

THE Harbinger of Light.

A 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."

No. 17.

MELBOURNE, JANUARY 1st, 1872.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Spiritualism and Progress	199-200
Mr. Nish's Lecture	200
Poetry—"To the Sorrow-Laden"	200
Communications—"Nature a Book unfolding Deity"	201-2
"Man's destiny"	202-3
The new Force	203-4
A Word to the Clergy	204
Ten separate remarks on Mr. Nish's Lecture	204-5
Individual Living	205-6
Our London Letter	206
The Malaise of Humanity	206-8
On Objections to the Necessarian Theory of Will	208-9

WHAT IS Spiritualism, is a question that may be otherwise put in the form of the enquiry, what is Truth. To determine the nature and objects of the teachings of what we call Spiritualism we have only to ask what is the purpose of spreading a knowledge of everything that is true. So much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to what should be the definition of Spiritualism as a faith, that it will be at once convenient and useful to lay down distinctly, as far as the light revealed to us will permit, the foundational principles of the Spiritualist's creed. As we said in our last issue, the term Spiritualism and its associated variations, appear to be unhappily selected, but we must continue to adopt them for expediency's sake.

Spiritualism is the great revelation which distinguishes the present age as by far the most remarkable in respect of intellectual progress that has reached the experience of human kind for the last eighteen hundred years. By the instruction obtained through the channels of teaching which Nature is now commencing to so bountifully employ, we have arrived for the first time in man's history at a true knowledge of his condition in this world, and a true knowledge also of the nature of his existence in the next. These are important items of information, it must be admitted; and the sceptics will be ready with the question—"Pray how do you demonstrate this to be the case?" To this inquiry the answers conveyed will be amply sufficient to show to any clear and candid investigator that the teachings of Spiritualism do suffice to prove these things. With the obstinate defenders of Orthodoxy, the blind and bigoted opponents of progressive knowledge, we have nothing to do. These must remain standing by the way side, while the multitude, with more or less resolution or perseverance, press on to the goal of perfect knowledge. We have abundant demonstration that the spirits of those who have lived

on earth can and do continually communicate with those who are yet in the flesh. Any one denying the evidence upon which these facts are founded is not worthy to be addressed upon any subject which appeals to the understanding. In addition to this item of knowledge we have learnt information from time to time upon a variety of matters connected with almost every branch of science, and the information so obtained has been proved in manner that has been recognised as irresistible—proved beyond the possibility of doubt or cavil. Information is also continually reaching us, through the magnetic influence, about the condition, and progress in truth, of distant nations. Great changes, we are told, are impending, and the news received by each mail confirms the belief that we are upon the eve of one of the most momentous revolutions in political and religious opinion that the world has ever witnessed. The Society, scarcely known to exist till within the last few years—the Society called the International—which has for its object the advancement of the status, and the alleviation of the sufferings, of working men throughout the globe, is now perceived to be an institution of most remarkable power, and one which it would be stupid to ridicule, and idle to ignore.

Throughout the earth there springs and flourishes a desire for freedom which takes innumerable shapes. Democracy is growing to be a deep-rooted political principle in the regard of hundreds of the leading statesmen, and of hundreds of thousands of the most intelligent people of England. Religious intolerance crouches in fear. Capital will not much longer be permitted to be the established Juggernaut by which the poor man is crushed in England, or in any other country. These are great reforms, but they have been foreshadowed, and they are assisted, by the light that comes from Spiritualistic teaching. Within a few months the scant information we have on these subjects will be increased to an extent that our old fashioned anti-progressionist newspapers and politicians little dream of. Every reform, every change for the better, every influx of light and truth, will be seen to be influenced by power from on high, and that power will be simply the advancement of truth. So unprofitable and unsatisfactory are discussions of mere trivial points of belief in connection with the

Spiritualistic phenomena that we will not waste time, and we are not disposed to accord space, in wearisome reiteration of what only leads to angry feeling. The main phenomenal facts of Spiritualism, as well as the mental instruction and inspired writings, are before the world, and only need the exercise of the commonest intelligence to understand. The great result, the mighty regeneration of society which is now commencing its rapid progress, is what we mainly rely upon to prove that the proper definition of Spiritualism is TRUTH—the eternal truth that Nature has been endeavouring to convey to the darkened understandings of men, any time for the last eighteen hundred years. Let our readers bear this in mind. When they shall be asked what is the belief that the Spiritualists cling to—they can answer fearlessly—it is faith and full reliance on the eternal existence, and everlasting progress, of TRUTH.

A LECTURE entitled "Spiritualism weighed in the balance, and found wanting," was delivered by the Rev. James Nish, of Sandhurst, in the West Melbourne Presbyterian Church, on the 11th ultimo. There was a numerous attendance, and the chair was occupied by Sir James McCulloch.

The lecture as a whole was moderate in tone, and free from abuse and ridicule; thus indicating that the rev. gentleman possessed rather more knowledge of his subject than the majority of our opponents who make up by ridicule what they lack in knowledge. He admitted that many remarkable facts had been adduced, he also believed that more would be brought to light, and that it was worthy of thoughtful investigation. With this admission, as a first step, we have every reason to be satisfied, but while he admitted the facts, he looked upon the theory that had been deduced from them as irrational, improbable, and delusive. If the rev. gentleman was a materialist we should think it necessary to refute his arguments, as he is not, and we think that he will do much more harm to his own position than to ours, we will merely point out the two-edged nature of his arguments. His course of reasoning will tend to engender in the minds of his congregation a scepticism regarding spiritual things that will recoil with double force on himself. For this much is certain, and the more we investigate the more conclusively it is proved, that the spiritual phenomena underlying all religions is strictly analagous to the modern phenomena, and whatever theory will explain one will explain all. From this proposition there is no escape. If morbid electrical conditions of the human mind will account for modern media speaking in tongues unknown to them, so will it account for the pentecostal manifestations. If optical illusion will account for the seeing of spirits to-day, it will also account for all angelic visitants in the past. If imperfect sleep will account for all the wonders of dream land and the seeing of visions to-day, so will it account for the same through all time. This, the rev. gentleman will be obliged to admit when he goes a little deeper into the subject, he will then see that he has been fighting side by side with such men as Hume, and aiding that materialistic scepticism which is so surely overthrowing the belief in the supernaturalism of the Bible.

The laws for the reception of evidence, laid down by the rev. gentleman, were just as fatal to his own position as the rest of his arguments, and if he acts consistently and applies them to the Bible he will inevitably reject the greater part of it as unreliable, and denounce the theology built upon it as "irrational, improbable, and delusive," and the apostles as deluded by the force of their imaginations. An argument on which the lecturer laid considerable stress was to this effect. "Many phenomena that had undoubtedly occurred could be accounted for by magnetic influence, to which some persons were peculiarly susceptible, without any spiritistic aid;

and he might add that some who had taken a prominent part in medium circles one day, and had taken a blue pill in the evening, had been unable to fill the same position in such circles the next day." We have heard this argument before, of mediums being "cured" of vision seeing and other mediumistic gifts, by means of a blue pill, and if the argument is a sound one we must conclude that if John, when in the Isle of Patmos, had but taken a blue pill the Apocalypse would never have been given to so hopelessly mystify and perplex theologians.

