

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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CONTENTS.

	Page
Government interference with Sunday Services	2159
Progress of Spiritualism	2160
Familiar Letters on Spiritualism	2160-1
Faith 2161-2; God 2162; Mr. Walker in Reply	2162-3
Further Results of Investigations into Spiritualism	2163-5
Pneumatic Embryology	2165
Church Congress at Newcastle-on-Tyne	2166
Mediumship and Spiritualism	2166
Can it Be? A Story of the Day (serial)	2167-9
Psychography Extraordinary	2169
The Beginning and the end of the Worlds	2169-70
The Materialisation Seances (Supplement)	2171-2
The Opera House Difficulty do.	2172-4
Spirit Identity as demonstrated in the Stances of Mr. Brown	2175-6
Buddhistic Adepts	2176-7
Message Department	2177-8
Religious Census of Liverpool	2178
Mr. G. Milner Stephen's Cures	2179
Spirit Communication	2179-80

THE recent action of the Government in threatening the suspension of the license of the Opera House for an alleged breach of its conditions in connection with the Sunday meetings, led to the temporary suspension of the services until recently held there by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, and aroused considerable indignation, not only amongst those immediately concerned, but in the breasts of all who advocate the right of free thought and free speech on all subjects affecting the religious, moral, and intellectual welfare of humanity.

The following brief recapitulation of the circumstances which led up to the present difficulty will make the position clear to our readers. Previous to May, 1879, the Association had used the Opera House and other theatres for Sunday services, and charged a small admission towards paying the necessarily heavy expenses without let or hindrance. During that month the Opera House Company made their annual application for renewal of their license, and received a letter in reply intimating that before a new license was issued they must give a guarantee that the theatre would not be opened on Sunday; and in face of this, intimated one Saturday evening to the Association that they could not open the doors on Sunday without a special permit from the Attorney General. On Sunday, a deputation from the Association waited on Sir B. O'Loughlen, to point out the inconvenience and disappointment that would be experienced by the congregation if they found the doors closed against them; and at length obtained a special permit to open them for that night provided no money were taken. This the deputation had no

alternative but to accept, and the house was opened that evening free. Subsequently a permit was obtained to carry on the meetings, provided no charge was made for admission; and, it appears, a clause was inserted in all the renewed licenses embodying that restriction. The meetings were continued, verbal appeals being made to the audiences to contribute to the expenses, and subsequently, to obviate the necessity of repetition, notices were exhibited at the various entrances intimating that visitors to the dress circle and stalls were expected to contribute either one shilling or sixpence towards the expenses, a plate being held at the door for those who were willing to comply. Although the place was under the supervision of the police, no objection was made to the practice during the continuance of the lectures, and the committee were under the impression that they were strictly within the terms of the new-made law. In December last the Association, desiring to resume lectures, made an application to the Chief Secretary for permission to do so, and were referred to the permit of May, 1879, as still in force. They therefore pursued the same course, using the identical placards, and were surprised, on the 7th February, at receiving a letter from the Secretary of the Opera House Company informing them that being threatened by the Government with cancellation of their license for allowing charges to be made on Sunday, they must refuse the further use of the House. Appeals were made to the Government to withdraw the threat, and although the Association offered to withdraw the placards and take no money at the doors, the Government evaded all efforts to get a guarantee from them that the license would not be interfered with, and the Opera House Company, though willing to let the theatre, did not dare to do so; the consequence being the driving of the Association and its congregation almost out of the city to the only unlicensed hall available—the Horticultural Hall, Victoria Street—which up to the present time has been found inadequate to accommodate the audience, many having to return disappointed of admission.

It is not unnatural, under these circumstances, that religious prejudice should be suggested and believed in as the motive which prompted the action of the Government, whether originating in themselves or by

pressure brought to bear by the orthodox, is immaterial ; but in the absence of any other cause for interference, that opinion will hold good in the minds of those who suffer from it to the prejudice of the Premier and Chief Secretary. Both in Sydney and Dunedin, at the present time, the principal theatres are used for Sunday evening lectures, and a fixed charge for admission made to every part of the house. This, as we have shewn, was the practice here until the interposition of the present Premier, who in 1879 made the law which he now seeks so rigorously to enforce. Spiritualists and Free Thinkers are much less favourably situated than the churches, having no endowment, or tenure of a building which would enable them to let seats in permanence; and if their congregation desire to pay for their seats night by night, what right has the Government to forbid them? Certainly no just one, and their interference savours much of persecution. If they or the religious bodies who are opposed to Free Thought and Spiritualism think to suppress the meetings by these means they are mistaken; there is too much vitality in the movement for it to be crushed out by this mild kind of persecution. The meetings would be held if we had to take a tent for them; and as is usual where earnest men are opposed they are stimulated to greater energy in the attainment of their object, which in this case is a diffusion of those ideas which they conceive to be of use to humanity, and the encouragement of free religious thought.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE reports of spiritual manifestations in all parts of the civilized world, most of which bear the impress of truth, show that Spiritualism is spreading rapidly. It permeates all classes of society. It is making a deep impress upon the literature of all lands; is talked about in the social circle and is the subject of investigation by the scientist, and of quiet reflection by earnest thinkers everywhere. New phases of manifestation gradually follow each other, and there is every reason to believe that but few years will elapse before the proofs of spirit communion will be so general, and of a character so unmistakable, that the fact can no longer be ignored or denied. The result must be a revolution in human affairs—a reform not merely religious, but political and social. The effect of a thorough belief in Spiritualism would be to change the motives, and consequently the methods of men. The accumulation of material wealth would no longer be the most engrossing passion; any injury to another would be recognised as a hurt to the one committing the wrong. Selfishness would survive, but it would change its form. Self-advancement can only be secured by unselfish acts; the highest good to self can only be attained by justice to all, love to all. And this truth, now lost to sight, will yet be made clear. Spiritualism is the agency by which it is to be done. As it progresses so will humanity advance; and even now we are in the dawn of that brighter day.—*Spiritual Reasoner*.

THE *Otago Daily Times*, during last month, has contained a lively correspondence on Geology, called forth by Professor Denton's lectures. Two of the objectors to Mr. Denton's positions had the temerity to support the Biblical data, placing the origin of man only 6000 years back. The ground has been taken from under them by various writers, and they are left without a leg to stand upon, it being conclusively shewn (even by Christian authorities) that man existed on this planet long anterior to that time.

FAMILIAR LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM.

XI.

"If circumstances lead me I will find where Truth is hid, though it were hid indeed within the centre."

RESPECTED FRIEND,—Thought, as an operation of the mind in producing it, is a most convincing proof to me of the existence of a principle of life apart from the body, or, at any rate, superior to it. Thought, as connected with the phases of active life, producing all those wonderful phenomena of locomotion which we experience during the period of our earthly existence, is a feature of being which seems to indicate something vastly superior to flesh, blood, nerves, and sinews, as pertaining to man; coming with him when he enters the terrestrial sphere, and going with him when he leaves it on the dissolution of his fleshy frame. The contemplation of this controlling principle, with all its results, is very elevating, and the more it is dwelt upon the more wonderful does it appear. The power of man, however, to think, wonderful as it is, is only equal to the ability which he possesses to express his thoughts, to communicate them, and to preserve them by the art of writing and printing; and thus, in a general way, his experience and the knowledge which hence arises. Who can adequately conceive of the advantage which stands connected with the processes referred to, or the sources of mental growth which are provided by the means of books? It is thus that not only is thought preserved, but transmitted, and by means of which men can commune with one another although separated by half the circumference of the globe.

It is this aspect of Spiritualism on which I desire to dwell in my present letter, and thus to introduce to your notice those works which will convey to your mind, on their careful perusal, both information gathered by others and the conclusions to which such writers have been led thereby. It is an unquestioned fact, that Spiritualism possesses a literature both rich in substance and diffusive in character, and certainly far too extensive to make it possible for me to refer to every work published and in circulation on this subject. I will, however, endeavour to make a judicious selection, and thus further to assist you in your enquiry. Doing this, I think it very likely that I may be considerably influenced by my own tastes or estimate of the value of certain works which I have found to be useful to myself. This will not prevent you making further enquiry; and as the literature of Spiritualism is being augmented daily, your research in this respect will be fully repaid.

The first writer to whom I would refer you is Andrew Jackson Davis. The works of this author are contained in a number of volumes, and present Spiritualism in its theoretical and practical form in such a way that were you confined to those volumes, I do not think you would fail to gain very great advantage. In his "Magic Staff" you have an autobiography which presents Spiritualism in all of its most striking phases; and having carefully perused this book, you will then be prepared to pass on to other volumes by the same author, such as: "Death and the After-Life," "Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse," "Spirit Mysteries Explained," "Nature's Divine Revelations," "The Great Harmonia," &c., &c. I am perfectly aware that there prevails an opinion that Davis's works are growing out of date; but for all this, I believe there is a clearness and depth in this writer's productions which will cause the careful student to feel that here Spiritualism has been, and ever must be, well represented. Indeed I would rather be master of the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis than of two-thirds of the more modern productions on Spiritualism. I do not wish to be understood as affirming that all the statements of this writer are to be accepted; but I do affirm that his works possess a vitality and value which must ever keep them in the forefront of all others; and, therefore, I press the study of these volumes specially on your attention. On my first introduction to Spiritualism I read Davis's works, and there are no others from which I feel I can derive more profit now. Undoubtedly this man has

been made the instrument of guiding intelligencies in the spiritual world, to lead the minds of millions to the delightful realisation of a life beyond the grave; and if by a lapse of time his powers may seem to have grown somewhat feeble, all honour to the instrument who has been used to accomplish so much for his fellow man.

The next work I would call your attention to is, "Wolfe's Startling Facts of Modern Spiritualism;" a work which presents spiritual manifestations under some very striking and palpable forms, and is written in an exceedingly interesting style. Dr. Wolfe was fortunate in securing the assistance of an intelligent, honest, and capable medium; and through this instrument he was enabled to pursue his investigations with great effect.

Another work which I feel sure will meet with acceptance is, "The Biography of Mrs. Conant;" a book which, like Davis's "Magic Staff," will introduce you to many of those interior phases of spiritual manifestations which are certain to attract and secure the attention. Mrs. Conant, from her childhood, appears to have been an instrument to lead thousands into the knowledge of spiritual communion, and since her character was so undoubtedly honest, and generally excellent, her testimony must carry much weight in enabling an enquirer to arrive at a definite conclusion. Consequently, I would much like you to read this work carefully, and give it your candid consideration.

I will now direct your attention to the writings of Judge Edmonds. Unfortunately, his principal work, in two volumes, is out of print, although it is possible to obtain it by careful enquiry. His smaller work, "Letters and Tracts on Spiritualism," is still in circulation, and easily obtained; and if you confine your attention to this alone, there is very much valuable information to be gathered on nearly every aspect of Spiritualism. Judge Edmonds was a man of such undoubted intelligence and integrity, and such a thorough investigator of this great question of the day, that I believe you will feel it to your advantage to have this work of his by you for constant reference. In connection with the book just named, I would advise you to read the little work of Professor Wallace on "Spiritualism, &c., &c.;" and which, like the former, will present you with material on which to form a judgment of the value of Modern Spiritualism.

There are some recent publications which would, no doubt, prove exceedingly interesting to you: I refer to Crowell's works, especially his "Spiritual World;" Sargent's "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism;" Farmer's "Spiritualism as a New Basis of Religion;" Works by "Crookes" and "Zoellner;" "Spiritual Philosophy," and a host of others; also the current papers devoted to this subject, viz., "The Spiritualist;" "Medium and Daybreak;" "Banner of Light;" "The Theosophist;" and the "Harbinger of Light," our local publication. All of these will give you such information as may be necessary to enlighten your mind on the ordinary aspects of Modern Spiritualism.

I must now, however, refer to another class of works which, while they treat of spiritual operations and phenomena, take a somewhat different view of the subject, and enter more fully into the basis on which the phenomena are supposed to rest: leading the mind into a consideration of those aspects of Spiritualism which connect it with the everlasting existence of man as a spiritual being endowed with occult powers; entering also into the question of its antiquity, and as one of those forces of nature which reveals the existence of other intelligent creatures than man. The works I am now about to refer to must be read with extreme care and caution, inasmuch as they are works of more than ordinary intricacy; and while certainly throwing much light on this all-important question, revealing aspects of the subject which will be somewhat difficult to modern readers who are not acquainted with the more occult phases of spiritual life. In "Isis Unveiled;" "Art Magic;" "Ghost Land;" "Ennemoser's" "History of Magic," and works by the late P. B. Randolph, you will find much to excite thought and awaken enquiry, and very likely statements which will apparently serve to place the statements of another class of writers in a

very doubtful light so far as conclusions are concerned. But for all this, I would rather you would read those works, and give them your unbiased consideration, because it is only by a general and comprehensive enquiry you can expect to arrive at just conclusions on the question of Spiritualism. The origin and destiny of man, together with the ability which we possess naturally in relation to spiritual operations, with all those numerous inferences which arise, are so important to each of us personally, that the greater our research, care, and honesty the more satisfactory will be the result and the fewer mistakes to correct hereafter.

Now, in closing this letter, I would wish you to understand that, to arrive at any satisfactory issue, you must become a student and an investigator on your own account, and not be discouraged by the trouble or difficulty which may arise. The result of this, as one of the great ends of earth-life, is worth all the means you may use, the self-denial exercised, or the perseverance manifested. So evident is the fact, first, that we look for a hereafter; and, second, that it is so imminent, that any indifference regarding enquiry into the circumstances of life present or to come, is to be deprecated in the fullest degree.

In my next and last letter of this series, I will endeavour to write something on the question of mediumship; and so generally conclude my remarks on this vital subject; acknowledging in the meantime most fully the very brief, and after all, but elementary stage of the question of Spiritualism to which I have had the privilege of directing your attention.

Your well-wisher,

H. J. B.

P.S.—In connection with works of interest on the subject of Spiritualism, I would refer you to Mr. Terry, the publisher of this paper, who will furnish you with lists of such works as you may wish to read; or, if it be inconvenient to apply to him, any local bookseller will afford you the necessary assistance.

To Correspondents.

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

C. R.'s letter (and reply) will appear in our next.

ON "FAITH"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—As you were kind enough some time ago to permit an article of mine, on the subject of "Special Providence," to appear in your columns, allow me again to solicit space for the following communication bearing on the dogma of "Faith," which is considered a very important item in every system of religion yet presented to the world. The exponents of all the superstitions hitherto used to perplex the human race will one and all tell you that their system is the only true one, and therefore must implicitly be believed to afford an escape from everlasting damnation. The priests know very well that this is the most effectual way of silencing enquiry, and thus mental shackles are forged around their dupes that the hammer of science is scarcely able to break. The Christian religion forms no exception to the rest; for if the Mahomedan system has an "Alsurat" to which it consigns all unbelievers, its contemporary of the west has resources quite as ample. The dogma of faith is magnified above all other points, and is considered a cardinal virtue by modern professors of Christianity. The absence of argument and evidence renders it all the more meritorious to receive its teachings on the mere *ipse dixit* of those who claim to be the servants of Almighty God. St. Paul is considered the great Apostle of Faith, and more importance is attached to his writings—or those attributed to him—than any beside in the Bible. Strictly analyzed, this dogma indicates a state of unreasonable credulity. The question then arises to the mind of a cosmopolitan turn, whom and what are we to believe, as there are so many antagonistic doctrines taught in the world, and each

party denounces another and threatens with eternal perdition all outside their own peculiar pale? Now let us observe how coolly St. Paul expects to be believed, and all his utterances accepted as the very breath of heaven, while he himself was only converted by the most demonstrative Spiritualism. In fact he had to be knocked down before he would believe, though he was living contemporaneously with all those marvellous events with which the Christian religion was ushered into the world. If he had not the opportunity of witnessing any of the supposed miracles himself, still he had the chance of examining and communicating with those who were so specially favoured, while we of the present day are obliged to be content with the information that has passed through a great many questionable channels during a period of over 1800 years. Now the gist of my argument is this, that if Paul required such a substantial basis on which to build his religious belief, that nothing less could reach him than a direct message from Heaven, is it unreasonable, after so long an interval of 1800 years, that we of the present day should look for something more than the mere *ipse dixit* of priests and ecclesiastics? Paul has a chapter on Faith, and recapitulates a number of important acts that were performed by certain Bible characters under its influence. Narrowly enquired into we find the facts will not justify such a conclusion. Not a single character in the Old or New Testament was ever converted by Faith only. To begin with Adam he was supposed to hold direct intercourse with God and angels, and so with all the patriarchs and prophets. We find these ancients would do nothing and take in hand no business whatever unless they had pretty strong signs and tokens from heaven. The disciples all required miracles from Christ, and Nicodemus was only won by a test of clairvoyance, and yet in the face of all these things the church teaches that unquestioning faith is the most pleasing to Almighty God. Now if the pulpit would only supply some argument in the absence of evidence, and thus appeal to man's rational faculties, we should not find so much fault even if they could not command signs and wonders. It seems to me almost a piece of impudence on the part of some of the new Testament writers to expect those in succeeding ages to be more credulous than they were themselves. Just at this time when the reflective portion of mankind have ceased to believe without some foundation, Spiritualism appears to supply the desideratum; and though many—of whom I am one—have not yet had an opportunity of experiencing its force, yet its facts are too well attested by credible witnesses to preclude it from being a fair subject for enquiry.

