

THE

# Harbinger of Light.

MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,  
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

*"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."*

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A PAPER read before the Eclectic Society of Melbourne, on Thursday, May 1st, by Mrs. Jackson, on "Spiritualism," has again brought that subject under the Association's notice. There was not much discussion on the paper itself, but it led to an interesting and animated discussion of the whole subject of Spiritual manifestations and intercourse, the tone of which formed a marked contrast to the former discussion introduced by Mr. H. S. Turner about two years since. Then the subject was scoffed at, and treated with ridicule by a great majority of the speakers; now it commands respectful attention, and has several able advocates amongst the Members of the Association. The debate was adjourned until the next meeting, when Mr. Turner will read a paper in reply to Mrs. Jackson's, but in the meantime a committee has been appointed to investigate the phenomena, and Dr. R—, at whose house some striking physical manifestations have recently occurred, has invited the committee to begin their investigations there. The greatest difficulty in the way of the committee will be to secure a suitable Medium, who will give his or her services to them in conducting their investigations. We have not, as yet, any public mediums who could be relied upon for the purpose, and private individuals, especially ladies, are naturally shy and nervous in submitting themselves to an ordeal before strangers, however confident they may be among friends and relations. The success of the investigation will depend much upon the spirit in which it is conducted, and from what we have heard of the constitution of the committee, we have some hopes of an impartial and diligent inquiry; this is all that Spiritualists ask, but it would be well if the committee acquainted themselves with the philosophy of the alleged manifesta-

tions that they might make due allowance for unfavorable conditions, or imperfections in the media they come in contact with. In a letter from Professor Denton (received by a gentleman at Sandhurst) by last mail, he says: "I have paid considerable attention to Spiritualism, and am satisfied beyond all doubt that Spirits of the departed can communicate with us. But I am equally satisfied that much which passes for Spiritual has a very different origin. Some persons are magnetized by the circle in which they sit, and very honestly give the reflection of the minds of the circle, supposing at the time that they are under the control of departed friends, some are self-magnetized and merely advance their own notions, and yet they may do it unconsciously and honestly credit Spirits, with very crude opinions. Undeveloped Spirits pass themselves off for other individuals and give utterance to ideas much below and sometimes altogether foreign to the person whose name is assumed for the occasion. A man in Spiritual, as in all other matters must stand securely on his feet and demand a sufficient reason before he moves, and accept nothing as Spiritual, merely because it claims to be. Some of our Mediums like Slade, Foster, and Mrs. Hardy, give names, dates, facts by the hundred, of which they could have had no knowledge, and Spirits through some of these "and others" write with their own hands in broad daylight, and give facts entirely foreign to every mind in the circle. We have only learned the alphabet of the Spiritual philosophy yet, and its literature remains to be mastered, the door is open, but we only dimly perceive what time is necessary fully to reveal."

These are the words of a hard, scientific thinker, of decidedly materialistic tendencies. He is convinced, beyond all doubt, of the reality of Spiritual intercourse, but he probably has better means of testing the assumed facts than our local scientific committee will have. A peculiar organization is necessary for Test Mediumship, which has not yet been developed here; many tests occur incidentally in private circles, which, in the presence of strangers, would have probably been withheld, the positive control of the Spirit over the organization of the Medium must be strong enough to overcome the influence of surrounding minds, to enable satisfactory tests to be given. Unless the committee are fortunate

enough to meet with a *Test Medium* it would be unreasonable of them to expect the same unvarying results that are attained through such Media as those referred to by Professor Denton. Still we have little doubt that if they pursue the subject in an earnest and truthseeking spirit, they will meet with sufficient evidence here, to satisfy them at all events of the reality of Spirit Manifestations either through the organization of the Media, or that of inanimate substances in their vicinity.

Mr. M'Lean's lecture, an abridged report of which (held over from last issue) appears in our columns, appears to have attracted considerable attention in the district in which it was given. Besides the favourable notices of the local press, a large amount of correspondence has appeared in the *Pleasant Creek Chronicle*, led off by a letter signed "F. S. S.," occupying nearly three columns, being a criticism of Mr. M'Lean's lecture. This is responded to by "Raxu," who criticises the critic; next we have a letter from the lecturer, accompanied with a long and interesting communication from the spirit of George Combe, which extends into two issues; then comes a long reply from F. S. S. (who is reported to be a clergyman), and who strengthens his position by denying the plenary inspiration of the Bible. In the same issue appears another Spirit communication, and the rules for the formation of Spirit circles. It is evident that the subject must be of interest to many in the Stawell district, to induce the *Chronicle* to devote so much of its space to it. Now that the public interest is so generally aroused in reference to Spiritualism, the example of the *P. C. Chronicle* might be followed by many other papers with advantage to their circulation and profit to their readers.

### Poetry.

#### RESURREXI.

"A REMARKABLE POEM.—The following striking poem was recited by Miss Lizzie Doten, a Spiritual trance-speaker, at the close of a recent lecture at Boston. She professed to give it impromptu, as far as she was concerned, and to speak under the direct influence of Edgar A. Poe. Whatever may be the truth about its production, the poem is, in several respects, a remarkable one. Miss Doten is, apparently, incapable of originating such a poem. If it was written for her by some one else, and merely committed to memory and recited by her, the poem is, nevertheless, wonderful as a reproduction of the singular music and alliteration of Poe's style, and as manifesting the same intensity of feeling. Whoever wrote the poem must have been exceedingly familiar with Poe, and deeply in sympathy with his spirit. But if Miss Doten is honest, and the poem originated as she said it did, it is unquestionably the most astonishing thing that Spiritualism has produced. It does not follow, necessarily, in that case, that Poe himself made the poem—although we are asked to believe a great many Spiritual things on less cogent evidence—but it is, in any view of it that may be taken, a very singular and mysterious production. There is, in the second verse, an allusion to a previous poem that purported to come from the spirit of Poe, which was published several years since, and attracted much attention, but the following poem is of a higher order, and much more like Poe than the other."—*Springfield Republican*.

From the throne of Life Eternal,  
From the home of love supernal,  
Where the angel feet make music over all the starry floor—  
Mortals, I have come to meet you,  
Come with words of peace to greet you,  
And to tell you of the glory that is mine forevermore.

Once before I found a mortal  
Waiting at the heavenly portal—  
Waiting but to catch some echo from that ever-opening  
door;  
Then I seized his quickened being,  
And through all his inward seeing,  
Caused my burning inspiration in a fiery flood to pour!

Now I come more meekly human,  
And the weak lips of a woman  
Touch with fire from off the altar, not with burnings as  
of yore;  
But in holy love descending,  
With her chastened being blending,  
I would fill your souls with music from the bright celest-  
tial shore.

As the heart yearns for another,  
As a child turns to its mother,  
From the golden gates of glory turn I to the earth once  
more,  
Where I drained the cup of sadness,  
Where my soul was stung to madness,  
And life's bitter, burning billows swept my burdened  
being o'er.

Here the harpies and the ravens,—  
Human vampyres, sordid cravens,—  
Preyed upon my soul and substance till I writhed in  
anguish sore;  
Life and I then seemed mismated,  
For I felt accursed and fated,  
Like a restless, wrathful spirit, wandering on the Stygian  
shore.

Tortured by a nameless yearning,  
Like a frost-fire, freezing, burning,  
Did the purple, pulsing life-tide through its fevered  
channels pour,  
Till the golden bowl—Life's token—  
Into shining shards was broken,  
And my chained and chafing spirit leaped from out its  
prison door.

But while living, striving, dying,  
Never did my soul cease crying,  
"Ye who guide the Fates and Furies, give, O give me, I  
implore,  
From the myriad hosts of nations,  
From the countless constellations,  
One pure spirit that can love me—one that I, too, can  
adore!"

Through this fervent aspiration  
Found my fainting soul salvation,  
For from out its blackened fire-crypts did my quickened  
spirit soar;  
And my beautiful ideal—  
Not too saintly to be real—  
Burst more brightly on my vision than the loved and lost  
Lenore.

'Mid the surging seas she found me,  
With the billows breaking round me,  
And my saddened, sinking spirit in her arms of love  
upbore;  
Like a lone one, weak and weary,  
Wandering in the midnight dreary,  
On her sinless, saintly bosom, brought me to the heaven-  
ly shore.

Like the breath of blossoms blending,  
Like the prayers of saints ascending,  
Like the rainbow's seven-hued glory, blend *our* souls  
forevermore;  
Earthly love and lust enslaved me,  
But divinest love hath saved me,  
And I know now, first and only, how to love and to adore.

O, my mortal friends and brothers!  
We are each and all another's,  
And the soul that gives most freely from its treasure  
hath the more;  
Would you lose your life, you find it,  
And in giving love, you bind it  
Like an amulet of safety, to your heart forevermore.

WHAT the fool does in the end, the wise man does in  
the beginning.

MANY hands are kissed by those who would rather  
chop them off.

## LECTURE ON SPIRITISM.

A lecture upon the above subject was delivered in the Commercial Assembly Rooms, Stawell, on Tuesday, 9th May, by Mr. Jas. M'Lean, his Worship the Mayor occupying the chair. Mr. M'Lean, who, on coming forward, was greeted with applause, commenced his remarks by reading an eloquent poem of Akenside's, with the view of showing how diversified were the minds of mortals, and the urgent desirability to establish a more comprehensive and elevating system of Spirit belief. Spiritualism, the lecturer said, would, "when properly understood and acted upon," meet the universal demand for real happiness, spiritually and materially.