Another point touched upon was the effect of strong and persistent assertion in inducing others to believe the thing asserted, this was so happily illustrated by the lecturer that we suppose he was speaking from practical experience. The rev. gentleman's peroration was an eloquent denunciation of what he called impious and blasphemous creeds taught by some Spiritists in America. We may inform him, however, that Spiritualism as a religion has no creed, and the whole tenor of the communications received is that nothing is to be accepted as truth, that does not accord with reason, justice, and common sense. So if the examples given be genuine (though we have not been able to ascertain whence he got them) some of them would be denounced as heartily by Spiritualists as by the lecturer himself.

From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Nish's imperfect knowledge of the subject has betrayed him into a somewhat anomalous position, he has been dealing wild blows at Spiritualism, and unconsciously at orthodoxy at the same time, and while the young and vigorous system of Spiritualism will gain rather than lose by the attack, the decaying and worn out props of orthodoxy can ill sustain such a shaking.

The lecturer's slight acquaintance with Spiritualism has convinced him that the phenomena are real, and worthy of thoughtful investigation; a further acquaintance will show him that they are rationally inexplicable except on our hypothesis; this hypothesis we hold, in accordance with scientific usage, until it is absolutely demonstrated to the satisfaction of every rational being, or until it is superseded by another evolved from still more profound research than has yet been possible. Any attempt, therefore, to set up opposition theories upon less knowledge of the phenomena than that possessed by the great body of Spiritualists is sure to lead the rash adventurer into positions as absurd as that held by Mr. Nish.

Poetry.

TO THE SORROW-LADEN OF EARTH.

THE breath of Autumn's being sweeps the sea
And Winter hastes from his Siberian snow,
But we, in our divine eternity
Of love and wisdom, free from every woe,
In calm mid-summer dwell, and feel no mortal throe.

Hope on, O weary Heart, heaven's glory shines;
Earth fades, and soon we shall rejoice together;
Night hastes and Death its drowsy wreath entwines;
Into our realm from earth's Decembral weather
We bid you come. Gently as drops the feather
From the swan's breast, your dust, ye weary hearted,
Shall from you fall, and none shall ask you whether
Ye feared or hoped; each rankling wound that smarted
Shall pain no more, for peace dwells with the world's
departed.

Crowned with rose-blooms, on thymy banks reposing,
Sweet lovers wait you; O one fond embrace,
One loving smile, from eyes their love disclosing,
Shall compensate you for this mortal race,
And every sorrow from the heart erase.
Love God in man, and thus on earth obtain
The victor's wreath; Lo, Death shall not efface
Aught from the soul save disappointment's pain;
All shall be yours in heaven the young heart hoped to gain.

(Lyric of the Golden Age.)

COMMUNICATIONS.

NATURE A BOOK UNFOLDING DEITY.

Salvation is progression. Christ is a principle. Heaven is a state. Reason is a divine attribute of the soul. Nature is a book, unfolding the wisdom and goodness of Deity; it is before any other book; its pages are luminous; it teaches the goodness of God; it has never been interpolated or wrongly translated; its teachings are immutable. It has often been misdirected, as also has reason. It teaches no angry God; it holds forth no blind creed; it is plain, and all who will may read and understand. Man has left this sacred volume, the only true Bible (or Scriptures), and has in its place substituted the traditions of men. I entertained many erroneous views while in the earthly form; and I am very anxious that the world should know wherein I was in error. I believed and preached many truths, but also many errors; the truth I wish to retain, the error I wish to have rejected. The sect who profess to pattern from my life and teachings, have all my errors, beside the accumulation of many more, but have not much of the truth. I was a reader and student of both Nature and Revelation; they only of Revelation. I, though a student of Nature, was in a great error, for I supposed that Nature must submit to the teachings of revelation; but the truth is, *wherein revelation does not agree with Nature, it is wrong*. The men who wrote the Bible were not always under full control of the Spirit communicating, so that many errors crept into the Bible; besides, with interpolations and wrong translations, we have the truth greatly adulterated. I desire, most of all, that those who pretend to be followers of me should study the book of Nature; it is not only an ancient but a modern record of immutable facts, which has stood, and will ever stand, the test: it is a sure word of prophecy, whereunto all will do well to take heed. I will write through this medium and others, those truths that are indispensably necessary to understand, in order to enjoy God here, and be prepared for a higher sphere of bliss in the Spirit-world.

In my former communication I stated, first, that salvation was progression; besides, other statements were made which will be startling to those who know my former teachings when I inhabited the earth-form. I will now take up these subjects separately, and discuss them briefly, and afterwards will discourse upon what is contained in the latter part of my former communication.

First—I stated, “salvation, or in other words, religion, is progression.” It has been supposed and taught, and with candour too, that religion was a certain influx of Divine light into the soul of man; which took place after a certain routine of conventionalisms, by which the person performing the same was translated from total darkness into the full blaze of the sunlight of the heavenly regions, and was in a moment (or, as some believed, a longer period,) prepared for the full enjoyment of the presence of God; and also that, if that person had changed the form a moment before, he would have been precipitated at once into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. I once taught and believed the same; but since I passed into the Spirit-world I have seen things as they are, and find to my inexpressible joy that such is not the case. The benevolence of my nature caused me to preach a better salvation than my contemporaries; but still I was far from the truth, so far that I have often looked back upon my former writings and preaching, and wished that oblivion might forever cover them; and also, that if I could return to earth in my corporeal form again, I would teach quite another doctrine. But I thank God that there is an opportunity through Spirit-mediums of correcting my former errors; though I know that those who profess to follow me will not, as a people, listen to what I shall write, but will condemn it all as not even spiritual, and much less acknowledge that it comes from me. I wish to impress upon the mind of mankind, that salvation or religion is no such thing as is, and has been, taught by theologians, but it is *goodness, righteousness*

and *truth*; that it is not instantaneous, but progression and that for ever. Oh! could men see the light that shines through my soul while I dictate these pages; could they behold the truth as I see it; could they behold error also in its hideous forms, they would not wonder at my anxiety to convince men of the truth, the whole truth, as Eternity can alone reveal.

I shall fail to impart what I feel, but will try to give to mankind a faint idea of the truth as it is in Jesus. That blessed man never taught any such religion, as has been ascribed to him by many of his pretended followers; neither did his disciples; it is the creature of pagan barbarism; Nature reveals no such thing from without, neither can such a sentiment be found in the enlightened and developed soul of man. Salvation, is ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well; learning, I say, for it is not learned in a moment, an hour, day, month, or year, nor in any number of years, but it is the work of eternity. I might reason from analogy; look through the kingdom of Nature, and behold the seed of a plant or tree in the earth, the moisture whereof expands the germ contained in that seed; it unfolds, its nature progresses, it bears fruit; so with the germ of goodness, righteousness, and truth it is not matured in a day, but, as in the regular order of Nature, it is developed, and will ever be developing through all eternity. I do not intend in the present instance to elaborate this thought, but merely to present the idea.

