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George
THE GLOWWORM.

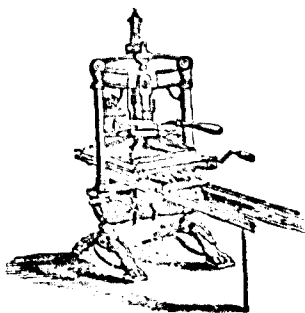
AN ADVOCATE FOR MISAPPREHENDED SPIRIT-PHILOSOPHY, AND A DEFENDER OF ITS ADHERENTS.

"The Glowworm shows the Truth to be near."

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"Light, Light, more Light!"



"The Printing-press will save the World."

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Notwithstanding this Periodical is the declared advocate of Spirit-philosophy, and the avowed defender of its Votaries, it is *not* to be accepted by the Public as being the mouthpiece of *all* the Spiritists in Victoria; but simply, as a vehicle giving publicity to the contributions of the various Individuals whose names may be appended—other Spiritists not being in anywise amenable for its Contents; as they, like its Opponents, are free to dissent from its views and expressions. Articles in direct contradiction to the doctrine of Spiritism, shall have free admission into its columns—provided, they be couched in respectful terms; though offensive language cannot be accepted: nor shall anyone attack man, woman, or child, *by name*, unless the Name of the writer be affixed to the article. The pages of this Paper are consecrated to the propagation of Truth and the eradication of Error; and its supporters say, with Milton,

Let truth and error grapple! Who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?"

For the convenience of Animadvertisers, numbers are placed before several paragraphs, making reference easy.

No. 2.

31, DECEMBER, 1869.

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What is Truth?

105. This question was asked, upwards of 1800 years ago, of Him who was eminently qualified to have answered it, fully and satisfactorily; yet, He did not deem it proper to reply. All of us must answer it (individually) for ourselves; as what seems Truth to one mind, appears Error to another; what I may conceive to be *fact*, my readers may look upon as *fiction*:

"How can men reason, but from what they know?"

Many things which were held as incontrovertible Truths by our predecessors, have, through the advancement of knowledge, been repudiated in our day; and many of the time-honored social and religious doctrines, men and women of understanding are now throwing to the moles and the bats: some things also, well worthy of unbroken continuance, have been suffered to pass into disuse; and some doctrines deserving of perpetuity, have slid into comparative oblivion. Truth, however, is as permanent as God! for, though assailable, it is impregnable; though liable to neglect, it cannot be totally obliterated; it may be obscured, but not extinguished; it may be repressed, but not destroyed; it may be trodden underfoot, but it never can be lost; it may be thwarted, misrepresented, and belied, but it cannot possibly be annihilated: it is always susceptible to the awakening influence of mental light and life, to spiritual intercourse—and, despite popular prejudices, however goaded on by Priestcraft, and aided by that modern marvel the Printing-press, Truth must Prevail!

"And Truth alone, where'er my lot be cast,
Shall be my end and aim, my glory to the last!"

Hundreds of intellectually-minded men and women in Melbourne and its Suburbs, are now inquiring,

Can Spiritism be True?

100. But a few months back, *Spiritism* needed only to be mentioned in this city, to evoke a burst of laughter, or call forth an illiberal and senseless critique; now, none but the thoughtless give vent to their gallimatia and ribaldry in the presence of Strangers, lest they should be rebuked by the persons next to them in the Coffee-house, the Railway-carriage, or any other public place; our Newspapers are beginning to treat the subject respectfully; and even some of our Pulpits have already cautioned their congregations against speaking unadvisedly against *Spiritists*, many of

whom, one Minister said, He believed to be "as intelligent, honest, and upright," as any then within the sound of his voice! These are *signs* of the Times; and the light which is dawning, will shortly burst into meridian splendor!

107. If we look abroad into the Religious world, we shall everywhere see that old things are rapidly passing away, and that all things are becoming new. America took the lead, the Continent of Europe followed, and, at length, the British Isles slowly assented to espouse the regenerating religion of Spiritism—and now, Australia is awakening to a sense of the reality of God's best gift to Man!

108. We have not in the annals of nations any record of a religious movement so sudden, extensive, and momentous, as the glorious resurrection of Spiritism, which will, happily and speedily, take the place of the worn-out dogmas and fossilized theologies which no longer satisfy the cravings of enlightened understandings and inquiring minds. The Roman Catholic as well as the Anglican instructors of the people, are introducing new phases of faith to their congregations, and teaching nobler and holier precepts than have been propagated in their churches for ages; while Ministers of many other denominations, are assiduously revolutionizing the modes of thought, and disseminating purer and more exalted principles, among their various flocks—humanizing, fraternizing, and spiritualizing millions of thirsty souls, longing for the waters of life, regeneration, and immortality.

109. The Christianity of the Churches has had its day, and it has proved a failure; and now, mankind, tired of creeds, wearied-out with liturgies, and sick of confessions, seem converging towards making a trial of that religious-life so strongly recommended, and exemplarily manifested, by the greatest of Spiritists hitherto—Jesus of Nazareth, God's well-beloved Son.

110. Spiritism, though familiar to men's minds during thousands and thousands of years in India, Egypt, China, and Persia, many ages prior to its adoption by the Hebrews, Grecians, Romans, and Christians, was unhappily put aside by Luther and his fellow-workers—the most deplorable concomitant of the notable Reformation—for, notwithstanding the Belief in the "Communion with Saints" has never been without adherents in Christendom, it has, for 300 years been strangely overlooked, and very generally

disacknowledged, by most of the 500 different and contending Sects—though the Roman Catholics have never ceased to confess the existence of Spirit-intercourse with Humanity.

111. Happily, in our day, a light from heaven has not only dawned, but glittered on our globe; for, in the short space of 20 years, upwards of 20 millions of Creed-bound Sectarists, have embraced the Free-religion of Spiritism; causing a revolution in the religious-world, wholly without precedent!

This Biblical doctrine, running all the way through the Old and New covenants, is so self-evident to the observant reader, that he cannot accept those ancient and sacred writings as "the Scriptures of truth," if Spiritism be a "sham" or a "lie"; for, if Human-beings cannot be visited by Angels, cannot hold communion with Spirits, then is Judaism a myth, and Christianity itself but a cunningly devised fable—both of them unworthy of our reverence and even beneath our notice.

112. I have shown, and, as I think, incontrovertibly shown, in Lecture 9 (on *Man*) that the Jewish Scriptures must be *false* if Spiritism be *not true*; and in Lecture 10 (on *Woman*) I have shown, that if Spiritism be *false*, the Christian Scriptures *cannot be true*: of course, the logical inference is, that Spiritism and the Bible *stand or fall together*! They are either both of them *True*, or, both of them *False*—*Which of the two are they?*

A Solemn appeal to Pulpit-teachers.

113. It is no secret in Victoria, that several professed Ministers of the Gospel, have, privately and publicly, denounced Spiritism as *blasphemy*, and ranked Spiritists among *imposters*, *blasphemers*, and *lunatics*—not knowing what they did; and I prefer ascribing their discreditable attacks and condemnations to Ignorance, rather than to Wickedness; to recklessness, rather than to premeditated assaults on the general truthfulness of the Bible—which, with all its known and acknowledged discrepancies and errors, millions may still safely use as a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path.

114. I intentionally refrain from an examination of the several Texts adduced in pulpits, pamphlets, and newspapers, for the purpose of showing me that the Scriptures prohibit intercourse with *Evil-spirits*, and that *Divination* is peremptorily forbidden; for, I know that, as well as any of my correspondents; and I also know, that in the barbarous times of Moses, divination as well as witchcraft, was punished with the penalty of *death*; all this I know, and more besides; but, our Anathematisers evidently do not know the wide difference there is between *Divination* and *Spiritism*, which are at opposite poles of Spirit-communion, and emphatically unapproachable; the one a decided *good*, the other a decided *evil*.

115. If, instead of giving ear to the extravagant reports of our Defamers, and receiving all the gross misrepresentations of our declared Opponents, as indubitable truths, Pulpit-teachers had taken the precaution *first* to have examined for themselves, and then have adhered to the Truth only; they would not so glaringly have exhibited their false inferences, nor would they now have cause for that bitter repentance which their unwarrantable censures will be sure to exact from them—sooner or later. Some of them have heaped texts upon texts from the writings of Moses, thinking to put me in a strait to answer them—just as the Critics quoted Moses to perplex Jesus; and I cannot do better than give his answer as my reply, couched in the following words—

Ye do err, *not knowing* the Scriptures!"

that is, though they knew the *words* of Moses, they did not apprehend his *meaning*. What signifies the quoting of 100 Texts, if not one of them is *appropriate*?

116. Seeking forbidden intercourse with Evil-spirits, for the prosecution of wicked purposes, is essentially different from seeking holy communion with Good-spirits, for our spiritual guidance; and cannot, by *thinking* minds, be ranked alike; any more than ostentatious prayer at street-corners, can be likened to sincere prayer in the closet.

117. Surely, it never entered the heads of these Pulpit-teachers, that in disparaging *Spiritism*, they were dis-

paraging the *Bible*—or, some of them, at least, would have refrained from bringing the Scriptures into disrepute. Besides, every one who preaches against Spiritism, undermines the very ground on which his pulpit stands; for if, as they maintain,

"All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,"

then, the antagonists to Spiritism place themselves in difficulties, out of which no after-wit can possibly extricate them. As *Inspiration* is the hinge on which hangs the authority of Scripture both for and against *Spiritism*, instead of offering my individual opinion, I shall quote the words of a few writers of acknowledged authority in the Churches. I read, in that highly lauded Orthodox work, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, by Rev. J. W. Burgon—

118. The Bible is none other than the *Voice of Him* that sitteth upon the Throne! Every *book* of it—every *chapter* of it—every *verse* of it—every *word* of it—every *syllable* of it (where are we to stop) every *letter* of it—is the *direct utterance of the Most High*! The Bible is none other than the *WORD OF GOD*—not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike, the *Utterance of Him* who sitteth upon the Throne—ABSOLUTE—FAULTLESS—UNERRING—SUPREME!"

Page 89.

119. Archdeacon Pratt tells us in plain terms, on p. 102, of his *Science and Scripture not at Variance*—

By the *Inspiration of Holy Scripture* I understand, that the Scriptures were written under the Guidance of the Holy-spirit, who communicated to the Writers *facts before unknown*, directed them in the selection of other facts already known, and *Preserved them from Error of every kind in the Records they made*."