"Spiritualists believe that after the change called death, mankind have a conscious and active existence, and can, under proper conditions, communicate in various ways with their friends in the material body. But objectors think this to be erroneous, supposing such to be opposed to the Bible, with this supposition we as Spiritualists are at issue—upon the grounds that modern Spiritists are enabled, from their advanced intellectual powers, to comprehend the source from whence they receive their communications, whilst our Hebrew brethren were in a comparative state of ignorance—supposing that Diety communed with them direct, whilst many of their impressions and teachings were from undeveloped and mischievous spirits, hence the many contradictions to be found in the communications through ancient media. Reason and experience tells us that in the days of Moses and Jesus men were not so advanced in thought as at present; and therefore not so well informed in general matters relating to cause and effect, hence their substituting miracles to any peculiar phenomenon which their rustic minds could not grasp. Spiritualism proves that a miracle is scientifically and philosophically impossible. None would deny that God was omnipotent, and that everything was designed for the best and wisest purpose. No change, therefore, could take place from His plan but for the worst. The Spiritual school is therefore justified in saying that a miracle is impossible. None of the powers exercised by prophets and seers was done without the province of nature. He would now proceed to show the analogy between Spiritualism and the Bible. But before doing so he would say that in adverting to that book he did so with all respect. Millions of Spiritists admired the Bible more now than ever they did."

The lecturer then quoted largely from the Bible to prove the analogy between modern Spiritualism and Bible Spiritualism. He alluded to Gideon as of a doubting Spirit—

"He doubted whether it was an angel who appeared to him in the form of a man, and he asked him for a test—namely, that he might be allowed to place a fleece of wool on the ground, and that the angel should so manifest that the fleece of wool during the night should become wet whilst the ground remained dry. The angel did this, and so effectually, that a bowl of water was wrung from the fleece. Now Gideon was not satisfied with this, but he said, 'Will the Lord permit me, that I again place the fleece of wool, and let the fleece of wool remain dry, and the ground become wet?' and the angel did that also. Still Gideon was not satisfied, nor was he convinced, until, in the seventh chapter (Judges), he received another manifestation—that of the tumbling of a cake of barley bread into the Midianitish camp! It was to be hoped that all investigators and Spiritists would find every Spirit as complaisant as the one who met Gideon."

After giving several other appropriate quotations, Mr. M'Lean said,—

In the 69th Psalm there is this remarkable verse (2), "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap." Spiritists can well understand the deep malignity of the man's heart who could utter such a prayer. Speaking of table manifestations, he (the lecturer) would read a letter which he had received from a few rustic farmers in the agricultural area of Callawadda, which no doubt would be highly interesting to many present:—

"Callawadda, May 6th, 1871.

"To James M'Lean, Stawell.

"Sir,—Hearing that you are about to deliver a lecture upon Spiritism, we deem it our duty, as lovers of truth, to furnish you with such testimony as we may possess relative to the accuracy or otherwise of the information which we recently received during our first attempts to practically investigate this wonderful philosophy.

"A few months ago, we determined upon holding what Spiritists term a circle, more out of idle curiosity than any real desire to believe in what we then looked upon as sheer absurdity. We had not, however, to remain long ere we received such startling proofs of an unseen intelligence, through the rustic table around which we sat, as to astonish all present, our questions being chiefly directed towards eliciting information concerning the double murder of the hawkers Selby and Bennett, that was so mysteriously and cruelly perpetrated some eight years ago, upon Carr's Plains Station. The replies were of such a nature as to convince all present of their accuracy. The names of the murderers were given, as also a descriptive account of the weapon used by the murderers; that the weapon would yet be found, and where; that two out of the three murderers were dead, and that the third would yet suffer for the crime, &c. Subsequent to receiving the aforesaid information, and by mere accident, was found concealed under an old log near to the spot where the murders were committed, a similar weapon to that indicated at circle, viz., a tomahawk, bearing unmistakable signs of a lengthened confinement, as also large blotches of highly-suspicious looking rust, and, strange to say, we have recently ascertained that one of the alleged murderers died a raving maniac, and that prior to his reason becoming diseased, he frequently disturbed all within his hearing, during his sleeping hours, by calling out the names of the murdered men, coupled with an occasional fendish expression of 'How the one above the ear made the — grin!' &c. It will be remembered by those who examined the dead bodies that there was a deep wound, as if from a tomahawk, over the left ear of the lad Bennett. The said tomahawk is now in the hands of the police, and we are only aware of one out of the three alleged murderers being alive, that he is an old convict who was employed upon the aforesaid station when the murders were committed, and that he is now under the special supervision of the police a short distance from Ballarat. Sundry other questions were answered in a most satisfactory manner, relative to matters connected with the members who formed the circle, and similar replies to those relating to the aforesaid murders were received at various subsequent circles in different parts of our neighbourhood. You are quite at liberty to make whatever use you think of the information herein stated, so that others with more time and ability may be induced to investigate this not-to-be-despised spirit commune.

"We are, sir, yours very truly,

"CHARLES MACINTOSH.

"DUNCAN M'PHERSON.

"DUNCAN M'INTOSH."\*

"The hypothesis of the Spirit school was—That if in the past there was a law by which Moses and Elias could speak with Jesus, then if God is eternal and his laws unalterable, that law must be now in existence. And therefore that we can now communicate with angels is a logical conclusion. There was a difference between the Old and New Testaments, but that was owing to the period of time between each. The ruling principle in the Old was, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,' in the New it was, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!' If revelations were made by angels a thousand years ago, why not now? Would God allow angels to visit rebellious Jews and not us? No; His love is universal, and angels are ever near us, aiming to comfort and seeking to bless. Upon what authority has ecclesiasticism declared the canon of revelation closed? No, my friends, revelation is not closed, and Inspiration

\*In reference to this letter, the *Pleasant Creek Chronicle*, of the 12th May, from which we cull the report, says:—"We may state that the persons who have signed it are well known to us, and are men of respectability and some standing amongst us."

is universal. (Applause.) From being a sceptic, he was induced to investigate the philosophy, and while so doing met with manifestations for which he could not account. He continued his researches, and proved it to be the greatest boon mortal ever possessed. It was a glorious belief. It does away with old dogmatic notions, and also dispels the damning doubt concerning the immortality of the soul, and with the question of the resurrection of the vile casket of clay. Spiritism removes the idea of carrying with us that casket, while proofs that we have a material and spiritual existence are not wanting. The lecturer concluded by brilliantly reciting a passage from Thompson upon the evidences of a future state, and sat down amid considerable applause.

"Mr. M'Lean then submitted several M.S.S. of Spiritual communications for general inspection, and expressed his willingness to answer any questions within his power.

"After a pause, his Worship the Mayor, as president of the Mechanics' Institute, expressed great pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. M'Lean for the very able and highly interesting lecture of that evening, and congratulated the people of Pleasant Creek upon having in their midst such an able lecturer. The vote was carried by acclamation."

#### COMMUNICATION.

RECEIVED IN MELBOURNE, JANUARY 8TH, 1871.

*"The truth shall make you free."*

FREE thought, and personal and political freedom is one of the great characteristics of this most remarkable age of the world's history. Never, since there is any record of man's existence on this planet, has his mind had the power to work so untrammelled, by either prejudice of its own, or the enforced opinions of his fellow-men.

The truths which we teach you, and which are now spreading by their inherent force over the globe, are one of the great outbreaks or results of this habit of free thought. God has given to man reasoning powers, which He has denied to other animals, their instincts suffice simply for their own preservation, the continuation of their species, and to make them willing and able servants to man. To man alone, is given the God-like mind, which enables him with eagle glance to survey heaven and earth, and to judge of right and wrong. But reason, like political or personal freedom requires to act by rules, and not to allow itself like an unkempt garden to grow weeds at its own will, without being superintended by previous arrangements and plans. Political freedom, as you all know from your studies of history, is apt to degenerate into disorder and licentiousness; personal freedom, into looseness of morals, and character. So it is with Reason. Let not man set up his reason on a pedestal, and endeavour to make his own instincts or the reason of other men prostrate themselves before it. This is wholly unwise, and likely to give rise to serious evils. Let no system of education, either for adults, children, or society at large be commenced without a due preparation by consultation with other minds, and by endeavouring by prayer, to summon the assistance of intelligencies wiser, higher, and uninfluenced by worldly and material prejudices. By this means truth may be got at, and true freedom of mind will result, the individual although allowing himself to be open to conviction on any point, still reserving to himself the casting vote as it were, of his own personal opinion. To rely too much upon one's own unaided reason, without first adopting the precautions of this character, is an error into which the young men of this generation are very apt to fall. As time passes on and the judgment matures, men see the advantages of consultation, and due caution and reflection. A crudely considered treatise on any subject, more especially on any question affecting the spiritual nature of man is a thing very greatly to be deplored. It has exactly the effect on those who are deceived by it, that indigestible and innutritious food has upon the organism. It upsets for a time the harmonious working of the whole machine, which cannot again go smoothly until the peccant matter is thrown out. But unfortunately, it is far more difficult to get rid of an error once implanted in the mind than it is to get rid of indigestible

food. What is truth? said Pilate; what, indeed! may men say still. To get at the truth is and has been the desire of man, ever since his reason was sufficiently developed to make him think for himself, and desire good. Truth has not that innate power over men's minds that enables it to overcome error at once. Truth is great and *will* prevail eventually, but alas! when? is the question that many inquirers have asked themselves, without being able to give or obtain a satisfactory answer. God in his mercy has allowed certain truths, and these the most important, to shine so brightly upon mortals who wish to see the light, that mistakes regarding them are impossible to the unprejudiced mind. But the application of truths in their minor or less apparent form is often veiled in mystery from the eyes of the sons of men. Firstly, because they are often afraid that the truth will not harmonize with their preconceived ideas. Secondly, because they do not go about the search in the right manner. There is no royal road to knowledge of the truth; the path that leads to the summit of the mountain of wisdom is both rugged, steep, tortuous, and difficult, and he who will climb it must fear neither fatigue, trouble, nor despair. But has he none of these fears, does he apply himself to the search, after due preparation and consultation of worthy friends, both in and out of the body; does he prepare that body in which his reasoning mind is obliged to work for the present, by light diet and calmness of mind: for then indeed may a man hope to attain the truth on almost any subject which it is possible for his mind in its then state of development to take in.

