favour, and from what we have seen of it we conclude it to be well deserving of support. It seems to be largely devoted to medical opposition to the "Contagious Diseases Acts," and certainly there are few subjects upon which the diffusion of correct information is more necessary. There is a wide-spread opposition to these acts, with which we agree heart and soul, on the part of the religious public, but unfortunately all the medical papers are—or have been up to now—on the other side. Our new contemporary aims at changing this objectionable state of things, and in the so doing we wish it a hearty success.

THE HONEYMOON.†

This is one of the most extraordinary books that it has ever been our good fortune to peruse. It describes such a honeymoon as assuredly can never have taken place, or if it did, could hardly have proved agreeable to the taste of the lady, unless, indeed, she, as well as her bridegroom, was a most exceptional character. An occasional discussion upon philosophy or religion, between a man and his newly-made wife, may not only sometimes take place, but may be even highly desirable, with persons of an intellectual caste of mind, but for one to occupy the entire month in delivering to his bride long discourses upon theology, and such other subjects as have a bearing upon it, with the sole view of effecting a change in her religious opinions, is certainly a course of procedure which we should consider to be most unusual. To marry a Catholic girl, and immediately after the wedding ceremony has been performed, before even the day has closed, to make an attack on her religion, would, under ordinary circumstances, be a dangerous experiment. In any case, it displays, we think, very bad taste. A man taking a woman to wife whose religious opinions are altogether opposed to his own, might very naturally determine in his mind to convert her to his way of thinking, but to engage in this by no means pleasant task during the wedding day, and to continue it uninterruptedly throughout the entire honeymoon, would be to take a course of procedure calculated, we think, to disgust the woman with her new lord at the very commencement of the journey of life which the two have to travel together. At all events, for ourselves we should not like to try the experiment.

The entire work of Count de Pomar, as its name implies, is taken up with a description of the honeymoon, but into that month is crowded, not only a large number of philosophical discourses, but also a great many short legendary stories, mostly connected with the scenes visited by the youthful pair, some of them of a very interesting character. As the honeymoon is spent in Scotland, not only have the stories told especial reference to that grand old "land of the mountain and the flood;" but there are descriptions given of Scotch scenery of a most graphic character. The literary sketches of Glasgow, Dumbarton, the Kyles of Bute, the Trossacks, and other parts of Scotland charming to tourists, and whose scenery eclipses everything else to be found in the British Isles, are given in a most admirable manner, and display great literary power on the part of the writer. Nor have we any objection to the philosophical disquisitions that are introduced, but only to the time and place in which they are given. They indicate a considerable amount of reading and thinking on the part of the author, and although we by

* "The Medical Enquirer," a Monthly Journal and Review. London: Trubner & Co., 57, Ludgate-hill.

† The Honeymoon. A Philosophical Romance. By the Count de Medina Pomar. In Two Volumes. London: Trubner and Co., 57 and 59, Ludgate Hill.

no means agree with the conclusions at which he arrives, still we cannot help bestowing a due meed of praise upon the admirable manner in which he places his thoughts before us.

At the end of the volume will be found a series of letters, evidently from the pen of the Countess of Caithness, whose laudable zeal in the cause of Spiritualism is so well known. These, together with the disquisitions before referred to, serve to render the work both interesting and instructive as a sort of popular philosophical treatise, although we think in no way justifying it in being called a romance. The doctrine most conspicuous among the rest portrayed, and the one, in point of fact, to which all the others are made subservient, is that of re-incarnation. This doctrine is not much believed in by English Spiritualists—although more common among those on the Continent—nor do we think the arguments by which it is sought to be supported at all conclusive. It is argued out, however, in this work with great ability. Those of our readers, therefore, who are desirous of learning what can be said on the modern form of this very ancient doctrine, cannot do better than to peruse thoughtfully the "Honey-moon," by Count de Pomar. And even those who are in no way interested in the theory of re-incarnation, may yet find ample food for reflection in this book.

HYGIENIC COOKERY.*

ALL those who desire to obtain pure food, and to learn how to prepare it in the best possible way, should procure the excellent little book by Dr. Trall, on the subject of Hygienic Cookery. The author is a man whose name has been familiar for the past thirty years to all those who have taken an interest in the Temperance movement, and other questions of a similar character. He has written largely upon dietetic reform, and his works are always well worthy of perusal. To Spiritualists, these subjects are of all absorbing interest, since the conditions of the mind, and its capability of being influenced by spiritual agencies, are very largely modified by the particular kind of food taken for the support of the physical frame. We heartily recommend the small work under consideration.