My second statement is; Christ is a principle; or, in other words, what constituted Jesus the Christ was that, in him was more fully developed the principle of *universal benevolence* than in any other person before him. This *Christ-principle* is religion; not forms, nor creeds or a blind faith, but *Universal Benevolence*. This is all of religion. Minds in the body do not see the full bearing of this Christ-principle. They suppose that Christ was a *person*, and that Jesus was that person; that in him were blended the human and divine, which was true in one sense, but in the same sense as it is with every enlightened and spiritually minded man. It has been supposed that Jesus was all of God, and also a perfect man, which thing is false. Jesus was a great and good man; but there was nothing more miraculous about his conception, birth, life, and teachings, than any other good man. Jesus never taught people to pay divine homage to him; he never taught that he was the Son of God, except in the sense in which other men might be the Sons of God. Jesus possessed a very perfect and positive organization naturally, and also at times was very negative; in fact, he was as perfect an organic being as probably ever preceded or succeeded him. He preached the Gospel of Nature, which reveals good tidings to all the race. He reasoned from Nature and natural things. What you have of his history teaches this invariably. You have but an item of the true biography of Jesus. There was more truth in those copies destroyed by the Roman Emperor than remains in the present authorized version. His biographers fell into the same error, as did his disciples, and supposed that he must have been a divine being because “he spake as never man spake,” that is, as they never heard man speak. They, as you, had listened to the mythological teachers of the age in which they lived, had heard the blind priests of their day represent God as being possessed of the worst attributes; as giving laws to mankind both unsuitable and unjust; as binding burdens upon them which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, in the shape of creeds, faiths, sacrifices, &c., &c. They saw, as men now see, that those who taught morality needed moralising; they saw and heard what neither reason nor common sense could receive or justify; and well might they exclaim, “Never man spake like this man.”

I proceed to remark on my next proposition very briefly. “Heaven is a state.” The errors have crept into the creeds of men,—that Heaven is a location, a certain country, with finite boundaries; that in that country there is a city, built of the most costly materials; that God is a person, and dwells within its walls; that He has “a great white throne;” that He sits upon it, dealing out judgment and mercy according to circumstances; that His memory is so poor, He is obliged to

keep a book or books (and of course He must have a book-keeper); that in that book or books He keeps a correct account of debt and credit against the name of every person born into the world, and will in the last great day—"the day of judgment," judge every person out of that book, according to his deeds, or debt and credit; and that He is possessed of such a bad disposition, that it requires the constant pleadings of His Son, (who by the bye, is said to be possessed of a better nature), to keep him from executing his wrath upon poor, offending man; and much more of just such inconsistent vagaries, which are not worth the labour of repetition. All this I unqualifiedly assert, is false; not a shadow of truth in the whole of it. I refer the reader to Nature in proof. *Heaven is all space*. It may be enjoyed as well, though not as perfectly, in this rudimental sphere, as in any other. The mind, in the rudimental, is held down by various things which serve as clogs to keep Heaven out of the soul. Heaven is the enjoyment of God as seen in His works, which in proportion as it is unfolded to the mind, creates a bliss unknown to the worldling or sensualist. God is seen in Nature, and that is the only way He is ever seen; and seeing God is Heaven, whether in this sphere or any other. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" which thing is true.

I next stated, "Reason is a divine attribute of the soul;" but how it has been perverted and misdirected! Man, by Reason, has been trying for ages to bring reason and Scripture to terms, which he never could nor can do if the Scriptures are taken indiscriminately; but when Reason and Nature have been brought into conjunction, they were ever found to agree perfectly, which thing proves that Reason is a divine attribute of Nature, and Nature's God. Reason was given to man as a guide to instruct in the revelations of Nature, to keep the mind in equipoise, that it shall not run into error on the one hand or the other. Let reason take the place which the God of Nature designed it, and all the inharmonies and incongruities of this world will cease forever. The voice of reason is the voice of God; it speaks in words of comfort, it falls in tones of melody on the ear of all rational beings. Give ear to her teachings, O sons and daughters of men, it will never mislead; it leads the soul up from Nature to Nature's God; it renders the souls unspeakably happy who exercise it.

I now proceed to elucidate briefly my next proposition, which is—"Nature is a book unfolding the wisdom and goodness of the Deity;" I might say unfolding all the attributes of God, which is the case; and it is, moreover, the only book which does fully unfold them. The study of Nature is the occupation of all the inhabitants of the Spirit-world. The harmony, the wisdom, the beauty, the benevolence, and adaptation found in that volume, as far surpass any other book as infinity surpasses the finite. I beseech all to study that book; begin your eternal occupation while you inhabit this grosser form of life; the joy and holy comfort you will experience in that study, will amply compensate you for all the toil. Human works are good inasmuch as they agree with God in Nature. There are many sublime lessons taught in the Bible, as also in many other books; these are to be treasured whether found in the Bible, or Shaster, the Koran, or Zendavesta, or any other production of man; but the Bible has more good teachings than any other work, and has more evil; choose the good, discard the evil.

JOHN WESLEY.

ST. KILDA, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1868.

Man is the image of God, and the embodiment of all Nature, his developing capacities are beyond all earthly conception, and his progressive capacity eternal.

The Great First Cause operating upon undeveloped matter, gradually and harmoniously developed the successive strata of the mineral kingdom, and inaugurated the vegetable kingdom. From these, by the operations of the Divine mind, was developed the animal kingdom, and by a gradual process of refinement, a form was eliminated possessing in itself the *ultimate* of matter,

and generating, by its affinity with the Creator, an imperishable spirit.

The first type of man was less perfect than the subsequent ones—the first man was not the *coronal* of humanity, but the *coronal of matter*. The refining influence of the Divine Spirit has been ever active in the development of mankind, and the perfect man is not yet.

The Celestial Spirits, whose divine influence moves worlds and systems, are the only representatives of the perfection of man.

The sublimity of the Great All-wise is imparted to these powerful spirits, as it will be ultimately to man in the body.

We wish to enlarge your ideas of the destiny of man, and of the latent powers which only want bringing into action to demonstrate what we say.

All Nature will become subservient to man. He will cleave the air like a bird; he will control the elements; he will cause the earth to bring forth abundantly with little toil; and he will learn to live in harmony with Nature's laws.

The Celestial Spirits are in frequent communication with the Sixth Sphere. Their glorious presence animates us to greater efforts; and the God-like aroma which surrounds them falls like a mantle upon their deputies in this sphere.

The Congress of wise spirits, who guide the movement, are aided by these celestial visitors, and whenever necessary a Celestial Spirit attends the Congress as a representative of the Divinity.

The Spiritual Gospel to mankind will indeed be glad tidings: it will show him the proximity of Heaven, and the glorious destiny that awaits him.

The only condition is that men should live in harmony with Nature's laws. By these means he will secure his earthly happiness and his heavenly salvation. He will rapidly develop in all goodness, and exhibit the God-like principle contained in him.

The ultimate destiny of man is not conceived of by man in the aggregate, nor do the existing systems of religion throw light on the subject. Few indeed entertain any definite idea of the nature of the after-life. The Bible, which is accepted by most Christians as a compendium of God's revelations to man does not convey any accurate description of the nature of the immortal life.

The spirits purpose to give mankind a definite description of spirit life, and at the same time teach them how to prepare for it.

The origin of man is matter; the origin of spirit is God.

God and matter are co-eternal. God is the positive and matter negative. The action of the Great Positive mind gradually but surely develops, out of gross materiality, the most refined forms which ultimate in spirit. Law and majesty pertain to all the acts of God. His laws are never broken: man may violate them, but they are immutable, unchangeable, and eternal. God is the loving parent of us all, and each and all are the objects of his solicitude. **ETERNAL HAPPINESS** is the destiny of his children.

Good and wise spirits are at work to accelerate man's development, and the consequent inauguration of his patrimony. We will write our views of what will most tend to this consummation.

One of the first steps to be taken is to show man on what an unsubstantial basis he has built his hopes, and fixed his faith. The destruction of the unsound foundation is necessary, to make way for the foundation of the truly secure temple of heavenly truth.