Yours truly,

W. B. BUTTON.

Leven, Tasmania, December 19th.

GOD!

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

MY DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly oblige me by publishing in your columns the following magnificent description of our great and good Universal Father, God, just communicated to me, *waking from a magnetic sleep of five hours' duration*:

The good spirits direct my thoughts to Him, and say of Him, "The Life Principle! Yes, He is not only the Great Life Principle, but the Great Life Perfection as well. He is not only the Great Beginning, but also the Great Consummation of all things, in whom all live, move, exist, and are. Thus is the great 'I am,' in Himself alone existent, the Great First Cause of all, the Great God and Effect of all! the Great First and the Great Last, and besides Him there is no God."

How magnificent, dear sir, is this grand conception of Deity thus imparted to me by these good angel guides! How I for one thank them for it! It has a deeper meaning than we can realise.

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

Rockhampton, Queensland,

Dec. 11th, 1881.

MR. WALKER IN REPLY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—In your last issue appeared a letter from the pen of Mr. Chas. Watt, under the heading "The end of the World," the object of which was to show that I was mistaken in my interpretation of the twenty-fourth Chapter of Matthew, at one of my lectures in the Temperance Hall. Mr. Watt is of opinion that the Chapter is a prophesy, not of the "End of the World," but of the Fall of Jerusalem. With your kind permission I will examine his statements.

The idea of Mr. Watt is that the Bible, being written in the style of the Orient (?) it is not to be interpreted by the "matter of fact principles of the Western mind." The 24th Chapter of Matthew must be understood by a mind who understands the ideas of the East, the metaphors of Judea, and the sublime allegories of Saint Matthew, and, fortunately, Mr. Watt supplies us with such a mind, or so far as I and a few others are concerned, the destruction of Jerusalem would never have found a prognosticator in the Chapter in question.

By applying "the common-sense principle," of making the chapter mean what it does not say, and say what it does not mean, Mr. Watt tells us that we shall "get rid of all the difficulties with which it is supposed to be environed." No doubt. The same might be said of "Jack and the beanstalk."

The position of Mr. Watt is "that the end of the world * * * was consummated in the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70, and as synchronizing with that event the stars fell from heaven."

To support this position he alludes to the fact that the Chapter opens with a prediction (so called, though Mr. Watt would find some difficulty in proving that these verses existed before the year 70) that the temple should be destroyed, after which his disciples ask him, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the signs of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The inference, therefore, is, according to Mr. Watt's method of interpretation, that the last question was connected with the first, and the end of the world and the coming of Christ meant, "when shall Jerusalem be destroyed?" I confess I should never have known it without Mr. Watt's assistance. It always appeared to me, previous to Mr. Watt's letter, that the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" meant what it said, and that it really asked what should be the signs not of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, but of the coming of Christ and the end of the world, or, if Mr. Watt would prefer it, the consummation of the age. But truly, "things are not what they seem," and the fashion now-a-days is to attempt to prove that the language of folly reveals the acme of wisdom.

Did Christ come when Jerusalem fell? How? In what form? Who saw him? What are the proofs of his visit?

As to the "end of the world" Mr. Watt assures us that it can be literally rendered from the Greek by "the consummation of the world," and then with a wonderful stretch of fancy, it appears to me, interprets "the consummation of the age" as "the end of the Jewish economy," and adds, "In this sense Christ employs it." There is nothing in the Chapter to warrant Mr. Watt in this bold assertion, and such a reckless method of reasoning will prove anything. Thus:—"The end of the world" means "the consummation of the age," and "consummation of the age" means "the end of the Bourbon economy." This is the sense in which Christ employed it. The passage, therefore, foretells the establishment of the French Republic!

We shall never know where to stop if we allow such reasoning to find a place of honour among us. Mr. Watt cannot prove that "consummation of the age" means "end of Jewish economy." If he thinks he can let him try. Nextly he cannot prove that Christ used the expression in that sense, though he asserts it so positively. How comes he to know so certainly in what sense Christ used the phrase? Does he even know, or is he able to prove, that Christ ever used the expression at all?

Another passage on which Mr. Watt seems to rely is the following:—"Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the house tops not come down to take anything out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes." It is argued that "these warnings could have no meaning in relation to an anticipated end of the material world, from the supposed destruction of which no warning could be of any avail, as there could be no place of escape." The fact is the passage has very little meaning whichever way we interpret it. It seems to apply less to Jerusalem, however, than to the supposed final end. For instance, the passage says, "Let them which live in Judea flee unto the mountains," not "them which be in Jerusalem." If the object had been to secure safety to the dwellers in Jerusalem at the time of the Roman invasion, it would have been far wiser to have said, "Let them which be in Jerusalem emigrate to Alexandria, Athens, France, or anywhere out of Judea, or out of the reach of the soldiers of Rome."

But what reference can this advice have to the fall of Jerusalem—Let him which is on the housetop not come down? Applied to the destruction of the capital of their country, such advice was the worst possible. The best advice would have been "Let him which is on the housetop come down as soon as he can, and get as far out of the reach of the Romans as his legs will carry him." According to Josephus the entire city was demolished except three towers, therefore those who stood on the tops of their houses during the scene of demolition were very unlikely to escape. I wonder if Mr. Watt would have stayed at the top, had he been there, providing he saw a chance to come down and run!

"In the symbolic language of the ancient Jewish scriptures," continues Mr. Watt, "empires, kings, and nobles are designated by the names of heavenly bodies." He gives what he believes to be examples, and adds, "Christ in the passage under review made use of ancient symbolic language, well understood by those to whom it was addressed, and the literal fulfilment was accomplished in the overthrow of the political kingdom and hierarchy of the Jews." The assurance of Mr. Watt is quite refreshing. There is no room left for probability or mistake. "Christ *did* make use of symbolic language, &c." Now, Mr. Watt, for your proofs. There are a few of the incredulous in the world, how are you going to substantiate your assertions to these sceptical minds?

Firstly, you cannot prove that the gospel of Matthew is "ancient Jewish scriptures," and secondly, you cannot prove that it is written in symbolic language any more than the letter of Jesus to Agbarus is written in such a manner.

The stars falling from heaven, the sun being darkened, the moon not giving her light, and the powers of heaven being shaken, mean empires, kings, and nobles falling, &c. Many thanks for this information, Mr. Watt. I am sure I should never have guessed so much.

What does a similar prophesy on grouping of words mean in Revelations, Chapter VI, v. 12-13, "And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell into the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind?" Surely this does not mean a destruction of Jerusalem, since, according to even the most orthodox of Christian authorities, the Book of Revelations was not written until A.D. 95-96! But doubtless it is allegorical, and some Mr. Watt of the future will attempt to prove that it means "The fall of London."

But how about those two verses in the 24th of Matthew, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other?" Would anybody in the world have guessed that these verses prophesy the victory of Titus and the destruction of a city? All the tribes of the earth mourning, and the elect gathered together from the four winds, seem

prophesies too comprehensive for Judea, and altogether too extensive for Jerusalem. If they prophesied only for Jerusalem the prophesy was not fulfilled. All the tribes of the earth did *not* mourn, and the elect from the four winds were not gathered together. Moreover, the descent of the Son of Man in glory, and the sound of the trumpet of his angels, did not take place prior to the event, or on the occasion of the event to which Mr. Watt would refer them.

Is it not high time that we did away with the nonsense about "allegories," "spiritual meanings," and "symbolic language" of the scriptures, since more men are driven mad than instructed by such folly? The scriptures must be read and understood as are other writings of their date and country, and it is degrading to our intellects to be compelled to look for the highest wisdom in the writings of people who were demonstrably ignorant. On this point Voltaire has a cogent paragraph, with which I will close, after stating that if the 24th Chapter of Matthew prophesies, as I am firmly convinced it does, the expected "end of the world," Jesus or his historian was a false prophet.

"One might write volumes on this subject, but all would reduce themselves to two sentences: it is, that the mass of the human race has been, and long will be, senseless and imbecile; and perhaps the most senseless of all have been they who have wished to find sense in these absurd fables, and to place reason in folly."—I remain, yours &c.

THOS. WALKER.

FURTHER RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS INTO SPIRITUALISM BY A UNITARIAN MINISTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—The first year of my investigation into what I now find to be truly the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism, will soon be closed, to be continued in future years with, I hope, still greater results than those attained in the year now passing away. On the 15th October, 1880, I began the inquiry, which I have since continued patiently throughout the whole year, and for the most part alone.

The following have been the *physical* phenomena observed by me:

In darkness, spirit stars, spirit lights; beautiful coruscations of all kinds; flashes of arcs (or crescents) of light of a beautiful pink colour, betokening the presence of spirits of great power. Once, a large light, yellow colour, oval shape, came advancing towards me, gradually diminishing in size as it approached nearer and nearer, till coming close to me it dwindled to the size of a pigeon's egg; shining then at its brightest, it passed me over my right shoulder and disappeared from view—vanishing in a few seconds.

Once I was seated at a small round table, with one pedestal and three feet supporting it. My hands were exactly over the centre of the table. I remained so for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes; when, suddenly and unexpectedly, and to my consternation I will add, an invisible force came from a direction tangential, *i. e.*, at right angles to the pedestal of the table, and struck it with great violence a most tremendous blow. This force was evidently directed by an invisible intelligence. It passed within an inch of my leg without touching me; but it had done so it must have done me some serious injury, but, except being startled, I sustained none. This was my first experience of that to which I have already given the name of "Spirit Power," and truly the force with which that spirit power can act is tremendous. I am no longer surprised to hear of mediums being raised high in the air; such a force is capable of far greater wonders even than levitation. This was in November, 1880.

On another occasion I tried for spirit writing on two slates, with the eighth of an inch of slate pencil between. I put the two slates, both corresponding with each other, on the top of a table, adjusting the edges of the frames to each other accurately. I laid my hands on the top slate, and waited for the result. It came, but in a way I little expected. I never got the writing, but I got instead something else. I had sat watching about

twenty minutes, when I noticed the corners of the upper slate being gradually twitched, first one corner and then the other lower down. I therefore thought I would replace the top slate back where it was before; and did so, laying my hands on again. The twitches began again, and the slate was moved downwards as before. I replaced it again two or three times; all at once the force came from a direction opposite to me, and struck the top slate a blow which knocked it clean off the bottom slate altogether! The blow was delivered as if in impatient anger, and startled me. Of course I had had enough of it for that night.

Sceptics tell me my *magnetism* caused these two exhibitions in the case of the table and of the slate. I reply it cannot possibly be so. My magnetism was in both cases working *downwards*; and, in both instances, the force or power came from a direction *exterior and at right angles* to that direction in which my own magnetism was working; and I am equally certain the invisible force was directed by an invisible intelligence, thus manifesting to me its power. In the case of the slates, if I remember right, this power was shown to me on two separate occasions—to my astonishment that such a power does exist unseen in nature, or rather in space—unnoticed and utterly disregarded by science. That it exists, in my own mind there is no doubt whatever. I have to deal with facts as they present themselves to me, and I now assert the existence of an invisible force in the universe apparently directed by an invisible intelligence capable of sending the earth and all its inhabitants flying through space with violence and pitching it and all of us on to the four horns of Jupiter's moons, as the Rev. Joseph Cook would say.

I have since tried to get a manifestation of the same force often, but in vain. Having demonstrated to me its existence, it seems satisfied with the startling it gave me, for I have never had it since December last. It may return however when I least expect it; but I have learnt to respect and love the intelligence by which it is directed. So I have no fear of it now; it is intended for some good, kind purpose towards myself, I feel very certain.

The only other experience of physical phenomena which has occurred to me has been that, alone and also in company with others, I have been in dark and light séances twitched bodily off my seat and laid flat on the floor; then been twitched up again on to my seat: all this being done gently and most kindly by the invisible power at work. This, I have been informed, is simply to demonstrate the power of spirit over matter.

But physical phenomena, though very interesting to us, are the least important part of Spiritualism. Far more so to me, at all events, are the wonderful intellectual phenomena which I am experiencing, and never yet did so experience, till I commenced this investigation. Nor do I suppose that if I had commenced the inquiry in a spirit of contempt and ridicule I should ever have attained the results I have reached by patient investigation.

These mental or intellectual phenomena are precisely such as might be expected to puzzle sceptics, who have their own way of accounting for the phenomena; but then, unfortunately, their theories do not cover the facts observed by those who experience the operation of the spirit influence on their minds. Writing under spirit-control, clairvoyance, magnetic healing under spiritual influence, and extemporaneous speaking under the same influence, are the forms of mental or intellectual phenomena with which I have been made conversant during the past year. In the case of writing and speaking under control, I am invariably seized with a magnetic tremor; something seems to *enter into me* and force me to say or write anything it dictates to me. Of late I have never taken the trouble to prepare anything when I have to preach to the people. It would be useless and needless for me to do so. I pass into control, and speak what I am told to say fluently enough, and this is surprising even to myself. When the fact is that naturally I have not the gift of extemporaneous delivery, having till within the last few weeks been in the habit of writing out my own addresses and delivering them from

manuscript. This I never do now; I prepare nothing. The same thing happens in mediumship and writing, the spirit influence seizes my hand, my eyes become closed; I take the slate and pencil and write the communication always in a hand-writing different to my normal writing. Sometimes very beautiful, the lines written perfectly straight across the slate: this no one could do easily in his normal state with his eyes closed. There is something then either exterior to my organism, guiding my hand across the slate, or else there is something within controlling and directing the writing, and that something within *sees* when the physical eyes are closed. From my experience in clairvoyance I am inclined to think the latter the most probable rationale of mediumistic writing; only, as in speaking under control, the spirit enters within the organism of the medium, and controls him or her to write whatever the spirit pleases.

From the earliest commencement of my investigation I have been a magnetic healer. I have had from first to last during the year fifty cases more or less of suffering and bodily pain placed in my hands for treatment. Nearly all, except three or four only, with satisfactory results; many of them indeed very surprising both to my patients and myself.

In one case of a lady suffering from headache and a strong fever. I placed one hand on her forehead and a piece of flannel magnetised by myself on the nape of her neck. I breathed a few times on the flannel, and then placed my other hand upon it. In less than three minutes she exclaimed "Oh sir, do look here," and showed me her hands, which were *dripping with wet*. A violent perspiration had broken out all over her body; the fever was expelled. I felt her pulse and found it quite normal. Next morning she was cured. She told me afterwards that when I placed my hand on her neck, she felt the perspiration break out and run in streams down her back. I say this was wonderful! but it is not the only case I have had to treat. Rheumatism has been driven out of the body instantaneously; in other cases in three to four days; and the remarkable thing is that it has never returned. Ulcers have been successfully treated, sometimes speedily, sometimes very slowly, but, so far, in all cases successfully; so have other diseases.

Perhaps, however, the most interesting phase of my experiences is the sudden acquirement of the gift of Clairvoyance, to discern the departed dear ones of earth. I shall never forget to my dying day my first clairvoyant vision of the form of a spirit, as it really is. It was to me an awakening to a grand reality; it was life from the dead; it taught me the grand truth that those whom we call the dead are *not dead at all, they are still living*; they have only *changed* their mode of life and existence. That which we term death is not "annihilation;" it is not dissolution; it is not that hapless, hopeless state which the poet mistakenly but vividly portrays in the celebrated lines:

"We die, you know, and then—
What then? I do not know, no more do you;
And so good night!"

No! thank God! It is not "good night!" It is no death at all; it is but a transition state, a new birth into a grander state or condition of existence than we have any idea of.