SPRING.

The seasons as they circle round,
Alternate blessings bring;
For Winter pale with homely joys,
Now comes the blue-eyed Spring;

With song of birds from every bough
On budding hawthorn tree;
The blooming hedges white with May,
The cowslip on the lea.

How soft and green the tender herb!
How pure each flower that blows!
How fair the virgin lily queer!
How sweet the fragrant rose!

A burning bush on every hand—
Yet unconsumed—we see;
God's glory stands revealed now,
An open mystery!

A miracle of Art-Divine
Is Nature's wondrous plan;
The voice of God in every clime,
The native tongue of man,

T. S.

* The Hygeian Home Cook Book; or, Healthful and Palatable Food, without Condiments. By R. T. Trall, M.D. New York: S. R. Wells, 389, Broadway. London: Christian Spiritualist Office, 75, Fleet-street, E.C.

The Gleaner.

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HIGHLY favourable notices of the *Christian Spiritualist* and the *Spiritual Magazine* appear in the *Leicester Chronicle* of March 6th.

THE literature of horrors is likely to be soon enriched by the publication of a work that has unaccountably hitherto escaped the eye of the translator and the bookmaker. This disinterred gem is the memoirs of Sanson, the hereditary French executioner, who officiated at the decapitation of Louis XVI.

"PAPAL Infallibility and Ritualistic Fallibility," is the title of a new work by the Rev. M. J. Mayers, M.A., Rector of St. Peter's, Churchill, Winchester.

MR. JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A., the celebrated antiquarian author, died during the past month, after a long illness, in his seventy-fourth year. He was the author and editor of nearly 150 books, and was for many years the editor of the *Illustrated London News*. Mr. Timbs was not gifted with any great powers of originality of mind, but he was a most indefatigable worker.

IN the course of the summer Mr. S. C. Hall will publish another Temperance Tale in verse; stimulated, no doubt, by the success of "The Trial of Sir Jasper." The new poem is entitled "An Old Story." The author in his announcement states that he has tried to make the book broader and more comprehensive in details than its predecessor, treating, indeed, every phase of the horrible vice; adding prose notes from the authorities by whom he has been principally guided. Every page will be illustrated, and there will be twenty-six full-page engravings by twenty-six leading artists of the age, drawn expressly for the book.

MISS GILLESBURY has been appointed permanent resident Secretary to the British National Association of Spiritualists, at a salary of £150 per year, with apartments, coals, and gas.

DR. SEXTON will deliver a Second Discourse at the New Hall, Church-street Islington, on Sunday evening, the 4th inst. Subject: "The Doctrine of Metempsychosis, with some Remarks on the Modern Theory of Re-incarnation."

WE regret exceedingly to have to announce the passing away of Mr. W. H. Gillespie, the author of "The Argument *A priori* for the Existence of God," which event took place at Stirling on the 8th ult. Mr. Gillespie's fame was world-wide in connection with his unanswerable argument for the existence of Deity. Our readers will remember two able articles from his pen which appeared in this journal in November and December last.

MR. GEORGE SMITH informs the *Daily Telegraph* that some of the Assyrian tablets discovered by him, and presented by the proprietors of the *Telegraph* to the British Museum, contain a much longer and fuller account of the creation and fall of man than the Book of Genesis. In particular, the fall of Satan, which in the Bible is only assumed, is in these records reported at length, and the description of this being is characterised by Mr. Smith as "really magnificent."

DR. NEWMAN has in preparation a new edition of his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, and he has added a Postscript, containing some criticisms on Mr. Gladstone's Vaticanism.

THE recent Cannon-street Church of England Conference was very numerously attended, and the addresses were thoroughly evangelical in tone. Many of the hymns sung were of quite a revivalist character. The proceedings throughout (says a contemporary) were characterised by a fervent and devotional spirit, an entire absence of all uncharitable or unkind aspersions on the actions or words of others, and by such hearty and congregational singing as to afford abundant proof, if indeed any be required, that the modern Ritualistic appendages of surpliced choirs are as superfluous as they are unbecoming, when, in the good old-fashioned language of bygone days, an assembly of Christians is invited to "sing to the praise and glory of God."

A NEW work is announced by Mr. Gerald Massey, entitled, "Myths Exposed."