120. Rev. E. Garbett, "Select Preacher and Boyle Lecturer," in his Sermon of 16th Nov. 1862, preached before the University of Oxford, told his hearers—

If the belief in the Infallibility of the Scripture be a *falsehood*, the Church founded upon it, must be a *living fraud*—in all consistent reason, we must *Accept the Whole* of the Inspired autographs, or, *Reject the Whole*, as from *end to end* unauthoritative and worthless." p. 10.

121. And in Baylee's Manual, which, according to the Preface, is "for the Use of the Students of St. Aidan's College," I read,

The Bible cannot be less than verbally inspired. Every *word* every *syllable*, every *letter*, is just what it would be, had God spoken from heaven without any Human intervention! p. 48.

122. The Archbishops and Bishops of the National Church, in addressing their *Protest* to Bishop Colenso, in 1863, hesitated not to aver—

All our hopes for Eternity, the very foundation of our faith, our nearest and dearest consolations, are taken from us, if *One line* of that sacred Book be declared *unfaithful*, or *untrustworthy*!"

123. The Committee appointed at the Meeting held in Oxford, on 25th Feb. 1864, drew up the following *Declaration*, which was extensively circulated among the Clergy—

We, the undersigned Presbyters and Deacons in holy orders of the Church of England and Ireland, hold it to be *our bounden duty* to the Church of England and Ireland, and to the Souls of men, to *Declare* our firm belief that the Church of England and Ireland, in common with the whole catholic church, maintains, *without reserve or qualification*—the *Inspiration and Divine authority* of the whole canonical Scriptures, as not only containing but being the *Word of God*!" etc.

And the Names of the "*Seven Wise Men*" constituting the Oxford Commission, which so reverently adhered to the "*Wisdom of our Ancestors*," were ostentatiously published in the following rotation—

C. C. Clerke, D.D. Archdeacon of Oxford;
R. L. Cotton, D.D. Provost of Worcester College;
G. A. Denison, M.A. Archdeacon of Taunton;
W. R. Freemantle, M.A. Rector of Claydon;
F. K. Leighton, D.D. Warden of All Souls College;
J. C. Miller, D.D. St. Martin's, Birmingham; and
G. B. Pusey, D.D. Regius Professor of Hebrew.

124. Observe—the Declaration of those *Seven Wise Men*, is, to all intents and purposes, a *Declaration of their Nonconformity!* for, it was drawn up as their avowed Opposition to the Judgement of the Privy Council's reversal of the Judgement of the Court of Arches in *re Williams and Wilson* (8th Feb. 1864) the Privy Council declaring “the right of Private Judgement”!

125. To the 6 Quotations already given (118-123) 600 may be added from Church of England writers—but, I have neither space nor inclination to insert them; and still more might be instanced from among other denominations; such, for instance, as Dr. Candlish, who says—

I claim the justice of being believed, when I avow it is my sole aim to advocate, as best I may, the *great truth* on which the religion of Christ and the hopes of Christians depend—that, not only is the **Word of God in the Bible**, but, that the Bible is itself, in the strictest and fullest sense, in every particular of its contents, and in every expression which it uses, the *Infallible Word of the One only living and true God!*” See *Daily Review*, 1864.

126. Now, I would ask the professed Believers in the Verbal and Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures—How could you stand up before your respective congregations, and so flatly contradict your avowed Beliefs, by preaching against Spiritism? and telling your hearers that all Spiritists are “Imposters”? or, did You condemn what you had never examined? and calumniate men of whose moral and religious characters You were altogether ignorant? or, did You never once think of the *consequences* of your injudicious and culpable outpourings? You say, that you Believe in the doctrines of the Bible; yet, in denying the existence of Spiritism, you deny one of the doctrines inculcated from *Genesis to Revelation*. How have you read the Scriptures? Certainly not with the eyes of your Understanding; or, you would have seen Spiritism running like veins of silver all through those ancient and invaluable writings. If you have ever read your Bible attentively, you must have read it through the spectacles of other men—never with the sole object of discovering Truth; for Spiritism is written, as with a sunbeam, in both the Old and New covenants. By your *thoughtless* condemnations of Spiritism, you are holding up the Scriptures to scorn and contempt; exposing them to the ridicule and scoffings of Unbelievers. If, as you tell your congregations, Spirits do not appear to Human-beings, do not converse, do not communicate with Mortals, you proclaim the Scriptures to be a medley of incongruities, rhapsodies, and nursery tales. Believe me, “ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures!” Are all the Biblical accounts of the manifestations of Spirits recorded in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Moses and the Prophets, nothing but the hallucinations of diseased brains? Are the Spirit-hand which was seen Writing on the wall at the celebrated feast given by Belshazzar, and the writing received from Elisha 13 years after he had left the body, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the den of Lions, and scores of similar accounts, no more *real* than the imaginary stories in the Arabian Nights? Reflect for a moment, what discredit you are bringing upon the Jewish records, by your mischievous censures of Spiritism. And, allow me to say, You are still more culpable, more chargeable with rashness and folly, in denying the promulgation of Spiritism in the Christian scriptures. Do you tell your congregations that the hovering of the Spirit (in the form of a Dove) over the head of Jesus, at his baptism, and his levitation and passage from the wilderness to the pinnacle of the temple at Jerusalem, and his ascension, are simply fables? Do you tell your hearers, that the ministering of Angels after the 40 days temptation, that his conversing with Moses and Elias on the mountain, that the Angel strengthening him for the ordeal, that the supernatural rolling away of the very great stone from the entrance to the sepulchre, that his appearing again and again to his disciples after his crucifixion, that his conversing with them, that their handling him, are all mere fabrications of human ingenuity? And do You yourselves believe, that Peter's release from Prison through the instrumentality of an Angel, and Saul's seeing a light and hearing a voice at his conversion, and John's record of the Revelation of Jesus, with a variety of other Spirit-manifestations, are all humbug? If you do, you may consistently rail against Spiritism—but, the sooner You leave the Pulpit, the better!

127. If you give credence to the *Spirit-seeings*, the *Spirit-hearings*, the *Spirit-touchings*, so frequently mentioned in the Bible, never more let your voice be raised in condemnation of Modern Spiritism; but rather *examine* into its nature, judge for Yourselves, prove all things, and hold fast to that only which is **True!**

Replies to several Queries.

128. I am asked, *If all the Spirits write a similar Hand? and if all employ the same Language?*

Of the variety of Spirit-communications I have seen, there are not two Spirits that form their Letters alike; the Writings differ more markedly than the Handwritings of Men and Women. Spirits experience considerable difficulty in writing at all, when they first attempt to communicate; and but very few first attempts are legible throughout; many of them downright *scrawls*, quite unreadable; yet, Spirits progress rapidly in the Art of Writing, and soon acquire distinctness, no matter through which Medium they write; and some of them have such peculiar Hands, that the Spirit communicating, is known before the signature is attached. On 15 April, 1869, my Mother informed me (through Planchet) that,

129. There are many millions of Spirits who do not know of such a mode of communicating, and others to whom such a process is new; therefore, they have to learn the *modus operandi*. You must wait with patience the unfolding of the Law. It is only a very short time since I understood this way of holding communion with You. Previous to it, my only way of influencing you, was by *impression*; which mode I always exercise as well, though You are not cognizant of the fact.”

130. On 13 Nov. I, for the first time, concentrated my thoughts on my Father, requesting direction from him on matters with which he was well acquainted in the body; and after waiting a few minutes, the Planchet wrote, very slowly, and in a large hand—

My dear Son, I cannot direct you very well this morning, but I will try to do so soon. Your loving Father, MATHEW NAYLER.”

131. The veriest decipherable scrawl I ever saw, Mrs. Naylor received on 2 Dec. 1869, from Doctor Feild (who died on 3 May, 1864, at Milford, in Pembrokeshire, shortly before we left England) which scrawl I keep, as a curiosity, as a specimen of perfect illegibility on a first glance, and which anyone else would at once have thrown away, as altogether unreadable; but which we have at length made out, without losing a word. It is as follows—

My dear Mrs. Naylor, I am very happy here. I find it rather difficult to communicate. I must try again, some other time, as I should like to correspond with you. Yes, I am happy. Beautiful world! Farewell, J. FIELD.

132. Bad *spellings* are very common in the commencement of Spirit-writings; but, after a little practice, they obtain accuracy. My father's first signature had but one *i* instead of *it*, and the Doctor wrote *ie* instead of *ei*. Spirits tell us, that they have to learn *how* to write. They are, however, apt scholars.

As to Languages, it would seem from their communications, that all Tongues are equally familiar to Spirits; and it appears evident that they occasionally write, to doubtful recipients, in Languages wholly unknown to the Mediums, in order to convince them that the communications are direct from the Spirit, and *impossibly* from the Medium. From a communication, received 25th March, 1869, from my Mother, I learn that the Language of words is not employed in the Spirit-world—

133. My dear Son, Blissful beyond comparison with aught on the earth, is this my Home. The language we speak is of the Soul. We do not commune orally, but, by our Eyes. Everyone's condition, thoughts, and desires, are known by the *aroma* that surrounds them; and we do not, cannot hold Communion with *all*—only those with whom we are in *affinity*, or, that their personal spheres attract us, so that we are all linked together in the bands of Love. There is no discord here, in our heavenly home—truly, one of many mansions prepared for all the children of the earth. Each one will find their Home here; some in brighter and more glorious homes than others, but *all*, that place adapted to their wants and desires.”

Do Spirits tell you aught of Mundane affairs?

134. Yes, frequently; but, Spirits of the *higher grades* are chiefly bent on instilling desires after Purity of thought and action; imparting elevating conceptions of the beauty, glory, and happiness of developed Spirits; and, above all, teaching the littleness of the Creature and the greatness of God, who is vividly represented as being "*Love, Love, and nothing but LOVE!*"

135. Spirits of lower grades, called *Undeveloped*, have groveling views of God and Goodness; and some of them far from being desirable correspondents. There is also danger, *imminent danger* of their taking possession of minds which are in *affinity* with them; but, persons of good moral-character, right-minded men and women, need not have any dread of Evil-spirits, as the lower are always subject to the Will of the higher Spirits; and these are what Apollos describes in the *Hebrews*, as "Ministering Spirits—sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of salvation."

Do you ask for Information from Spirits.

136. Sometimes; and if on fitting subjects, Information is freely imparted. We are even asked to put important and difficult Questions, for solution; and should the Spirit be unable to answer satisfactorily, the Inquirer is told that the necessary knowledge shall be *acquired*, and the information shall be communicated at a future Sitting. Spirits are far from being Omniscient, and often have to defer answering questions, until they shall have acquired adequate knowledge from higher Spirits. They also correct mistakes made by themselves on former occasions. Spirits *caution* us against placing too much reliance on *all* that is communicated from Spirit-land, as they are in a state of *progression*—going on from one degree of knowledge to another; ever gathering more and more information, on a variety of subjects—and they urgently advise Recipients *to use their own judgement*, and not to accept as truth, what appears contrary to reason. The higher the Spirits, the more reliable their Communications; hence, my individual reluctance to join those who seek information through the medium of Tables, etc. which are *not* presided over by the higher, but, *commonly*, by lower Spirits. See 68.