You know very little as yet of the powers of the human mind. Men's education even in these days of freedom of thought is still very defective. It so often begins completely at the wrong end, and reasons so thoroughly on false premises that the mind totally fails in many cases to get at the real point of the question at issue. Be bold my friends, be ambitious, set your aim high. Be not content with paltry shreds and patches of knowledge, strive to store up a granary of truth for your own benefit and that of the world which is hungering for it, but which cannot at present understand the means of attaining it in its pristine purity—Never sit down and be satisfied. Let your God-like aspirations ever lead you upwards to something higher, better, and purer than yourselves. Though we should be loth to part with your companionship as friends and pupils, how joyfully should we hand you over to a circle of spirits of a more elevated grade than ourselves, for it would show to us that our labour for your progress had not been thrown away, but like good seed in good ground had brought forth abundantly. But we do not see any immediate prospect of this at present. We are pleased at the progress you have made, and earnestly desire you to continue to follow up with ardour and energy the work which you have begun. *Good-bye.*

#### To Correspondents.

*Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.*

#### OUR CRITICS AND REVIEWERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—There are phases of quackery most numerous, and most amusing; and among these is the exhibition of silly and pretentious review-writing in consequential periodicals. The January number of the "Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review" has an article stuffed with rampant absurdities and monstrous misrepresentations, all directed at Spiritualism. For a bundle of texts the reviewer gives the titles of six books, ranging in date from 1580 to 1694, and which are referred to as "Literature of Diabolism and Witchcraft." After some forty pages of turgid nonsense, the article winds up with the complacent conclusion, "The whole imposing mass of the so-called evidence of Spiritualism is resolvable into the effects of ignorance, imagination, imposture, disease, fanaticism, and the rest of the catalogue of human vice and weakness." What miserably indiscriminating abuse, what childishly passionate scolding!

Observe the curiously inapplicable quality of the terms. For "ignorance," we have in possession a knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism, as surely founded as any knowledge can be that is built on the evidence of our external senses, aided by reason and reflection. "Imagination, imposture, disease, fanaticism," have been conclusively demonstrated to be entirely without any sort of connection with the physical manifestations. And, "the rest of the catalogue of human vice and weakness," simply conveys no meaning. It is like calling a person the stupidest, cunningest, idlest, busiest, most outrageously sneaking, cowardly, bold scoundrel that ever roared out the wickedness he brooded over. This will be seen to be a little mixed in idea, and consequently somewhat weakened in stigmatising force. So, when the reviewer winds up by asserting that Spiritualism, as a belief, is based on every "human vice and weakness," the logical absurdity of the statement makes it thoroughly inoffensive.

But the grand finale of the article reaches the climax of ridiculous argument." The whole fell crumbling down [did it?] so soon as the spirit of rational criticism [such as I am here noticing] and the advance of positive science [positive nonsense] had cleared away the mist of inveterate prejudice and tradition." Inveterate prejudice is just the thing that Spiritualism is opposing and bearing down before it with a force, calm, silent, and sublimely irresistible, moving ever onward, like an Alpine glacier, and its progress is as certain as the revolution of the earth. But hear the reviewer further. "No amount of testimony, whatever the number, repute, and unanimity of the witnesses, can weigh against the plain evidence of experience and reason, and the well-ascertained order of Nature." And this sort of trash is pointed out to me as very fine, because it appears in a pretentious periodical. The experience of one age is always altered in value by the experience of the next, as seen in the discoveries of science; and pray what is meant by the "well-ascertained order of Nature?" The knowledge of the laws of Nature is essentially imperfect and progressive. So much for this very dull man, the Westminster Reviewer.

There is an obstacle I frequently encounter in discussing Spiritualism, which presents itself in a quibbling about terms. For instance, I speak to a friend respecting the *supernatural* phenomena, and he brings me up short by demurring to the term. "Nothing in Nature can be supernatural," &c., &c. At which I feel crushed, and humbled, and say nothing more. And yet very little argument can be conducted without the use of ambiguous terms for the sake of convenience; and my friend himself goes on to say, "the supernatural is impossible, and there is an end of the matter." Now, there is such an expression as a mathematical impossibility; *e. g.*, that two straight lines should enclose a space, which is an absurdity, a contradiction in terms. Then there is the phrase, moral impossibility, signifying that extreme of improbability which leaves no scope for doubt; such as the "impossibility" of a shilling, fairly tossed, coming down head uppermost a thousand times in succession—although if this happened there would be no infraction thereby evidenced of the known or commonly received laws of Nature. Spiritual manifestations, tested by this standard, are impossibilities; we imperfectly understand the laws of Nature, therefore I tell my friend he is right in classing the supernatural with the impossible, in this sense; but he is wrong in supposing that this is equivalent to demonstrating that supernatural phenomena have no existence. This quibbling is not worth referring to except as illustrating the petty, peddling, small-grocery sort of intelligence that is brought pompously forward to investigate a system of belief involving questions of the largest imaginable importance to all mankind.

Then there is the paltry pop-gun malevolence of the low-ordered Press always pointed at Spiritualism, That eminently unscrupulous paper, the *Melbourne Leader*, must needs throw a stink-pot at the subject lately. A blackguard impostor, named Fisher, crops up at Nunawading, just as blackguard impostors are incessantly cropping up, here, there, and everywhere, and especially in the pulpit. The *Leader* writer says of Fisher: "He is, or he acts and speaks as if he were, a mesmerist."

This he may or may not be, but as having any bearing on his knavery, it might as well have been said that he was a Baptist, or a druggist, or a pyrotechnist. But the astute writer improves the opportunity for indulging in a silly sneer, in this sort, "Grant the existence of the power, call it mesmeric, magnetic, Spiritualistic, or what you like, and you can explain many instances of imposture, and many social phenomena otherwise mysterious." Note this imbecility of spitefulness, which aims to associate Fisher and Spiritualism. By such a process of argument I would undertake to prove that the writer of the article referred to is a man who would, presumed, rob a church, starve his children, or swindle his grandmother. But Spiritualism is not to be sneered at, or preached, or traduced out of existence. "It moves, for all that," as Galileo said of the earth. By the way, I hear that some local Discussion Society is preparing to investigate the theory of the earth going round the sun; and, after concluding its enquiry, the members will proceed to examine into the composition of the moon, the cause of twinkling in stars, and the truth of Spiritualism. The Parliament of Lilliput met to discuss the best way of preventing the man-mountain getting fat, lest he should shake the houses as he walked.

I remain, Dear Sir, yours truly,  
COLONUS.

#### WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A month ago, if anyone had asked me this question, I should have replied that I had not the most remote idea unless it were something connected with table-turning; and table-turning might, perhaps, be an innocent and curious trick adapted to beguile an hour with as a pleasant exchange for charades, or perhaps a clever but useless adaptation of electricity.

A month ago, an old friend, in course of conversation with me, introduced the subject of Spiritualism, and admitted that he was a believer in its teachings. A smile at his simplicity was quickly exchanged, (when on further inquiry I found he meant religious teachings) for the greatest surprise, and I confess that, could he have read my thoughts, he would not have found them flattering.

After further conversation I consented to read some works on the subject, feeling curious to know how it had been contrived to connect religion and the turning of tables. I had heard of religion turning men's heads, but the idea, in sober earnest, of tables being turned by religion tickled my fancy amazingly, and I could not help reverting to the grotesque notion of "rum and true religion." I thought I knew the particulars of every Christian sect and denomination. I had studied them all carefully and seriously for years, and I had frequently found that I knew more about the particular tenets of some one or other sect than the professors themselves; who, as it often appeared to me, made "sitting under" some reverend shepherd their whole xxxix articles. And I was quite prepared to find my friend was "sitting under" some worthy pastor who turned tables in a little Bethel round the corner.

Sir, I read the works mentioned by my friend; read with increasing wonder. And at length I came to the conclusion that, if it were not the greatest delusion the world ever knew, Spiritualism was "not of man but of God." I felt that I dare not leave the question, "What is Spiritualism?" unanswered. And I continued my readings, determined to answer it.

Let me say what, in the end, I conceive Spiritualism to be. First, and to include all else, Love to God, God the Creator and Preserver of the Universe; God whose attributes are Wisdom, Love and Truth. Secondly, Love to Man. Thirdly, that it proves the Immortality of the Soul and ultimately the eternal happiness of all mankind. Fourthly, that it allows me to use my reason, and without asking me to accept the Bible as inspired, it leaves me free to admit that it contains the word of God, and shows me how "Jesus is the Christ and the Way, the Truth and the Life."

I have never seen a table turned, have never heard a rap, have never attended a "circle," nor have I expe-

rienced (to my knowledge) any Spiritual manifestations. Nor do I need any such corroborations, and I may say that I am not easy to convince on religious matters, for after searching and studying carefully, for thirty-five years, I was still not convinced of the truth of any one of them any divisions, into which Christendom is parcelled out.