Let me narrate my experience on that eventful Sabbath morning, when I saw that first clairvoyant vision, which came to me with a message of glad tidings, not to me alone, but to all mankind. About eight o'clock on that Sunday morning I was just going to my breakfast, when a boy on horseback rode up to my gate with a note requesting me to come to the house of a lady who was suffering from sore eyes. I asked how far it was. "Four miles," was the reply. I tumbled my breakfast things away, and started off fasting, save only one solitary cup of tea. My reason was that I knew my magnetic power would be stronger fasting than full. Dressing was the work of a few minutes, and taking my stick and medicines with me, I started off, and after a walk of four miles reached my patient's residence. I was met at the door by a young lady, who introduced me into the bedroom where my patient, a middle-aged woman was lying in bed with her eyes bandaged over.

At my request the bandages were removed, and I soon saw what was the matter (Ophthalmia). I proceeded to magnetise her. Having breathed on some flannel I had taken with me, I placed it on her eyes—my left hand underneath her head lying on the pillow. The young lady remained standing at the foot of the bed, myself at the side. Suddenly I was controlled by the spirit power, and requested that the curtain might be drawn over the window. This was done; the young lady moved back to her position at the foot of the bed. I was instantly forced on my knees; my hands remaining as I had placed them. In that position was gradually unfolded to me the vision of a most beautiful woman, apparently twenty years of age, with black hair, large black eyes, and with a face indescribably spiritual. She was looking as I saw her towards the young lady at the foot of the bed, with a look—oh, of such intense love and affection—as I cannot describe. It was the love of a mother, dead, twenty-four years ago, aged twenty, for her daughter, aged at that time four years, now married herself, and the mother of three or four children; and that young lady was standing at the foot of the bed all unconscious that her mother, lost so long to her, was in that sick room, looking at her daughter from out of the spirit-world! I gazed in astonishment at the beautiful vision till it faded away and disappeared. The control ceased, my eyes unclosed, and in a few minutes I rose and hurried from the room. I told the young lady to have no fear, her (living) mother, as I thought, would recover speedily. A few days after, such was the case. I informed the young woman of what I had seen, and described the beautiful vision so accurately that my patient instantly recognised her own deceased sister from my description; and my surprise was great when a few days after the whole truth was made known to me.

Here, then, I had a grand revelation of a fact, which I wanted to see for myself. Here, indeed, was the true glad tidings for you, for me, for all men and women, the inhabitants of earth: That those whom we call the "dead," are not so; they are living still, and that as they are, so shall we also be. Here, then, is our hope assured to us. Death is overcome; there is no such thing as death; it is but a transition state, a new birth into another more glorious state of existence. That is the Gospel indeed; "the glad tidings of great joy" which shall yet "be to all people." The fear of death is conquered at last—the sting of it is taken away; the dead, so called, are not dead; they are living still with forms of beauty, glory, majesty, and radiance far surpassing even the most beautiful forms of earth!

Such is what 1851 A.D. has done for me. It has manifested anew the true glad tidings, not that which is usually preached as such; but the far more true and more lovely glad tidings of Jesus of Nazareth, first manifested by himself, grossly misunderstood by his foolish disciples, and by Paul, the best of the lot; then obscured and darkened for ages by the blockheads who call themselves Christians (and pretty Christians they are); and now at last restored to the world of long-suffering, much-enduring, down-trodden humanity, in this year 1851. Well may humanity to all future time bless this glorious year. It ends for ever that miserable gospel of fear, darkness, and gloom, and brings to the fore prominently the true glad tidings, the true gospel of the love of an all loving Father Spirit for this misguided human family.

These true glad tidings, dear sir, the spirits who control me have requested and enjoined me to proclaim to all men. I most gladly and willingly obey them, and ask you to give me this opportunity of doing so through the Harbinger of Light, that I may reach as many as possible. The glad tidings which this loving angel ministry is preaching to us all in the name of their Father and our Father, and their God and our God, is that what we call death is a new birth into other more advanced states of existence hereafter; that we need not be afraid to die, because it is but a transition state to another more advanced life, awaiting all those who make a right use of THIS; and that even those who do not use this, their present life aright, will be brought under the operation of laws imposed by the Father Spirit of

all things upon all things, by which all must be sooner or later perfected through suffering.

All must progress either here or hereafter; happy are they, though, who begin to progress here towards the Infinite. For there, as here, he that is unjust will be unjust still; he that is stagnant here will be stagnant there, perhaps for ever. He that is good, pure, and loving here, will be good, pure and loving there; he that is holy and progressive here in his aspirations towards the Infinite, will be holy and progressive there in that more advanced and brighter, more glorified state which awaits all who abstain from evil, strive to learn to do well, and obey the laws of their higher, more spiritual natures.—I am sir, yours, etc.,

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

Rockhampton, Queensland,

Oct., 1851.

PNEUMATIC EMBRYOLOGY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR HARBINGER,—I often, and with much interest, read your admirable journal. But I cannot fail to be struck with the fact that among Australian Spiritualists there is a strong and increasing tendency to become radicals, and radicals upon a materialistic plane. There is a constant disposition to manifest their pugnacity towards venerated faiths and past systems of belief, a dogmatic (Theologians themselves are never more dogmatic than your rabid radical) repudiation of every thought and circumstance that is specifically Christian. My remarks find apt illustration in Doctor Rohner's article on the Descent of Jesus Christ. The doctor always writes ably, but also always dogmatically and severely. Seeing that he himself was once as fervent a Catholic as ever breathed, I think he might have a little more sympathy and tenderness for those whose superstitions he believes himself to have out-grown. He takes violent exception to the theory that Jesus was of essentially pneumatic generation. Why? Certainly not because SPIRITUALISM teaches otherwise. Doctor Rohner admits that eminent and scholarly Spiritualists, like O'Sullivan and R. D. Owen, incline to the theory. And I could add many more illustrious names, such as Swedenborg, P. B. Randolph, Frances McDougall, Allen Putnam, perhaps even J. M. Peebles, and the majority of English Spiritualists. Why then? Surely not because SCIENCE teaches otherwise. The very fact that among the clergy, who of course devoutly believe in the Divine Incarnation, there are men as scientifically and medically qualified as Doctor Rohner, shows that no insuperable physical objection exists. But, apart from that, embryological science has nothing to offer against the hypothesis of a human being having been procreated without paternal intervention. Of course this is not the place for an *excursus* into the medical aspects of such a topic, but I would ask Doctor Rohner to remember the biological law of PANTHOGENESIS, which may, under special circumstances, apply as much to an ape as to an apib, as much to man as to a moth; and I conclude with the following citation from Mr. Cook's excellent volume on Biology:—"When the topic of the origin of the life of our Lord on the earth is approached from the point of view of the microscope, some men who know not what the Holy of Holies in physical and religious science is, say that we have no example of the origin of life without two parents. There are numberless such examples. (Then after quoting Wallace, Haeckel and Huxley, Mr. Cook continues.) Take up your Mivart, your Lyell, your Owen, and you will read what Huxley here asserts, 'That the law that perfect individuals may be virginally born extends to the higher forms of life.'—I remain, yours fraternally,

NATURAE DISCIPULUS.

SOME recent numbers of the *Telephone* contain a communication through a "writing medium" on the "Individuality of Man," which, though somewhat marred by the introduction of doctrine in its preamble, is admirable. There is much in this little paper that we take exception to, but an article such as the one we allude to, is worth a quarter's subscription in itself.

THE CHURCH CONGRESS AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—I would like to say a few words of my own in reply to Dr. Thornton's remark in his address at the above congress on the subject of Spiritualism:—

"But let us all the while remember that the Gospel is a final revelation till the Lord come, and boldly reply to those who would supplement or supersede it, 'Though an angel from heaven preach unto us any other Gospel than that which has been preached unto us, let him be accursed.'"

Now firstly, Dr. Thornton alleges that the Gospel is a final revelation till the Lord come. This I challenge at once. It is not true. Jesus himself said "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now (in his own day), however, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it will guide you INTO ALL TRUTH." Does Dr. Thornton mean to say that we have yet received *all Truth*? I say we have not. If any of the quasi orthodox can prove that we have received all truth to come yet in the future, all I can say is—they prove too much.

2ndly. In reference to the remark about the angel from heaven preaching a gospel, or glad tidings, different to that received, I may remark, that the gospel of orthodoxy and that of pure Christianity as taught by Jesus himself, are two different things. Why do you—the orthodox—persist in teaching the people a *different*, yes, a *changed* gospel to that delivered to the primitive Christians in the days of Paul? That glad tidings has been changed, I say. Why do you persist in teaching as *true* a parcel of delusions which everybody on arrival after death in the spirit-world has to *unlearn*? I have before pointed out the changes made in pure Christianity by the Pagan fathers. Why do you *persist* in teaching them? Surely, you poor simple orthodox people lay yourselves open to the charge of being "Anathema," i. e., "*accursed*," because you preach a doctrine, or rather ten thousand fallacies, which were never taught to the primitive Christians in the days of the apostles? You are preaching an entirely different gospel, or rather "mispell" to that which they received, and therefore yourselves are "Anathema." All the special pleading and quibbling for "Finality" by its advocates, will not avail against God's law of progression in all knowledge of what is true; that law is as eternal as His law of eternal nature manifest in the universe.

Further, I would remark, that in the Revelations the Apocalyptic seer states that "he saw an angel flying through mid heaven having an *eternal glad tidings* to preach to them that dwell on the earth." That is as I interpret the passage, *another* and very different glad tidings to deliver to us earth-dwellers to that which is being preached now by the so-called orthodox; and this too, long before the advent of the Lord. But according to Paul and Dr. Thornton, and the rest of the blind leaders of the orthodox blind, this angel is "*accursed*," eh?

Now the case stands thus, in plain words: Seeing the hash the different sects have made of Modern Christianity, called orthodoxy, every one teaching a different gospel to that of the others, do we not need another more certain, more dependable glad tidings than that accursed, miserable thing which goes by the name. I think we do, and that we are receiving it in Spiritualism, given to the world by the ministry of angels, or spirits of the departed.

As to the last coming, I say unto you that *He is come already* in the spirit of power, and the people know him not, but each returns to his own way, and is filled with his or her own devices. "Behold, I will send my messengers who shall prepare my way before me." Spiritualism, the ministry of angels, is that messenger, preparing the way for a mighty change, overwhelming all the churches of man in one common ruin.

How is it, ye orthodox hypocrites, that you will still disregard the signs of the times? and when signs are given to us refuse still to believe, or rather to know. Behold, the oil in your lamps is gone out, you foolish virgins, and you are left in darkness—the miserable

soul darkness and stagnation of orthodoxy, with its justly accursed "Finality," while we are rejoicing in the glorious light and freedom of the sons of God, the people of Free Thought and liberty, and the eternal glad tidings of Progression, onward and upward for ever!

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

Rockhampton, Queensland,
January 19th, 1882.

MEDIUMSHIP AND SPIRITUALISM.

(From an advanced Spirit.)

MEDIUMSHIP is a gift which is not bestowed on man to "fust in him unused," and it is the sacred duty of every medium to exercise his power for the benefit of hungering humanity.

It is considered by many advanced and faithful ardent Spiritualists that it is not necessary to proselytise; but, in reality, that is one of the most potential reasons that mediumship is developed in man.

Newspapers are being conducted by spirits for the furthering of the cause; manifestations of spirit power are now being obtained in many places, and mediums of all descriptions are exercising their gifts for the diffusion of the evidence of spirit existence. All these things are taking place, and innumerable other agencies are at work, proselytising here, there, and everywhere, and all advanced influences concur with me in advising and urging mediums to place their organisms at the disposal of their spirit guides.

Man uses his sight, his hearing, his sense of smell, and, greater yet, his reason; why should he not exercise his slumbering spiritual gifts which are lying dormant in his inner being?

The course which this grand movement of Modern Spiritualism has taken is unrivalled by any other science or religion which has yet been propagated on this earth, and so enormous have been the strides in advancement, that it is too appalling, too mystic, for the mind of the sceptic to grasp. The deathlike stillness of the after-life is awakened into vitality, and the slumbering dead once more have voice in the affairs of men. A little while ago, burning at the stake would not have been thought too odious and too terrible a recompense for the witchcraft now so commonly practised.

But the Smithfield fires are quenched, and ecclesiasticism is fleeing before the untiring angel of progress; unsought manifestations of spirit power are springing up and astonishing the minds of thousands daily, and the churches are so jostled by the influx of truth, that they are outwitted, and have to observe with open reticence. Inroads are being made into their favourite dogmas, and slipping from their grasp, their congregations are steadily being taught to use their reason and to untrammel their minds from the iron hand of ecclesiastical despotism.

The clergy and priesthood are no longer the rulers of the people, and their clients are for the most part bound to them by fear or ignorance.

With the advance of knowledge, priestcraft recedes, and vast breaches are pouring out its life-blood dry by drop.

Soon will ecclesiasticism have to adopt new clauses into its dogmas, new interpretations of its Scriptures, and gradually no longer will it be ecclesiasticism, but will merge in the great Republic of Rationalism. Year by year gain to our cause is being made at the expense of church dogmas and old world idealism.

New sciences divulge hidden secrets daily, and each new fact is a rent in the side of biblical doctrine. You who profess to be Spiritualists are unworthy of the name unless you enrol yourselves in the new church militant, and heart and soul diligently work for your neighbour's enlightenment. Unravel the mysteries of the past; reveal the truth as proved to you by spirit teaching, and confer on the unbeliever, the materialist, and the indifferentist, a lasting benefit. 'Tis your duty to God as well as man to impart to your fellow-creatures your superior knowledge. Uplift the pall of death, and unveil the glorious summer land, and great reward will be yours in the spheres you prepare yourselves to occupy.

CAN IT BE?

A STORY OF THE DAY.

BY E. CYRIL HAVILAND.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER V.

On the Friday evening as appointed, we saw Lily Branton off to Queensland by the steamer. A lady friend of the Brontons' was going up, and she undertook to act as her chaperone until Brisbane was reached, when her uncle, Mr. Stanthorpe, would meet her and convey her to his station.

Jamieson was there, and so was Joe Kingsbury, but Joe was not in good spirits, and I thought he looked upon Jamieson's presence as rather presumptuous on his part.

At last the third bell rang, and we all cleared off the vessel and stood on the wharf as the ropes were loosed, and the steamer began to glide silently and slowly away. Mrs. Branton was in tears, and my wife and her sister Mary were doing their best to cheer her up. Lily was crying too, but was evidently trying to choke it down.

Then the steamer disappeared from view, and we, with some sixty others, seemed left forlorn. Jamieson could not come with us to Mr. Branton's house, where it was arranged we should return to dinner, to help fill up the gap caused by Lily's absence, but Kingsbury came, and so we all with the one exception returned together by train.

In the train Joe Kingsbury came over, and he said that he was more convinced than ever that Jamieson was a conjurer, but that Scrag would arrive on Monday morning, and he should take him at once to see Jamieson.

"You remember that rap on the table the other night, Tom? I called attention to it. You said it was a spirit rap. I declare to you I saw him distinctly kick the table with his foot. It's no use saying he did not. I tell you seriously I did see him, and he would not deny it when he found I knew it."

"But Joe, he was just coming out of trance, and perhaps did it accidentally."

"Ah! trance indeed," he said, contemptuously. "I cannot understand how you are so easily gulled. But here we are—this is the station. I will talk to you another time."

"All right, old fellow."

We got out and proceeded to Branton's house in his sociable, which had been waiting an hour for us at the station. Mary and Joe began chaffing one another as they usually did when opportunity offered, and after a pleasant drive we arrived at Brantonville, the name of the house.

I am not going to describe the evening we spent which was quite what every one expects. Frequent allusions to the girl at sea, and surmises as to how she was getting on, were interspersed with a little whist, and a little music, and about eleven o'clock we took our leave and went home.

Nothing in connection with this record transpired until the Sunday following Lily's departure.

Joseph Kingsbury was at my house to tea, and as it was a beautiful moonlight night in summer, we four, Mary, my wife, he and I, sat out late talking over the Exhibition at the Garden Palace, then open, when suddenly, without any previous warning, my wife gave a sort of chuckle, and looking at her I recognised a "control" coming on. She had not spoken for a few minutes, and now we waited a few more for the spirit to take possession. I had only known her to be controlled three or four times in her life, and now Mary wanted me to try and stop it. Joseph said nothing, and sat calmly looking on all he could see by the aid of the moon.

Presently she straightened herself up more in her chair, and said, "Me come, Koorawani. How do all. Not stay long, medium too weak; me not hurt her. Me come say lillie flower name papoose in big ship all right. She nearly there; no been sick. She there one, two, three, four, five hours more."

"I'm glad to see you, Koorawani. You say she will arrive at Brisbane in five hours more," I said.