At a conference of two hundred delegates of the Middlesex Good Templars, just held in London, the report of the Political Action Committee was adopted, recommending the introduction into Parliament of a bill prohibiting the employment of young females behind bars in public-houses and refreshment-rooms, "such employment being peculiar to this realm, and almost unknown on the Continent and America, being fraught with immense temptation to immorality, and reflecting great discredit upon our national credit for Christian morality." Arrangements were also entered into for holding the next session of the Grand Lodge of England in London, and for a series of great demonstrations in promotion of the extension of the order in the metropolis.

OVER two hundred young men in Edinburgh and Glasgow, fruits of the great revival movement under Messrs. Moody and Sankey, have come forward to devote themselves to the Gospel ministry in Scotland, or anywhere else in the world.

THE Testimonial Soirée to Mr. Wallace, will be held on Thursday evening, the 1st inst., at the Co-operative Institute, Castle-street, Oxford-street. About £70 has been collected, which will be presented to Mr. Wallace, on the occasion. Tea will be on the table at six o'clock, and the chair will be taken for the public meeting at 7.45.

A RE-ORGANIZED Society, entitled the Brixton Psychological Society, has just been formed, of which Dr. Gully has become the President, and Mr. Rendle the secretary.

MR. W. H. HARRISON, the Editor of the *Spiritualist*, has been giving his first experiences as an inquirer into Spiritualism, in the columns of his periodical.

DR. HITCHMAN presided at some public readings, in the rooms of the Liverpool Psychological Society, recently given by Mrs. Nosworthy, for the benefit of the Wallace Testimonial Fund.

THE *Spiritual Magazine* for March contains, among other articles, a contribution by Mr. Thomas Brevior, on "Spiritual Problems," being a review of a Sermon Lecture on the Day of Pentecost and the Gift of Tongues, by Mr. F. R. Young, formerly the editor of this journal.

THE REV. DR. LORIMER has been lecturing in the Fremont Temple, Boston, to very large audiences, on Spiritualism, in which the rev. gentleman has no belief; first, he says, because of the unreliability of the revelations; secondly, because these revelations are unimportant; and thirdly, because they are undesirable. Dr. Lorimer is perfectly welcome to his own opinion. We differ from him.

THE *Medium* of March 12th, gives a long account of some facts which occurred at the house of Mr. William Crookes, 20, Mornington-road, London, on the evening of 25th February, the account receiving the indorsement of Mr. Crookes himself.

MR. CHARLES CROWE, 27, Duke-street, Bloomsbury, London, has obtained a Spirit-photograph, which he identifies as the likeness of his father's second wife, who departed this life about ten years ago, through the mediumship of Mr. F. Parkes, 6, Gaynes Park-terraces, Grove-road, Bow.

MRS. TAPPAN's oration at Cavendish-rooms, on Sunday evening, March 14th, on the history of a re-united soul, was given entirely in verse, and is published in the *Medium* of March 19.

DR. KENEALY has denied the rumour that he is a Spiritualist, and says that those persons who make such statements are "infamous liars."

MANY thanks to our friend, Dr. Newton, for the January and February numbers of the *Shaker and Shakeress*, which we have read with interest.

Open Page.

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[UNDER this heading we allow correspondents to state their own views in their own way; the Editor, therefore, cannot be held responsible for the sentiments expressed. Of course care will always be taken to prevent the introduction of personalities, and of language and matters likely to prove offensive.]

SIR,—I think the following extracts from messages purporting to be from the spirit of E. N. Denny, will be interesting to some of your readers, especially such as may have seen the first set, given through me, and published in the *Christian Spiritualist*, for July, 1871.

May 1st, 1873.

Present:—Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Pearce, F.J.T.

E. N. Denny having announced his presence, Mr. P.—asked him—

What had been his occupation during the past year or more since our last message was given from him?

"Learning, rejoicing, in my new-found power to advance,—power that has been given me in vast and large proportions, since I was able to grasp the spiritual truth of Christ's Mediumship and Oneness with the Father.

"The Father we can only reach by the Son. This is very inexplicable to your material senses, it is so deeply spiritual; for whilst I thus, as it were, speak of two separate entities, the Father and the Son, yet do I know that the Son (as I know Christ to be) involves in His essential nature the Divine Fatherhood!

"You are all children. This is a marvellously intricate subject, my friend, but I will try to teach you of it.

"The Divine germ is the essential life of all mankind, but in Christ the germ is infinitely developed throughout his very nature; it is perfect as no mere man can ever be.

"The infallibility is the one point of distinction. Man is finite. God, and God as manifest in Christ, and in His Holy Spirit, (which is diffusive) is absolutely infallible and unchangeable.

"Man advances ever, but can never become Divine—i.e., infallible as God.