137. When I could not conceive the possibility of *Spirit-intercourse* with *Material-beings*, I was taught, by my Mother, that my conceptions regarding Spirits were erroneous; and that they still bear about them a species of *materiality*. On 18 March, I received in Circle:

My dear Son, You say truly, that you do not realize my Presence; nor you will *not* do so, in a sensuous manner. It is only in a spiritual manner, that Spirit-presence *can* be realized. In your present condition, and in the condition of the present Circle, *do* you contemplate what *constitutes* the Spirit-body? It is vastly more *refined* in substance, than earthly Electricity; yet, you cannot behold that with your material eye, nor *feel it* beneath your touch—still, it is a reality: and so, my dear Son, is my Presence with You. You will yet *realize* it, and be happy. Leave *not* the path you have begun to tread, for, it leads to happiness. Go on, my Son, try to *believe*.

M. N.

I asked, What am I to apprehend by the word *believe*?

Leave your mind open to conviction of the truth—I misapplied the word; *Belief goes after convincing Proof.*" 1 April. "My dear Son, How I long for your Spiritual-sense to be Opened, that you could *feel* the loving and breathing influence of your near and dear kindred around you; to know, *with certainty*, that we are as truly and palpably with you as when I fondled you on my knee, and called you *My darling Boy!* I have a Body now, as *material* in feeling as when you were ushered upon earth; but, much more *refined*—more so than any Spirit extracted from earth-compound is to the *material* whence it is extracted. When I *died* (as the earth term is) I left the *material* part of me behind, or, the Body that was visible to the *material* eye, never more to take it up again; for, I had already a Body so much more beautiful, that the other appeared as an old and faded garment, or, as a shell that was broken by the washing drift on the sea shore. My Son, I shall give you an explanation of the so-called *Resurrection* on a future occasion."

8 April. I promised to answer your Question, touching the Resurrection of the Body. The Mortal-body ascends in essence, to nourish

vegetable and animal existences, mixing and forming the gasses that constitute the atmosphere; but, when the Spirit is intirely freed from the Mortal-body, it is furnished with a *more refined one*, being that which is called a *Spirit-body*, which is the Resurrection-body. The Spirit-body that each one possesses at the birth of the Spirit into these spheres, goes through a succession of Changes, similar to the *first* we possess. There is Law and Order throughout the intire and ever-changing scenes through which we pass from our first Inspiration till we reach farther than my Conception leads.

O my dear Son, the beauty of the Spirit-body depends upon the right Life while the Spirit inhabits the Rudimentary-body. *God's Laws are True*; no turning to the right or left—all is Harmony sublime! Good night, my Son; I am ever your loving mother, M. N.

138. On 15 April, I wrote on a scrap of paper the following, and placed it on the table before us—

To me it is a puzzle, believing as I do, partially, in the Communication of Spirits, *why* those with whom we have never had personal intercourse, should make their communications to Us, rather than the Spirits of those with whom we have been familiar, either in the body, or, through their writings. If the Spirits of Ballou, Eldred Bacon, and Grenfell, influence the pencil in our meetings, *how is it* Luther, Zwingle, and Calvin, the 3 notable Reformers—or, Milton, Locke, and Newton—or, Fletcher, Wesley, and Whitfield—or, Priestley, Channing, and Parker—or, 100 others with whose writings we are familiar—*how is it* that these well-known characters to us, do not Communicate with us, rather than the Spirits of those with whom we have *never* had any communication, personally nor intellectually?

Perhaps, my honored and ever-beloved Mother, may be able to enlighten us on this point; or, She may probably, ask the co-operation of my Grandfather, or, my Grandfather's favorite author Law."

To which the following reply was given—

139. You shall be visited by some of your favorites—if your concentrated thought can *reach* them: this is a great Law in Spirit-intercourse. Sympathy alone, is not enough; but, you will learn the Law by degrees. Do not expect too much at once, my Son. Though I would fain lift you into the Light at once, and clasp you in fond embrace, the Law must be fulfilled. You must expand in Spiritual-knowledge, as the Rose opens its petals to the sun."

The following was communicated to the Circle generally, on 22 April, 1869—

140. Let no *levity* exhibit itself in Circle; it draws *inferior* Spirits around you.

We see the emanations that arise from your Circle, and we are happy to see such thoughts. You wish to understand what difference exists between *mind* and *soul*. But, before entering upon the subject, I would have you to understand, that each Spirit, or, Party of Spirits, give just as much knowledge to You, as they are *capable* of perceiving, and *no more*. We are still seeking for more, and, always receiving.

What We see as *spirit*, is what you term *mind*. Mind manifests the Spirit's workings, as the Universe manifests the Deity. Mind is the *body* (so to speak) of the Spirit. The Divine mind is the *principle of Life* in all things; the mind of Man is the same principle in a state of development, that will continue to unfold for ever. The *mental* development is necessary to unfold the Spirit. The Spirit must be harmonized in all its parts, and through a fully developed Brain—or, through an equally and uniformly developed individual—does Spirit manifest itself in the Wisdom-principle. There is a *duality* in all things. The Deity is *dual* with Nature; the one is a manifestation of the other—so is *mind* and *soul*.

J. GRENFELL.

141. We received on 13 May, in Circle—

My dear Son, I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to tell You to look *upward* and *inward* for assistance in all matters that trouble, or, perplex you; giving your attention to the Principle itself, and leave the result to God. If the Cause be *good*, the Result is certain to be *good* also. Many things in the Earth, and relating to the Life thereon, are looked upon by its Inhabitants as *evil*; but, everything is, comparatively, *good*, and *all* subserve a good end. When the children of earth understand the Love of God in his various ways of exhibiting such, *then* will they become wiser and happier. They must *first* appreciate his Love, before they can enjoy

the good things of heaven. Heaven, my dear Son, must be *within* you, ere you taste its joys. It is not a *place* to be brought to, but, a *state* of existence to be attained even on Earth. Do not expect to reach it by a bypath; the straight way lies in a *pure* and *upright* Life on earth.

142. I perceive Your mind is not satisfied upon the *term* of the Immortal-principle that is within you, termed by some *spirit*, others *soul*, and others *mind*. It is this Immortal-principle showing forth its Life in *all*, under different phases—but still, the Life-principle! What is in a Name, when *words* are inadequate to express the *meaning*? Cultivate your Soul-thoughts; let them mount up, as with wings, to the farthest boundary of your mind's vision; and, let them descend into the innermost parts of the earth, and contemplate the Love and Wisdom of the Great and beneficent Cause of all—He whom Angels adore and Spirits worship.

Good night, my dear Son; you have much to learn; but, the time is ample to bring you forth a good Student, with many Degrees. Bless you, my dear Son! Your loving Mother, M. N.

143. On 20 May, we received, in Circle—

My dear Son, You do not yet recognize the *Spiritual* in the *Material*. The Spiritual is interwoven throughout the material, or that substance which is visible to the bodily eye; but, it is so *refined* that only the eyes of the Spirit can perceive it. Could you behold the way by which We and You hold intercourse, you would then understand how We in the Spirit-body can and do use the *Spirit particles of the Material elements* to demonstrate their power. O, my dear Son, would that You could perceive the close relationship of the spirit with what you call the material world, where all is seen and felt more clearly and tangibly, than You can see or feel in your present condition.

Your thoughts ascend and take *form* here, and become indelible; they appear in character, and are fixed for ever; but, *all* in the Spirit-world do not perceive them; only those who can appropriate them, or, whose thoughts assimilate with yours. This is a mighty Truth, that when recognized by Man, will bring much good, and become his Savior.

Good night, my dear Son; study Nature in all its forms; and let the communings of your mind be with God. With the affectionate offering of your dear Mother's love, M. N.

Do you believe in the existence of Evil-spirits?

144. Of course, I do. Without any Scripture testimony, I *know* that they exist; because, I have *seen* their powerful influence on human beings; and others in Melbourne, have witnessed the lamentable prostrations to which men, scientifically gifted, have become the slaves of decidedly low and mischievous Spirits. The baneful influence of Evil-spirits, is not an infatuation, but, a reality; and though thoughtless and unphilosophic minds may treat the subject with levity, or ridicule, or disbelief, there are those in Melbourne who know to their cost, that evil influences are neither imaginations, fantasies, nor dreams—but, horrid realities. Persons of low inclinations and passions, however gifted intellectually, are not likely to be swayed by *pure*, and *soul-elevating* sentiments. They are of the earth, earthy—but, not lost beyond redemption; they are still within the reach of Omnipotent beneficence and saving grace.

Are not all Spiritists guilty of Blasphemy?

This ponderous question occurs in the following Letter, penned (I suspect) by a Pulpit-teacher—

145. To the Editor of *The Glowworm*. Sir, If I have been rightly informed, the whole body of Spiritists are disbelievers in the *Divinity of Christ*, and disacknowledge the Scripture doctrine of the "holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity," mentioned as "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy-ghost"; which doctrine, "except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." Now, sir, I challenge you, as Editor of *The Glowworm*, to answer this in your next Number—*Are not all Spiritists guilty of Blasphemy?* No evasion, if you please; but, give a straight forward, unequivocal Answer—if you can.

Yours, interrogatively, CHRISTIAN.

Such a Challenge I did not anticipate; and I would rather that it had not yet been put forward; but, I shall not shirk it. I say with Locke,

146. I desire to take my religion from the Scriptures; and then, whether it suits, or suits not, any other denomination, I am not much concerned; for, I think, at the Last day, it will not be inquired whether I were of the Church of England, or, the Church of Geneva, but, whether I sought and embraced the Truth in the love of it. Letter to S. Bold, 1699.

All the Spiritists I am acquainted with, adopt the Scripture view of the subject to which my attention has been called—differing widely from the Unbiblical view taken by CHRISTIAN, who knows *not* the Scriptures, and who, as a worshiper of more Gods than One, ought rather to have signed himself IDOLATER—a Bible-Christian he cannot be, seeing that he believes in the Pagan doctrine of the Trinity, which is diametrically opposed to the whole tenor of both the Old and the New testaments. In what particular sense He employs the word *blasphemy*, I know not; I accept it in its plain English meaning, namely, "*An offering of some indignity unto God himself*"; and when after reading "I am Jehovah, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another," CHRISTIAN parades his "God the Son and God the Holy-ghost," I turn round upon CHRISTIAN, and fearlessly charge Him with *blasphemy*—it is blasphemy in CHRISTIAN to insult Bible-readers with two additional Gods after reading, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else!" Besides, there are no such derogatory expressions to be found in the Bible as *God the Son, God the Holy-ghost, or, Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity!* and, instead of Spiritists being guilty of blasphemy in quoting, "There is no God else beside me, a just God and a Savior," we Spiritists tell such Idolaters as CHRISTIAN,

"Ye do Err, *not knowing* the Scriptures!"