This is being done by a natural sequence of events, and spirits are aiding in every conceivable way. It should be your task, whenever an opportunity presents itself, to point out the weakness of the basis of accepted theology. The mind once relieved of the incumbrance of theological chains, will naturally penetrate the sphere of darkness which has surrounded it, and interrogate

Nature, and Nature will respond in unmistakable accents:—"Behold in me the *work* and *expression* of the Father. See in my beauties the light of his presence, and draw inspiration from his mighty universe." Into the expanding mind of such will flow the truths of immortality, and the wisdom of angels.

Good influences come wherever sought, and evil ones flee from truth and purity.

We can pour into the receptive brain of a pure-minded man the wisdom of our sphere. We can attune his soul to the harmony of the sphere; we can arouse the dormant faculties of his nature, and fill him with ecstatic yearnings to do good.

The next step is to enlighten those who, having cast aside their chains, are looking for the light, but from the defective nature of their organisations, are not competent to grasp the great truths presented to them. It is necessary that those more enlightened should take them by the hand, and see them safely on their way, lest they stumble over the rocks of Error, or lose their path for want of wisdom.

The duty of man to his brother is to aid him as a brother. Those who revel in spiritual wisdom should give of their abundance to their fellows.

The manifestations of spiritual power which are constantly occurring in all parts of the world, fulfil their mission, which is to impress susceptible minds. Many cannot receive them as spiritual—their minds are not fit.

Our desire is to form a nucleus or centre in every community, from which will radiate spiritual light, which will gradually attract the multitude. These circles once established on a proper basis, cannot be destroyed, but will continually be augmented until the whole lump is leavened. The spiritual manifestations now taking place in America are of every conceivable description—the majority appeal to the intellectual faculty of man; but many of the inferior ones appeal to man's lower perceptions. They are superficial and fallible, and abound in contradictions, the cause of this is that many men enter into the investigation with no other motive than *curiosity*, and a desire for novelty. Such minds attract towards their circles an inferior class of spirits, not capable of instructing nor *desirous* to do so. They are generally in affinity with the minds of the circle, and will do (as far as lays in their power) what the circle desires. The manifestations are physical, and often very powerful, but very little good results therefrom, the motive not being what it should be.

The true method of reaching man's heart is through his understanding—through his moral perceptions—through his soul. God and man are linked together by this eternal and imperishable principle, and through it God's influence is conveyed to man.

The soul of man is naturally expansive, but gross materiality prevents its expansion whilst in the body. Our efforts are directed to the refinement of the spirit and mind of man, that the soul may more thoroughly permeate his organization, and then the good principle would appear in all his acts.

THE NEW FORCE.

BY THOMAS BREVOIR.

Those who are familiar with the progress of modern Spiritualism must be amused at the constant recurrence of the announcement of the "discovery" of a "new force." This is generally made by some independent man of science, who enters on the investigation of Spiritualism *de novo*, unacquainted with, or ignoring all, the investigations and experiments of his predecessors in the same line. This new force, so often discovered

during the last twenty years, has been variously christened and re-christened "nerve force," "nerve fluid," "magnetic aura," "vital electricity," "od," "spiricity," "Mary Jane," and "psychic force;" the last baptismal name being conferred on it by its godfathers, Mr. Serjeant Cox, J.P., and Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S. Mr. Crookes, however, deserves well of science and of Spiritualism, for his independent, persevering, and searching investigation, and the courage (so rare in men of his high scientific position) with which he has publicly avowed the unpopular conviction to which his experiments have led him, of the genuineness of the phenomena generally called "spiritual manifestations," and which he now designates by the significant, though somewhat less pronounced, name of "Psychism:—a name for which Dr. Haddock stood sponsor some twenty years ago, in his work *Somnolism and Psycheism*.

Mr. Serjeant Cox suggests the term *psychic force*, to avoid the appearance of any foregone conclusion.* If, however, he "can find no evidence even tending to prove that the force is other than a force proceeding from, or directly dependant upon, the human organisation"—if it be wholly, as he designates it, a "nerve force"—why call it *psychic*? In that case it is purely physiological, not psychic; and the latter term is simply misleading. Perhaps, however, the contradiction is one of terms rather than of fact; and both may be appropriate, according to the opposite side from which the object is approached. The force may proceed partly or wholly from the human organisation; but every patient and careful investigator discovers that there is also an obvious intelligence *ab extra*, which governs and uses this force. In the case of the experiment with the accordion, as the *Spectator* correctly says, the force must clearly have been "in some way connected with a musically educated mind." It is the obscure perception of this twofold aspect of the question—on the one hand, a force demonstrated by science; on the other, a controlling and regulating mind, as demonstrated by reason, that has caused in the mind of the learned Serjeant this apparent oscillation between the opposite poles of matter and spirit; and has led him to speak of what to him is a new force now as physical, now as psychic. It is physical and psychic. To identify it exclusively with either is partial and defective. There can be no adequate investigation which does not comprehend both. Its effects and the conditions on which they are dependant are in part at least, physical; but the operating cause is psychic or spiritual, and the work of the scientific investigator should be to ascertain their several limits, and assign to each its place and use. A knowledge of their mutual relation and harmony is necessary to a full and proper understanding of the subject. Unfortunately these investigations are mostly one-sided. The scientist, from bias and habit, generally insists on treating the question as one of pure physics; while the non-scientist, intent on its physical aspect, seldom makes the physical conditions a matter of searching and systematic investigation.

If the proposed Psychological Society is founded, it is to be hoped that it will give due and proportionate attention to both factors of the problem—the physical and the psychical; we believe it will soon be found that the latter is the larger and more important of the two.

The calm and careful statement of Mr. Crookes, it will be seen, is confirmed by the testimony of Dr. Huggins, Vice-President of the Royal Society, and by Mr. Serjeant Cox, M.P., who adds in his published letter to Mr. Crookes, "Your experiments completely confirm the conclusion at which the Investigating Committee of the Dialectical Society arrived after more than forty meetings for trial and test." The *Volsicians* of the Fourth Estate are in consequence considerably fluttered. The *Daily Telegraph* not only prints the greater part of Mr. Crookes' paper, but devotes a leading article partly to it and partly to an article on "The Transpor-

* Apart from other objections, the proposed term is a very awkward and embarrassing one. It is to be used both as adjective and substantive; to designate the force itself, and also the person it proceeds from.

tation of Mediums." The *Telegraph* affects the facetious, but the funniest part of the article is the statement that, "if this new light be true, it more entirely upsets spirit-wrapping than anything yet discovered." The writer, however, naively adds, "but still the new nerve force does not explain Mrs. Guppy's flight, nor Mr. Herne's playful prank of entering the breakfast-room on all fours, unheralded, unexpected, and unannounced." No, and a good many other things besides are left equally unexplained by it. The writer, however, is in a very proper and hopeful frame of mind, for he sensibly concludes that he will "respectfully wait for further facts."