But how is it that so little, so very little, has been done to make known to the people of this country Spiritualism and its teachings? How comes it that you, who believe its doctrines, have kept them to yourselves? I find on inquiry that converts to Spiritualism have existed here for the last two years, and that some of them, men who stand high in the opinion of the best in the land, are afraid to confess their faith, lest they "suffer for conscience sake." Surely this does not look like an earnest faith, and surely you err in keeping back what you believe to be "glad tidings of exceeding great joy." "If Baal be God then follow him, but if the Lord be God then follow Him." Publish broadcast over the land what you know, court inquiry, challenge criticism, shew that yours is a living faith; let none remain in ignorance and unable to answer the question, "What is Spiritualism?"

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

INCERTUS.

Melbourne, June 3rd, 1871.

### SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR.—Spiritism claims to be founded upon facts; of the reality of these facts all are invited to judge by their senses and reason. It is frequently objected that the movement of tables is a ridiculous occupation for the disembodied; the objectors, however, fail to observe that not alone tables, but chairs, stools, sofas, pianos, clothes-presses, guitars, violins, lamps, pencils, and indeed material bodies of all kinds, have been seen to move without human contact or visible aid. Now, as inertia is the peculiar quality of these bodies, and not motion, movements without human aid attract immediate attention, and lead to the logical inference that there must be a cause for the apparent violation of the laws of nature.

A search after this cause is at present engaging many among us; and although we are not aided in Victoria by professors of the recognized sciences, although we are ridiculed by the learned, and denounced by church dignitaries as dealers in diabolical arts, still, we have the satisfaction of an inward conviction that the humblest observer and recorder of facts is assisting in some degree in the pursuit of what may ultimately be developed into a science. Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., says, in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, for July, 1870:—"That certain physical phenomena, such as the movement of material substances, and the production of sounds resembling electrical discharges, occur under circumstances in which they cannot be explained by any physical law at present known, is a fact of which I am as certain as I am of the most elementary fact in chemistry."

As I consider the universality of the phenomena obtained by sitting in a circle, and their independence of each other, good presumptive evidence against the idea of delusion and collusion, I propose to furnish you with some extracts from a record of occurrences at a circle in our midst. No sounds or movements were obtained until the ninth evening of our meeting, and what occurred then, and at the following, the tenth, were narrated in your last number, by a gentleman who attended them. On the eleventh evening, an invocation was read, music followed, and sounds on and in the table were heard first, then movement of the table was seen by all present, in fifteen minutes after the same persons had seated themselves. On the preceding, or tenth, night, thirty-five, and on the ninth forty-five, minutes had elapsed before any sounds or movements attracted attention. A lady was spending the week at my house, and being interested in the subject, desired to be present. She joined the circle, and we all sat with our hands on the surface, and our knees and feet clear of the under ledge and legs. The table, a heavy telescope one, is capable of seating, when the centre leaves are in, fourteen persons.

It soon moved towards her. We decided that three lateral movements should mean "Yes," and two "No." The following questions and answers are some of those received:—"Is there a relative present of any of the circle?" "Yes." Relatives were named, and at husband a violent movement towards her ensued. "Are you happy?" "No." "Are you suffering bodily?" "No." "Mentally?" "Yes." "Are you pleased to meet us?" "Yes." "Are we doing wrong in meeting for this purpose?" "No." "Have you seen God?" "No." "Is he then invisible?" No answer.

I then narrated a conversation I had with a friend, the day preceding his recent departure from this life. I asked him to come to our circle, if he could, and give us evidence of his continued existence. I said he promised to do so. During my narrative the table shook, and was raised in a very marked manner. I endeavoured to obtain initials of name, by calling over the alphabet, but "No," was signified by movement and by letter. On the twelfth meeting, the first movements occurred twenty-five minutes after prayer, and during music. There were three visitors present, and one only had studied the subject. The same phenomena of noises and movements occurred. The table moved, in response to request, towards a person present, with whom a claim was made for relationship. Relatives were named, and at brother a marked movement occurred. Noises of a kind not previously noticed now occurred. Soon the movements returned, and became so violent as to compel all to rise. The heavy table rushed due north, from three to four measured feet—all former movements had been east and west. A chair was at this time upset, the dresses of the ladies unfortunately, to used a nautical phrase, "fouled" with the table legs, the circle became deranged, and the experiments ceased.

Two of the visitors and some of the circle affirmed positively that they saw the table rise.

#### SEANCE XIII.

Two gentlemen and three ladies; room rather cold, ther. 56 deg.; cloudy night, damp atmosphere, no wind; invocation, music. There had been a change in the persons composing the circle. We sat for forty minutes without any occurrence beyond slight noises on the surface of the table. Two more ladies joined the circle, and within fifteen minutes we had louder noises and movements. The table was the same heavy one, and moved repeatedly west and south-east, towards Mr. R. and Mrs. B. Several questions were put, and the following among others:—"Are you happier than when we last met?" No answer. "Are you glad to meet us again?" "Yes." "Can you suggest any improvement in the arrangement of those sitting?" No answer, &c.

#### SEANCE XIV.

A mild, cloudy evening; no wind, air and ground dry, barometer during day 30.208. Fire in room, ther. 62 deg. No music. Two strangers present, who joined the circle, which consisted of three gentlemen and four ladies. We adhered to no advised arrangement in sitting, for three ladies sat together and two gentlemen. The detonating noises began in eight, and the movements in fifteen minutes after taking our seats. Table moved west, east, and north; and in the east direction in reply to a wish expressed aloud. The alphabet was called over, and at letters which indicated initials of a gentleman recently departed, distinct movement followed. It was asked, "Are you happier than when we last met?" "Yes." "Can you obtain assistance which will enable you to give better evidence of your presence?" "Yes." "May we hope to see you or to hear your voice—to hear your voice?" "Yes." "Will it impress the intelligence?" "No." "The ear?" "Yes." It was elicited that a lady present was to hear the voice. Other questions received answers. The table shook and rose from the ground more than once; the movements took place when the tips of the fingers only were lightly held on the surface. The phenomena detailed in this and the preceding communication, signed "Lux," have now been witnessed and the sounds heard by fifteen persons, whose names and addresses are in my possession, and will with their permission, be given to any inquirer. All present at the last meeting were satisfied—1st. That there was a force

present operating independently of our wills. 2ndly. That there was an intelligence directing this force.

As this circle has been formed with the object of demonstrating facts recorded elsewhere, and in the hope of bringing to light fresh truths, the members hope to be able soon to invite inquirers of all classes. The conditions surrounding the investigation of what is called Spiritism, are, however, exceedingly subtle; and it is observed that the presence of certain individuals prevents entirely the occurrence of the phenomena, while the admission of many produces violent phenomena, which can with difficulty be controlled. Thus great discretion is necessary in the admission of strangers; and I am assured that circles at which many interesting phenomena occurred in Melbourne formerly, have been prematurely broken up by neglect of rules which have been recommended by experienced observers in England and America.

I hope to be able to continue my notes in your next, and am, Sir, yours,

TRUTH BEFORE ALL THINGS.

St. Kilda, June, 1871.

MRS. BAMFORD'S VISIT TO PLEASANT CREEK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—The following interesting discourse, purporting to be from the Spirit of Sir I. Newton, was delivered through Mrs. Bamford, whilst in trance, before a mixed audience of about fifty, in the Reading-room of the Reef's Mechanics' Institute, during her recent visit to Pleasant Creek, under an engagement to the Stawell Psychological Association. During her brief stay of three days, she addressed seven or eight meetings upon various subjects, causing more or less commotion in the varied minds of her hearers; but, unfortunately, the atmosphere and general surroundings of the edifice wherein the principal seances were held, were such as to be utterly unfavourable towards the production of uninterrupted manifestations, and, therefore, many who, like Gideon of old, requiring *peculiar* tests, were somewhat disappointed, yet, upon reflection, and a more perfect knowledge of the law of mediumistic development and Spirit commune, the few disappointed friends may, ere long, realize the glorious truth in all its effulgence. At more than one of seances Mrs. Bamford, whilst under the control of a Spirit purporting to be that of Dr. John Elliotson, accurately described the mental peculiarities of several of the audience; and upon one occasion clearly read the thoughts of one gentleman, but failed to do so with others, possibly through their own anxiety, thereby causing the particular thought to become confused, coupled to the aforesaid unfavourable surroundings, &c.

I am happy to say that several circles of *intellect* are in course of formation in and around Stawell, and that our psychological association are buckling on their armour of investigation.

ONWARD.

INVOCATION.

GREAT FATHER OF MANKIND! look down on these thy children. With thy powerful breath bring thy messengers who are able these to teach. O! bright principle of truth and love, fain would we have thee so to bring us nearer to the knowledge of thy love!