147. I conceive, that all persons enter the Spirit-land with precisely the same views they entertained at the instant when making their exit hence; Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians, Baptists, Wesleyans, and Independents, Trinitarians, Unitarians, etc. all carry their particular notions and sentiments along with them into their Second state of existence, the Life beyond the grave; and although some are represented as speedily shaking off the trammels of earthly prejudices, others have no little difficulty in overcoming the wrong impressions imbibed during what is termed *religious-education*: Spirits of quick discernment and keen penetration, naturally developing much more rapidly than Spirits of dull, lethargic temperaments; the clearest thinkers on earth, outstripping the less intellectual minds, and passing on, from sphere to sphere, with greater ease and celerity than less-cultivated minds—borne out by several communications made to our Circle.

A part of Bacon's communication to Mrs. Naylor (in Circle) on 22 April, states—

148. A cultivated mind may be spiritually-minded as well; and in such a case, all the high attributes are active in proportionate degrees. A spiritually-minded man *without cultivation of the mind*, can never attain a high degree of Spiritualism, on account of his ignorance, or, want of knowledge."

After a long and interesting Communication (on 27 June, from my Father (who had been a Methodist-preacher for upwards of half a century) my Wife, put the following question before him—*Father, what are Your ideas now, about the Atonement?* and received in reply—

149. I do not think about it as I did when on Earth. That Christ, or Jesus, was sent into the world as a Messenger from God, to proclaim Him to the world as a merciful and loving Father, does not admit of a doubt—but He has not redeemed Mankind through his blood. I believed this formerly, and preached it also, thinking I was right; but, I saw, as through a glass, dimly. Now, with the glories of God's light surrounding me, I know better. Jesus was a great blessing, the *Sent of God*; but, men did not understand him—nor do they now. He gave us a bright moral example in his whole life, and it would be well for mankind to follow it, and thus become his true followers. He loved God, his Father and our Father, and did his Will in all things. "Not mine, but thy Will be done," he submissively prayed, committing himself intirely into His hands whom he knew to be all Love, and nothing but Love! He came into the world to proclaim God as a loving Father to his Children, and died in that belief and great solemn truth. O, that Christians

would think more of this, than of sects and parties! there would then be peace and harmony amongst them; but, as long as they choose to squibble and quarrel about minor things, and lose the essential out of sight, there never will be peace on earth and goodwill amongst men.

Mrs. N. Then, of course, You do not think that Jesus was God—in a word, You do not believe in Trinitarianism.

To which was replied in *large* letters,

No; certainly not! there is but One God, even our God!

On 1 July, Mrs. N. again put the Question—

Dear Father Naylor, Do you believe in the Atonement of Christ as you used to do when you were on this nether world?

My dear Daughter, Your question will bring many a one to a standstill. I certainly believed in it when on Earth, religiously, and during the whole course of my life, and I died in the belief. But, I have found, since here, that I have been in Error all my life.

Mrs. N. But You died *happy* in the belief.

True; I knew no better; I was brought up in it; I preached it; but, this proceeded from ignorance.

Mrs. N. But, You knew the Bible so well, you must have had grounds for your Belief—

Yes, so may anyone, when he believes anything, and be, for all that, in the wrong, as I was. I have learned to view it here in a different light; we are still *to work out* here, our own happiness, our own sanctification: we feel that better here, where no Preachers will uphold old teachings, old doctrines, old prejudices. We see everything clearer here, and find that we must endeavor to live *holy*, to become every day more and more perfect; to progress from step to step, untill we reach that highest station where we shall see God in all his glory, and of which we have as yet, no conception! I am dumb with the thought. O, my Child, what glories, what bliss will be reserved for us, to get near to Him our Father, our Loving father. O, the unutterable bliss! My Child, think of that; and try to believe and trust in your loving Father in heaven.

Your loving Father, M. N.

150. All harsh expressions of God, all unfavorable conceptions of God, seem to be speedily erased from even the most intemperate dispositions on their entering the world of Spirits. As an instance—my honored Mother, who was esteemed and loved for her intellectuality and amiableness, by all who knew her during four score years, could, occasionally, become *violent* against my “perverseness” in pleading for the reasonableness of the doctrine of *Universal Restoration*, when I was but a Boy; and, strange to relate, on 19 of March, 1869, I felt an indescribable timidity, in asking my Mother—May we be told aught of Universal Restoration? and joyfully received in answer,

Yes, ALL will be restored to Happiness and Bliss!

I then continued—You *know* that I believe that God is Love, and that not an iota of wrath is in him—have I formed a wrong conception of *what* God is?

Answered, in extraordinarily large letters—

No, my Son, you have not. He is indeed and in truth, a God of Love! is Love, Love, and nothing but LOVE!

And my Father, who as a Methodist-preacher of the old school, had faithfully dealt out for scores of years the horrible and Ungodlike “hell and damnation” tenets, communicated, on 27 June last, to Mrs. Naylor.

152. My dear Child, You will be aware of the great Truths which all nature cries aloud through all God's works, that He is a God of Love. Imprint this great Truth well on your heart; and whenever, and wherever, endeavor to *propagate* this greatest of all Truths; for, the Love of God endureth for ever and ever towards all He ever created. He does not wish any of his Children to be lost, or unhappy, All, ALL will, eventually, be redeemed by their own efforts, to become wiser, better, holier; for, the Love of God will so permeate the whole existence of their being, that they will endeavor, from his very feeling, to please God in all things, and enjoy that holy bliss which all happy Spirits enjoy,” etc.

153. When my Father visited me at Amsterdam (in 1826) we had many conversations on “eternal damnation,” and “universal restoration”; and I thought he left Holland a decided *Universalist*; but, like that great and good man JOHN WESLEY, my Father proved a moral coward, and

could not summon courage sufficient to preach a doctrine diametrically opposed to what he had been preaching for more than half a century—reminding me of a remark made by Archbishop Tillotson—

154. There are very few so *honest and sincere*, as to be content for *Truth's sake*, to part with their reputation and authority, and become less in the esteem of men than they were before. Few are so *impartial* as to quit those things which they have once laid great weight upon, and kept a great stir about; because, this is to acknowledge that they were in *Error*, and *mistaken* in their zeal; which few have the ingenuity [ingenuousness] to own, though it be never so plain to others. 117th Sermon.

John Wesley, for once, at least, a Moral Coward.

155. Great men commit great blunders. Mr. Wesley and my Grandfather Merryweather (who was a Local-preacher) were intimate during a long course of years (as may be seen from their correspondence) and from my Grandfather's lips I heard, what I am about to recount—if my memory prove in anywise inaccurate, I shall be made aware of it (by Spirit-correction) before these lines pass the Press.

Mr. Wesley always made my Grandfather's house his *home*, at Yarm (in Yorkshire) as he made my Father's house his *home*, at Darlington (in the county of Durham) and their respect and affection for each other was as ardent as congenial. My Grandfather told me, what (for the sake of clear apprehension) I shall throw into the form of dialogue, between George Merryweather and John Wesley—

G. M. Mr. Wesley, are You a believer in Universal Restoration?

J. W. Brother, all my nature leans that way.

G. M. So does mine. But, I have progressed farther; I have made the subject a study for years; I have read several works both for and against it; I have read the Bible repeatedly through, with a single eye to discover whatever light the Scriptures might throw upon it; and I have not hastily come to the conclusion, that Universal Restoration is as surely a biblical doctrine, as that God's name is I AM THAT I AM!

J. W. Brother, all my nature leans that way.

G. M. Mr. Wesley, You and I have known each other for years, and as you have expressed it, *there is a fraternal friendship between us*; therefore, I am the more desirous, I may say *anxious*, that You should be open and communicative on this important point. Your favorite instructor [William Law] is decidedly a Universalist; and You have propagated the doctrine very alluringly in works which you have Reprinted and issued from your Book-room—such as the “Fool of Quality,” for instance, which you Yourself have abridged and given to the world under the title of the “Earl of Moreland,” with one of the most recommendatory *Prefaces* you ever penned. As You have actually disseminated the doctrine among the body of Methodists, *why* do you not preach it as a Scripture doctrine? I have not yet done so, but, for years I have ceased preaching *eternal punishments*. Would you recommend, or, would you disapprove of my preaching Universal Restoration? Tell me, do you, or, do you not, firmly believe in the doctrine?

J. W. Brother, all my nature leans that way.

Any further acquiescence, my Grandfather could not elicit; but, he told me, that he was morally convinced of Mr. Wesley's firm belief in Universal Restoration: and I am at this moment of opinion, that Mr. Wesley could not summon courage to stand up and preach a doctrine the reverse of what He had been preaching for so many years—though more than persuaded of its Truth.

156. Despite all the Texts that the abettors of the horrible doctrine of *endless misery* now quote, it is absolutely untenable on Scripture grounds; it is one of the gangrenous excrescences which Archbishop Tillotson assures us, has “no foundation in Scripture”: and though Dr. Pusey tells us,

157. Take away *Hell* and the *Inspiration of the Bible*, and you take away all our *Safeguards of Morality*;

I consider the doctrine as derogatory to God, and contrary to the tenor of the Bible. But, as Bishop Watson said—

158. It will require as much application of genius, industry, and learning, to free the Christian world from the dominion of *corrupted doctrine*, as it did to free the philosophic world from the dominion of Aristotle.”

Happily, such out-and-out *hell and damnation* Preachers as were common at the commencement of this century, have gradually gone out of fashion; and as Archdeacon Paley justly remarked,

159. Whatever renders Religion more *rational* renders it more *credible*."

On some of these momentous subjects, my dear Mother's views are much altered since she left the body, as may be seen from the communication, received in circle, on 5th Oct.

160. My dear Son, Man's destiny is a high one, worthy of his highest efforts. The crosses and trials in the life on Earth, are the means of purifying his soul, and preparing him for a fuller enjoyment of the Spirit-life. What do the poor creatures think of the great and good Father, who could send a poor weak erring child into *endless torture* for sins not its own, but inherited from its ancestors? Oh, what a Delusion and a Snare to the mind of the generations of the present time, is such *untrue* and *pernicious* teaching, dispensed by those who profess to love God and Christ Jesus! But, the free and glorious Truth is dawning among the Children of the earth, that their Father in heaven is full of Love and cannot depart from the Laws of Justice. Tell it throughout the empires of earth, that the destiny of the Human-race is far beyond their highest conceptions of God!