"Christ is ever, and ever was, one with God."

MR. P.—*Have you ever known of any good that has arisen from the first set of messages which you gave through F. J. T.?*

"Yes; I traced it as far as I could. It germinates in the minds of many who will not at once admit its truth. Never mind. Truth will out, soon. I've not had so much converse since, because I wished to let the subject rest. . . . It is very difficult to frame earthly language, through various channels. Passivity (in mediumship) is above all things necessary."

MR. P. asked something as to when E. N. D. left the earth sphere after he had passed out of the body?

"I never left it at all till raised to the Christ sphere. Then, remembering the impression and teaching of my sphere on earth, I wished to return, and teach my advanced views. It is a most desirable knowledge to gain, the spiritual knowledge of God."

MR. P.—*What is the best way to bring about the good you desire?*

"Just pray, individually, and for individuals. Prayer has a most enormous power! and that alone can purify the earthly sphere to receive the spiritual. It draws like to like also."

MR. P.—*Of course our prayers must be such as would improve our own lives?*

"Or it would not be effectual prayer. A prayer that does not elevate your own spirit, can be of little use beyond."

September 2nd, 1873.

Again present Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Pearce, with F. J. T.

E. N. Denny having announced his presence, and after a few preliminary remarks of personal interest only, he wrote, in reference to some remarks we had been making about the absorption in business in the daily life of many:—

"It is difficult to use this medium to say all I would upon this subject, but the outer life needs these anxieties to bring

to the inner life the needful spiritual power. If one is too absorbed in the inner life, it is needful to draw them to the outer life! For the combination of lives, outer and inner, is needed to form the deepest, truest character.

"There is now a widely diffused trade spirit at work, which seeks to check the spiritual life spreading.

"Troublous waves, by bringing centre to centre, prove helpful to all spheres."

We asked why the trade spirit was allowed to check the spiritual growth?

"It does not because it shall not prevent it: but it is the evil and good contending.

"Trade spirit, apart from inner life is hard, material, and purely earthly. But as, whilst in the material body, a material world has to be dealt with, the spiritual man must so blend the trade spirit with his spiritual life as to let one raise the other, and not let the outer draw from the inner. . . . I see there is a very great error abroad as to the very name of 'Christian.' But I wish, most emphatically that the high Christ spirit should reach all."

F. J. THEOBALD.

OBITUARY

ENTERED into rest on March 12th, at 9 p.m., BARBARA HENRY, the wife of James W. FARQUHAR, Esq. Mr. Farquhar will be known to our readers as having recently given four able discourses in Doughty Hall, which were published in the *Medium*. The deceased lady was the author of several works, amongst which the "Pearl of Days," will be, perhaps, best known. She had been for a long time a great sufferer.

Notices to Correspondents, &c.

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FRIENDS in the various parts of the country will oblige the Editor by forwarding to him newspapers issued in their respective localities that may happen to contain any matter likely to prove interesting to Spiritualists, or in which statements may have appeared of an incorrect character—a very common occurrence—regarding Spiritualism. The paragraphs to which attention is called should be marked to save trouble.

A copy of the *Christian Spiritualist* will be sent by the Editor to any Address in Great Britain and Ireland for twelve months, on pre-payment of 2s. 6d. in stamps. As it is highly desirable that copies should be distributed gratuitously in quarters where they are likely to have a beneficial effect, donations for that purpose will be thankfully accepted.

FUND for sending copies of the CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST gratuitously to the clergy and ministers of all religious denominations. Received:—Capt. Fawcett, R.N., £2.

PROPAGANDIST FUND for supporting the SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE and CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST, and for enabling Dr. Sexton to visit provincial districts for the purpose of delivering lectures on Spiritualism where no societies exist, or where Spiritualists are too poor to pay a lecturer's fee and other expenses, consequent upon public meetings. Received:—

A BIBLICAL STUDENT.—It is a rule of criticism which every person competent to judge, admits the justice of, that in the interpretations of all writings, the passages that are few or obscure, must be explained in conformity to those which are numerous and clear, and especially in conformity to great and leading principles, the enunciation of which is unmistakable. It follows necessarily, therefore, that although there may be many passages that we can never explain to shew what they do mean, we may be quite certain as to what they do not mean. This rule should be especially attended to in the study of the inspired Scriptures, and will serve to remove many difficulties—amongst them those which you mention.

JAMES BARTON.—A carte-de-visite of the Editor will be sent to you from our office, on the receipt of 12 stamps.