Friends,—In addressing you to-day, we would try to make you realise how much power we have to give you what your souls desire. Fain would we tell it as you wish to have it told, but this would not be wise. It would be better, friends, to wait a little while. Now your minds are unprepared—ye would not believe it. Fain would we give you all the tests ye ask; but the time will come when that medium I told you of\* will so address you, and your minds will then be better prepared. She will give you what will bless you, and suit your case. Why is there

so much scepticism amongst you? Why is your reason blinded? Why are your minds so ruled and guided by your fellow-men? I will tell you why. It is through idleness! Ye would have others do for you what it is proper you should do for yourselves. We would have ye prove for yourselves by reason—God's greatest gift to man is reason. Use it; prove by it to your own minds the glorious truth. When in ignorance you would listen to men who teach only what is false; when in ignorance you lend yourselves to this, and profess to be Christians! Christians!—to believe a dogma; listening to the teachings of men who tell you what your reason rejects as false. Oh! that ye could weed out the errors and find the truth of those teachings of the great man Christ! Follow out his teachings; his pure and holy life. Do as he bid ye: "Love your neighbours as yourselves; "Do unto others as ye would that men should do to you." Know ye not what led him to suffer. Even now he suffers for your doubts. Your teachers would bring him before you, as the Great and Infinite himself. Could he, with his deep humility bear to hear such homage paid to himself? All those whom he yearned for have brought him down to earth by their continued cry of "Christ, Christ." He fain would give them comfort. But they say to him, "Oh God," and how can he comfort them when he is not God, but God's son; a part of God, as e'en thou art, my brothers. Why are you blind to truth and reason. The time shall come when doubt and error, and orthodoxy too, shall clear a way. Then shall you realise the truth. Great and glorious are the ways of God; great the means by which he would make known those ways. No blind dogmas, but bright and glorious teachings from the Spirit-world to sustain you amid your troubles. Man! ye make trouble for yourselves. The principles by which you live are false! The time is fast approaching when in the minds of men shall ripen the seed sown even within the last few years. Men shall throw off the chains which bind them now, and minds shall be freed from priestly fetters. So do we look to you with the desire of bringing you to better thoughts—and thus benefit ourselves. Even here, in the spirit-world, are many in darkness, still waiting for the resurrection and the judgment. What a sympathy and love we have for those misguided ones. There are bands of spirits united for this one great purpose—to bring the minds of men to learn the truth. No idle state of rest is ours, as you would think of heaven; no dreadful state of pain, as you would also teach of hell. Hell is a man's own conscience, friends; and each in his proper sphere of action must work out his own redemption. There are many among you who yet have the fear of hell in their hearts. *Root* it out, and make room for the truth. No spirit is so high but you may attract it by your wish. For a while I leave you, but ere doing so I breathe you a prayer to that Great Power—

Great and holy God,  
Look down on these thy misguided children,  
So give them patience,  
So prove to them without doubting,  
All we would so gladly give to them.†

So would I address ye, and prove the power that music has on the mind. Your medium is not so well controlled by me as before. She is in pain from atmospheric changes. I will address you again, if inclined to listen.

CASTLEMAINE.

(FROM OUR LOCAL CORRESPONDENT.)

In my last I alluded to the public circles held at Mr. Bamford's, and the interest they were exciting. This interest seems to be increasing, judging from the large attendances, visitors coming even from Sandhurst for that purpose. Last Tuesday there was a small posse from that place, and one gentleman among them exhibited evidences of great susceptibility to Spiritual influences, becoming powerfully controlled. He described his sensations as being delightful, and the scenes presented to his awakened vision as grand, making him feel loth to return to the normal condition. He expressed his astonishment, more on account of his having been

\* The one alluded to is a young lady whose mediumistic powers are rare.

† This prayer was sung by Mrs. Bamford.

unsuccessfully operated upon by several professors of electro-biology. The writing mediums are more numerous than ever—as many as a dozen may be seen under influence at one time, in various stages of development. The numerous private circles in Castlemaine are making steady progress, and new developments are constantly taking place in some of them. The Children's Progressive Lyceum is increasing in numbers, and the scholars appear to take a lively interest in what is taught them. We have every reason to be satisfied with the progress of our glorious cause in this district, and hope to hear of as good results in other quarters. I will write you from time to time when anything of interest transpires, meantime I remain

BETA.

### ON THE PRESENT TENDENCY OF LIBERATED THOUGHT.

ANIMALS are prompted by instinct, man regulates his conduct by reason, while the Deity is guided by intuition. We thus occupy a place between the lowest and the highest, and while we look forward to what our aspirations indicate as our future, we may with benefit take warning from the follies of the past. Does a retrospective view of the beliefs of our ancestors afford our reason satisfaction? Can any read sacred, or ordinary history, without horror and grief, at the enormities perpetrated in the name of religion, by following the dictates of what is called conscience? Now while most admit that the race has ever been working and advancing under guidance, it must be evident that man has never done his best. There have always been influences for good which he might have recognized: light has always shone through a Confucius, a Socrates, a Plato, a Jesus, an Alfred, a Swedenborg. No time has been without its phenomenal history. Truth, holy truth has been knocking at the door of man's heart for ages: a saviour has ever been standing there seeking admission, but his voice was not heard. Progression, the evident design in all nature, has been retarded. Mind, not content with lording it over the brutes, has sought dominion over fellow minds. Thus ambition of men has been a constant source of non-development. The race has been mentally enslaved, and has never been permitted to think out the great problems. An assent to dogmas was demanded at the risk of life, and faith was proclaimed as necessary to salvation from terrors of priestly invention. This was the parent of hypocrisy; all sorts of devices were resorted to in order to enslave the minds of men, while they are still terrified from applying their reason to their religious beliefs. Mosheim tells us in vol. 1, page 130, "that the doctrine that it was not only lawful but commendable to deceive and lie for the sake of truth and piety, early spread among the christians of the second century;" and if then, it may reasonably be inferred, that the same art of deceiving was practised among the wilful sensual Jews, the custodians of the most ancient history, who appear never to have been instructed in the doctrine of future life.

As may be imagined, Reform and reformers were always dreaded: Socrates and Jesus were both unbelievers in the prevalent doctrines then considered as vital truths; the spread of infidelity gave the priests then, as much uneasiness as it gives the clergy now, and as they could not put them down by argument, they did, what no doubt many have since desired to do, to other freethinkers, they killed them. The pure teaching of the son of Joseph and Mary, soon became Paganized; as time rolled on, man added to his beliefs; the true faith was never entirely lost, but by a process of accretion, theology was developed. While the tribes and nations fought, the warriors delegated to a class, the duty and privilege of prayer. An angry Deity conceived in the likeness of the mythical Saturn ever ready to devour his children, had to be appeased by blood. The pagan idea of sacrifice developed the doctrine of the sacrifice on the cross; and a sacerdotal order has ever been a supreme power in every state. The admission to their paradise, and immunity from their brimstone pit, was purchased, (1) and the race slumbered for centuries as regards religious thought. It has however ever been a disturbed sleep, there were periodic wakings: reason would have itself heard, and Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Socinus, Servetus and others, asserted the right of private judgment, although some of them denied this to others. Their light was according to their day; some of the incrustation of religion was shaken off, alas only some, and in its place has been imposed a superstition of another kind. This has been submitted to for more than three hundred years.

Religious belief has become fossilized, it has not been reasoned upon. An infallible church was given up, but the reformers set up in its stead an idol equally offensive to truth. This incubus has really retarded the race since the so-called reformation. The Anglo-Saxon has not advanced by theology, but in spite of it. It is a fact that progress has ever been impeded by the clergy on the authority of the Bible. The Royal Society, the microscope, telescope, vaccination, life assurance, fanners for wheat, chloroform, secular education, the science of Geology, were all declared to be atheistical inventions of Satan, and subversive of the christian faith.

(1) The North British Review lately passed into the hands of liberal Catholics; in the last number is an article on "The Borgias," and the writer says "He (Alexander VI.) simplified and cheapened the deliverance of souls in purgatory. . . . The mass was not held necessary, to visit the churches did as well. Neither confession nor contrition was required, but only money. It came to be the official doctrine, that a soul flew up to heaven, as fast as the money chinked in the box."

History reveals the fact that the gradual diminution of theological authority, has been in a direct proportion with progress. The Historians Lecky and Buckle both notice this; the former says (2) "In medicine, physical science, commercial interests, politics, and even ethics, the reformer has been confronted with theological affirmations which barred his way, which were all defended as of vital importance, and were all in turn compelled to yield before the secularising influence of civilization." I look in vain in history, for names of churchmen who have advocated any of the great social reforms forced upon society. There is one single exception. I allude to Archbishop Langton who with the Barons obtained from King John the Magna Charta.

It is darkest however just before dawn. Motion is a property of matter. They are, says Davis (3) "co-eternal principles," and motion pervades all nature. Thought participates in the general activity and can no more be permanently chained than can water be restrained from flowing down hill.