Live pure in thought, pure in actions, and Heaven will be opened up to you; the Dove shall descend and abide with you for ever.

What momentous expressions in those two little words, *for ever*! We cannot conceive their meaning; neither can we express the deep, the profound Love of the angelic choirs that fill these lands with praises to the Almighty giver, the infinite God.

Your loving Mother gives you her blessing; and that the holy influence of surrounding Spirits may be felt by all, is my earnest desire.

M. N.

Does not Spiritism contravene the teachings of Jesus.

161. Not that I am aware of. It may run counter to some of the interpretations given by certain Sectarists, but I know not of any doctrine inculcated in the Sermon on the Mount, with which Spiritism is *not in accordance*. As Mrs. Naylor received a Communication bearing upon this point, on 23 July, I shall insert it here.

My dear Child, One mistake which is made by men in general, with respect to Spiritism, is this—they seem to think that it will conduce towards illegal forms and notions of all religious observations, as taught by Jesus whilst sojourning on earth; whereas, it is *just the reverse*: it tends to inculcate the morals He taught, more deeply on the mind, and enjoins everyone believing in Spiritism to lead a holy life, to perform all his duties with an eye to God, to please Him in all he does. Let his Thoughts be *pure*; so shall his Actions be *pure*: and whatever he doeth, or says, will savor of the *purity* of his mind—*this is what Spiritism teaches*.

It insures holy joys within, from the consciousness of acting rightly, endeavoring to please God in all things. The earth is the place where you should *prepare yourselves* to become fitter for the development in a higher degree in our spheres. The more you endeavor to develop on Earth, the more rapid will your development be, when in the Spirit. Assist each other as fellow-travelers to the same country, to reach the happy Home in a fit state, that you may be joyfully received by your expecting friends, who will hail your coming amongst them as a most joyful event, increasing their happiness in the eternal abodes of bliss. Your loving Mother,

M. N.

The following was received, in Circle, on 7 Dec.

162. My dear Son, May your thoughts blend in harmony with those distilled upon you from above. Harmony is *felt*, not seen; nor can words express the meaning of *harmony*; it is the diffusion of the God-principle equally through the manifestations of his kingdom. Man to be *harmonious*, must pass through the fire; he must be purified through suffering—mentally, physically, and spiritually. *The reformation of Mankind, is the study of Angels*; and to that point, do all our efforts tend. Then, in the first place, it is required that each individual must make the great effort towards his, or her, Reformation, by living up to what their highest aspirations lead, and putting down, with all their might, all low and debasing thoughts that arise, prompting them to actions unworthy of themselves, or, the image of

the immaculate Father that breathes within them. Every bad passion must be immolated, every vice must be sacrificed; and all Error shall be overcome—with difficulty. It is a hard struggle, that struggle with Self; but, Self must be hid in the work for the good of others. You are all employed and used in this great work; each one must be tried, if fit to do the work intrusted to them. If *weak*, we give more help—we are like the Shepherds, we carry the lambs in our arms.

Reform, Reform! is the order, or mandate of God, for ever.

May his benign influence cause your souls to rejoice in your work, and be felt in your daily intercourse with your Sisters and Brothers! Let your light so shine, that you may help your brethren out of darkness, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven. All praise, all glory be unto Him which was, and is, and ever shall be!

My dear Son, Good night! Your loving Mother, M. N.

How must I prepare myself for Writing with the Planchet?

163. Certainly *not* by having any anxious care regarding either your *success* or *failure*; be calm, and *as passive as possible*. See 97. If you wish to receive a communication from anyone in particular, endeavor to concentrate your Thoughts on that individual (139) and then glide into a *passive* state. In a communication received from my Mother, on 27 May, among other instructions, she writes—

164. When you sit down to the Planchet, you should strive to divest your mind of any particular wish; *be as passive as if you were falling asleep*; and then you shall receive high and *pure* Inspirations, that will thrill your Soul with the pulse of Divinity! Be assured, my dear Son, that you shall receive *all* that is necessary, in due time. The mind must be calm, and in a *receptive* condition, ere We can give, or You receive, the truth clearly.

When you desire to have anything elucidated, *you must wait the Spirit's time*. We see *what* is necessary; You do *not*. Therefore my dear Son, wait with patience the unfolding of the Spirit within—this you *must* do, or, You shall *not* be satisfied."

Are Spirits gratified by Human-intercourse?

165. I believe they are; still more so than we can possibly be in communing with them: they have expressed their gratification in a variety of ways; telling us that "the Reformation of mankind, is the Study of angels" (162) and that they "are ever present," watching over, influencing, and protecting us. They also are aided in their operations through our instrumentality; are developed more rapidly through their intercourse with Human-beings; and from that interesting pamphlet *Theodore Parker in Spirit Life*, we meet with the words of Channing saying to Parker—"Well, we must do what we can; but, we shall miss You as our *instrument* through whom to work." p. 17.

166. The fact is, Our world and the world of Spirits are *not* two different worlds, but, two different phases in God's grand universe; separated from each other by the thin partition commonly called *Death*—though death there is none: that is, *Life* is never extinct; we simply pass from one sphere to another; and shall continue passing from sphere to sphere, throughout a glorious eternity! The word *death* belongs only to the mortal part of man, not to the part which is immortal; Flesh and Bones become particles of the Earth-sphere, while the Spirit passes by *transition* into that sphere where *death* is unknown—into *life everlasting*. The so-called *gates of death*, are hung on the hinges of the *gates opening to endless life*!

Away then, with the creeds, dogmas and confessions of the Churches, those cobwebs and stumblingblocks to awakened intellects! "Old opinions, rags and tatters, get ye gone! get ye gone!" The creeds of past ages, have become musty; the liturgies of our forefathers, have lost their vitality; the confessions of our predecessors, are lighter than the dust of the balance! A transplendent and fast-spreading Light, has broken in upon the mental Darkness of this age; and we are called upon as rational beings, as children of *immortality*, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Angels and glorified Spirits, to leave sectarism and formalism and scepticism behind, and press onward, from one degree of *purity* of Thought to another, towards that state of development which shall fit us for joyfully entering that sphere, where we shall be welcomed by our dear Departed friends into the realms of light, life, and ever-accumulating happiness!

Respectfully Addressed to Correspondents.

167. It is announced in the head paragraph of *The Glowworm*, that "Articles in direct contradiction to the doctrine of Spiritism, shall have free admission into its columns," etc. but, that announcement does not imply that Articles which have *not* any relation to the subject, shall be inserted. Some Letters respectful in tone, others kindly expressed, and even Articles cleverly written, have been received; yet, cannot be published—for the simple reason, they have not any connection with Spiritism. It is evident that the writers have not apprehended the nature and bearings of Spiritism; or, they never could have supposed that in attacking *Astrology, Divination, Witchcraft, Animal-magnetism, Phrenology*, etc. they were attacking "*Spiritism in its stronghold*;" and were I in the humor for ridicule, I might be induced to publish the correspondence before me, adding the Names of the writers, which, from the kindest motives, I repress; persuaded that the Authors are as sincere as their Articles are inappropriate. Biblical quotations, whether given by scores or by hundreds, if *not* to the purpose, cannot have any weight with persons of clear thought; while an array of texts may impose on weak understandings. I have a long catalogue of Scripture passages before me, not One of which relates to Spiritism; therefore, after giving but one sett (by way of specimen) I shall pass the others without rejoinder—as not belonging to the subject. A well-meaning writer, who I doubt not is as honest as he is earnest, gives the *chapter and verse* only; I add the *words*, for the convenience of the reader—

168. "Scripture distinctly prohibits, *on pain of Death*, any direct application to, or communion with, any demons or disembodied spirits whatever. In proof, see Ex. xxii. 18. Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live. Liv. xix. 31. Regard not them that have familiar Spirits, neither seek after Wizzards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God. xx. 6, 27. The soul that turneth after such as have familiar Spirits, and after Wizzards, to go a whoring after them I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. A man also, or woman, that hath a familiar Spirit, or, that is a Wizzard, shall surely be put to Death; they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them. Deut. xviii. 10-12. There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the Fire, or, that useth Divination, or, an observer of Times, or, an Enchanter, or, a Witch, or, a Charmer, or, a Consulter with familiar Spirits, or, a Wizzard, or, a Necromancer. For, all that do these things, are an abomination unto the Lord. I. Sam. xv. 23. Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft; and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. II. Kings, xvii. 17. They caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the Fire, and used Divination, and Enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. xxi. 6. He made his son pass through the Fire, and observed Times, and used Enchantments, and dealt with familiar Spirits, and Wizzards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. xxiii. 24. The workers with familiar Spirits, and the Wizzards, and the Images, and the Idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the Law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. Gal. v. 20. The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these—Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

169. All the preceding passages (in 168) have been quoted by a Layman, who seems pretty well versed with the *words* of the Bible; and some of them have been taken as Texts, by Ministers of different sects: yet, I scruple not to tell them, in the phraseology of the greatest of Spiritists (Jesus) Ye do Err, *not knowing* the Scriptures!" for, what, in the name of commonsense, what reference have these passages to Spiritism? None, whatever! no more than the title *King of Kings* given to, the idolater Nebuchadrezzar, constituted him the GREAT FIRST CAUSE—no more than the amorous *Song of Solomon* has any relation to JESUS OF NAZARETH—no more than *The Lord's Day* (but once so

mentioned in Scripture) has any reference to either the JEWISH SABBATH, or, the CHRISTIAN SUNDAY!

170. Quoting *Scripture-words*, contrary to *Scripture-meanings*, is simply misrepresentation; and though false interpretations may tend to deceive both Quoters and Readers, persons of penetration are not likely to be misled by a display of texts which are *twisted* into illogical, illegitimate, irrational senses. Neither are we to suppose that passages are always quoted for the elucidation of Truth; it being too frequently manifest, that Victory only, is the object of the Textuarist. It is reported in the New testament, that the *Father of Deceit*, who is said to be going about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, was an adept in the Scriptures, and quoted texts to suit his wicked purposes. Be this as it may, I cannot afford space in *The Glowworm* to refute passages which do not require refutation—because, *inapplicable*; inasmuch as Divination and Witchcraft have not, neither can they by surreptitious arguments be made to have, any connection whatever with that Holy Spiritism, which consists in *purity* of Thought, *uprightness* of Conduct, and a close *affinity* with the Spirits of just men made perfect.