Now that this "new force" has received the *imprimatur* of Science, so far as Science has yet investigated it, the next question to be agitated—and it is by far the more important one—is—What is the agency which so intelligently adapts and applies the "new force" to so many and such diverse purposes, now making detonations of various degrees of power, and by them responding to questions or holding converse with those present; now moving the hand in involuntary and unpremeditated writing, or guiding the wholly unskilled hand in the production of artistic drawings; now passing fruits, and flowers with the fresh dew upon them, snow-flakes, ice blocks, and even living bodies, through what is called solid matter; now, as in the "crucial tests, with carefully arranged apparatus, and in the presence of irreproachable witnesses," detailed by Mr. Crookes, lifting heavy weights, or playing tunes on a caged and insulated accordion? Given electricity as an element or force, what makes and works the telegraph? Does electricity construct its own telegraphs, and supply as well as transmit its own telegrams? What, if after all, the "new force," is used by those who have passed beyond the veil as a means to establish on a firmer, and on a scientific basis, the old and all but universal belief in spirits and a spirit world? This is the inevitable question looming up behind the "new force," and which causes so many to regard it with suspicion and alarm.

Spirits—

Ay, there's the rub!

"Spirits is the last thing I will give in to," said the late Sir David Brewster; and in this he but too faithfully reflected the feeling of scientists, who are scientists—and nothing more. Hence, at the Oecumenical Council of Science at Edinburgh, the "new force" was indicted as a heresy, and learned professors seemed half bewildered, and more than half confounded, at the reported defection from the ranks of scientific orthodoxy. It may be humiliating to the pride of men of science, who have so long and persistently looked down with supreme contempt upon the belief in sensible manifestations from and open communion with the world of spirits as a vulgar and exploded superstition, to find that they have been somewhat hasty in their conclusion, and that, after all, the immense majority of their fellow-creatures were not such fools as they had thought them. But perhaps this may be no great misfortune, even to the men of science themselves. Perhaps a little more modesty and humility is just the lesson which they most need to learn, and this may be the means of teaching it. To the man of true science it is no humiliation, but an honourable satisfaction, to acknowledge an error and admit that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.

A WORD TO THE CLERGY

WHO WRITE AND PREACH AGAINST SPIRITUALISM.

THE attachment of the Clergy to pre-conceived notions—for the most part blindly received in early youth—is unfortunate for themselves, and the cause, which, above all others, they desire to uphold; because it does not leave their minds open to the reception, or examination, of any adverse conclusions which men, equally earnest and able as themselves, have arrived at; and thus prevents all progress; and the advent of every fresh truth is an additional blow to their cause; which gives the more pain, because they inwardly feel so utterly powerless to contend with it.

When any new truth is unfolded, they do not calmly investigate it, when presented to them, and ask their reason if it be right; but they invariably apply to it the standard of their pre-conceived notions; and if it conflict with this standard, they are at once prepared to battle with it, not because, after due inquiry, they have found that it is unsupported by reason and facts; but because it does not agree with what they have previously been taught to believe, and to guard against all comers.

If they had a firm unwavering conviction; if they *knew* they were right; they would not be so painfully excited at what is said in conflict with it. But they evidently have not this firm belief: they think that they do believe certain things, which they have persuaded themselves, they ought to believe; and which they have resolved that they will believe: but, not being sure that they are right, anything which tends to show their faith to be unfounded annoys them, arouses their combativeness, and takes away from their minds that even balance and that susceptibility to the reception of truth which is so essential both to intellectual and spiritual progress.

VOX E DESERTO.

Dec. 10th, 1871.

TEN SEPARATE AND DISTINCT REMARKS UPON THE REV. MR. NISH'S LECTURE ON SPIRITUALISM.—By W.

"As for the various manifestations, and spontaneous spiritual phenomena, they are alluded to daily, in every local journal of France, and other countries. How then is this wide spreading conversion to be accounted for? How can this unprecedented rapid extension of a belief so absolutely opposed to the universal tendencies of a sceptical and scientific age, be effected? What can produce such a sudden and irresistible conviction, not in one or two exceptional cases, but amongst thousands of learned, intellectual, honest, and discriminating individuals, in direct contradiction to their previous convictions, and antecedents? What is it, or can it be, except the irrefragable and irresistible demonstration of tangible fact, and certitude thereby attained." *"Scepticism and Spiritualism."* By the Authoress of *Aurelia*.

FIRST—He said the phenomena were both remarkable, and worthy of investigation, and that he would not act so unfairly, as to give that part of the question the "go by," the expression was his own, as reported in the next day's morning paper.

SECOND—He did not mention if he had, or had not, been present and had opportunities of witnessing such phenomena as he spoke of, nor did he mention any result of his own actual experience in such investigation. Herein he is certainly chargeable, and positively did do the very unfair thing he had just promised not to do—that is to say, he gave the all-important, tangible visible facts of the question, the "go by."

THIRD—His motives for such unfair suppression are naturally open to suspicion upon the following grounds, and for the following reasons:—

Suppose he had stated that he had seen the SLIGHTLY REMARKABLE phenomena of Mr. Home and Mrs. Guppy floating in the air, but that the cause of such effects was EASILY ACCOUNTED FOR, by mental or magnetic organization, peculiar to certain Spiritualists. The consequence would have been, that his hearers would have judged the cause insufficient for the effect. He may be suspected of fearing the same result would attend the mention of any actual, unquestionable facts, of a less wonderful nature,—say of inert matter moving without any apparent cause, seen by himself in presence of others, or well attested by others; fearing therefore the cause he had to assign for such effects as he could instance, would be judged insufficient, be for that exact reason, neither instanced, or made the slightest allusion to any one of the countless facts (as well attested as any other facts in history), but which remain unaccounted for, and unaccountable to, anti-spiritists.

FOURTH—Is it not strange that writers and lecturers, who opposingly treat upon the subject of Spiritualism, are blind to the suspicious circumstances in which they involve themselves by being silent upon what their readers want to know, and as in this case what the hearers are panting to hear, viz., exact facts—where—when? and most particularly what came under the investigating eye of the lecturer, when so worthily engaged in investigating that which he allowed to be so worthy of investigation? Can they not see that such silence is to all intents and purposes giving the very pith, point, and marrow of the question, the “go by?”

FIFTH—A class quite as numerous as those who coincide with Mr. Nish, think quite differently, and take the views of the Dean of Melbourne, that is to say they think Spiritualists do commune with departed familiar Spirits, in the same way as the Israelites were forbidden to do. If the Dean's party are right, three consequences necessarily follow—1st, Communion with a departed spirit is possible, not impossible as held by Mr. Nish. 2nd, Personal investigation would be practising sorcery, and would not be a worthy occupation, as held by Mr. Nish. 3rd, If evil spiritual agency causes the phenomena, Mr. Nish must be wrong who holds that it is caused by mental or magnetic organization.

SIXTH—There is a third party opposed to Spiritualism quite as large as the followers of Mr. Nish on the one hand, or the Dean on the other. We may call these the followers of Archdeacon Stretch, who has published a work upon the subject. The theory and doctrine of this school is this—They flatly deny the fact that any remarkable phenomena has ever had any existence, and maintain that it is all a false report, to be attributed to nothing more than collusion, delusion, and imposture, that tricky men slyly push the table, that 20,000,000 of people are thereby deluded, and that the rest of the world have as yet been unable to find the sly fellows out. This doctrine will be found distinctly laid down in the “Dictionary of Science, Literature, and Art”—in the article under the word “Clairvoyance.” In this case it follows that both the Dean and Mr. Nish are wrong.

SEVENTH—It must be concluded that under any circumstances the anti-spiritist will always be opposed in his theory by two thirds of his own party as well as the whole of the Spiritualists, being thus out-voted by three to one.