"Yes, about five hour more. Good night, me go to my medium."

"Let me see," says Kingsbury, looking at his watch, "five hours; that will be twenty-five minutes past three to-morrow morning; it's just twenty-five past ten now."

"Well, about that time," I remark.

"We'll see now, what about it to-morrow morning," he adds.

"I wish it was earlier and I would go over and tell Branton," I say.

"Tell him what, dear?" asks my wife, in a weak voice.

"What is the matter; did I faint?"

"No, Ruth; only Koorawani controlled you and said Lily was safe, and would arrive soon in Brisbane," I say, assuringly. "Have a glass of wine, it will do you good," and I go inside and get her one. When I returned a thought struck me, and turning to Joe I remarked that it looked to unbelievers like acting.

"Yes, it does," he replied, "but I could not accuse Mrs. Hawk of that. No, I should think it's a species of self delusion. You see, Koorawani, or whatever his name is, promised to control her, as you call it, and she was expecting him, and so then she fancied herself into a kind of dream."

"Your explanation, Joe, is more ingenious than the simple solution of Spiritualism," I reply.

"I think Mr. Kingsbury is quite right to be sceptical," says Mary, "and now he has taken up the subject I shall await his verdict."

All I do is to softly sing the nursery rhyme—

"Oh, Mary, Mary quite contrary."

"Well, Mrs. Hawk, I will sleep on it. It is getting late and I must go. Good-night, Miss Langton. Good-night, Mrs. Hawk. Give me a cigar, Tom, and a light, for if I stay another minute you'll have to keep me all night, and I am not ready for argument yet."

So Joseph and I went down to the garden gate, where I left him, after his informing me that "to-morrow, Monday, Scrag would arrive."

The next day I did not see Joseph, but on Tuesday he came in quite triumphant.

"What is the matter?" I ask.

"We've begun well. Last night I took Scrag to another medium, and he certainly bowled him out. There'll be no difficulty now."

"But tell me about it," I say.

"Lots of people have been telling me of this medium, and his wonderful phenomena, and as Scrag and I could not get a sitting with Jamieson yesterday we went last night to the other."

"Come inside and tell me who he is and what you did." So after speaking to the ladies he turned again to the subject in hand.

"Who was he? Not Boston?" I ask.

"Yes, of course, and there was a row over it."

"But, Joe, you must give me credit for never recommending Boston, and never upholding him. He holds all his seances in the dark, a thing I do not approve of for enquirers."

"It's all very well. But listen. We went in and there were about twenty or thirty people present. Then the door was locked inside, and Scrag asked if he might tie the medium Boston to his chair. He consented, and we took our seats and the gas was turned off. Then all present began to sing 'Nearer my God to Thee' and 'Nancy Lee', alternately, and then I got struck on the head with a tambourine and voices were heard. We were told that that was 'John King', and as Scrag said he believes every medium in the universe has 'John King'. Well, we let things get into full swing, and Scrag and I were getting it hard on the head, and subdued whispers of 'Did you see that?' 'Did you feel that?' came from the ladies and gentlemen present, when suddenly Scrag gave a cough, which was our signal. He and I struck matches simultaneously, and there were two young fellows in different parts of the circle, standing in their chairs, the one in the act of dealing me another blow with the tambourine, and the other with a long paper tube, through which he was simulating 'John

King's voice. You may imagine the row, and now what have you to say? Don't you tremble for your friend Jamieson?" Joe asks, more triumphant than ever.

"Joe, I am very glad of this. I have been a long while thinking that man an impostor, and have often thought of dealing with him in the same way."

"But what do you think? Scrag swore he would have him up for it, when he said 'he was innocent, that he always thought the sitters honest, and never dreamt of them playing him such tricks, and now he would kick them out, and never have those two rascally young men again. The young men said they were only playing a practical joke, and had never done it before, and Scrag said that he was a detective, and would have a warrant out for them in the morning and give them seven years each. This so frightened them that on his promising to forgive them if they told the truth, and that they would never do it again, one of them said they were in partnership and were accomplices, and we left, giving them twenty-four hours to clear out of Sydney or a warrant would be issued. I am beginning to think of Scrag as the Latin quotation has it, *Veni, vidi, vici*."

Joe would not pay any attention to my remarks as to there being imposters in everything, and that neither I nor any Spiritualist of any standing had ever referred to Boston with feelings other than doubt. No, they had exposed one medium and they would soon finish the others, and so he left us, more convinced than ever that it was all humbug.

Enquirers and those who know nothing of the subject should be careful whom they go to, for first impressions are hard to clear away. As for Boston I was glad he had been bowled out at last, though of course everybody heard of it, and quoted it as "a death blow to Spiritualism."

So two or three more days passed over. A telegram had been received from Lily to the effect that the steamer had arrived a little after four on Sunday morning, which slight discrepancy of three-quarters of an hour made Joseph say "he could have given quite as good a guess."

One day, late in the week, Joe wrote me a note to say "that Scrag was on the track; that he had watched Jamieson's movements in a small piece of looking-glass held between his knees, and had caught him writing with a piece of pencil fastened to his toes."

I thought to myself then what wonderfully ingenious devices these clever people invent to do impossible things with. I should like to see Scrag or anyone with fifty years of practice write upside down on a slate with their toes, and write sensibly and plainly without seeing their writing.

Joe's letter went on "that he would see me the next day, and that Scrag was busy, as he was going to give an amateur entertainment of conjuring at the School of Arts Hall, in Sydney, in a few days."

Letters began to arrive from Lily by now, and one to my wife was a request to write and tell her about Jamieson, and to say she had asked after him. Joe had been to see us, and had evidently something in store, for he would say "Wait awhile," "Stop a bit." "We are getting phenomena, too; Scrag is a medium himself," and so on, evading every enquiry, and I was puzzled, until one morning I picked up the paper, and there I saw a notice drawing attention to "Dr. Scrag's Amateur Conjuring Performance in aid of the Sick Hospital. Spiritualism thoroughly exposed, and Charles Jamieson's slate writing trick outdone. Questions by the audience answered on a slate suspended in mid-air."

"Oh, ho, Joe, my boy," thought I, "we will be there. Will you both come?" I asked, as I handed my wife and Mary the papers to read. Both readily consented, but I had to promise not to jump up and say that it was no exposure.

I made a point of seeing Jamieson, and after some persuasion he consented to go with us if we took a back seat. I told Joe we would be present, and he only said, "All right, I will most likely see you there."

The next night came, and we went and sat for Jamieson's comfort in the back row of the front seats, and presently the curtain went up. Joe, I could see

sitting near the front, but he had not seen us, and Jamieson kept his head down.

Dr. Scrag came forward, made a short speech, and commenced his tricks. I skip all these until the last of the evening, and at this last trick of all he came forward, and directing attention to a pulley in the ceiling said "he was now going to prove the fallacy of Spiritualism, that it was all delusion and trickery, and that all mediums were simply conjurers. Slade, Foster, Watkins and he might mention one in this town, were simply clever conjurers, and he was now going to prove it. Here are two slates which he would please request the audience to examine and clean. See, there is no writing on them," he urged, handing them down to the audience, some of whom examined them and rubbed them, and then handed them back.

"Now, I tie these slates up so," he went on, "tying them round, and round with red tape, and we will seal them up. Here, boy, bring me my candle and wax," he called off at the side. "Ah, here are matches," he said, going half off the wing, and turning round to the boy who had lighted the candle. "Now some gentleman come up here and seal them up."

A stranger went to the stage and sealed up the slates, and then he was requested to take them down and attach them to the string and haul them up to the ceiling, which was done.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Scrag, "some of you might think I changed those slates; now suppose I did, what would it avail me, as I have not yet got your questions? Please write each one a question and put it into my hat, while I get a drink of water."

He gave his silk hat to the front row, and went off for the drink of water. His hat went on and on until it was full, when he asked for it to be returned, and holding it up he remarked "that it was a pity the slates were not bigger, as it was impossible to get all the answers on to those two small slates. He proposed taking half-a-dozen haphazard."

A voice I recognised as Joe's here called out, "make it a dozen, Doctor."

"All right, a dozen since you wish it, Sir," he replied. "As the spirits do this to oblige me, why I don't care how many, so we will say a dozen," and so saying he stirred the hat up, and pulled out the dozen questions.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, you will see how stupid it is to believe in Spiritualism. This is simply delusion, and no medium in existence would allow you to so test him by putting the slate out of his reach. There are the questions, and these questions," he added, pointing to the hat, "I assure you were written after those slates were hung up. Now, spirits, have you finished?"

Three raps answered him.

"Well, then," said he, "let some one come up and read out the questions, and some one else cut down the slates and see what trickery can do."

This was done, and there on the slates were twelve answers to the twelve questions that were read out, and amidst tumultuous applause the curtain went down, the doctor disappeared, and the audience went out, as the papers next morning said, "now thoroughly convinced of the trickery of all mediums."

"I would like to meet Dr. Scrag privately some evening," said Jamieson, as we parted with him at the station. "I have set my mind on convincing that man."

"Oh, don't worry over him," I reply. "Well, good-night, as you won't come home with us."

Lily Brontë had been away now about five weeks, and letters had come from her saying how she was enjoying herself, and in every letter to my wife she mentioned Jamieson, and asked after him. As far as he was concerned he had taken a great fancy to her, for in talking with me he had in other words led me to believe that he was much attracted to her, and I was always wondering whether the solution to Kingsbury's warning would be that Jamieson would marry her.

Some three or four days after Scrag's entertainment I met him, and asked him out to dinner with Kingsbury, and then I went for Jamieson and told him, so that he would meet Scrag as he desired.

It was a calm cool evening, and I remember it well, the discussion was very warm, and Koorawani had con-

trolled Jamieson, and had said he knew how Scrag had done his trick, but he would give no explanation. Koorawani was very sad in tone to-night, and I could see something was the matter.

"Isn't the medium well, Koorawani?" I asked.

"Yes, he all right, but bad news coming. Make you all sorry, me sorry. Good thing lillie flower-name papoose chief and squaw not here; make 'em all cry much."

"Why, what is it, Koorawani; tell me?" I again ask.

"Another spirit come here to-day. She love my medium; me love her; every one love her. She ride horse, horse get fright much, run away, knock papoose on tree. Koorawani there; he help take care her spirit."

"You don't mean that Lily Brontë has been killed to-day?" my wife asks, all in a tremble.

"Koorawani sorry; too much true. She here now. She say don't cry."

"Oh, Koorawani, it can't be true," says Mary, who with my wife, is sobbing violently.

"Koorawani wish all him heart he tell lie. Cannot stop now. Sorry all of us; spirit glad. She glad too, soon. Good-night."

When Jamieson came to himself again he was surprised to see the two ladies crying, and asked the reason, and when they told him he said he hoped they would excuse him and let him go home, and no one attempted to persuade him to stop.

Dr. Scrag did not improve much on acquaintance, and he did not gain with my wife or even Mary, when he tried to persuade them that Jamieson was acting and in his opinion had carried it too far to-night.

As for Kingsbury. Poor Joe; he seemed half divided, and one moment would catch at some idea of Scrag's and the next be despondent about it.

At last they both went, and at the gate Joe, taking me by the hand, said aside, "Well, good-night, Tom, and if this sad news is true I shall begin to believe in Spiritualism."

After consultation with my wife I decided not to say anything to the Brontës (for at first I thought of going over there), as perhaps it might be a lie, for we well knew that every spirit does not tell the truth, and so we retired to rest; but sleep never came to any of us that night, our brains were too full for that.

(To be Continued.)

PSYCHOGRAPHY EXTRAORDINARY.

WE extract the following from an account of a séance with Mr. Eglinton, written by Signor Rondi in the *Spiritualist*, of September 23rd last:—

"At eight o'clock we took our places round the table in full gaslight, and shortly afterwards Mr. Eglinton taking from the table three pieces of white cardboard, each the size of a post card, handed them round for us to see that no writing was upon them, and then tore away the corner of one and gave it to Mr. Craigie, who put it in his pocket. The largest piece was placed in a double slate, and two other cards were placed in two separate books with a tiny piece of lead pencil, as big as the head of a pin, in each. The slate was placed under my and Signor Damiani's hands; one of the books under those of the M.P. and Mr. T. Tambayah Pilly; the other was placed on a chair, and Signor Damiani sat upon it. Under these conditions, Mr. Eglinton passed his hands over the book and the slate, and after two or three minutes, on opening the slate and the books, messages were found written upon each of the cards, in a very small hand. The one addressed to Signor Damiani was in English, and contained 59 words in excessively minute handwriting, the one addressed to Mr. T. Tambayah Pilly was in an Oriental language; a gentleman well learned in those languages assures me that the message was written by a Hindostani scholar; and the third, which was directed to me, was in Italian, consisting of 63 words, written in a beautifully fine and clear hand, but with some mistakes of orthography and language, such as would be made by one who writes in a foreign tongue. The piece torn from this card was applied to it and found to fit exactly."

THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE WORLDS.

By CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

Translated from *Journal du Magnetisme*, July, 1881.

By C. W. ROHNER, M.D., BENALLA.

THE question of the beginning and of the end of the world has, not without reason, agitated all those minds who are fond of investigating the mysteries of nature. The progress of contemporary science enables us to-day to answer that question, and to understand, no longer in accordance with the manner adopted by Bossuet, who dealt with the history of a nation and a doctrine six thousand years old as if it were the history of the world, but in accordance with rigorous proofs and positive data, the history of the whole planet, the development of which in time is proportionate to the greatness of the universe.

I. THE BEGINNING.

Since we have not been present at the creation of the world, we can only form an idea of the events which happened by applying to their investigation the method of scientific induction as the only reliable one with respect to results.

Now, we see that the immense globe of the sun revolves in the centre of its system, turning on his own axis in twenty-five days and a half, and that all the planets turn in the same direction and almost in the same plane round the sun. We see also that the density of the planets is directly proportionate to their distance from the sun, being greatest in his vicinity and smallest at the extremity of the planetary system, and at the same time we observe that the matter composing them is of the same nature as the matter which enters into the constitution of the earth and sea. We have, therefore, here to deal with a large family of bodies, the original unity of which is self evident.

From another point of view the form of the terrestrial globe shows that it has commenced in a fluid state the same as the rest of the planets. In spite of certain minor difficulties of details, the only tenable cosmogonic theory is that which represents to us the planets as having been successively detached from the sun's equator at a time when it was in a state of nebulosity, and extended to the present actual orbits of the planets respectively. Thus, for instance, at the time of the birth of our own planet, the earth, the solar nebula reached thus far, and revolved round its axis in three hundred and sixty-five days. The centrifugal force arising out of this movement on the exterior circumference of this enormous nebulous mass predominated for a moment over the force of attraction, and this momentary difference of these antagonistic forces was sufficient to detach from the nebulous mass a ring of vapour, which continued to revolve in 365 days, whilst the solar nebula went on condensing itself, after which the terrestrial ring, in its own turn, became condensed into a globe, which globe is now known to us as the earth.

The moon was formed from the earth at the time when the latter extended as far as the moon is now distant from the earth, and when her revolution occupied 27 days and 7 hours, the time requisite to establish the equilibrium between the centrifugal force and the density of the newly formed globe. Afterwards, from century to century, the terrestrial globe has contracted itself, revolving quicker and quicker as it proceeded condensing, in accordance with a well established law of mechanics. In reality the terrestrial equator revolves at the rate of 465 metres in one second, and produces a centrifugal force which stands to the gravity of the earth in the proportion of 1 to 289. If the earth were to turn round 17 times quicker, its centrifugal force would equal its force of gravitation itself, and the objects in the equatorial region would no longer have any weight at all. A citizen of Quito who jumped only a few centimetres into the air would never be able to regain *terra firma* again with his feet! Nay, more, nobody could

maintain his footing on the ground he occupies. No living being, no object, nothing at all could maintain its proper weight. The slightest breeze would carry away everything. No town or city ever could have been built. The equatorial zone would be uninhabitable. A ring of water detached from the ocean, rocks detached from mountains, dust detached from the soil, objects of every description lifted from the ground into the air would mark the equator. And if the earth were still in a gaseous state, undergoing a process of condensation, the ring thus formed by the centrifugal force would not be long in condensing itself in its turn into a new body, a moon, turning round our earth at the rapid rate of one hour and twenty-four minutes.