171. Strange to say, the very Preachers who have been inveighing against Spiritists and Spiritism, have told their congregations, that Communion with Departed friends, is "*an utter Impossibility*;" as none but Evil-spirits, tortured in outer Darkness, are permitted to revisit the glimpses of the moon! They acknowledge, however, the existence and communion of Spirits with Mortals; and the next thing required of them is, to tell us, whence they derived the information that Good-spirits cannot possibly communicate with Human-beings. If instead of vociferating against me, by Name, and publicly charging me with "*profanity and wickedness*," for quoting Scripture to support my "*hallucinations and lunatic idiosyncrasies*," they had attempted to show that I had quoted unfairly, or wrested texts from their legitimate meanings, they might, perhaps, have discovered that they were bearing *false* witness against me. Let the most chivalrous among our Pulpit-antagonists, read and digest the two Lectures on *Man* and on *Woman* (No. 9 and 10 Pamphlets) and show to the public, wherein I have either misquoted or misinterpreted any of the numerous Texts I have adduced—*If they can!*

172. By others, I am gravely told, "*it is sinful to pry into the secrets of the Dead*"; that I have no right "*to approach the Spirit-world at all, except by Prayer*"; that it is "*a direct violation of the Law of God, as revealed in the Scriptures—a violation which will, in due time, lead to the direst consequences*," etc. but, not One of these bold asserters of these (to me) glaring Untruths, has attempted to prove either the falsity of my texts, or, their misinterpretations. If they can show me the utter falaciousness of the doctrine of Spiritism, and the folly of my belief in the Bible, why don't they set about it, right manfully? Let Pulpits, however, *first* declare the Scriptures unworthy of *belief*, and boldly call Immortality a *fantasy*, before they venture to maintain that Spiritism is a *delusion*.

173. As to the *right* of approaching the Spirit-world, will anyone pretend to say, that my Creator has given me *faculties* that are not to be exerted? *capacities* that are not to be gratified? I say with Bovee Dods—

As we are endowed with *reason*, and as the inspiration of the Almighty hath given us *understanding*, so we are bound, by the very laws of our being, to extend our researches to the utmost verge of our mental capacity. He who would curb the Human-intellect, and say *this* or *that* is a subject with which we have *no right* to meddle, and into which we have *no right* to inquire, is not only recreant to duty, as an *intellectual* and *moral* being, but, betrays his own ignorance, and proves himself a scientific bigot. Give the mind full scope—let it feel the deep stirrings of its own powers, and soar, if it can, into the light of eternity, and survey the very throne of God, and Him who sitteth thereon; and, if possible, let it scan the secret energies of his creating fiat, and even examine the raw material out of which worlds were made. *Electrical Psychology*. p. 120.

Similar sentiments have been expressed by the superior-minded and much misunderstood writer of the *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, as follows—

I am extremely loth to imagine, that there is anything in Nature which we should, for any reason, refrain from *examining*. If we can

infer aught from the past history of Science, it is, that *the whole of Nature* is a legitimate field for the exercise of our intellectual faculties; that there is a connection between this knowledge and our well-being; and that, if we may judge from things once despaired of by our inquiring reason, but *now* made clear and simple, there is none of Nature's mysteries which we may not *hopefully* attempt to penetrate. *Tenth edition, p. 113.*

174. I must not omit noticing, that many passages marked as *quotations* by my Correspondents, are *not* accurate; are not in my Bible; some of them are deviations from Scripture so frequently heard from Pulpits, that many hearers and readers accept them as sterling passages; whereas, they are flat contradictions to biblical doctrines. Many Preachers have the knack of lengthening or shortening, of altering and perverting texts, to suit their preconceived notions; and none but critically experienced observers are aware, how very frequently, and to what a serious extent, the Scriptures are falsified, either of set purpose, or, inadvertently. Accept a few specimens, in proof—

Mercy is thy darling attribute, and Punishment thy strange work.

As the tree falls, so it lies; and as death leaves us, judgement finds us.

Jesus is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe.

These, and similar well-known phrases, are unblushingly uttered from Pulpits, despite their nonsensicalness and contradiction to Biblical texts. Some minds seem so constituted, that they may be said to be *incapable* of quoting accurately; and I have known Ministers who could not read a Chapter as it stood printed before their eyes; they invariably *left out* and *stuck in* words, which made the Scriptures a hodge-podge of sense and nonsense. From pulpits we hear of *hereditary depravity, innate sinfulness, inborn corruption, original sin, born guilty, by nature unholy*, and similar cant expressions, not One of which is in my Bible. When the Scriptures tell me plainly, that "the Son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father," but that "Everyone shall bear *his own* burden," and the soul that *sinneth* shall die; I cannot give credence to the irrational and blasphemous nonsense about "original sin," and "innate depravity;" for, "God hath made us, and not we ourselves;" and, what is more, He made us "in his Own image," as is affirmed, and re-affirmed, over and over again, even *after* the alleged Fall of our progenitors—therefore, I consider it as nothing short of *blasphemy* against my Maker, when anyone avers that I am "by Nature unholy" and a "Child of the Devil." It is a damnable doctrine for any Minister to promulgate, that babes and sucklings, who have never transgressed against any Law, divine or human, are condemned to endless torture for Adam's sin! Who can read, much less deliberately sing aloud, without shuddering—

"There is a never-ending Hell,

And never-dying pains,

Where Children must with Demons dwell,

In darkness, fire, and chains :

For Hell is crammed with Infants damned,

Without a day of Grace !

Happily, the Calvinistic writer of these revolting lines, lived to repudiate all such horrible notions of Infinite Goodness! He lived to proclaim God as our Father, and to teach his hearers that no human being ever was a Child of the Devil. Every year is adding to the members who have renounced Calvinism, and learned to look upon our Father who is in heaven, solely as a God of Love.

Spiritists, no matter how educated, necessarily become speedy converts to the Scripture doctrine, that "God is Love"—Love, Love, and nothing but LOVE!

Spiritists do not, can not believe in the frightful Hell, much less in the perpetuity of Future punishments; they believe that "God will reward every man according to his works, whether they be good or whether they be evil;" but, they firmly believe in the Restoration of all men.

"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity—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." Can any believer in the perpetuity of punishments give me half as good a reason, *why* God will contend for ever, as He has given me, *why* He will not?

The Rationale of Spiritism.

PART I.

175. Every belief must necessarily be founded upon such evidence as produces conviction. Belief, or, Unbelief, is not a matter of choice, but, of necessity; and if we are unprejudiced and rational, we are frequently impelled to *suspend judgement*, until the evidence becomes clear and conclusive. If it be said, on even common-place authority, that an ordinary occurrence has taken place, it is believable; although we may not know for a *fact*, that such has really happened, in as much as we did not witness it. But, if an event be said to have happened *contrary* to common experience, and in direct contradiction to our notions of Law and Order, we cannot believe *that*, however respectable the authority—without acknowledging a lack of caution which would border on credulity. If, however, such phenomenon should be stated to have been multiplied, and if the repetition be attested by several of the leading men of the day—men of legal acumen and penetration—keen, quick-sighted politicians, or, statesmen—grave and learned judges, accustomed to collect and formulate evidence—proficients in the exact sciences—poets, philosophers, journalists, and other eminent literary characters—men whose names are familiar as household words throughout the civilized world; who have stamped their character upon their own time, and also upon futurity, by their influence in moulding and directing the currents of thoughts and events; then, modesty requires that we should refrain from their condemnation, though we may not be prepared to yield our acquiescence—i. e. we are in a position, if influenced by rational motives only, neither to believe nor disbelieve, but, to *suspend judgement*, and to *prosecute inquiry*.

The perceptions of our senses, or experiences, are the intuitions which form the basis of our knowledge. Effects appear, which lead to the discovery of Causes. Each additional experience confirms, modifies, or, alters previous conceptions. Were each individual to receive what could be obtained by means of his personal experience only, the advance and spread of knowledge would be very limited. Testimony, therefore, is not only admissible, but, requisite. In many instances, individual experiences are unsatisfactory, unless confirmed by the experiences of others; and the accumulated testimonies of accredited experimenters and credible witnesses, as to the repeated occurrence of any phenomenon, ought to establish such occurrences as probable, however contrary they may appear to our notions of possibility. "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the Creeds," saith Tennyson; but, "honest doubt" ought not to be confounded with an unreasoning scepticism worse than credulity. We advance, not by inconsiderate rejection, but, by careful examinations. So liable—in fact, so certain are we to err, that it would be unwise to pool-pool, upon first impressions only, and without due examination, any alleged phenomenon supported by respectable testimony. The more opposite the events are to our conceptions of law and order, the more likely are they to lead to the discovery of new phases of law, by which our knowledge would be expanded.

There have not been any phenomena better attested, than those called *Spirit Manifestations*. They are either essentially true, or, many of the leading men of our time have been duped, or else, they have lent their countenance to aid and abet fraud and imposture. The latter alternative is inadmissible with such men as Lyndhurst, Bulwer Lytton, de Morgan, Robert Chambers, William Howitt, Ashburner, Elliotson, John Stuart Mill, Tennyson, Sir Charles Wheatstone, Varley, Prof. Hare, Washington Irving, Abraham Lincoln, Robert Dale Owen, Judge Edmonds, Horace Greeley, Longfellow, Whittier, the French Emperor, Victor Hugo, Guizot, Leon Favre, Garibaldi, and a long catalogue of other celebrated men. On the other hand, while we are not to yield blind adherence to *authority*, it would be presumption to say, that such celebrities as the preceding are but dupes, or fools, because *their* beliefs run counter to *ours*. Therefore, what devolves upon us, is calm, earnest inquiry. Count de Grim, a Prussian atheist, in relating a Spirit-anecdote of Swedenborg, said—This fact is confirmed by authorities so respectable, that it is impossible to deny it; but, the question is, *how to believe it*." Seeing that we are surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses, the testimony of which it is "impossible to deny," it behoves us to attempt

finding out "*how to believe it*"—to discover rational means by which such manifestations may be rendered believable.