ROBERT MASON.—The "Christian Spiritualist," and the "Spiritual Magazine," both circulate largely in America.

ANDREW MOSS.—Yes, the book was written by Dr. Sexton twenty years ago. He has not a single copy, however, in his possession. There is one in the library of the British Museum, to which you can refer if you have a readers' ticket. The book will not be reprinted.

J. S. JONES (Birmingham).—We always suspected that the thing was a hoax, and hence persistently refused to publish the accounts in this journal that were continually being sent to us—many of them by well-known Spiritualists—describing the wonderful phenomena that were taking place. Messrs. Reddalls and Russell may well chuckle at the way in which they have humbugged, not only the local Spiritualists, but the Editors of some of the Spiritual papers. The denouement did not at all surprise us. We were quite prepared for it, and in fact, expected it earlier.

J. S. MARSON.—You had better send for what copies you require at once, as there has been an unusual demand for that number in consequence of it containing the Editor's Discourse on "Man as a Spiritual Being," and it is likely soon to be out of print.

ONWARD (Newcastle-on-Tyne).—We are very sorry that you have been unable to gain admission to some of the splendid sances that have been held in your town. We feel sure that the only object had in view in excluding any one who is desirous of attending is to keep the sittings select. You should try to get manifestations in your own home.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, ETC., RECEIVED.—"Will-Ability: or Mental Volition, with Essays on Free-Will and Destiny," by Joseph Hands, M.R.C.S., etc. (London: J. Burns). "Father Fernie, the Botanist; a Tale and a Study, including his Life, Wayside Lessons, and Poems," by James Nicholson (Glasgow: Porteous Brothers). "Iyls' o' Hame," and other Poems, by James Nicholson (London: Houlston and Son). "Wee Tibbie's Garland," and other Poems, by James Nicholson (Glasgow: James McGeachy). "Steiger's Descriptive Catalogue of Scientific, Technological, and other Special Periodicals, published in the United States of America" (New York: E. Steiger). "Dietetic Reformer" March (London: F. Pitman). "Religio Philosophical Journal" (Chicago). "Spiritual Scientist" (Boston). "Englishman's Magazine" March, (London: Englishman Office). "Truth-seeker" March, (London: Trübner & Co.). "Revue Spirite Journal D'études Psychologiques" March, (Paris: Bureaux Rue de Lille). "Signs before Death; a Record of Strange Apparitions, Remarkable Dreams," etc. (London: William Tegg and Co.). "The Crusade" (Betchworth: The Holmes). "Poems," by B. H. Farquhar (London: F. Pitman). "Spiritism versus Spiritualism" (Glasgow: J. McGeachy). "Psychische Studien" March, (Leipzig: Oswald Mutze). "American Spiritual Magazine" March (Memphis: Boyle and Chapman). "A Woman's Work; in Water Cure and Sanitary Education," by Mary S. G. Nichols (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "Behaviour: a Manual of Manners and Morals," by T. L. Nichols (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "Bathing and Swimming, without Danger of Drowning," by T. L. Nichols, M.D. (London: F. Farrah and Co.). "Count Rumford; how he Banished Beggary from Bavaria," by T. L. Nichols, M.D. (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "How to Live on Sixpence a Day," by T. L. Nichols, M.D., F.A.S. (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "How to Cook," by T. L. Nichols, M.D. (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "A Scamper Across Europe," by T. L. Nichols, M.D. (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). "The Medical Inquirer," (London, Trübner & Co.)

DR. SEXTON'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.

- April 4.—New Hall, Church-street, ISLINGTON. "Metempsychosis; or, the Transmigration of Souls."
- " 11.—Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, LONDON. "Nature and the Supernatural."
- " 18.—Goswell Hall. "Theories regarding the Origin of the Human Soul."
- " 25.—Goswell Hall. "Theories regarding the Destiny of the Human Soul."

AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF THE "CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST."

Bath	Mr. W. J. Hart, Union Passage.
Birmingham	Mr. J. C. Aston, 39, Smallbrook-street.
"	Mr. James Guest, Bull-street.
"	Mr. A. B. Matthews, 92, Snow-hill.
"	Mr. Clement Malins, 58, Suffolk-street.
Bristol	Mr. J. Hayward, 1, Corn-street.
Bolton	Mr. Winterburn, Deansgate.
Brighton	Mr. J. Bray, 82, St. James-street.
Bromley	Dr. Brown, 40, Standish-street.
Bury	Mr. J. Howard, Bell-lane.
Dublin	Mr. James Gerrard, 17, Clare-street.
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