It is not by the enumeration of years or centuries that we can define the immeasurable time which nature requires for the elaboration of the genesis of our world system. Millions of years added to millions scarcely indicate the seconds on the dial of the eternal world clocks. But our mind, which embraces both time and space, perceives henceforth the birth of worlds; it sees them at first shine with the faint light of a nebula; it sees them afterwards assuming the brilliancy of suns; it sees them becoming cold, covering themselves with spots, later with a solid crust; it sees them further on undergoing violent revolutions and formidable cataclysms in consequence of the frequent cracking of the crust under the influence of the furnace heat underneath; it sees them getting furrowed by deep fissures getting slowly consolidated by cooling, and receiving henceforth their heat and light from a source external to the sun, they become now inhabited by living beings, are converted into seats of hard-working humanities, which in their turn help to change the aspect of the surface, and, after having served the purpose of habitations for a higher order of life and thought, they lose gradually their fertility, get insensibly used up like the men who occupy them, become old, decrepit, and finally die, rolling henceforth like erratic toms through the silent deserts of an eternal night.

During thousands of centuries the terrestrial globe travelled through space in the condition of an immense chemical laboratory. A perpetual deluge of boiling water fell from the clouds on the burning surface, and rose again into the atmosphere in order to fall again. When the temperature fell below that of boiling water the liquified vapour would precipitate itself. In the midst of these terrible writhings the crust of the earth, broken a thousand times by the convulsions of the central fire, vomited forth flames, and again filled up the fissures made; by-and-by volcanoes would raise their bulged-up domes above the level of the hot seas, the first islands would appear, and the first semi-fluid combinations of carbon would make the first rudimentary efforts of life by the formation of a substance which scarcely deserves to be called organic, which, however, is no more simply mineral, but at the same time, neither vegetable nor animal. The primitive plants, the algae which inertly floated on the bosom of the ocean, were already a step in advance. Gradually, from century to century, our planet lost some of its original rudeness, the conditions of life became more perfect, living beings became multiplied by differentiation from the primitive stock, and by acquiring new organs, which at first would be clumsy and rudimentary, becoming afterwards better developed and more perfect.

The primeval age, during which the slowly rising life would only be represented by algae, crustacea and headless vertebrata, seems to have taken up for itself fifty-three hundredths of the time which has elapsed from the epoch when the earth became habitable until now. The primary period which followed this epoch, has for its type the formation of the vegetation of the coal measures and of the kingdom of the fishes, and seems to have occupied the next thirty-one hundredth of the time above alluded to. The secondary period, during which the splendid vegetation of coniferous plants covered the earth, whilst the enormous saurian reptiles held sway in the animal world has lasted the next twelve hundredth. The earth was then peopled by fantastic creatures, which were engaged in constant strife, surrounded by the still only partially subjugated play of the elements.

Thus, then, in accordance with the comparative density of the strata, which were deposited during these succeeding periods, the ninety-six hundredths of the time past were taken up by a living order of creation, entirely different from that which to-day embellishes a creation relatively gross and formidable, and as distinct as that of another world. Who would at that time ventured to lift the mysterious veil of the future, and made a guess at the future still unknown and hidden epoch when man was to appear on the scene of a newly transformed planet?

The tertiary period during which we observe the arrival only of the mammifera and these animal species, which present more or less pronounced physical resemblances with the human species, comes next to receive the heritage of those primitive ages, and to take the place of the preceding periods. The duration of this division of time has not even reached to the three hundredths of the total estimate above laid down.

Finally, the quaternary age has seen the birth of the human species and of cultivated trees. It does not represent the one hundredth part of our time scale. How much do these grand and vast contemplations extend and magnify the ideas which we habitually form about the nature of things!

We fancy that we are going back a very considerable distance in historical time when we are looking upon the old pyramids which still rear their lofty summits in the valley of the Nile; when we raise our eyes to the lofty columns of obelisks, covered with mysterious hieroglyphics; when we admire the mute temples of Assyria, the ancient pagodas of India; when we cast our eyes upon the idols of Mexico and Peru; and when we peruse the secular traditions of Asia and of the Aryans, our ancestors; when we unearth the tools and instruments of the stone ages, the weapons cut out of flint, such as arrows, lances, knives, rakes, or scrapers, and the sling-stones of our primitive barbarity. We scarcely venture to speak of ten or twenty thousand years of human history; but were we even to admit an age of one hundred thousand years for the existence of the slowly advancing race of human beings, how little and trifling would that liberal allowance of time be in the presence of the fabulous accumulation of centuries which have preceded us in the history of our planet.

By allowing only 100,000 years for the quaternary age, the age of the present state of creation, we see that the tertiary period would have reigned 300,000 years; the secondary period, 1,200,000 years; the primary period, more than 3,000,000 years; and the primordial or primeval age more than 5,000,000 years. A total of 10,000,000 years. And what again is this total history of our globe when we consider that it required something like 350,000,000 years to render the earth solid by reducing its external temperature to 200 degrees? And how many millions of years more might we not have to add to represent the time which elapsed between the temperature of 200 degrees and that of 70°, the probable maximum of heat with which organic life is compatible?

The study of the worlds opens to our eyes in the order of time equally immense horizons as those which it displays before our astonished gaze with regard to the order of space. Such a study makes us feel both the eternity of time and the infinity of space.

Benalla, Feb. 12th, 1882.

(To be continued.)

MR. WALKER'S lecture on the "Lyceum" or the "Education of the Children of Liberals," which appeared in our last issue, has been published in next pamphlet form, and may be obtained at the office of this paper. Another able lecture of Mr. Walker's—"The Jews and Gentiles"—has also been published during last month.

FROM an article in the *Banner of Light*, Dec. 17th, we observe that the Boston *Watchman*, the organ of the Baptist Church, which has been writing down Spiritualism lately, is constrained to admit the phenomenal facts, falling back on the demonical theory.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE Harbinger of Light.

MR. G. SPRIGGS' MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

WEIGHING AND MEASURING EXPERIMENTS REPEATED.

SINCE the recommencement of these, certain experiments have been carried out, the particulars of which are here given. Before proceeding thereto, it will be well to notice a few points in connection with the first five sittings. On several occasions the medium was shown (at the same time, of course, as the materialized spirit-forms), so that considerably more than the lower half of his body, with the hand lying on the knee, was distinctly visible. On one evening Georgie, after showing himself, in accordance with his usual custom, in the full and unshaded light, and also showing the medium (walking behind the latter, so as to be seen leaning over him), came forward, and taking the hand of one of the sitters, raised it first to his forehead and then to his lips, kissing it audibly. A remark was made to the effect that this proved Georgie to possess the "flexible features," (which at one time had been frequently mentioned by the Editor of the London *Spiritualist* as a desideratum in materialization phenomena,) upon which he again advanced, and gave further evidence of this, moving the whole of his features quite freely. At the invitation of his old friend Mr. C., he took the "vacant chair" beside him, and rising together they walked arm-in-arm across the room and back again, and stopping opposite each of the sitters, Georgie—with his right arm still passed through Mr. C.'s left—shook hands with them in turn. On another evening Georgie stepped to the writing-desk in the centre of the circle, and stood there in his picturesque white costume, writing a short message. Flowers were handed him, among them some rosemary, which he wrote "reminded him of earth-life." He afterwards again showed himself in a light which rendered every detail of form and feature visible. Stepping forward, he brought his face within an inch or two of the eyes of Mr. H., one of the sitters, who remarked particularly upon the jet-black of the eyebrows. At the sitting on the evening of February 10th, Georgie expressed a desire to walk right out of the seance-room into the front portion of the premises. Mr. Terry went out first to unlock the door of communication, and was immediately followed by Georgie, who first took down from the shelf a book, which he opened, and replaced, and then handled some packets of herbs, selected one, re-entered the circle-room (preceding Mr. Terry), and handed it to one of the sitters. He then took Mr. C.'s arm, and they both walked into the front, where he replaced the packet in its proper position, and returned.

At all these sittings "Peter" was present, and conversed on a variety of subjects. On one occasion he remarked jocularly that what with being called "od force," "psychic," "double," "diakka," "elementary," "fourth dimensional being," and so on, he had enough to contend with, and that it would be rather hard, after having worked so long, if he had to "go to nothing." Reference being made to the "postage stamp episode," he said that such things were of great use! For instance, in the case of those persons who accepted the phenomena as genuine, but did not know whether to ascribe them to psychic force, elementaries, or what else, it proved to such that those who manifested were possessed of a knowledge of such things as postage stamps and their use, and this would help those persons in forming their conclusions. It also showed them to be natural beings, and when people got such queer notions of the next world and its inhabitants as they had, it was time they should be undermined. As to the "absurdity" of it, if people were told a table had floated, they would say it was ridiculous, and ask where was the use of it? It was the same with everything at first. In the course of conversation reference was made to Freemasonry, in connection with the fact that, at one of the sittings of last year, "Peter" gave a visitor the masonic grip, the

medium never having been initiated. Peter said Freemasonry was a good thing, if only those initiated knew the meaning of the ceremonies; properly carried out, it would be Spiritualism; but he deplored its degeneracy to such a large extent into a mere matter of eating and drinking. Being questioned on the subject of clairvoyance, Peter said that it was possessed by all, only with some circumstances brought it nearer the surface, while in others it was latent. It only required development, and in the spirit-world there were conditions that would bring it out. To develop it in earth life would be a benefit, as no organ of the brain could be developed without its being a gain to the individual hereafter. In time, when men came to understand themselves and their organization better, children would be educated in such a manner that it would be quite a phenomenon for anyone to doubt the existence of the spiritual world, for each one would have the spiritual faculties developed, and receive evidence of its existence. He doubted whether these manifestations would be the same as they now are, because the world would not require them.

"Charity," with her slender and graceful feminine form, "Zion," with his long white robe, and red girdle, and Mrs. Cobham, have been frequent visitors, the latter twice drawing back the curtain from the medium, and leaning over him. On February 3rd "The Nun" came much further forward than usual, showing her dark hair with the single curl hanging down on the left side with great distinctness. On the 10th a new control presented himself, "John Cobham," who halted considerably in his walk. Having been lame in earth-life, he exhibited the same defect on returning to earth-conditions, following in this what seems to be a general law. On this occasion Peter stated that the spirit of a young girl was present named Isabella, who had lived at Sandridge, and had been a member of the Lyceum. This was recognised.

On the 10th the controls tried the experiment of materialising in more rapid succession than usual, the contrast between them being thus rendered still more striking. Georgie first showed himself and retired, and in twenty-five seconds by the watch Mrs. Cobham presented herself; in twenty-five seconds after her retirement the markedly different figure of Zion was visible, and in thirty-eight seconds after he came (the moment of leaving was not noted in this instance), Peter presented himself. This experiment will probably be repeated.

It having been considered advantageous that the weighing and measuring experiments some time since carried out, with the view of obtaining further proofs of the separate identity of the various forms, should be repeated, in which Peter and the other spirit-friends exhibited the greatest willingness to co-operate, for the purpose of verification, the evening of the 14th of February was devoted to the measurements. The measuring-standard used is seven feet four inches high, with large figures and divisions painted white upon a black ground, and is furnished with a slide which can be adjusted to any height, and will there remain registering the height for inspection. During these experiments each of the controls came right outside the curtain, and stood upright against the standard. Mr. Carson then brought the slide to the top of the head, after which each control, on request, again stood beneath the slide, so that all could see the latter was correctly adjusted, at the same time moving the head from side to side in a natural manner. The figures were then recorded, each member of the circle present (whose names are appended below), individually satisfying himself or herself that the figures were exactly as stated. The amount of light was sufficient to enable the sitters to see the figures and divisions on the standard with ease. On this evening eleven different forms materialised, ten of which were measured, with the following results:—Peter, 5ft. 5½in.; Zion, 5ft. 7½in.; Georgie, 5ft. 5in.; Mrs. Cobham, 5ft. 2½in.; "The Nun," 5ft. 0½in.; "Charity," 5ft. 4in. (barely); Lily, the child form, (who came out particularly

well, and stood in full view upright, with back against standard), 4ft.; a new control, who gave the name of "Annie Dawson," measured 5ft. 0in.; another, who gave the name of "John Rogers," 5ft. 8in.; John Williams, 4ft. 11in.; height of medium, 5ft. 6in. "John Cobham" (previously mentioned as walking lame) also stood against the standard, but his height was not recorded, as the "stoop" in the form was considered as nullifying the value of any contrast which might exist between the height of this form and that of the medium. An analysis of these results shows that there was a difference of 1ft. 8in. between the greatest and least heights registered during the evening; of 1ft. 6in. between the least height and that of the medium, and of 2in. between the medium's height and the highest registered.

The evening of February 17th was devoted to the weighing. These experiments require extreme care and patience, for at times a form seems to possess no absolutely fixed weight, but will rapidly lose pound after pound, even while standing motionless for a few seconds upon the platform of the machine, and while the act of adjusting the balance is in process, and after all be compelled to retire for the purpose of acquiring fresh force, without a fixed weight having been obtained. This necessitates frequent repetition. The machine used was of the American platform kind, of Fairbank's make, (a first-class manufacturer) and graduated to weight to two ounces. The figures on the beam being small, a hand-lamp was found necessary, so that the beam might be illuminated sufficiently to allow of the figures and weights being seen by all. The forms while being weighed stood fairly on the platform of the machine in full view, entirely free from surrounding objects, and with the hands raised. In cases where they inadvertently allowed a hand to rest on the top of the pillar of the machine, the weight was not recorded till the hand had been removed. Peter was the first to step on the scale, which he turned at 139½lbs. On a second trial the weight registered was 72½lbs. 14oz. A third weighing gave 68½lbs. From the first to the third weighing only five or six minutes elapsed, during which there was a diminution in weight equal to 71½lbs. Zion next stepped on the platform, but was compelled to retire before his exact weight was obtained. He had, however, turned the scale at 76½lbs., but failed to do so at 79½lbs., so that he would have been somewhat lighter than this. On a second trial he turned the scale at 80½lbs., and then lost weight, pound by pound, with such rapidity that it was at last found impossible, in moving the indicator along the beam, to keep pace with the decreasing weight, so that it can only be said that Zion retired from the scale weighing less than 60lbs. Geordie began to lose weight immediately, until he got under 80½lbs., when he had to leave. On a second trial he turned the scale at 80½lbs., and then again got lighter, but a fixed weight of 74½lbs. was arrived at for a few seconds, and Geordie then retired. Although so light in weight, in appearance he was solid and muscular looking as usual. It was with great satisfaction that the weight of the child-form Lily was taken. She was unable to come out so well as the stronger controls, and it was necessary to move the machine nearer to her. On her first appearance the weight registered was 56½lbs. On a second trial she turned the scale at 45½lbs., and then ran rapidly down to 34½lbs. A third weighing gave the result as 33½lbs. 10oz. Medium's weight, 14½lbs. The clothes of the medium (including watch and shoes) being also weighed separately, were found to be 8½lbs. 2oz. There was thus a range of 105½lbs. 14oz. between the greatest and least weights recorded during the evening, and a difference of 114½lbs. 14oz. between the least weight recorded and that of the medium. All the weights obtained were less than the medium's weight.

In accordance with what seems to be a general law, all the forms exhibit a diminution in weight (often considerable in the course of a few minutes) at each successive weighing, a diminution which goes on even during the act of weighing. There seems to be no permanent weight pertaining to any particular individual form, but it varies with the length of time the form may have been out in the circle, and probably depends upon other con-

ditions, mediumistic, circle, and atmospheric. Even the height of individuals seems to be slightly affected by altered conditions. The larger forms do not always possess a correspondingly heavier weight. It was noticeable that when the form, standing on the platform of the machine, began to grow lighter, there was a vibratory motion of the beam. This may be the result of momentary checks in the diminution of weight, or slight momentary recoveries of part of the weight being lost.

On the evening of the 21st ult., the weights of two of the female forms were taken, with results similar to the foregoing. Mrs. Cobham stepped on to the scale, but the beam at that moment was only furnished with counterpoise to the extent of 100lbs., which was not sufficient, and before fresh weight could be added, Mrs. Cobham had to retire from the machine, weighing over 100lbs. A second trial gave a little under 80½lbs., with a rapid loss of weight to below 60½lbs. A third trial gave 76½lbs. "Charity" then presented herself, and on the first occasion turned the scale at 84½lbs. On the second at about 86½lbs, the exact weight not being noted, owing to the sudden diminution, which brought it to 63½lbs. A third weighing gave 80½lbs. at first, which diminished as usual until a weight of 75½lbs. less 2oz. was reached. On this, as on the former occasion, the forms were in full and distinct view, free from all surrounding objects.