Before the idea of Creation by means of natural law was dreamt of, the *fact* of any *existence*, led to the belief that it must have resulted from the *fiat* of a Power capable of working such wonder. Perceiving the existence of comparatively civilized man and the savage, combined with a sense of the ease with which man retrogresses, and the difficulty with which he climbs the ascent of knowledge, led to the very common belief that Man was originally *perfect*, and *fell* into barbarism—hence, the "golden-age" represented as *past*. These errors are the inconsiderate inferences drawn from things as they appeared to be; and Materialists seem to have fallen into similar errors. They see that a particular phase of life is connected with a particular form of material structure, and they infer that life is a *condition* of matter—that, if the organism be altered, or destroyed, the life it manifests must also be altered, or destroyed; that *motion*, or *force*, is an attribute of matter—inseparable from it—a characteristic, not an impulse—that Structure is the result of *matter in motion*, and Life the result of structure. Yet, is not this contrary to many facts, which go to prove that motion is the result of a Principle? having a *separate* existence from, but dwelling in, matter? as soul dwells in body? Matter of itself could not *move* into Structure, any more than a lifeless seed could *grow* into a plant. The scientific theory of the conservation of forces, can be true only on the supposition that life, or, the motive-power, is a principle having an existence *distinct* from that of matter. Like matter, force, as a whole, can neither be increased nor diminished in quantity. If it exceed in one direction, it must, proportionally, diminish in another. One part of matter loses force; another part receives it. Matter and its force can be separated—therefore, they are two *distinct* things; and it is consistent with reason to believe, that force is the activity of a living principle pervading matter. Structure could not originate without living force—a force capable of being *added* to matter, and of being *abstracted* from it—because, formations and decompositions necessarily go on side by side. Material tendency is not towards *construction*, but *destruction*. When life leaves a body, *and not till then*, decomposition sets in. It is *the life* which compels all the elements composing the body to exist together. Frogs and lizzards have been alive for years in the human stomach—the *life* in the reptiles resisting the efforts of the stomach to decompose them. If the materialistic view were correct, *changes* in the instinctive habits of animals would be preceded by *changes* of structure; yet, we find the contrary to be the case; for, Changes in the physical structure of animals, result from changes in their habits of life. If the existence of mind depended upon structure, and mental action upon sensuous impressions, then, an animal structure, exactly similar to another animal structure, would manifest *similar* living instincts in obedience to similar natural necessities. For instance, two eggs laid by the same hen are hatched, and produce chickens, which, in due time, also lay; in obedience to the law of reproduction, one fowl sits on her eggs to hatch them—while the other does not: the two are from the *same* parent, their structure and rearing similar; yet, they do not exhibit similar instincts; for, one of them has lost a *living* quality—not through any corresponding loss in Structure, but, through its having been hatched by *artificial*, not by *natural* means. A breed of dogs, trained for some generations to herd sheep, take to that course instinctively. The descendants of horses, trained for some generations to a certain amble, possess that peculiar motion hereditarily. Natural history, as interpreted by certain scientific and philosophic men, proves, that when an animal is compelled to change its Habits, a change of Structure gradually follows, until new species, and new genera arise—not a change of Structure *first*, and *afterwards* a corresponding change in the life manifested by the structure. Hence, it is rational to infer, that Structure does *not* generate Structure; but, that Life generates Life, using matter as the medium—that all nature is but *one body of matter* possessing *one living spirit*, eternally co-existent—that eternal Spirit, agitating eternal matter, *moves* it into Structures; and that, by means of Structure, new phases of Life are progressively organized—eventually arriving at *consciousness* in the Animal, and at *intellectuality* in Man; probably, ultimating in Spirit-existences—we shall see.

J. R.

Explanation of the Law by which Spirit-manifestations are effected.

Received by a Member of our Circle, 12 Oct. 1869.

176. You are in a good frame of mind tonight, and I will take the opportunity of explaining what you have often been anxious to know.

You are already acquainted with the Object we have in view, in communicating with you; but, you are not yet quite decided as to the *means* we employ: if I can, I should like to give you a somewhat clearer idea of the Law by which We write through You.

177. Magnetism, or Electricity, is as yet but little understood on the earth. If you were better acquainted with its Laws, you would see how simple are the means we employ. The Nerves of the whole body are so many conductors of Magnetism to the brain, and are also used by the brain for the purpose of conveying its messages to any part of the body. The wires may be operated upon from either end, just as the Electric-telegraph wires may be. It is necessary that this should be the case, as only in this manner can the Brain be informed of what is going on around it; and by the same means only, can the body be acted upon by the brain. Knowing this, you will easily understand how necessary *passivity* is on your part, to enable Us to take the place in you of your brain. This we do by a very simple process; as we, in our more advanced condition, can see as visible, what to you appears quite invisible and immaterial. We can see this Magnetism; or rather, we can see the *effects* it produces just as you see the effects produced by a current of air. We have also the power to *direct* its movements to a very considerable extent; so that it is not at all difficult for us to direct a stream, or current of it upon any particular organ of your body.

We can *influence* the body, through the brain; or, we can operate upon the other end of the wires, and send a message to the brain, through the nerves. In your case, we prefer to influence you through the brain, as we see that the effects produced will be greater. Your brain is much more easily acted upon, than your body; and, as a rule, we select *that* means of working which will produce the greatest result with the least exhaustion of the subject; or, in other words, with the smallest quantity of magnetic force.

178. All magnetic force, or, all effects produced by means of magnetism, result in a loss of *vital power* in the person operated upon; so that it is not only wise, but necessary for the welfare of our Medium that we should exercise a proper discretion as to how far, or in what manner, we may use them.

Physical manifestations cause a much greater loss of this magnetic force, than mental ones; and, usually, can only be produced upon, or by, those persons who are rich in this vital, or magnetic force, or power. I may as well explain now, that *vital* and *magnetic* force are synonymous.

179. If two or three persons, strong in magnetism, meet together, the result is generally a series of startling physical demonstrations. One person is quite sufficient, but, the consequent *exhaustion* is, of course, greater.

You seem to desire that I should explain more fully, *how* the loss is occasioned; nothing is more easy.

180. A telegraphic wire, in transmitting a message, only parts with that exact quantity of electricity with which it has previously been charged, and cannot, therefore, lose any of its own particles; it is, however, different with the human wires, and the human electric machine: the latter loses not only that magnetism which We supply, but also a great part of its own magnetism which it has made and stored up for its own use. The brain can only hold a certain quantity, and if that quantity is used quicker than the system can reproduce it, a consequent loss, or falling off in power, ensues.

I think I have told you enough for this evening, as you will now understand that it does not do to expend too much vitality at once.

I will conclude, therefore, with just one more observation—that the old proverb of "*use being second nature*," applies to this, as to other things; and that by constant practice in writing, or any other spirit-manifestation, the quantity of magnetism created, and stored ready for use, is always increasing; so that old practitioners can do many things, almost without suffering any evil effects, which would quite exhaust new beginners.

BYRON.

On Inspired Writings. 19 Oct.

181. Much of what is written by Mediums, and called *Spirit-teachings*, is affected, to some extent, by the Brain of the person writing. It must be so; for, untill We are so strong in our power to influence and impress, as to be able to overcome any exposition or interference, the productions must inevitably contain *some* of the ideas of the person writing. It is only natural that it should be so.

From the paper I gave you last week, you will easily understand how *two* cannot operate upon the same magnetic-machine at the same time; and how much more power the Owner of the machine has over it, than We possibly can have.

Can any reasonable man deny this? Can any one say, this is unreasonable? or illogical? Admitting it to be true, then, does it not remove a very great objection many people have to some of the Communications?

We all know how a very good sentence may be spoiled by the interpolation, or substitution, of a single word. How very much, therefore, must some of the Communications suffer, when almost every other word may be wrong! Careful writers take great precautions not to allow themselves to *think*, or to *write*, any foregone conclusions of their own; at least, not more than they can possibly help; for, as I said before, *plenary* Inspiration is quite impossible!

You all believe the Bible to be *Inspired*; but, you all know that it is very incorrect in innumerable instances; and I think I have shown it is *impossible* for it to be otherwise, seeing it came through Human-hands.

Do not, therefore, lay too much stress upon *any* of our Communications; but, in *all* cases, use your reason—and always advise your friends to do the same.

This is not exactly what I wanted to write, but, it is the best I could give you this evening, as you were not in very good condition for writing. Perhaps, at some future time, I may resume the subject, as there is a great deal of useful information for you in it. BYRON.

On Spirit-writings. 30 Nov. 1869.

182. My Dear Children, You should not make so much disturbance. Your Circle is not nearly so good now, as it was a month ago. Many causes, no doubt, prevent the regular and punctual attendance of the Members; but, I should like you fully to understand, that unless you do attend a little more regularly, and punctually, than of late, your Circle cannot advance as We are anxious to see it advance.

I had intended to have given you a paper on the subject your Father promised you, but I am afraid I cannot do so this evening; I will try and give you a little exposition on *Spirit-writings* instead.

Spirit-writings, as I told you in my last paper on the subject, are very much affected by the peculiarities of the Organism through which they are given; because, the Magnetism of each individual differs. The more refined the organism, the more refined the magnetism; and it is solely by means of *magnetism*, We are able to communicate. It is, therefore, easily seen, that each paper will depend upon the Magnetism by which it is written, and, therefore, upon the Person writing.

183. Physical manifestations are produced by the *Lower-Spirits*, upon very magnetic, and, generally speaking, less developed organisms.

Mechanical manifestations depend upon a rather peculiar, and altogether different nature. The magnetism is of a *peculiar kind*, and is not so coarse, or *material*, as that required to produce physical manifestations.

Mental impressions are conveyed by means of a more *refined* magnetism; and can only be produced upon, or by, persons who have practised for some time, and whose organisms are favorable. I will, perhaps, continue the subject by and bye, as you have written enough for this evening. BYRON.

Modern Spiritism.

184. In Pamphlet No. 9, I have given a succinct account of Spiritism as known many thousands of years before the Christian era—practised by Indians, Egyptians, Chinese, and Persians, afterwards by Hebrews, Grecians, and Romans—and in Pamphlet No. 10, I have continued the account of the Spirit-philosophy as practised by Christians, from the age of Jesus down to our own day; for, though it fell into desuetude at the Reformation, it never ceased to

exist. It was vigorously resuscitated in 1848, and in so short a period, it has spread into all civilized countries; already numbering upwards of 20,000,000 of adherents—unparalleled by any religious movement in any previous age.

As the following compendious statement, from the pen of A. E. Newton, has appeared in several American Spirit-journals, it may be considered as a fair presentation of the general views and principles of the great body of Spiritists; therefore, I copy it into *The Glowworm*.

Definitions.

185. Spiritism, in its broad sense, as a Philosophical System, embraces whatever relates to *spirit*, *spirit-existences*, and *spirit-forces*, especially all Truths relative to the *human spirit*, its nature, capacities, laws of manifestations, its disembodied existence, the conditions of that existence, and the modes of communication between that and the earth-life. It is thus a system of Universal Philosophy, embracing in its ample scope all phenomena of life, motion, and development—all causation, immediate or remote—all existence, animal, human, and divine. It has, consequently, its Phenomenal, Philosophical, and Theological departments.