EIGHTH—For the foregoing reasons the position and theory of the non-investigating anti-spiritists may be said to resemble that of the non-geologist, or non-astronomer, or non-machinist, the theory of the first opposed by two-thirds of the non-geologists, and the whole of the geologists, the theory of the second opposed by two-thirds of the non-astronomers, and the whole of the astronomers, the theory of the third opposed by two-thirds of the non-machinists, and the whole of the machinists. The chance of any one of these three gentlemen being right in their particular theory under such circumstances must be but slight.

NINTH—It is singular that the three before-mentioned distinct and divers schools of opinion should seem oblivious to the fact of their mutually criminating, or stultifying each other, and manifest no curiosity or anxiety to clear up their differences; but on the contrary, amicably unite (like Jews and Gentiles in days of old) against Spiritualists. Yet more singular is it to find that in the face of defamation by and from such unholy alliance, Spiritualists increase faster than did the early Christians under precisely the same circumstances. 1st, If the Rev. Mr. Nish or Archdeacon Stretch are right, what a serious charge against the Dean of Melbourne's party for falsely imputing implication in and with “satanic agency,” to 20,000,000 of innocent, earnest, serious, heaven-seeking, spiritual-minded men. 2nd, If the Dean or the Rev. Mr. Nish are right, how wicked

of the Archdeacon Stretch's party and the before-mentioned dictionary, for speaking so positively of truthless imposture. This latter party presume to impugn the veracity of all Spiritualists, and the genuineness of the phenomena they report as witnessed by them in countless instances in all parts of the world. 3rd, If the Dean or the Archdeacon and dictionary are right, to what an extent is Mr. Nish stultified, for in the one case there is no phenomena (remarkable or otherwise), and in the other the phenomena is from the Devil.

TENTH—The Spiritualist holds that the incontrovertably attested actual facts, concerning which anti-Spiritualist lecturers are so fond of preserving a profound silence, constitute the foundation, the starting point, and turning point, of the whole controversy. That such phenomena always has and always will laugh to scorn and contempt all and every theory of explanation or hypothesis which excludes the real one, big, untrue mundane cause, by the will of the Most High God and supreme disposer of wants in heaven and earth. Spiritualists have further to say to those who senselessly deride the wonderful phenomena and modern spiritual dispensation, which is direct Divine Revelation.

“You rave, you wrestle, with great Nature's plan
You thwart the Deity, and 'tis decreed
Who thwart His will shall contradict their own.”

INDIVIDUAL LIVING.

NEXT to social living on the earth, and the first in life after death, is the development of individual living.

From birth to death, through every toil and conflict, every pleasure and pain, the manhood of the soul is being formed by the invisible growth of its individual forces. The development of man's individuality is the great and divine purpose of his earthly life: all experiences, pleasurable and painful, laborious and indolent, serious, and frivolous, virtuous and vicious, holy and unholy, are produced by the divine laws of God acting without cessation, spontaneously in the soul of man, for his growth, development, and progress,—for the individual manhood of his immortal life. Like the pulsation of the heart for the continuance of earthly life, are the pulsations of the divine forces of nature for the development of man's individuality. There is no condition, no time, no place, in the life of man, when the individual growth of his soul ceases. Nature inevitably holds him in the mysterious circle of eternal progress.

The nursing and cherishing of outward influences, though they be necessities as outward effects, are not the means of the soul's individual development. It is the spontaneous life and power within us that bear us onward.

The desire for individual power always precedes and foretells its development. A consciousness of its want is always allied to a desire for it.

We feel that our powers are weak, and insufficient to the end of our wishes.

— We have not yet done what we would do. We have not yet what we desire to have.

We have not power to gain the goodness, the greatness, and the happiness we pursue.

The power of man to accomplish the ends he seeks is yet latent in his undeveloped individuality.

The more he imitates, counterfeits, and reproduces the religious morals, thoughts, and acts of other men, the weaker are his powers to gain the ends he seeks.

As the nursing child draws succor from its mother for its life; so the spiritual man, in his nursing childhood, in his individual littleness, draws his support from others. He imitates their thoughts and passions, forms and ceremonies, records and traditions, for his religion, and takes

pattern from the moral acts of other men for his morality.

Individuality is independence of thought and action. It subscribes to no religious forms, creed, or system; it adopts no outward law of moral compulsion; it does not need the superficial habiliments of deceit, which fashion wears for good repute. It turns man from his dependence upon the outward and physical religions of the people to the inward and spiritual religion of his own heart.

It enables man to see himself as others see him; and also to see others as others see themselves.

It opens man's intuitive powers, which are above the need of books and masters,

It enables him to see and comprehend the lawfulness of every act, thus superseding the need of punishment for wrong, and revealing charity, the greatest of all the virtues, for his full and perfect rule of action.

Human greatness is the development of individuality. Whoever, by the virtues of his own life, gives character to the people, gives it from the magnetic stamina of his individual development.

Individuality produces new thoughts and acts; and the want of it counterfeits the thoughts and acts which others have produced.

We come nearer to the optimism of nature, nearer to the power of spiritual manhood, nearer to the sacred life of Christ, nearer and nearer to God, as we come from the counterfeits and imitations of the present modes of living to real, vital living,—fresh, spontaneous, manly, individual living.

We come nearer to the harmony and happiness that we long and hope for, as man comes to be his own master, his own teacher, his own thinker, his own law-giver, to live his own religion, and to do his own work.

But it has been, and will still be, claimed that man has less endowment for natural, spontaneous, individual, development than the lower animals; and, if left to the individual development of his natural powers for himself alone to lean upon, that he could not fill the possibilities of his nature; he could not come to perfectness of manhood; that he would recede from civilized life, and fall backward and downward. This claim sees the uses of civilization in earthly production, and believes the outward glory of them to be their immortal possession; while the present educations and customs of the people are morasses and quagmires over which human souls must pass in coming from the vanities of civilization to individual development.

After all the instructions and helps that others give, after all the lessons of civilization, the soul of man has to fall back upon itself. There is not any power in all the world of civilization, and its influence in education, to succour or support man's inner, real life. At the gate of death, he rests entirely on his individuality.

When man comes from the treacherous support of outside things to rest alone upon himself, he clearly sees that individuality is the stamina of his immortality.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

DEAR HARBINGER—

We are in a state of great popular excitement here respecting Spiritualism. It is in everyone's mouth. This is to a great extent, due to causes which I have indicated in former letters, but notoriously supplemented by the Report of the Dialectical Society, which has just been published. It is a heavy work (price 15s.), and in the most satisfactory way corroborates the findings of the Spiritualists. The various sub-committees elicited phe-

nomena which covered the whole ground even to the identity of Spirits. The physical phenomena were quite remarkable. All is succinctly stated in the reports of these sub-committees, and the conditions are stated in the minutes of each sitting. As might be expected the work has been audaciously assailed by the press. The book is as badly treated as if it had been the work of a Spiritualist. Indeed those who went into the work of experimenting honestly are Spiritualists, and have taken the risk of issuing the work as the Council of the Society backed out of it. Well the newspapers have been full of it, and with all their loud declamation and bitter invectives the secret can't be hidden that the phenomena are real. In fact no one has the stupidity to deny that now. But they have other cries equally nonsensical. They won't admit the great fact of human immortality. The result of all this ventilation is that spiritual books and publications are in increasing demand, and it is the one absorbing question of the day.

Our mediums are all in full power. Miss Lottie Fowler has recently arrived from America, and is charming the most experienced with her descriptions of departed friends and tracings of the living as well. She seems to have genuine prophetic power, and is altogether a most valuable acquisition to our forces. Miss Kate Fox has also arrived, and a deep interest attaches to her on account of the fact that she is the *original medium*. Next month I hope to tell you of some phenomena through her mediumship.