For the sake of completeness, it may be well to add that these experiments were carried out in the Library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists; that the room is situated on the solid ground floor, with no cellar or apartments beneath; that there is no "cabinet" in the usual sense of the word, but only two curtains suspended from a rod extending from wall to wall (which are of solid brick, and built many years since) in one corner of the room; that the only door is completely cut off from that part of the room where the materialisation takes place by the chairs of the sitters; and that throughout the experiments there was a steady light more than sufficient to enable the operation of weighing to be carried on with ease and accuracy.

JOHN CARSON, Clutha, Kew, near Melbourne.
ELIZA ANDREW, Montpelier House, 240 Albert Street, East Melbourne.

W. H. TERRY, 84 Russell Street, Melbourne.
MARTHA BAMFORD, Lygon Street, North Carlton, Melbourne.

A. J. SMART, 66 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne.
* MARY LOUDON, Simpson Street, East Melbourne.

THE OPERA HOUSE DIFFICULTY.

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE WITH THE SUNDAY SERVICES.

INTIMATION having reached the officers of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists too late for advertisement in the papers of Saturday, Feb. 7th, that the Opera House would be closed against them the following day, some handbills were hastily printed for distribution amongst the congregation who began to assemble outside the Opera House at about half-past six p.m., on Sunday. In these they were invited to come up to Mr. Terry's place in Russell Street, from the verandah of which Mr. Walker would explain the reason of the doors being closed against them. Accordingly, by seven p.m., about 800 people were congregated on the road and pavements waiting anxiously for an explanation of the difficulty. At that hour Mr. Walker emerged from the window and requesting the audience to remove from the footpaths to the road, and to do nothing illegal, briefly explained that through a threat from the Government the Opera House Company were constrained to refuse the use of their house for Sunday services. He therefore requested them to walk in an orderly manner to the Horticultural Hall, where he would more fully explain the position. The progress of this large body through the streets naturally caused considerable excitement, doors and windows along the route being crowded by the inmates of the houses curious to know the import of it. In a few minutes the Hall was densely

packed—aisles, platform, and ante-rooms being crowded, and a large number being unable to find even standing room. Mr. Walker, who was greeted with applause, reviewed the circumstances which led up to the present difficulty (which are given elsewhere) characterising the interference as a blow at Freethought and freedom of speech, and urging them to resist it by all legitimate means. The audience heartily applauded the speaker's remarks, and an indignation meeting being suggested, it was announced that one would be held during the ensuing week; and after a few concluding remarks from Mr. Walker, the meeting dispersed.

A PUBLIC meeting was held at the Temperance Hall, Melbourne, on Thursday evening, February 16th, to protest against the interference of the Government with the Sunday lectures. Upwards of nine hundred persons were present. The chairman was supported by representatives of both the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and the Freethought Society.

Mr. John Ross occupied the chair, and in opening the meeting, having referred briefly to the object which had called them together, recommended that the matter should be taken deliberately, and with business-like feelings; not as a mere outburst of indignation, to be expended in one moment of superfluous energy, but something that would remain with them; to consider the matter with a view of continuing the effort in whatever direction they might see it necessary to employ it. He read a letter received from Mr. H. J. Wrixon, M.L.A., in the following terms:—"My attention has not been called to the action of the Government of which you complain, and I am not aware of the facts which constitute your grievance. I will inquire into the matter, and will be ready in Parliament to maintain whatever justice requires;" also one from Mr. Alfred Deakin, M.L.A., in the following:—"I regret to say that an engagement of several weeks standing, which compels me to speak at Stawell on Thursday evening, will prevent my attending your meeting on that date. Your protest has my entire sympathy. I consider the interference with your privileges to be quite uncalled for, and can only regard it as another attempt of the church to control affairs altogether outside its spiritual sphere."

The chairman then proceeded to say that it appeared, in taking any hall licensed for public amusements, it was in the power of the Chief Secretary to see that nothing in the way of trading or mere worldly amusement should take place therein on Sundays. This power would certainly be very efficient in stopping anything that had in view mere money-making, or any proceedings that depended upon the taking of money to pay current expenses, but he thought there was a great difference between a performance with a view of making money and the mere discussion of liberal opinions that required money to carry on current expenses. He thought it a stretch of this power when exercised in stopping such a collection, even if made a *sine qua non* of parties being allowed to enter. The Association now embarrassed by this proceeding gave way to the decision, and used all the moral power in their possession to induce people to pay, though if they insisted upon entering without paying they could do so. They had no power, and therefore exercised none, to prevent their entering, and in fact, people had entered all parts of the house who did not choose to contribute. But even this had been objected to as an evasion of the act, and they were practically disallowed to meet in such halls, and to discuss liberal opinions in such a way. He was not there in the name of any specialism, but of freedom of discussion, the greatest freedom that they could possess, for it was the basis of all true thinking, and true thinking was at the basis of all true action. Anyone who wanted to put his thumb upon anything in society, would do all in their power to prevent liberality of discussion. He called upon Mr. T. Walker to move the first resolution, which read as follows:—

"That this meeting expresses its indignation at the recent action of the Government, which is calculated to suppress freedom of speech by interfering with the Sunday evening lectures."

The chairman considered the word "indignation" to be "rather strong," but numerous cries of "No, no" from all parts of the audience indicated the contrary.

Mr. Thos. Walker said he was pleased to see that the meeting agreed with the wording of the resolution, and were disposed to consider it expedient that the word "indignation" should be retained. Whom were they to express their indignation if not at the suppression of their liberties? This was a matter that affected all who had an opinion to say what might differ from the reigning power. He did not think that anyone could become acquainted with the facts of the case without concluding that they had suffered an injustice. But it was well to consider both sides of the question, and he thought that the statement given to the public in the *Age*, of Wednesday, covered the Government's case. In this they disclaimed any intention of interfering with the liberty of any body of people to assemble together for the interchange of religious thought, and claimed to have acted merely in a judicial and secular capacity, that the Opera House was licensed under the condition that if it be used on Sunday no charge should be made, that it was only by means of this clause that a line could be drawn, and that if no charge be made for admission, no objection would be raised to orderly gatherings in the building. Mr. Walker thought that the meeting on Sunday evening, and the advertisement of the present meeting had helped to draw from the Government that public statement. When he lectured at the Opera House some years ago, the Association made a positive and advertised charge every Sunday. There was then no such clause in the license as that referred to. But the Chief Secretary wrote to the Opera House authorities to say that in all probability if they continued as they were, the application for a renewal of their license would be refused, and they then had to inform the Association that it would be turned out if it continued charging. They then got notices printed—That admission was free, but visitors were expected to contribute towards the expenses—and posted in various parts of the house, and a plate was held at the door, and the services were continued, a permit having been obtained stating that this might be done under the conditions that no money was taken for tickets, and no seats sold by tickets or otherwise; but this restriction did not forbid the letting of "pews" for a term, which was also done. The Association continued this for some months, and were not interfered with, but left in the belief that they were acting in accordance with the terms of the permit, and the lectures came to a close in consequence of Mr. Walker's departure for England. The next Opera House license contained the clause in question. The services had been recommenced on precisely the same basis as when they were left off, the identical notices again put up, and as before, people had not been compelled to pay. But it was now said that this was charging. The Government said they did not wish to stop freedom of speech, but the taking of money on Sundays for a performance. They went a long way from home, however, to do this, for it had been advertised that at St. Patrick's and St. Paul and Peter's churches specified charges for admission would be made, and that there would be five hundred five-shilling reserved seats in St. Patrick's on a special occasion. But nothing had been done to stop that kind of Sunday trading; they might conscientiously believe it good for the morals of the people, and yet in their own advertisements they had applied the "performance" to these occasions. From this Mr. Walker concluded that the statement made by the Government was only a pretext, the real object being the stopping of the lectures. (Applause.) If they had advocated the popular faiths, and upheld them to approbation, they would not have been stopped. He characterised the method which had been adopted as lacking in straightforwardness and moral courage. The only question was, what was to be done to prevent a repetition of a similar policy, and to secure freedom for the future? They had much against them: the Government, a powerful church, extensive vested interests, popular prejudice, and in a great measure even the press; but in spite of all these they knew that truth was on their side, and were determined to stand by it. (Applause.) They (the Freethinkers) would not be silenced. The Government, he thought, must be afraid that they were growing too fast, and, unable to meet them by fair means—by those who were paid to do it—

thought to crush them by the pressure of the law. But it could not be done. The right of private judgment had been won in the ages gone by, and if that had been done when the battle was more difficult to fight—the powers stronger, the agencies more tyrannical and cruel—could not they, armed with the science of the nineteenth century, the wisdom of this age, the moral courage of our times, do their little all, and win a victory now? Mr. Walker could not conclude without a few practical suggestions. He thought the Free Thinkers, of various classes, had been too much scattered, and their energies consequently dissipated, but their common interests were now at stake, and they should unite. They had not yet a Hall in Melbourne. They could accomplish their desire if they would only put their shoulders to the wheel, and work in harmony on the common platform of liberty to all. Let them give their free thoughts expression, and they would make their influence felt in every part of the land. (Applause.) But in the meantime they had, if possible to carry this resolution, and he hoped this would be unanimously.

Mr. White, who seconded the resolution, said he thought every rational man must feel the necessity now of standing up for the right of freethought principles. Although there had been among the different classes of freethought people a little coldness, he thought they ought to shake hands and work shoulder to shoulder for the grand cause of free discussion. He did not know how men could be refused admittance to any place to express their thoughts without feeling indignation. He thought the freethinkers might drop any little feeling they might have to one another, and unite in getting some place of their own where no Government and no clergy could interfere with them (applause). He heartily seconded the resolution, because he felt indignant, and had a right to say so.

No amendment being made, the Chairman put the resolution to the meeting, which was carried.

Mr. James Donovan rose to move the second resolution—

"That every effort be made to secure henceforth freedom of thought and speech to all citizens of Victoria upon all matters whatsoever."

The reason of his appearance on the platform was that he sympathised with what all freethinkers were attempting to gain,—the liberty of thinking, and not only the liberty of thinking, because that would be useless unless they also had liberty of expression. He disagreed with the Chairman, and thought the word indignation was quite in its proper place. He rehearsed the facts of the case as stated by the Chairman and Mr. Walker, and considered that the method adopted by the Association of taking voluntary contributions at the door did not differ one iota from the manner in which contributions were taken at the Catholic Cathedral. The motive put forward by the Government was that they wished to prevent theatrical performances being held on a Sunday, but was there not enough of ingenuity in our Houses of Parliament to frame a law sufficiently explicit to do away with that possibility, and yet admitting of people going there to hear philosophical dissertations? Why should not freethinkers be allowed to charge for admission? No man was coerced. If he thought the arguments put forward were worth listening to, why should he not be permitted to pay for them? The fact was governments generally were very unteachable. Liberty was not properly understood. Herbert Spencer had said that the duty of the State should be confined solely to seeing that justice was secured to every citizen, by justice meaning that every citizen should be guaranteed any benefits that accrued to him from the exercise of all his faculties, and he Mr. (Donovan) thought that if the State did make that its sole business it would have quite enough to do. The question was, how were they to secure freedom of thought, not only on religious, but on all matters, because the mind that was free in religious matters was led to think more freely on social matters, which were of as great if not more importance. He recommended keeping within the law, but by peaceful agitation to alter the law. But there were other means by which they might try to gain freedom of speech. Let

the freethinkers obtain a sub-lease for a Sunday night, or let them secure the leasehold. Previous speakers had advised the building of a hall by the united efforts of the freethinkers. Reference had been made to the Lyceum at Dunedin. In that Freethought Association they had men of every cast of opinion, united by the common bond of liberty of speech. No matter what belief a man might profess, the ranks of that Association were open to him. Why not the same here? They had the Spiritualists in one body, the Freethinkers in another. Why not unite, and build this hall, where they might have these freethought services held? He believed the time was ripe, and hoped ere long to find some practical action result from the suggestions thrown out. By passing the resolution that had been read, they (the meeting) would combine together in supporting the leaders of the freethought movement in whatever action they might take.

Mr. H. Watts had much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Mr. W. I. Terry said he did not wish to detain the meeting by enlarging upon what had been said, but merely to state the position at the present time with regard to the Association, the Government, and the Opera House. The document that had come to hand, the permit upon which they were supposed to act, was not considered sufficient by the directors of the Opera House Company to permit of their letting to the Association the Opera House on Sunday next or at any time until they had got something more explicit. They were perfectly willing to let it, but could not afford to risk the suspension of their license even for a few days, having entered into engagements with persons to let the Opera House to them, for any breach of which they would be held responsible, and mulcted in a very large sum of money. Under these circumstances they did not feel justified in letting the House until they got some definite statement from the Government that they would not be interfered with. They had been told that the Association would depart from their practice of taking money at the doors, relying on the letting of seats for a term, and on voluntary collections inside the House after the audience were seated, or at the conclusion of the services, but that was not adequate for them. The Government, they said, could construe that any way they liked, and they looked upon the letter which they had received from the Government—which he had not seen—as a threat of suspension of their license, and did not feel justified in letting it. He had written to ask for a more explicit communication from the Government, and submitted to them an interpretation of the clause, and asked if that was the correct one, and if not if they would furnish their own interpretation, so that there might be no further misunderstanding. That letter had been sent in two days since, and an early reply requested, but none had yet reached them, and hence the Association were uncertain what to do. Unless they could obtain the Opera House they must obtain some unlicensed house, if it were only the Horticultural Hall. Mr. Walker was prepared to lecture wherever he could; in the Opera House if it could be got, if not, in the next best place to be obtained.

The Chairman considered Mr. Terry's explanation a very important one, as showing the willingness of the Committee to agree with the Government's own terms, if their intention was merely what they expressed in general terms, and they would make it more clear in their statement to the proprietors of the Opera House, and end the disputation.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

The third and last resolution: "That copies of the resolutions already carried be sent to Sir Bryan O'Loughlin, and to Mr. Grant, and to be published in the daily papers of Melbourne," was moved by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Pedley, and duly carried.

The usual vote of thanks to the Chairman, having been passed, the proceedings came to a conclusion, the Chairman stating that he hoped in due course they would be again called together to discuss the question of the building of a Hall for their own services.

SPIRIT IDENTITY AS DEMONSTRATED IN THE SEANCES OF MR. BROWN.

By A. MUELLER, M.D.

THE fascinating seances held at Yackandandah under the mediumship of Mr. Robert Brown, during the Christmas holidays, deserve far more than a passing notice. Nothing in the whole range of spiritual phenomena which it has been my good fortune to witness has ever so thoroughly convinced me that the communicating intelligences are neither demons, as ignorant bigotry still maintains, nor those miserable simulacra of deceased persons, bereft of their higher or spiritual consciousness, and doomed to final disintegration, which the great Bombay oracle and prophesies of the Theosophists, in the October number of her journal pronounce them to be, but that they are still genuine human beings who, freed from the coarse earthly body with all its wants and passions, continue, on a higher moral and intellectual plane, and with faculties heightened instead of impaired, the life commenced on earth.

Mr. Brown's seances have improved greatly during his residence at Malsbury, to which place, after his late short visit here, he has now returned. The spirits that manifested through him originally, namely, his brother George, his brother-in-law, Mortimer, and last, but not least, their leader Barlow, appear to have been the nucleus around which a numerous band, all more or less thoroughly identified, have gradually formed. Among these the spirit of Mr. John Brown, the father of the medium, is the most conspicuous, and has given most undoubted proofs of identity. His deep, sonorous voice is recognised at once by those who knew him in the body, and though he has left the latter more than fifteen years ago, he often speaks to them of past events with a freshness of memory exceeding their own. On taking leave of the circle this spirit invariably pronounces a short, but impressive, benediction.

But the most interesting features of these seances are Barlow's addresses to the circle. They express the deepest, most heartfelt religiosity, and scorning dogma and creed, advocate "The free style of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good." "Be truthful above all things; let your best prayers be loving deeds of kindness towards each other; try to do your best in all your relations of life—and rest assured that death will be a glorious change to you." Such and similar are the utterances of this noble spirit—a peculiar thrilling pathos, an earnestness no human voice can express, mark his every word. A young friend, after hearing him for the first time, most pertinently remarked to me: "If spirits have thus spoken to men in olden times, as no doubt they did, I can well understand the frequent—'Thus saith the Lord' of the Old Testament, for if I could think of God as speaking, I could imagine Him to speak as Barlow did."

Barlow's addresses are generally very short. He appears to watch most carefully over the welfare of his medium, and never draws more from him than is compatible with his perfect health, closing seances abruptly when he finds the power waning in the least, and meeting expressions of regret on the part of the circle with the invariable reply, "We must study his health." Thus he informed me of his intention of giving a lecture shortly at Malsbury, "On their life and occupations in the spirit-world," but when I asked him to fix a date, in order that I might be present, he regretted being unable to do so, as he could not tell beforehand when the conditions would be such as to enable him to concentrate all available power in this one effort without injury to his medium.