But, not in any of these departments is it, as yet, clearly and completely defined, to general acceptance. Hence, there is no distinct *system* now before the Public which can with propriety be called *Spiritism*, or, the *Spirit-philosophy*, and for which Spiritists, as such, can be held responsible.

MODERN SPIRITISM, more specifically, may be defined as *that* belief or conviction which is peculiar to, and universally held by, the people now called *Spiritists*. This may be stated in the single proposition—

That, disembodied human spirits sometimes manifest themselves, or, make known their presence and power, to persons in the earthly body, and hold realized communications with them.

Whoever believes this one fact, whatever else he may believe or disbelieve in Theology, Philosophy, or Morals, is a *Spiritist*, according to the modern use of the term.

Hence, there are wide differences among Spiritists on theological questions. There are those who regard the Bible as divinely inspired and authoritative; though in the light of modern revelation, they interpret its teachings somewhat differently from any of the prominent sects of Christendom. There are others who esteem it simply as an historic record, embracing the religious ideas, spirit-manifestations, etc. of the Jewish people and early Christians, having no higher claims to reliability or authority than have other histories.

The subjoined summary embodies the views on a variety of topics generally prevalent among the most intelligent class of Spiritists.

I. Theoretical.

186. (I.) That—Man has a Spiritual nature as well as a Corporal—in other words, that the *real* man is a *spirit*; which spirit has an organized form, composed of sublimated material, with parts and organs corresponding to those of the corporeal body.

(II.) That—Man, as a spirit, is Immortal. Being found to survive that Change called *physical death*, it may be reasonably supposed, that he will survive all future vicissitudes.

(III.) That—there is a Spirit-world, or state, with its substantial realities, *objective* as well as *subjective*.

(IV.) That—the process of physical death in no way essentially transforms the mental constitution or the moral character of those who experience it; else, it would destroy their *identity*.

(V.) That—happiness, or, suffering, in the Spirit-state, as in this, depends not on arbitrary decree, or, special provision, but, on *character*, *aspirations*, and *degree of harmonisation*, or, of personal conformity to universal and divine Law.

(VI.) Hence that—the experience and attainments of the present life, lay the foundation on which the next commences.

(VII.) That—since growth (in some degree) is the Law of the Human-being in the present life, and since the process called *death* is in fact but a *birth* into another condition of *life*, retaining all the advantages gained in the experiences of this life, it may be inferred that *growth*, *development*, *expansion*, or, *progression*, is the endless destiny of the human spirit.

(VIII.) That—the Spirit-world is not far off, but near, around, or interblended with our present state of existence; and hence, that we are constantly under the cognizance of Spirit-beings.

(IX.) That—as individuals are passing from the earthly to the spirit-state in all stages of mental and moral growth, *that* state includes all grades of character, from the lowest to the highest.

(X.) That—as heaven and hell, or, happiness and misery, depend on *internal* state rather than on *external surroundings*, there are as many gradations of each, as there are shades of character—each one gravitating to *his own place* by natural law of affinity. They may be divided into several general degrees, or, spheres; but, these must admit of indefinite diversifications, or, “many mansions,” corresponding to diversified individual characters—each individual being as happy as his *character* will allow him to be.

(XI.) That—communications from the Spirit-world, whether by mental impressions, inspirations, or any other mode of transmission, are not necessarily infallible Truth; but, on the contrary, partake *unavoidably* of the imperfections of the minds from which they emanate, and of the channels through which they come, and are moreover, liable to misinterpretation by those to whom they are addressed.

(XII.) Hence that—no *inspired* communication, in this or any age (whatever *claims* may be, or have been, set up as to its source) is *authoritative* any farther than it expresses Truth to the individual consciousness—which last is the final standard to which all inspired or spiritual teachings must be brought for judgement.

(XIII.) That—inspiration, or, the influx of ideas and promptings from the Spirit-realm, is not a miracle of a past age, but, a *PERPETUAL FACT*—the ceaseless method of the divine economy for human elevation.

(XIV.) That—all angelic and all demonic beings which have manifested themselves, or, interposed in human affairs in the past, were simply disembodied Human-spirits, in different grades of advancement.

(XV.) That—all authentic *miracles* (so-called) in the past—such as the raising of the apparently Dead, the healing of the Sick by the laying on of hands (or other simple means) Unharmful contact with poisons, the Movement of physical objects without visible instrumentality, etc. have been produced in *harmony* with universal Laws; and hence, may be repeated at any time under suitable conditions.

(XVI.) That—the Causes of *all* phenomena—the Sources of *all* Life, Intelligence, and Love, are to be sought in the *internal*, the *spirit-realm*, not in the external or material.

(XVII.) That—the chain of Causation leads inevitably *upward* or *inward* to an *Infinite Spirit*—who is not only a *Forming Principle* (Wisdom) but an *Affectionate Source* (Love) thus sustaining the dual *parental* relations of Father and Mother to all finite intelligences, who, of course, are *all* brethren.

(XVIII.) That—Man, as the offspring of this Infinite Parent, is his highest representative on this plane of being—the Perfect-Man being the most complete embodiment of the Father's “fulness” which we can contemplate; and that each man is, or has, by virtue of this parentage, in his *inmost* a germ of Divinity, an incorruptable portion of the Divine Essence, which is ever prompting to the right, and which in time will free itself from all imperfections incident to the rudimental or earthly condition, and will triumph over all evil.

(XIX.) That—all Evil is *disharmony*, greater or less, with this *most* or *divine* principle; and hence, whatever prompts, and adds Man to bring his more external nature into subjection to, and harmony with, his *interiors*—whether it be called *Christianity*, *Spiritism*, or, the *Harmonial Philosophy*—whether it recognizes “the Holy-Ghost,” “the Bible,” or, a present Spiritual and Celestial Influx—is a “means of salvation” from Evil.

II. Practical.

187. The hearty and intelligent conviction of these Truths, with a realisation of Spirit-communion, tends,

(I.) To enkindle lofty desires and spiritual aspirations—an effect opposite to that of a groveling materialism, which limits existence to the present life.

(II.) To deliver from painful fears of Death, and dread of imaginary Evils consequent thereupon, as well as to prevent inordinate sorrow and mourning for deceased friends.

(III.) To give a rational and inviting conception of the *after-life* to those who use the present worthily.

(IV.) To stimulate to the highest and worthiest possible employment of the present life, in view of its momentous relations to the future.

(V.) To energize the Soul in all that is good and elevating, and to restrain the passions from all that is evil and impure. This must result, according to the laws of moral influence, from a knowledge of the constant presence or cognizance of the loved and the pure.

(VI.) To guard against the seductive and degrading influence of the impure and unenlightened of the Spirit-world. If such exist, and have access to us, our safety is not in Ignorance.

(VII.) To prompt our highest endeavors, by *purity* of heart and life, by angelic unselfishness, and by loftiness of aspiration, to live constantly in affinity with the highest possible grades of Spirit life and thought.

(VIII.) To stimulate the *mind* to the largest investigation and the freest thought on *all* subjects—especially on the vital themes of a Spirit-philosophy and all cognate matters—that it may be *qualified* to judge for itself, *what* is right and true.

(IX.) To deliver from all bondage to *authority* (whether vested in Creed, Book, or Church) except that of perceived Truth.

(X.) To make every man more an Individual and more a Man, by taking away the supports of *authority*, and compelling him to put forth and exercise *his own* God-given, truth-determining powers.

(XI.) At the same time, to make each one *modest*, *courteous*, *teachable*, and *deferential*. (If God speaks in one person's interiors, He does the like in those of every other person, with a clearness *proportional* to their individual development; and if one would know the Truth in all its phases, it is well that he should give a patient ear to the divine voice through others, as well as himself, that all possible mistakes in his own intuitions may be corrected. To refuse to do this, is the extreme of *egotism*; while, unquestioning submission to another's convictions, is the extreme of *slavishness*.)

(XII.) To promote charity and toleration for all differences, in so far as they result from variations in mental constitution, experience, and growth.

(XIII.) To cultivate and wisely direct the *affectional* nature, making persons more kind, fraternal, unselfish, angelic.

(XIV.) To quicken the *religious* nature, giving a more immediate sense of the divine existence, presence, power, wisdom, goodness, and parental care, than is apt to be felt without a realisation of angelic ministry or mediation.

(XV.) To quicken all *philanthropic* impulses, stimulating to enlightened and unselfish labors for *universal* Human-good—under the encouraging assurance that the redeemed and exalted Spirits of our race, instead of retiring to *idle away* an Eternity of inglorious ease, are encompassing us about, as a great cloud of witnesses inspiring us to the work, and aiding it forward to a certain and glorious issue.”

Mr. Editor,

Castlemaine, 3 December, 1869.

188. I have read with intense interest and heartfelt pleasure, your First number of *The Glowworm*, which surpasses my sanguine expectations. The compilation must have entailed upon you much labor and expense. If I have not been misinformed £20 will cover the outlay on the First number, and £15 the Second number, unless you enlarge it; which pecuniary expense, the Friends of the glorious cause of Spiritism, will, as a matter of course, take good care to reimburse, remaining indebted for your labor of love—and this I hope they may do promptly. Please to accept my mite,* with the assurance, that did my circumstances warrant it, I should inclose a Check for the full amount, and leave future Numbers to be provided for by others. I fully expect it will not be long before *The Glowworm* becomes self-supporting; in the meantime, it is our duty to bear you harmless. I am, my dear Sir, Yours fraternally —

* A One pound Banknote accompanied this friendly Letter.

As Editor, I embrace this eligible opportunity of *suggesting* to the Adherents and Friends to Spiritism, an inexpensive mode of making *The Glowworm* a success—simply, by making it known.

Several friends to the Cause, have *voluntarily* intimated their readiness to contribute towards defraying the Expenses; and I am sure they mean to do so; but, up to this day (23 Dec.) not One has carried his good intentions into practice—except the above Castlemaine enthusiast, whose Name I have not his authority to mention.

I have printed 1000 Copies; and if every Copy were Sold, I should not have Sixpence for myself, after deducting the 25 per cent. Discount to the Trade. But, how am I to get the 1000 Sold? Certainly not by the aid of friends who are “so deeply interested in the sale of *The Glowworm*,” that they borrow it, and even ask Me to lend a Copy, on the assurance of its being “returned quite clean!”

Of the 1000 Spiritists in Melbourne, if but 100 were to take half a dozen Copies each, and distribute them among their acquaintances, they would not only run away with the better half of the 1000, but they would give it a publicity which £20 of Advertisements in the Newspapers could not accomplish; “but what is everybody's business, is nobody's business;” and *The Glowworm* will have to struggle into notoriety independent of its admiring and deeply interested Friends.

B. S. N.