J. BURNS.

THE MALAISE OF HUMANITY.*

The following excellent article, having particular reference to the works of Allan Kardec, is reprinted from the *Australasian* of 9th December:—

Without entering into the criticism of the subject, or the form in which that subject is presented, by the works under notice, one of which has reached its fifteenth edition, we may refer to their appearance simultaneously with the issue of books of a similar character in England, in Germany, and in the United States, as an evidence of the *malaïse* from which the most civilized nations of the globe appear to be suffering, and which may be the precursor of a great change either in the religious sentiments, the political institutions, or in the industrial organisation of the most advanced races; perhaps, in all three. The whole surface of society seems to be agitated by a tremor like that which runs before an earthquake. Systems of theology and forms of belief which have been for centuries regarded as authoritative are rapidly losing their hold upon the minds of thinking men, who are rising to a juster, truer, and loftier conceptions of Almighty power, wisdom, love, and justice than that which is embodied in the creeds and dogmas established in the darkness of the Middle Ages. And while, upon the one hand, the revolt from these creeds and dogmas is driving some men to materialism, there is still a greater number who are striving to penetrate the thin veil which separates us from the spiritual world. In politics, again, there is, among persons with reflective minds, a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment with the outcome of the experiments of governing a country by what is called democracy. They see that it has failed in America, failed in France, and failed in Australia; that is to say, it has not succeeded in placing power in the hands of men who combine the highest intellectual with the purest moral qualifications. It has not destroyed absolute authority, it has merely transposed it. It has not presented to us the spectacle of a virtuous people, instructed, animated, and exalted by the examples

* La Genèse, selon le spiritisme. Par Allan Kardec, Paris: Librairie Internationale.

L'Evangile selon le spiritisme.—Ibid.

Le Livre des Esprits.—Ibid.

of disinterestedness, integrity, and elevation of character and conduct set before it by its rulers; and it has not shown itself exempt from the vices and the corruption incidental to other forms of government. If we turn to the domain of morals, we do not find that we are one whit better than certain "pagans," as we called them, who flourished 4,000 years ago. Nominally we profess to accept the ethical teachings of the Gospel. Practically we deride and deny them. The man who should shape his daily life in accordance with the precepts of Christ, would be fortunate if he escaped confinement in a lunatic asylum. So long as a man holds orthodox opinions, subscribes to certain formularies, and is "sound" with respect to particular tenets, he may lie, cheat, defraud, overreach, and outwit his neighbours with impunity. It is not charity, but success, which covers a multitude of sins nowadays. Provided a man is rich, he is secure of consideration, influence, homage, deference, and even adulation. But the very persons who achieve this sort of distinction and pre-eminence are conscious of a feeling of *malaise*. The Rothschilds, the Astors, and the Barings, the monarchs of commerce and the queens of society, complain that life is a burden, or that pleasure is weariness; and their imitators in the various grades of society echo the complaint in their hours of lassitude and despondency. There is a universal craving for excitement, the gratification of which brings about the inevitable reaction; and, from the depression so engendered, men and women fly for relief to drams or drugs, and so lay the foundations of disease, and aggravate the evils they hoped to alleviate.

Take, again, the literary studies or the literary recreations of the reading public. Everybody reads and nobody thinks. People load their minds with an incredible amount of useless and undigested information, and intellectual dyspepsia is as prevalent as is its physical prototype. Original thought is becoming as rare as the dodo. Men and women chatter—but how many of them converse? Enter any drawingroom, railway carriage, omnibus, or place of public entertainment, and listen to the imbecilities and inanities which form the staple of so-called conversation. Can anything be more melancholy or more meaningless? But how can it be otherwise? Is it not altogether forgotten or overlooked that all original thought comes to a man *ab extra*, that every lasting production of the human mind, whether it be a painting or a poem, a scientific discovery or a mechanical invention, has been wrought out in solitude, and has been matured by the help of steady and sustained reflection? In the tumult and confusion of modern life, the sequestered thinker is almost a phenomenon. There are a few such, and they are the salt of their generation, preserving it from putridity and decay.

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers;" and in the midst of this self-complacent age, there rises up a conviction that its theory of life is a radically false one, and must be changed *in toto*. Intermingling with the chorus of jubilation over the march of intellect and the spread of enlightenment, there is a plaintive undertone of regret at the absence of that happiness of which all human beings are in chase. When were the material comforts of life so numerous and so accessible to all classes as they are now, and when was the feeling of *malaise* to which we have previously referred so general and so deep? Wealth and science have given us such a dominion over nature as we have never before possessed; and people are more restless, more discontented, more cynical in their views of life, and more sceptical as to what lies beyond that life, than perhaps they ever were before.

This is the secret of some of the most striking religious and social movements of the present day, from the experiments of Hawthorne and his friends at Brooke Farm, down to the organisation of the community to which M. Lawrence Oliphant belonged. Mistakes have been made and failures experienced. Some of the schemes for regenerating society have been impracticable and others absurd; but we must not refuse to recognise in the whole of them the efforts—often illusory, often misdirected—of men struggling towards the light—men who are infinitely pained and perplexed by the confusion and misery, the ignorance and vice, which are seething around

them, and who will not bring their minds to admit that the evil is cureless, or that the world is incapable of undergoing a transformation for the better.

So far as we have been able to arrive at a knowledge of the aspirations and beliefs of men like the late Allan Kardec and others, they shape themselves in this wise:—Man is an immortal being, standing in close relationship to, and capable of holding communion with, and of being impressed and influenced by, the spiritual world. His duties are twofold—those which he owes to his Almighty Father, and those which he owes to his fellow men, who although various in their origin, disparate in capacity, and differentiated by circumstances of climate, country, creed, and caste, constitute one great body. Man's first duty to his Maker consists in the intelligent study of His works and His laws, and a knowledge of both would necessarily compel him to yield implicit obedience to the latter. From that obedience would result perfect health of mind and body, and the extinction of vice and crime. Reason would be the supreme ruler, guide, and arbiter of his conduct; because he would discover that Infinite Reason presided over the material construction and moral government of the universe, and he would perceive that the more highly the creature cultivated his reason, the more closely would he approximate to the great Creator; but, of course, *longo intervallo*. Man's animal nature being brought into complete subjection to his reason, he would be the better qualified to hold communion with the angels who are described as actively participating in the affairs of mankind. Man's duty to his fellow man consists, according to the authority from whom we borrow these particulars, in the precept formulated by Christ, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and in the suppression of egotism and selfishness. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, it is contended, receives the most impressive confirmation it is capable of obtaining, from the fact that clouds of spiritual intelligences who have put on immortality are in direct communication with mankind, and are giving in all parts of the world simultaneous and concurrent testimony as to the reality and the actual character of the after life.

Such, in a very meagre and condensed form, is an outline of the views put forth by Allan Kardec in France, and by a host of writers in Italy, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. We refer to them mainly, as we have said, to show what is the prevalent *malaise* of civilised mankind, and to indicate the direction and nature of some of the forces which are at work under the surface of society, and which may or may not make themselves felt in that general explosion towards which events seem to be irresistibly tending.