Though short, his discourses, however, are always to the point. He seems to read the minds of the sitters, for his utterances are always adapted to the circle he addresses. Thus in one, composed principally of Spiritualists, he expressed regret at Spiritualism apparently making but slow progress at Yackandandah (*alias* Sleepy Hollow), but assured the circle that, though slow, its progress here, as everywhere, was sure, whilst at another, held at my house on the 5th of January, he explained the aims and objects of Spiritualism

to a company of educated sceptics, and declared what they saw of it that evening to be merely its A. B. C., predicting a time when spirits would speak to large assemblies from public platforms, as he spoke to them then.

Frequently, also, he addresses himself to the scruples of individual sitters, who have heard Spiritualism denounced from the pulpit (a favourite pastime, by-the-way, with one reverend (?) here of late.) "They call us bad spirits," he said, at the last seance. "How strange then that we are not kept roasting in that alleged hell of theirs, instead of being at large, as we are, and enjoying this glorious existence. The devil, they say, is at the bottom of it all. Well, friends, might we return the compliment, for the worst of all devils is that of bigotry and intolerance," to which another spirit, George Brown added, "and that of bad temper and passions uncontrolled; every one is his own devil who does not master them; within you is the only devil there is room for in the world." Evidently our modern Pharisees, the Sacerdotalists, who would fain chain humanity down to their old, worn out creeds, are no great favourites with our spirit friends. It must be conceded that Barlow's utterances, if they do not prove the identity of the spirit with the man Barlow, whose mundane life, history, and manner of death the former has faithfully given, prove at all events that the intelligence from which they proceed is both morally and intellectually unclouded, and of a superior though evidently human type. The spirit Barlow acts with a set purpose, a mission in view. Though his communications do not give us anything new, they are invaluable as coming from a being in a higher sphere of existence, and as confirming as such the conclusions with regard to man's nature and destiny, which human reason, when freed from the trammels of dogma and creed, has already arrived at. But the best proof of spirit identity ever vouchsafed to me, came quite unexpectedly at a seance held in my house on the 5th of January. It is so interesting that no excuse is required for giving it in detail. After having been told repeatedly by the medium on this and previous occasions that a female spirit, apparently anxious to communicate, was standing behind me, and having received intimations of its presence by gentle touches of a small, soft hand, I was at last addressed by a feeble, scarcely audible, female voice, and on inquiry received the name "Mary Blewett" as that of my visitor. At this I felt somewhat disappointed, for the thought uppermost in my mind when I heard the voice, was that at last I would get now, what I had long and ardently wished for, namely, a communication from a beloved sister, passed away many years ago. Moreover, who was Mary Blewett? The name was not quite unfamiliar to me, but I could not recollect when and where I had heard it. After some ineffectual attempts on the part of the spirit to enlighten me, the voice dying away into the faintest whisper Barlow now spoke as follows:—"Mary Blewett was accidentally burned many years ago at Hillsborough. She is here this evening to thank you for your decision given to Mrs. Takle. The girl was foully slandered after her death; you defended her and saved her name from disgrace." Now, at last, I recollected that, as coroner of the district, I once held an inquest on the body of a girl of that name, and on looking through my records, after the seance, I found the following verdict opposite the name Mary Blewett:—"Died at Hillsborough on the 22nd of May, 1872, from asphyxia, through falling into a fire whilst in a fainting fit." Still unable, however, to call to mind by what service or action I had earned a gratitude sufficiently deep to be tendered from beyond the grave after so many years, I went to Mrs. Takle next morning, and from her received the following narrative:—"Mary Blewett, not long out from Cornwall, had lived at Hillsborough, in the house of a cousin. The wife of the latter died, and the girl, though only 17 years old, then took charge of the household and some five or six small children. A few months after this she was found dead, with her face lying in a fire, over which she had been cooking." Mrs. T., a friend of deceased, was present at the inquest, and, after the close of the proceedings, had solicited a few minutes

private interview with me, at which she informed me that the girl was said to have died *enroute*, and requested me to state, confidentially, whether such had been the case or not, since I had been present at the post-mortem examination made by Dr. Fox. My reply had been a most indignant denial of this most rascally slander, to the effect that, so far from being pregnant, the girl had most undoubtedly died a pure virgin. These are the facts of a case the bare outlines of which only were recalled to my memory after hearing it again related to me. Scarcely a passing thought had ever been bestowed by me on it since its occurrence, and only one person in the circle had ever heard of it. Some mischievous elementary, however, according to the explanation the editress of the *Theosophist* gives of such phenomena in the article referred to, some soulless spoon, perceiving the picture in the astral light, which our minds were at the time evolving of Mary Blewett and her sad death, or, in plain English, reading our thoughts, appeared as the spirit of the girl, pretending to be actuated by one of the noblest impulses of our nature, but in reality only bent on foolish mischief, trickery and deceit. "Si tacuisses, philosophus mansisses" was the final conclusion forced upon me after reading "Fragments of occult truth." In her desire to "play first fiddle" in the great spiritual oratorio now being enacted, the accomplished writer has started a theory of her own, presented to us on the authority of the hypothetical Himalayan brothers, and, with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause, she now tries to force the facts of Spiritualism into her theory, instead of accommodating her theory to these facts. The somewhat riotous manifestations at the Eddy brothers seances may fit into this theory, but it is totally inadequate to explain the phenomena in *lots*, more especially such as those narrated above, occurring in harmonious private circles. Ere long Madame will have the very great satisfaction of being cited as an authority against Spiritualism by those whom she most professes to despise, the devil-mongers and devil-worshippers of the churches, ever ready to clutch any floating spar that might keep their sinking craft afloat.

BUDDHISTIC ADEPTS.

The *Spiritualist* of July 29th., contains an article on the above subject by A. J. C., embodying a translation from the "Samanna Phala Sutta," from which we take the following:—

"Here below, O great King, the religious person having renounced taking the life of anything that lives, has aversion to any idea of murder. He lays down the stick, the sword, is full of modesty and pity, is compassionate and good for all life, and for every creature. This even is counted to him for virtue.

"Having renounced taking what is not given him, he has an aversion for every idea of robbery; receiving as a gift all that is given to him, desiring only what is given, he lives with a heart thus purified. When the religious person has this merit, it is counted as virtue.

"Having renounced incontinence, he is chaste; he has an aversion to the gross law of the union of the sexes; that is counted as virtue.

"Having renounced lying, he has aversion for every false word; he speaks the truth, he is the whole truth, he is sure, worthy of confidence, enemy of all falseness in his relations with men.

"This is counted to him for virtue.

"Having renounced all slandering, he has an aversion for scandal and evil speaking. He does not go about repeating what he has heard in order to cause anger; he reconciles those who have been divided; he does not separate those who are one; he rejoices in conciliation, loves it, is impassioned for it, his language is such as to produce it; this is counted as virtue.

"Having renounced all gross language, he has an aversion to such language. All soft speech, agreeable to the ears, affectionate, going to the heart, polished, beloved by many people, gracious to many, is the language he employs; this is counted as virtue.

"Having renounced frivolous discourses, he has an aversion for all language of that kind.

"He has an aversion to destroy any collection of grain or of creatures; he only takes one repast; he abstains from eating in the night; he does not eat at improper hours; he does not like dances, songs, concerts or dramatic representations.

"He has an aversion for dress, or to adorn himself with garlands, perfumes or oils. He has an aversion to receive gold or money, or unripe grain, raw flesh, a woman, or a young girl, a slave of either sex, a goat, a ram, a cock, a pig, an elephant, an ox, a horse, or a mare. He has an aversion to receive a cultivated field, or a property. He has an aversion to trade. He has an aversion to fraudulent weights and measures; he has an aversion to walking in tortuous ways, to fraud, trickery and blameable actions. He does not like any act of violence.

Then follows a long list in great detail, of forbidden means of gaining a livelihood, and among them is "communicating with spirits," (Bhutas) which, although very curious, is too long for this paper.

"And how, O great King, does the religious person shut to the gates of the senses? If the organ of sight be not restrained, if it be dispersed on every side, then violent desires, despair, sin and culpable conditions will follow. Then he succeeds in restraining it; he guards it, putting a bridle on the organ of sight.

"In the same manner, having perceived sounds by the sense of hearing, odours by the sense of smell, tastes by the palate, and tangible attributes by the sense of touch, these are the subjects of his reflections: if the organ of the mind be not restrained, if it be allowed to wander, then violent desires, despair, sin and guilty conditions will follow. Then he succeeds in restraining it, he watches over it, and succeeds in placing a bridle upon the organ of the spirit. He who is endowed with this sublime empire over his senses, enjoys an internal pleasure which nothing can take away. It is thus that the religious person shuts the gate of his senses.

"Having abandoned all cupidity for this world, having renounced the vice of wickedness, full of pity and of goodness for all creatures, he purifies his mind from the vice of evil.

"Having renounced idleness and indolence, he remains exempt from those defects. Having renounced pride and evil actions, he feels a calm soul within himself. Having renounced doubt, he remains free from all doubts.

"When the religious person having become detached from the objects of desire and from culpable conditions, has arrived at the degree of the *first* contemplation, which is the happiest of that satisfaction born of analysis, and accompanied by reasoning and judgment, let him bide his body in the pleasure of the satisfaction born of distinguishing (what really is from what is not), that this be counted to him as meditation.

"Yet another thing, O great King. The religious person after having attained by the annihilation of reasoning and of judgment, to the *second* degree of contemplation which is the pleasure of the satisfaction born of meditation, affranchised from reasoning and from judging and where rules the unity of the spirit, which is internal peace and calm; the religious person remains in this contemplation."

This would appear to point to the attainment of the state of intuition, instead of understanding and reason.

The enumeration of the different stages of advancement, like almost all the Buddhist sacred books, is so unreadably long winded, and contains such wearisome repetitions, that I find I must give the substance or *resume* of each subsequent degree, without following the exact words.

"The *third* stage or degree of contemplation is attained by detachment, a state of indifference to outward things, but preserving memory and knowledge.

The *fourth* stage is obtained when by the abandonment of pleasure and pain, the anterior impressions of joy and sorrow have disappeared, and the perfection of memory remains. In this state "having touched his body with perfected spirit, purified in a perfect manner, he remains seated, and there is no part of the body which is not in contact with this perfected spirit."

"Buddha was stricter than Socrates, who declared that every one who took more than two repasts was a barbarian."—A.J.C.

"The religious person perceiving his mind thus concentrated, perfected, purified, exempt from every stain, and free from every vice, and arrived at impassibility, directs his mind towards knowledge and science."

"Seeing his mind thus concentrated, he turns his mind towards the act of creating, under his eyes, the 'manas,' (the organ of intelligence). He represents to himself by thought, another body or form created out of his material body having all its members and organs fit for action."

This evidently describes the power which the Adept has now reached, to project and make use of his spiritual body, or double.

"He attempts the practice of supernatural powers, the effects of which are various; although one, he multiplies himself in many forms; although being multiplied he remains a unity; he appears, he disappears, he passes without difficulty through a wall, a rampart, a mountain; he plunges and replunges into the earth, as if it was water; he walks on the water without sinking, as if he was upon the earth; he passes through the air; he reaches to and touches with his hand the Sun and the Moon; he attains with his body even to the world of Brahma."

He then directs his mind towards the element of divine hearing (clairaudience); "with this element perfectly pure, which surpasses human hearing, he hears two kinds of sounds, sounds divine and human, those which are distant as well as those that are near."

He then directs his mind towards the knowledge of the minds of others (thought reading). "Penetrating, with his mind, the minds of other beings, he knows them."

He then "directs his mind to the distinct knowledge and remembrance of his ancient abodes; he recollects his previous abodes or existences, which have been numerous," and then follows a minute description of the details of this knowledge.

This exactly agrees with the views of the Reincarnationists, and with the statements made by the Spirits or Mediums (as it may be) of the Latin races.

He then directs his mind "towards the knowledge of the death and birth of creatures. With his sight divine, pure, surpassing human sight, he sees creatures dying and being born, miserable or eminent, &c, following the destiny of their works. Those beings (says he) full of faults, which have resulted in actions, in words, or in thought, who injure the Aryas, who follow the doctrines of lies, who act conformably to false doctrines, these beings after the dissolution of the body after death, are born into miserable existences, into the bad way, into a state of decline, into hell. Those beings, on the other hand, endowed with good works, and words and thoughts, who follow the good doctrine, these beings after death are born in the good way, into the world of heaven."

"The religious person perceiving his mind thus concentrated, turns his mind towards the knowledge of the destruction of the stains of vice; he knows what grief is, and says, behold this is grief; this is the production of grief; this is the cessation of grief; this is the degree or stage which leads to the destruction of grief; he knows the stains of vice, and says, behold the stains of vice, this is the production of the stains of vice; this is the path which conducts to the cessation of the stains of vice. When he thus sees, when he thus knows, his mind is delivered from the stains of desire, from those of existence, from those of ignorance. His mind being delivered, his knowledge is thus: existence is exhausted; (for me) the duties of religious life are accomplished; what is to be done has been done; there is no place to return here below. This is the general and foreseen result; the most eminent and the most precious."

This is a short summary of this remarkable Sutta—A more detailed account and learned critique on these different stages is given in appendix No XIII. It is evident from it that the great aim and object of the Buddhist religion was to relieve every one who chose to take the proper means, that is the religious life, or the life of an Adept, from a return to a new life on this earth. Many scholars suppose that this is to be effected by means of annihilation. But it is, to the writer, inconceivable how anyone who at all studies the Buddhist

writings, can arrive at this conclusion; for the expressions used, describing the final state of the blessed Nirvana, all imply continued consciousness and perfect happiness. No doubt this view as to annihilation has been arrived at by merely looking at the etymology of the word "Nirvana;" an insecure foundation to build such an extraordinary edifice on. The punishment of sin was a return to earth life; the escape was by means of the before mentioned stages of Adeptship, by which Nirvana, or the annihilation of earth life for the individual, was attained, and his continued existence in the Heaven of Brahma secured.

MESSAGE DEPARTMENT.

THE following Messages are given through the organization of Mr. George Spriggs, by invisible intelligences professing to be the Spirits of human beings who formerly inhabited a physical body in this world. They come spontaneously, while the Medium is in an abnormal state called a "Trance," and are taken down as spoken by an amanuensis. They are published, not alone for their intrinsic interest, but in the hope that some of them will attract the attention of those to whom they are addressed.]

GOOD MORNING, SIR.—So far successful last time, I take this opportunity of speaking to you further. When I attend circles for experimental purposes, and to further my knowledge of the power of the mind of both spirits and mortals, I see more and more the necessity of guarding circles, both in the spiritual and the physical; for as to minds that are inharmonious to the furtherance of your investigations from the spiritual world, they have a detrimental effect upon the production of any phenomena. I can see now that the things which at one time were called miracles were only the bringing into operation of laws which may have been unknown in those days. The demonstration of immortality is a science just as much as chemistry or any other branch of the sciences is. All sciences ought to illuminate the mind, and give an impulse to your better natures. In the same manner ought the science of the spiritual world. The man of low and intemperate habits, who wishes to use it for immoral purposes, is not worthy to be admitted within the radius of the circle, whether it be a physical or a spiritual circle. Again I wish to shew you that minds in the circle, both in the spiritual and the physical form, must have a tendency either to illuminate or darken the minds of others, as the case may be, and therefore it is quite necessary to observe conditions of harmony and aspirations for good, so that Science and Religion may be as twin sisters, working in harmony together for the general welfare of all mankind. Religion without science becomes dogmatic, bigoted, and illogical, without foundation, and fit only for the ignorant and unthinking; but with Science and Religion combined we have a grand structure, fit for the highest intellects of the day, with a true and firm groundwork for the belief in the future, ready to accept all facts in nature, whether they come from Heathens or Christians, and so search into the hidden laws of nature and their effects. Farewell.

ROBERT WILSON.