The fact is apparent, that the religion of the Teutonic race, is being subjected to the scrutiny of the most active, intelligent, and fearless minds. The immense progress made in the physical sciences this century, has led to the conclusion that authority is not the soundest basis on which to erect belief: the overthrow of theories by new discovery, indicates that unbelief in traditions is necessary, and what is termed (4) infidelity compulsory. With every new fact it is needful to reject the authority that has denied that fact. Pope Urban the eighth solemnly condemned the motion of the earth as a heresy; Alexander the seventh confirmed and approved that decree, by his apostolic authority. Is the authority of these ignorant Popes on a point now adopted by all civilized nations to be affirmed or rejected? Depend upon it, other dogmas now upheld as vital by the churches, are gradually losing their hold on men's minds, and will before very long, be as effete as the decrees of these Popes, who placed faith before reason. The authority upon which the dogmas of Popes, priests, and presbyters is based, is being scrutinised by science, philosophy, and reason in the light of the nineteenth century. Very recently Mr. Foulkes in what is certainly a damaging indictment by one of her own sons, proclaimed to the world that in an investigation of the Papal claims, he had discovered that they were based upon the pseudo decretals, which are now shown to be forgeries. His words are (5) "history deposed in short unhesitatingly, that Rome rose to the eminence which she occupied in the thirteenth century when at her zenith—and from which in the Providence of God she has been gradually, but surely descending ever since, most unrighteously as concerns the church, the whole church I mean—by fraud and force . . . allowing the primitive code of the church to be stealthily supplanted by a new code based upon forgeries." Thus the very foundations of the most ancient church are discovered to be of the most rotten materials. But the Protestant churches found their claims to Divine truth, not upon tradition but upon a book. This compilation of translated old manuscripts, called most inconsistently "the word of God," is found when illumined by modern criticism, to contain words, verses, and even parts of chapters, inserted on no known authority; not found in the most ancient manuscripts, they must then have been inserted by copyists or translators, and are called interpolations, earnest truthseekers call them forgeries. (6) Are these passages then to be considered as the word of God? Surely not, they are the words of men, and the Privy Council decided reasonably in the case Wilson v. Fendall, that the Bible contained the word of God, but that it was not justly "the word of God." How injurious then to the sacred cause of truth is it for interested teachers to promulgate such views, as are expressed by the Rev. J. Burgon quoted by Mr. Naylor, in his most instructive work on "the Unity, Duality and Trinity of the Godhead;" he says "The Bible is none other than the voice of him that sitteth on the throne; every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, 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 on the throne, absolute faultless, unerring, supreme." This is a fair sample of what our brave Dr. Bromby calls worshipping the letter, and which is most ignorant idolatry. The south sea islander who bows before his wooden image, and the African who lacerates his flesh to appease his Fetish, are more excusable in their ignorance, than is any European, who in the face of the published Testaments of Tischendorf and Alford, Mill, and Griesbach; the researches of Michaelis, Lardner, and others, can prostrate his reason, before a bad translation of very ancient documents, the history and authorship of which is only traditional. (7)

But ideas and opinions must advance. The light shineth into darkness, whether the darkness comprehendeth it or no. The truth seekers in Victoria are being aided by a strong band in other places, working with us, unknown to themselves, "for the Lord against the mighty." The citadel of orthodox superstition, is not only being besieged from without, but there is mental rebellion within. Locke, Newton, Milton, Lardner, Hume, Kant and the whole German Rational school, laid the train that has been fired by Colenso, Temple, Williams, Jowett, Seely, Maurice, Kingsley, Stanley, and the courageous Voysey; by Principal Tulloch, Norman Macleod, Dr. Wallace and Bishop Ewing in Scotland; by the late Archbishop of Dublin in Ireland; churchmen mark you, and

(2) Hist. of European Morals.

(3) Nature's Divine Revelations. Page 122.

(4) "The sceptic and infidel is he who refuses to accept facts and rejects the conclusions of an enlightened reason." PAGE.

(5) Letter to the most Rev. Archbishop Manning Page 27.

(6) Even Bishop Perry now admits the spuriousness of 1 John v. 7, which was known 40 years ago to scholars as a forgery, and yet has been retained and taught as the word of God.

(7) Our Bibles are still printed with the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, which Biblical Scholars have known for some years, Paul never wrote.



some like Paul, leaders among the strictest sects—these are being assisted by the workers in science; and Huxley with his Protoplasmic theory; Tyndall with his advocacy of continuous evolution; Lyell with his two to three hundred millions of years for the earth's age; Wallace and Darwin with their formation of species by "natural selection;" Lubbock with his Ethnological discoveries of the savage being the ancestor of civilized man, and other truthseekers in natural revelation, are engaged in undermining *without knowing it*, the gigantic superstition of Popular mythology. Veneration for truth, and a fearless search after it, is without question the characteristic of the age. It is felt that before all things, before even traditional beliefs formerly held most sacred, (and thus removed from scrutiny) must come the truth. "If" says the late Archbishop Whately, "we give way to a dread of danger from the circulation of any truth, physical, moral or religious, we manifest a want of faith in God's power or in the will to manifest his own cause. There may be danger in every truth, since all may be perverted, and may give offence to some. It is not only when we perceive the mischief of falsehood and disguise, and the beneficial tendency of fairness and candour, that we are to be followers of truth. The trial of our faith is when we cannot perceive this, and the part of a lover of truth, is to follow her at all seeming hazards, after the example of him who came into the world that he might bear witness to the truth." The present Archbishop of Canterbury said in the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution some years ago—"The man of Science ought to go on honestly, patiently, diffidently, observing and storing up his observations, and carrying his reasonings unflinchingly to their legitimate conclusions, convinced that it would be treason at once to the dignity of science and religion if he sought to help either by swerving ever so little from the straight rule of truth."

Mr. Drummond said at the opening of the new College, Manchester, last October, "A vast change of opinion is taking place in regard to the origin and functions of the Bible. This change is esteemed by those who adhere to the old systems of belief an attack on its authority. Those in the midst of the movement feel that a veil is being lifted from their eyes, and flashes of light are breaking in, and disclosing depths of spiritual wisdom, which had lain concealed amid the mists of an erroneous hypothesis. On all sides, the dogma of Bible infallibility is giving way, and that wonderful literature is being rescued from the position to which a mistaken reverence had consigned it. No longer the miraculous book before whom the clearest of evidence of science must own itself mistaken, and which must crush with its dead weight all the original springs of spiritual life. It is the varied expression of the soul's communion with God told in conformity with the laws of human thought and culture."

The late Archbishop Whately (8) says "Nor again is there any reason to suppose that any of the Apostles was in such a sense infallible as that he could not teach false doctrine. It does not appear that they were always compelled to write the truth, and if there be no such evidence, then any given passage in the New Testament, may convey a falsehood, and a fallible church may have founded any given dogma on passages which may express a falsehood."

The late Dean Alford said "The Evangelists and Apostles were not supernaturally informed, but left in common with others to the guidance of their natural faculties. In the last apology of Stephen we have at least two demonstrable historical mistakes." Dr. Stanley, the learned Dean of Westminster, says "The acceptance of every part of the old Testament as of equal accuracy is rendered impossible by every advance made in Biblical science."

Here then is authoritative language for those who desire it. Science is exact knowledge, and science finds that the written word which its worshippers call an infallible guide, but which no where between its own lids asserts this claim for itself, so far from being infallible, abounds in inexact, incorrect, and erroneous teachings.

Professor Huxley says (9) "The myths of Paganism are as dead as Osiris or Zeus, and the man who should revive them in opposition to the knowledge of our time would be justly laughed to scorn; but the coeval imaginings current among the rude inhabitants of Palestine recorded by writers whose very name and age are admitted by every scholar to be unknown have unfortunately not yet shared their fate, but even at this day, are regarded by nine-tenths of the civilized world as the authoritative standard of fact, and the criterion of the justice of scientific conclusions, in all that relates to the origin of things, and among them of species. In this nineteenth century, as at the dawn of modern physical science, the cosmogony of the semi-barbarous Hebrew, is the incubus of the philosopher, and the opprobrium of the orthodox."

Pretty plain language this from the President of the British association; again, the same brave thinker says (10) "The whole of modern thought is steeped in science. I believe that the greatest intellectual revolution mankind has yet seen, is now slowly taking place by her agency. She is teaching the world that the ultimate court of appeal is observation and experiment and not authority. She is teaching it to estimate the value of evidence, she is creating a firm and living faith in the existence of immutable, moral, and physical laws, perfect obedience to which is the highest possible aim of an intelligent being."

This, singularly enough was taught by a remarkable man, in a remarkable book, in 1846. (11) "The test of truth" he said "is the amount of evidence you receive through the organization, and not that originating in the organization, make the body, the organs, the medium through which you test reality."

You will remember how Huxley's Protoplasmic theory startled society some two years ago; how the upholders of the literal truth of the Eastern allegory that the trees, and plants, animals and man sprang into being by a sudden fiat, received a shock. And how he was called unbeliever, infidel, and other pretty names that the orthodox apply so freely to those who dissent from their narrow and dismal views. This is what he said at the opening address of the British association in 1870, "If it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time, to the still more remote period when the earth was passing through physical and chemical conditions, which it can no more see again than a man can recall his infancy, I should expect to be a witness of the evolution of living protoplasm from not living matter. I should expect to see it appear under forms of great simplicity, endowed like existing fungi, with the power of determining the formation of new protoplasm, from such matters as Ammonium" &c.

Now this Professor, is only corroborating the truth of the revelations before quoted for Davis said (12) "Chemistry will unfold the fact, that light when confined in a certain condition, and condensed, will produce water, and water thus formed subjected to the vertical influence of light, will produce by its internal motion and further condensation a gelatinous substance of the composition of the spirifer, the motion of which indicates life. This again being decomposed and subjected to evaporation, the precipitated particles which still remain will produce purified matter, similar to earth, which will produce the plant known as the fucoides. . . . "Masses of the above description were existing in various parts of the earth, and upon the segregated beds formed by the action of the elements upon the first stratified portions of the earth's crust. These breathed into existence the forms termed flowerless and marine plants, the highest type of which is the fucoides." For a full description of the development of life the reader is referred to the work quoted.

Professor Tyndall at the same meeting said "Does life belong to what we call matter, or is it an independent principle inserted into matter, at some suitable epoch when the physical conditions became such as to permit of the development of life? There are the strongest grounds for believing that during a certain part of its history, the earth was not, nor was it fitted to be the theatre of life. Did creative energy pause until the nebulous matter had condensed, until the earth had been detached, until the solar fire had so far withdrawn from the earth's vicinity, as to permit a crust to gather round the planet? Until the air was isolated, the seas formed, evaporation, condensation and rain began &c. Having waited through these aeons until proper conditions set in, did it send the fiat forth, let life be? . . . The process must be slow which commends the vival hypothesis to the public mind. Strip it naked, and you stand face to face with the notion that not alone the more ignoble forms of animalcular or animal life, not alone the noble forms of the horse and lion, not alone the exquisite and wonderful mechanism of the human body, but that the human mind itself, emotion, intellect, will, and all their phenomena were once latent in a fiery cloud;" and then after saying that spirit and matter have ever been presented to us, the one as all noble, the other as all vile, instead of equally wonderful and worthy, two opposite faces of the same mystery, he continues "without this revolution of the notions now prevalent the evolution hypothesis must stand condemned, but in many thoughtful minds such a revolution has already occurred. . . . I do not think this evolution hypothesis is to be scouted away; I do not think it wicked! Fear not the evolution hypothesis! If it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, if it be of man it will come to nought. Trust me its existence as a hypothesis in the mind is quite compatible with the simultaneous existence of all those virtues to which the term Christian has been applied."

Now hear what the clairvoyant said (13) "There is not such a thing as absolute creation, but what is termed such is merely a development of inherent principles which are eternally established and sustained. New forms and properties, new developments and refined and exalted conditions of matter, are merely the visible ultimates of the grosser yet essential principles of matter and motion. They are therefore produced or rather made manifest by the law of perpetual progression. The highest and most perfect form known to exist is one link in the great chain of correspondency." Now it is often stated by prejudiced persons, and feared by weak reasoners that this doctrine of continuous evolution leads to atheism, this is false reasoning, and so thinks the seer, for he continues "Admit this proposition and you are compelled through that admission to repose belief in one great Power, which is governing and controlling all things and has established a law equal to its own comprehension; whereby not one thing is existing, but what is uniformly developed in forms, sizes, degrees and associations, according to the force and power which is indivisibly and eternally co-existent therewith. Contemplation is necessary, deliberate reverence, and a submissive disposition are positively required, in order to comprehend and enjoy the privilege of associating with the conceptions and argument herein set forth." Now Darwinism represents two prominent ideas, Firstly, That all life originally proceeded from one or more simple germs. Secondly, That the Almighty now works, and has ever worked, by adaptive modifications. Here then is Science proclaiming a revelation of the Genesis of all things, very different from that accepted by our ancestors in the childhood of the race. A revelation, confirmed, demonstrated if you like by the great naturalists, Wallace and Darwin, but singularly enough proclaimed years ago in the lectures of the entranced Davis.

Thus the liberated mind is everywhere rejecting antiquated ideas, and is appealing to facts. "A vast concurrence of evidence"

8 Cautions for the Times. Page 111.

9 Origin of species.

10 Lay Sermons.

11 The principles of Nature, her Divine revelations a voice to mankind, by A. J. Davis.

12 Divine Revelations. Page 237.

13 Nature's Divine Revelations. Page 68.

says Mr. Lecky, (14) "directs the minds of scientific men to the conclusion, amounting to moral certainty, that the whole course of physical nature is governed by law; that the notion of the perpetual interference of the Deity with some particular classes of its phenomena, is false and unscientific, and that the theological habit of interpreting the catastrophes of nature as Divine warnings, or punishments, is a baseless and pernicious superstition!" It is evident that the course of thought cannot now be restrained as formerly, by fear. It is the fault of theologians who desire to stereotype the childish ideas of the past, that the progress of science should always appear to be so antagonistic to sacred things. Science is not opposed to Divine truth, but to the schemes of Divines. They are perceiving this, and are taking alarm. Canon Liddon (15) says "Infidelity menaces us with intellectual forces greater than at any other period in the history of the Christian Church." "We live" says Bishop Ewing (16) "in anxious times. The old institutions of our country are upon their trial, sometimes it would seem as if they were about to break up, unequal to the strain of the nineteenth century. What the church of the future may be, is to us English Christians a question we cannot face without awe, and yet I venture to think from the spirit of honest inquiry abroad not without hopefulness. Face it we must; the discoveries of science, the difficulties of religion, the earnestness of contention assuredly indicate that we are on the eve of some great crisis in our religious history. Theology say some is dead in England, all its wants is decent burial. Be it so, if from its grave there is to come a better resurrection." And again "As a rule for the last 1800 years with few exceptions Christianity has not been set forth as at first. The teaching of Christ and of his apostles has been much misconceived and misrepresented. The real advent of Christianity is yet to come, its golden age is in the future, not in the past."

A layman, F. W. Newman writes "The age is ripe for something better, for a religion which shall combine the tenderness, humility and disinterestedness which are the glory of the present Christianity, with that activity of intellect, untiring pursuit of truth, and strict adherence to impartial principle which the schools of modern science embody."

The leaders in every church perceive that the intelligence of the community is not with dogmatic teaching.

The Rev. Dr. Wallace (17) of the National Church of Scotland writes "The true policy of church preservation lies in widening its doctrinal basis as the times permit. This alone will conciliate the intelligence of the country, which ultimately leads it. If the religious thought of the country is moving toward a new point of view, the church must go there also to meet it, if it means to be instrumental in preserving a living faith within the mind of the nation."

The *American Churchman* of last October says "The land awaits a spiritual leadership. It is as yet utterly adrift. It has lost faith in its old guides; its rampant individualism refuses to bend before any mere human authority; it looks for some voice that repeats and echoes unflinchingly the voice of God; it demands power and might in him that speaks and the certainty of an undoubted faith in the speaker. Never did nominal Christian land so need the kingdom of God in his power."

A writer in a Melbourne religious organ (18) recognizes the serious aspect of advancing unbelief in traditional beliefs and says "The communities of Christendom are drifting from their moorings in the belief of the supernatural, and faith which is essentially the eye of the supernatural is closing its eyelids before the more dazzling glare of demonstration and positivism. A great reaction is going on against religious faith. There is hardly a region where this has not been felt. It has been felt in the criticism of Holy writ. The very men who had undertaken to expound it had often applied to it a criticism that had shaken its very foundations. It has been felt in education, where all positive religious teaching is fast disappearing. The reaction has passed like an earthquake wave over every land in Christendom. To what then are we coming? Have we outgrown religious faith? Is humanity at its majority freed from the laws of heaven as well as the tutelage of priesthood? We do not for a moment recognize this as the drift of the current. We are in the centre of an eddy caused by a rock that has long obstructed the stream. Christianity is not about to disappear from the earth. She is only shaking the mighty prison house of sacerdotal pretension and bigotry where she has been immured for centuries." And the writer proceeds to point to the Latin Church and her excesses of belief as the incubus that is to be shaken off, blind to the Bibliolatry, irrational creeds, and superstitions that repel truth lovers from the sects.

The Roman Hierarchy disturbed also by the spread of free thought, among themselves, by Freemasonry Spiritism, the Bible society, and Mazzini, have attempted to lighten the chains that bind the intellect of their willing votaries; Bishops and priests in that ancient church are beginning to discover that they too have a faculty of mind named reason. Père Hyacinth throws up his orders; Father Saffield, the great promoter of Peter's Pence, a friar of the order of Dominicans, takes charge of an Unitarian congregation near London; while intelligent perverts like Mr. Ffoulkes return to that purer church whence they came.

Professor Philopanti delivered a lecture on Astronomy in the Colosseum of Rome last February to an audience of five thousand persons. He explained the plurality of worlds, and the probability that the stars and planets were inhabited by beings more or less like ourselves, in opposition to the opinion of the clergy, who consider that our world is more especially deserving of Divine care. He argued that the maker of this wonderful universe was a God, all powerful, wise and good, and not as described by the clergy, spiteful, capricious, foolish and powerless. He thought the

clergy the enemies of religion; that England was more religious than France, France more than Italy, and that the Papal States were the least religious part of Italy." Thus while churchmen are uneasy and look for light and help, the minds of laymen are being moved by the spirit of inquiry, and love of truth. All are impressed that a critical time is at hand. Fanatics as they have done since the time of the Apostles, continue to foretell the end of all things. Advertisements announce the immediate coming of Christ. Earnest and learned students of prophecy have by common agreement declared that the last twenty years, and this very decade would be marked by unusual spiritual phenomena. Nay Baxter, Bickersteth, Cumming, Faber and others have predicted that the millenium has been due some time. The interpreters of prophecy have however committed the too common error of taking tropes as literal expressions; they have fixed their attention on the material view of a personal reign of Jesus, for a thousand years; they strain their chronology to prophetic and literal years, to make it synchronous with events. They waste their time and learning in childish notions of Universal monarchs, earthquakes, obscuring of constellations, drying up of the Euphrates, &c. &c. They stand gazing into heaven, unmindful of what is going on around them. They cry "lo here, and lo there," forgetting that the kingdom of God "cometh not by observation," . . . . . "for behold the kingdom of God is within you!"

Now there never was a vacuum but it was filled, a need but it was supplied. In the beautiful language of Emma Hardinge "who ever extended his arms in true aspiration but found they were filled by an angel." Can we doubt that the sun of light and truth is about to arise upon the world; that not one holy spirit but many are descending upon us; that Christ is coming not in person but in principle, not bodily but spiritually. The heaven is indeed opened, and the seventh angel is pouring his vial into the air. Who can doubt that the beautiful allegory of the beloved John depicted a time we are now entering upon. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with them and he will dwell with them,' &c." A philosophical historian (19) writing on the conversion of Rome pithily remarks "That the greatest religious change in the history of mankind, should have taken place under the eyes of a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and historians, who were profoundly unconscious of the decomposition around them, that all of these writers should have utterly failed to predict the issue of the movement they were observing, and that during the space of three centuries, they should have treated as *simply contemptible*, an agency which all men must now admit to have been for good or for evil, the most powerful moral lever that has ever been applied to the affairs of man, are facts well worthy of meditation in every period of religious transition."