Good Morning, Sir.—I hope I do not intrude, but I feel deeply interested in giving my views to you this morning. I was an old citizen of Ballarat, and lived there for some years, until I received the call to go to the spirit-life. Strictly speaking, I believed in the Christian religion, and no doubt your experience has taught you how many are disappointed in their hopes and anticipations of the future life. I can see plainly now that if these hopes were only realised it would make the spirit-world a world of monotony and idleness in the extreme. I was perfectly astonished to find things so different to what I had expected. My poor old mother and father were there waiting to receive me with open arms, and they seemed much more youthful in appearance than I did. They took me to a little home situated on the hillside. Below was a running stream emptying itself into a large river; along this river was indeed a grand sight; trees with all their brilliant tints, flowers dressed in all their gorgeous colors, singing birds, and the scenery around truly magnificent. Whilst staying in this spot I thought of Jesus and the Golden City, and I became very much distressed, until my mother

THE POSTAGE STAMP EPISODE.

spoke to me, asking what more I required to complete my happiness? I gazed around; I could see nothing that I required at the time. I soon questioned my friends as to the ideas I had received on earth. It was not easy for me to give them up, although I had perfect confidence in my relatives and friends, so I thought if only I could get back to earth, and just tell them the state of things in spirit-life, they would then be able to regulate their minds accordingly. I found it was not so easy to speak to them, and to express the meaning I wished to convey, and the views and ideas were difficult to friends on earth. I seemed to feel more of the influence of God in spirit-life than on earth. The inhabitants appeared to understand the laws that govern things in spirit-life; still the laws appeared much finer and subtler than in earth-life. There is a great field for work here, very different to what many people think. I can see that the teachings of earth-life are a mixture of various systems together, consequently that many of them have faint glimmerings of truth. In my earth-life I had to pass through a great deal of trouble and hardship, but I can safely say it has only fitted me for the work here. I know my old friends in and around Ballarat will not understand how it is possible for me to attend this circle, but I wish to state that this is not the first I have attended. I was connected with a mine, "Lauderdale," and no doubt Winter's Freehold will be recognised by many. I lived to a good old age, past seventy, before I entered this state, and you can judge of my astonishment at all the wonderful things I have heard and seen. I will not name any of my old friends specially, but to all I would say—I, John Winter, am still alive, a natural being in spirit-life. I fear I trespass too long on your time. I thank you for this opportunity, and hope to be allowed to come again.

JOHN WINTER.

THE LATE WASHINGTON A. DANSKIN.

MR. WASHINGTON A. DANSKIN, long and favourably known in America as an earnest worker in the cause of spiritual progress, and author of "How and Why I became a Spiritualist," passed to the higher life, at Baltimore, in December last. Mr. Danskinn was much respected, not only by his co-religionists, but by all who knew him, and the local secular paper pays tribute to his many estimable qualities in an obituary notice.

For those who are always asking the *cui bono* of Spiritualism, the following extract from the *Baltimore Morning Herald*, which appears in the *Banner of Light*, will be some reply:—

"A most remarkable case of premonitory warning of death is involved in Mr. Danskinn's illness. As is well known, he has for many years been closely connected with the spiritualistic cause in this city as President of the First Spiritualistic Congregation. His wife, Mrs. Sarah A. Danskinn, is the well-known physician of the new school, and medium. A few days prior to this attack, Mr. Danskinn received through his wife a communication purporting to come from his father in the spirit-world, warning him of approaching dissolution, and advising that he had best prepare for the same. Mr. Danskinn at once took the advice, made his will, and settled his affairs. The night before he was taken ill, he again received through his wife another communication from his father, informing him that if he had left unfinished any of his affairs, to complete them before morning, which was accordingly done, Mr. Danskinn working far into the night; and, singular to relate, it was at seven o'clock on the following morning, that, without a moment's warning, he received the stroke that (eventually) deprived him of his life."

THE *Banner of Light* of December 24th, 1881, gives an interesting account of the marriage of Professor J. R. Buchanan to Mrs. Cornelia H. Decker, the celebrated Psychometrist. The marriage ceremony was performed by Dr. S. B. Brittan, and as it embodies the views of the marriage relation held by the great body of Spiritualists, we shall reprint it in our next.

In the *Record* (Emerald Hill and Sandridge paper) of Feb. 17th, appears a letter from Mr. Robt. Caldecott, on the Materialisation Séances at 84 Russell Street, which we were unable to find sufficient space for in this paper. It has special reference to the "Postage Stamp" episode, which has been ridiculed by some wisacres who know nothing about the phenomena. As Mr. Caldecott argues, the value of the manifestation lies in the fact. If it is a fact, it is a most significant one, and it would be more philosophical for those who are disposed to ridicule, to suppress that inclination until they have ascertained the fact or falsity of the report. The bald fact presented to an unprepared mind, may appear ridiculous, and so would many statements made in the Bible and other books without the context, the addition of which would make them rational and credible.

It will be seen by reference to another part of this paper, that the ladies and gentlemen engaged in conducting the investigation of the phenomena referred to, are doing all they can to obtain and publish scientific evidence of the fact of spirit-materialisation: and that their object is unselfish, may be inferred from the fact that no one connected with the matter has any pecuniary or worldly interest in the results.

A RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF LIVERPOOL.

A HOME paper, the *Ennisworthy News*, publishes the following:—

"A census of the attendance at all the churches and chapels in Liverpool on Sunday last was published in the *Liverpool Daily Post* of Monday, the enumerators having been instructed and the census organised by the proprietors of that journal.

The result shows a very striking diminution in the number of persons attending places of worship as compared with a similar census taken in the year 1853. At the latter date, although the population was only 400,000, as against 552,006 in the present year, the attendance at places of worship was not only proportionately but numerically larger, the totals being for 1853, 101,982, and on Sunday last 63,576.

It is to be observed also that in 1853 the number of churches was only 154, with a total sitting-room for 132,393 persons, whereas on the present occasion the number of churches has increased to 218, with sitting-room for 169,242 persons.

The details of the enumeration on Sunday last are of interest. At the Protestant churches, which have a total sitting-room for 72,033 persons, there was an attendance of 22,610.

At the Roman Catholic chapels, with sitting-room for 22,945, the attendance was 14,448.

The other totals are: Wesleyan Methodists, seat-room 21,384, attendance 7,051; Presbyterians, seat-room 13,190, attendance 6,075; Congregational, seat-room 7,560, attendance 2,387; Baptists, seat-room 11,400, attendance 4,032; Unitarians, seat-room 2,400, attendance 972; Calvinistic Methodists, seat-room 6,100, attendance 2,702; Welsh Independents, seat-room 2,760, attendance 705; other denominations, seat-room 5,770, attendance 2,564.

The census was taken at the morning service, and both adults and children were included.

The smallest attendance at any regular place of worship was at the Church of England Church of St. Anne's, where in a building capable of holding 860 people only fourteen were assembled. The largest attendance was at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Francis Xavier, where 1,554 were gathered, this being in excess to the extent of over 100 of the actual sitting room, the aisle and other portions of the church being occupied by persons standing.

The weather throughout the day was that of genial autumn, perfectly dry and sunny, and presenting an inviting contrast to the meteorological disturbances of the preceding few days.

The census has been taken as the outcome of a good deal of attention that has recently been devoted to the paucity of attendance at places of worship in Liverpool, in which the *Liverpool Daily Post* has taken a considerable part.

MR. G. MILNER STEPHEN'S CURES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—As many hundreds of people have asked me how, or by what means, I perform my cures, I took advantage of an evening alone with my youngest son (whose principal control is an intellectual spirit from the "Benjamin Franklin Circle") to enquire from him the *modus operandi*; and I received through him the enclosed written replies to my questions.

There are two or three other answers to questions, which are instructive; and if you think the paper will interest your readers, it is at your service.

Yours faithfully,

G. MILNER STEPHEN.

172 Collins-street East.

[QUESTION by G. M. S.—How do I operate in Healing?]

Ans.—A curative magnetic current from a healing circle of spirits of an advanced degree is joined to the aura and magnetic force pervading and proceeding from your incarnated spirit, and is thrown or propelled by "will" power into the physical frame of the diseased patient. This renovates the subject, revitalises his system, which from pain is somewhat deadened, and gives a harmonious tone to his magnetic "perispirit," which is the inner abode of the ethereal soul. Your controls determine what is best to be done in each individual case, and give you instructions, by means of impression, how to act. Hence the different and divergent modes you have of treating different patients.

[Ques.—As to E's (the medium's) doubts and questionings as to his control?]

Ans.—It is part of his nature to doubt and question the authenticity of all things; hence it would be absolutely absurd for me to be annoyed at his want of faith. Of course I wish him to be of a little more recipient nature, since it would enable me to control with greater ease were he more passive; but I really think his doubts and fears will not harm him to any great extent, as he usually has some one to impress him in the right direction.

[Ques.—What was the meaning of spirits putting their hands all over me when healing in public?]

It is simply the method used to connect their magnetic "aura" with yours, and is quite a common one, since even in earth-life the magnetic force is generally thrown out from the tips of the fingers by mesmerisers, magnetisers, &c., who maintain—and to my mind rightly—that there is something about the nerves and membranes of the hand which facilitates the diffusion of power therefrom.

[Ques.—How was I enabled to tell a woman that she had a sunstroke at a particular time and occasion?]

Ans.—I should conclude that you were impressed by some one of your spirit friends present, who probably was prompted by an intimate knowledge of the woman in question. This is somewhat of a satisfactory test of "spirit intuition," as of course you of yourself were not acquainted with the fact, and it could not have been a case of "mind-reading," since it was not retained in the memory of the patient at the time.

[Ques.—Have I been impressed to send Magnetised Water to stay the Smallpox?]

Ans.—If you feel an irresistible desire to do so, you may regard it in the light of an "impression," and act accordingly. But I should not care to advise you in the matter, as I am not one of your healing and controlling circle, and consequently do not like to interfere; and it is not necessary for me to make enquiries as to their wishes, since you will receive impressions—vivid and irresistible—whenever there is occasion to act in such an important matter.

Ques.—I fear that it may be only a thought of mine?

Ans.—Impressions are usually received by Sensitives in such a manner that they cannot recognise their advent. This, no doubt, is your case, and hence you are unconscious of being influenced in any way.

* This fact was communicated to me in Sydney by an advanced Spiritualist, sitting in circle, to whom it was given by a spirit.—G. M. S.

Ques.—[Can a spirit judge of Geology better than a scientific human?]

Ans.—Of course, being in an advanced state I am necessarily more advantageously situated as regards all knowledge; but I do not wish to dilate upon scientific subjects until I have better control over the medium; then, when I have perfect use of his powers of speech, I shall be happy to lecture on any branch of science with which I am sufficiently acquainted.

Ques.—[Does Professor Denton know better than a spirit?]

Ans.—Of course a scientist such as you mention would undoubtedly have more knowledge of geology, or any other subject, than the freed spirit who has not exercised his reasoning and intellectual faculties in that particular direction. But the very fact that we have the power of passing matter through matter—of which you are aware—is sufficient to satisfy you that we have better advantages of obtaining geological information than are open to your use.

Ques.—[What was the meaning of the Prophecy used to Joel and Paul?]

Ans.—Prophecy is a very difficult thing to explain to you. It is the art possessed by advanced spirits of deducing certain effects and conclusions from certain presenting causes and reasons. It is a very dangerous power to exercise, and is not to be (to my mind) implicitly relied on, because there are nearly always exigencies and divergent influences arising which may alter the course of events mapped out to the foreseeing eye. It is dangerous for spirits who value the belief in their veracity to predict with any degree of certainty.

Almaville, Aug. 23rd, 1881.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

DR. BARNETT'S CIRCLE.

(Continued from last month.)

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—We are most anxious to give you some further enlightenment upon that which you have desired, namely, the work which lies before us, and which teems with undoubted ill-directed testimony against a Divine and holy indication of the wondrous love and Almighty power of a great Spirit, who is above, around, and below us; the very essence of all that is just and merciful, and the Instigator of all that will advance His own great Glory and goodness.

This great Spiritual Being, whom we call God, is the author and giver of all good things, and in this particular instance we find a strong manifestation of His power. This means of communicating between earth and heaven "is no new thing," which is one of the ideas inculcated within that work before us.

Therefore, if its origin is one of antiquity, the promoters thereof were undoubtedly some of those whose agency enabled them to make known to their fellow-creatures some of the Divine will of God—a testimony of angelic power. But, dear friends, the minds of those who lived many periods of time back, were not sufficiently intellectual, or sufficiently advanced, to receive this, which is now being thrown within the reach of ALL who like to become acquainted with its truth. It was not only regarded as a power of miraculous agency, but was also condemned by many as one of *witchcraft*, or some mysterious agency not to be permitted. It was then cast aside, and until later times has not been enabled to become a thing permissible. The very idea of antiquity is suggestive; for do we not herein find that if of perfectly ancient authority, it cannot be now denied or cast off as devilish, that is, of an evil power.

My dear friends; to those whom we have been permitted to enlighten as to the meaning, or, we should say, the reason, that sin is a portion of our very nature, we do not hesitate to say that it is a matter of surprise to us that such persistent hold is still retained of the old idea of Satanic power, which has the form of an evil one, trying to draw God's children from Him to be burned for everlasting in a lake of fire. No! dear friends! we wish you to realise and to believe that there is no power but of God, and that, therefore, an opposing spirit of greater force and ability cannot exist to overthrow and destroy all his designs, corrupting and

demoralising all those to whom he has given the breath of life. No! dear friends! the evil is within us: the natural consequence of our material form, and we have to strive to feel that the Spirit of God has been implanted within us also, and that we must ever strive to glorify that Spirit, and prove ourselves worthy of the great and glorious gift of an eternal inheritance. It is not meet that any should perish, neither shall any who strive to live according to the amiable and wise ordering of the All-wise; meaning, who regard the spirit more than the body, and wisely follow its dictates; in so living that we may be prepared at any time to give back the spirit which God has given us glorified and purified and enriched to His glory. Dear friends; if once our minds become firmly convinced of all this, we shall more readily understand the way to reach that frame of spiritual harmony which will enable us to raise our thoughts to meet those who come near unto us at these times: the solving of many matters which have hitherto appeared a mystery, inexplicable in the extreme.

Here is the rational idea of a sound, Christian religion verified. The soul that can grasp this is one that is blessed with peace and happiness, for light has dawned upon that one, shewing unto him the abundance of the Grace of God, and enabling him to view afar off a glimpse of the eternal home. To those who will not unite in these blessed means of grace, all still remains as heretofore, in a manner darkened and obscured. Faith must necessarily be strong to make that soul feel at ease about its future, which is only led by doctrinal teaching without the convincing and comforting effect which this personal intercourse with the unseen world must ever afford. Therefore we must earnestly desire that our aid may further this cause, which is rapidly spreading throughout the world, giving unto all men that peace which the world cannot give.

We do not desire for a moment to say that the teaching of those whose efforts are pure in their desire to do good, is without any good effect; but we do say that if their ideas and views of the subject of the soul's redemption were less bigoted and more strongly endued with a feeling of love and earnest desire for truth, more souls would be won from the depths of sin, and more clearly would the true path be laid before those whom they are so desirous to instruct. In all our efforts we have but this one aim in view: To do all for the glory of God and for man's eternal salvation. This is our particular province as ministering guardian angels, and without these means of communication, we should be shut out from performing fully the task which is ours in the spirit-life; ours to be the messengers from God on high to work his will throughout the earth sphere—to bring all within the fold, that not one be lost. Therefore, dear friends, we are permitted to show unto you that in the eternal home are we here to work, spiritualised and gifted with that which we had not in earth-life. We are in a position to throw light unto our dear ones left behind, and to testify unto them of the grace of God. Good night.

MINNIE.

RESUMPTION OF THE OPERA HOUSE SERVICES.

On Friday last a letter was received from the Government, by the Executive of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, intimating that the former had no desire to suppress the lectures, but endorsed the permit of May, 1879. The directors of the Opera House Company were interviewed, and on the understanding that no money be taken at the doors, consented to the opening of the House. The fact being announced in Saturday's papers drew a large audience to hear Mr. Walker's lecture on Sunday, "Lord Macaulay on Roman Catholicism." The services will be continued as heretofore. Seats in Dress Circle or Stalls may be hired by month or quarter, at W. H. Terry's, 84 Russell Street.

Professor Denton is lecturing, both Sunday and week-day, at Dunedin, and meeting with great success. There, as in Sydney, a direct charge is made for admission to the Sunday lectures without Government interference. Our legislators are sadly behind the times.

MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

NOTICE.

A LARGE number of applications for admission to the above have been received, and will shortly be considered by the "circle" committee. If one half the number are approved it will be sufficient to fill all vacancies for the next three months. No tickets will be issued, but written invites sent to those whose application is approved in due course.

The committee of the Cape Town Free Dispensary refused to receive the proceeds of one of Mr. Walker's farewell lectures. The Cape Town *Argus*, in a forcibly written leading article, castigates the bigots who compose the committee, and their remarks are endorsed by a liberal local clergyman.

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