The writer has endeavored to indicate, firstly, that Science is pressing Theology, and saying "Stand aside, our facts are God's words, and are more plainly read than your texts!" Secondly, that a revolution gradual, insensible it may be, is taking place in Theology; that thought liberated from priestly despotism is pushing past Theology and metaphysics. Thirdly, that the astonished teachers of barbarous doctrines transmitted to us from a rude age, are becoming aware of the approaching storm, and are anxiously watching the future. Those who know the opinions of the late Lord Lyndhurst, Robert Chambers, Professor de Morgan, Robert Owen, of Lord Lytton, Viscount Adare, the Marquis de Mirville, Leon Favre, Jules Favre, Garibaldi, Mazzini, and who share the belief of Mr. Varley, Electrician to the Atlantic Cable, A. R. Wallace F.R.G.S., F.R.L.S. Drs. Gully, Ashburner, Storer, Dixon M'Leod, the late Dr. Elliotson, Warren Chase, the late H. C. Wright, Signor Damiani, Lord Lyndsay, H. D. Jenken F.R.G.S., William and Mary Howitt, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Hiram Powers, Keesuth, and of millions of intelligent educated men and women in all countries, they can perceive the purport of this great upheaval in modern religious thought. These know that there must be a process of disintegration, before a final assimilation of beliefs to pure truth can take place. They see a new Catholic faith, that is predicted to be the religion of the civilized world in the year 1900. They know that

"Through the harsh noises of the day  
A low sweet prelude finds its way,  
Mid clouds of doubt and creeds of fear  
A light is breaking calm and clear.  
That angel song, now low and far,  
E'er long shall sound from star to star;  
That light, the breaking day which tips  
The Golden Spirit Apocalypse!"

W. L. R.

#### IF NOT SPIRITS, WHAT IS IT?

I have been a member of the Masonic fraternity for thirteen years, and in June, 1864, it was our good fortune to have a visit and a course of lectures at Susanville, Cal., from Mrs. Emma Hardinge. During her stay, we were privileged to receive her as a guest at our home.

The 24th of June was celebrated by the Masons, and while making preparations, I had some Masonic emblems in our parlour; and Mrs. Hardinge became partially controlled, and, while in that condition, and during a running conversation, she gave me two Masonic signs and two words in a manner that was not observable by

14 History of European Morals.

17 Recess Studies.

15 Letter to Guardian, March, 1871.

18 Victorian Independent, May, 1871.

16 Present day Papers.

19 Lecky.

herself or anyone else present.

For the time I was very much surprised, it being the first Masonic signs that I had ever received from a spiritual source. When the influence left her, I asked her if she would meet with a few Masons in our parlour, and see what the spirits would do. She said she was willing to give her time. I invited some twelve or fifteen brothers from Dupen Lodge, No. 149; among them were the Master and Wardens. They met in our parlour, and the family retired to another part of the house. The doors were locked and the window-blinds closed. We all being seated around the room, Mrs. Hardinge became entranced, and to all appearance perfectly oblivious to surrounding conditions. She acted in the capacity of Master; went through the work of opening the lodge on the first degree of Masonry. She gave all the lectures, signs, and words pertaining to the degree in regular order; closed in that degree; opened in the next, giving everything in regular order; and so on, through what is known as the Blue Lodge. After closing on the Master's degree she gave us a very impressive address on the morals and teachings of Masonry, and remarked that she would like to have gone on through higher degrees, but she saw that, as far as any of us had gone (which was the case). This I give upon the honour of a man and a Mason. I say, let the sceptic deride. I know all the resources that Mrs. Hardinge would be likely to have, to gain Masonic secrets and knowledge; and then, when we take into account the high moral character, and consider how far it would be from her, even if it were possible for her to have gained this knowledge from any other than a spiritual source, she would never have used it and claimed it to be from spirits. I cannot account for it upon any hypothesis except that she was entranced and controlled by a spirit that knew more Masonry than all of us combined. I am thoroughly convinced that, in her normal condition, she knows nothing of the secrets of Masonry.

During the whole course of my investigation of Spiritualism, I have tried to account for many of the tests I have received in some other way; but when I lay aside the agency of spirits, it is all a mystery.—P. Chamberlin, in the "Banner of Light."

#### RECOVERY OF A STUD AND DIAMOND-RING.

TO MR. NAYLER,

Hobart Town, 10th June, 1871.

Dear Sir,—At your request, I now submit for your information, details of the restoration of a gold stud by Spirit-agency, which was lost on Mount Wellington, some few months back, by a respectable tradesman of this city. (who happens to believe in Spiritism, and who holds a Writing-circle at his residence, weekly; but who is, to my mind, none the less reliable on that account) and as I happened to be one of the party of pleasure seekers amongst the hills, on the occasion, and helped to search for the stud, when first missed, I take upon me to vouch for the correctness of the following remarkable incident of a physical demonstration by Spirit-condescension.

Mr. T— who commonly wore a set of studs, fully believes he started in the morning for the mountain, with the intire set—besides, two of the party happened to take especial notice of that particular stud, and they are prepared to swear, that they distinctly saw the stud in his shirt-front. Just before returning home, in the afternoon, Mr. T—'s attention was called to the absence of the stud, when diligent search was immediately instituted; but, unsuccessfully. Mr. T— however, thought there might be a chance of its being still on his dressing table; surmising, that in the hurry of dressing, he might have left it there; at the same time, he felt persuaded that if it were not on his table, it must have been lost on the mount. But to the sequel—The stud was nowhere to be found. Four or five days afterwards, the stud was discovered on the floor of his shop, in a conspicuous spot, which had been swept 3 or 4 times daily, and must have been trampled upon a hundred times in an hour, had it not been at once seen: the stud, however was sound, with the exception of a trifling scar, as if produced by electricity.

On the following Monday night, when met in circle, a Communication was received, that four Spirits had been

engaged in the restoration of the stud; which Four gave their names in full; stating, that the stud was dropped whilst Mr. T— was drinking at a stream among the hills, and that they had much trouble in recovering it. When brought back, it was placed on the ledge of a sugar-bin, most conspicuously, (a spot conclusively selected with care and forethought, showing that no accidental circumstance could have placed it in that situation, after such a lapse of time) and the Communication also stated, that one of the children passing by, had accidentally brushed it on to the floor, a few minutes prior to its discovery.

The above is, I think, a complete relation of the facts as far as I can recollect them. I believe the foregoing to be true; nor is it more remarkable than an instance which recurs to my mind of a somewhat similar kind, given, I think in Emma Hardinge's work, of the recovery of a diamond-ring from the bottom of a river. However, though all the circumstances connected with the stud did not come within my own immediate knowledge, I can add a relation of subsequent facts which transpired under my personal observation, and which, more than anything else convinced me of Invisible-agency—meant, perhaps, to satisfy my own mind of Spirit-presence and power, with harmless intent. A large diamond-ring belonging to the same party, Mr. T— was missed out of a casket. Owing to its value, diligent search was made; and considerable uneasiness felt concerning its disappearance; but, on the succeeding Monday evening, a Communication was made through the Planchet, that "a Spirit, for sport, had taken it, and that it would, no doubt, be again restored." This intelligence was very gratifying, as it removed all anxiety touching its safety; but, of course, the natural desire to have it speedily brought back, still existed. About ten days after the ring had disappeared, I was about to write with Miss L— (our Writing Medium) and placed myself, as usual, on her right, with my left hand on the Planchet, while my right hand, as customary, was put forward to smoothe the paper, which often gets more or less displaced by the action of the Planchet, as is well-known to those accustomed so to write. I had carefully leveled the paper, and had written about two lines and a half, when, suddenly, the pencil met with a prominent obstruction; conceiving at the moment, that a large crumb of bread had found its way between the folds of the paper, I raised the top sheet, and, to my amazement, there lay a large diamond ring, which I never saw before, and which was, at once claimed by Mr. T— as the lost treasure.

Now, what I can say of this affair is, that although I could not swear that the ring was not in the folds of the paper when I began to write, I am quite prepared to swear, that I do not believe it could possibly have been there, as, from its bulk, I must have detected its presence, either when smoothing down the paper with my right hand, or when writing the first two lines. My firm belief is, that the ring was inserted by an Invisible hand after we completed the second line; because, the edges of the paper lay on my right, and as no other person was present in the room, no Earthly power could have so introduced the ring.

The fact of my feeling convinced, will not, of course, convince others; nor have I ever named the circumstance to even my intimate friends, well knowing, they would regard me as silly, for being so easily bamboozled into a belief of such nonsense; feeling persuaded in their own minds, that the ring was there before I began to write; I, therefore, refrain from coming in contact with the wiseacres of the present generation, who are always both able and ready to account scientifically (?) for everything they do not comprehend.

The truth is, my dear Sir, the world must be gradually educated in Spirit-philosophy, before it can be brought to believe in these or any such phenomena."

Mr. Editor.—I am privy to several particulars relating to both stud and ring, which render the circumstances still more remarkable (my authority is from another eye-witness) but, I deem it prudent to suppress them here, and leave the preceding recital as it stands.

## NOTICE.

In consequence of no satisfactory arrangements having been made with respect to the Saturday evening REUNIONS, there will be no Meeting next Saturday.

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