So far as Europe is concerned, we believe we are not guilty of presumption in saying that we, in Australia, can form a better idea of the true scope of events more than those who are living in the midst of them, simply because we can convey them in their *ensemble*. We thus discern their relationship, and perceive their combined effect. Thus the overthrow of the temporal power of the Pope, the great schism which has arisen in Bavaria, and is spreading through Germany, the diminishing influence of Catholicism in Spain, the secularisation of church property in Italy, the extraordinary movement towards pure theism by the Presbyterians of Holland, the disestablishment of the Irish, to be no doubt followed by that of the English, church, "as by law established," and the fact that the "heretical" doctrines preached by Mr. Voysey have received the countenance of an ex-bishop and of many distinguished individuals, all fall into their proper places as congruous parts of a great movement, of which we may estimate the magnitude, and comprehend the momentum, without being able to predict the consequences.

It would scarcely be rash to affirm that the second half of the nineteenth century will be pregnant with changes quite as momentous to the history of mankind as those which have made the epoch of the reformation such a landmark in the annals of Europe. On all sides we witness the crumbling away of venerable superstitions, and obsolete institutions, political, social, and religious;

and the end is not yet. We will not attempt to speculate upon the structures which will take their place. We must wait till the last cloud of dust raised by the fall of the worm-eaten timbers and dilapidated walls has been blown away, in order to clear the ground of the rubbish, and to trace out the foundations of the edifices which will be erected on the vacant site. Probably, the next generation, wiser than our own, will introduce a daring innovation into their modes of faith and principles of action. They may have the temerity to assert that religion ought to be a rule of life, and not a mere unmeaning expression of intellectual belief; and may seek in simplicity and purity of morals, manners, costume, conduct, diet, pastime, and enjoyments, that happiness which seems, by general confession, to be an absolute alien in the present generation.

ON OBJECTIONS TO THE NECESSARIAN THEORY OF WILL.

BY J. R.

THERE are several moral objections urged against the necessarian theory of *Will*, giving the doctrine an appearance of being vicious; and these objections must be removed before the theory can be made acceptable, however conclusive may be the arguments in its favour. The strongest objection to the doctrine of Necessitism seems to be that of *consciousness*—that we *feel* that we are free; and with many this outweighs every argument in its favor. The necessarian argument may be put in a nutshell—all that could be said besides would be mere circumlocution. Every occurrence must be the result of some cause or causes sufficient to produce it. When the cause is sufficient the result must be produced. A Will to be Free must either be uncaused, or, a cause may be sufficient, and yet the Will need not result; which, to use an algebraic phrase, is absurd. To *feel* that we are free is not any proof of actual freedom. To rely upon feeling alone would be to trust to appearances. By critical analysis we may always discover that our every determination is the result of motives derived from internal and external conditions and circumstances; so that when we think we feel that our Will is free it is likely to be a mistake for the *consciousness* which takes cognizance (without fully understanding it) of the mental process by which a determination is arrived at, and of the effort required to carry the determination into effect.

The moral objections to the *theory* may be stated in one sentence—the doctrine of necessitism is conceived to be vicious because it discourages good by withholding *praise*, encourages evil by ceasing to *blame*, tends to the abolition of penal statutes, destroys the sense of responsibility, depresses human energy as futile against the course of destiny, and lowers man into being the automatic toy of circumstances.

The sense of responsibility has been dealt with in the paper to which this is a sequel, and shown to be inconsistent with freedom. Responsibility implies obligation, which is another term for *necessity*.

Praise and *blame* are used and spoken of as being the emphases of *approval* and *disapproval*; whereas *approval* is as distinct from *praise* as proper *pride* is from silly *vanity*, and *disapproval* is as distinct from *blame* as fault is from *misfortune*, and never ought to be confounded. *Approval* may be called the sense of satisfaction with the condition of things calculated to produce what is conceived to be good; *praise* is the abuse which turns *approval* into *personal merit*. *Disapproval* may be called the sense of dissatisfaction with what is deemed to be a vicious condition of things; *blame* is the abuse which turns *disapproval* into *culpability*. A person of a benevolent disposition cannot help feeling and acting according to his character and conditions, and however much we may *approve* the disposition, we ought not to *praise* the person. Neither ought we to *blame* any individual conduct if we scan all the causes—parentage, organisation, and every circumstance antecedent and concomitant

—however much we might *pity* the person and *disapprove* the vice. For instance, there are many individuals who, under whatever provocation, could neither rob nor kill. It would be manifestly absurd to *praise* such persons for abstaining from crimes of which their natures are totally incapable, yet we may look upon them with *approval*. If this cannot be denied, the converse must likewise be admitted, that others there are who, under certain circumstances, cannot refrain from robbing or killing, and that it would be equally absurd to *blame* them for giving way to impulses which for the time being they were incapable of resisting; yet we cannot *approve* the disposition. *Praise* has sacrificed millions of our race at the altar of tyrannous ambition and vain-glorious pomp; *blame* has crushed millions of poor wretches, by considering them *culpable* instead of *unfortunate*. *Praise* and *blame* become obsolete if the doctrine of Free Will be untenable; while necessarian utility would retain the vigorous, healthful notions of *approval* and *disapproval*.

So far necessitism proves itself wholesome and curative, and this will become more apparent when we consider it as tending to abolish penal enactments. That it tends to this, I regard as its greatest recommendation—I had nearly said merit. The grand defect in our legal system is that it is *penal* instead of *remedial*. If we were to perceive and acknowledge the necessary connection between the vicious circumstances which affect a vast portion of the human family from parentage to maturity, and the disorders and misfortunes which affect society and individuals, we should take cognizance of the laws which regulate such matters, and aim at producing good social results by remedial social laws, as we aim at inducing public health by obedience to sanatory law. Statistics absolutely prove that every social, moral, and mental occurrence is but the offshoot of a general and comprehensive law, as every occurrence in physical nature is the offshoot of a comprehensive physical law. "The fact is," says Buckle, "that murder is committed with as much regularity, and bears as uniform a relation to certain known circumstances, as do the movements of the tides, or the rotation of the seasons. M. Quetelet, who has spent his life in collecting and methodizing the statistics of different countries, states, as the result of his laborious researches, that 'in everything which concerns crime, the same numbers re-occur with a constancy which cannot be mistaken; and that this is the case even with those crimes which seem quite independent of human foresight, such, for instance, as murders, which are generally committed after quarrels arising from circumstances apparently casual. Nevertheless, we know from experience that every year there not only take place nearly the same number of murders, but even the instruments by which they are committed are employed in the same proportion.'" The same author says, "even the number of marriages annually contracted, is determined, not by the temper and wishes of individuals, but by large and general facts, over which individuals can exercise no authority." Even acts, the most apparently capricious and accidental, are found to be governed by a general law. "The Post Offices of London and of Paris," Buckle goes on to say, "have latterly published returns of the number of letters which the writers, through forgetfulness, omitted to direct; and, making allowance for the difference of circumstances, the returns are year after year copies of each other. Year after year the same proportion of letter writers forget this simple act; so that for each successive period we can actually foretell the number of persons whose memory will fail them in regard to this trifling and, as it might appear, accidental occurrence." Fire, Marine, and Life assurances recognise and verify this law of averages, which seems capable of being extended to the most insignificant of human occurrences. Our civil laws, therefore, which only recognise individual results, and which are founded upon individual free agency and individual responsibility, must be in complete error, and be a cause of confusion and disorder. It is like repressing disease instead of eliminating it. The vicious elements are allowed to remain, and the only aim is to counteract them. As we have discovered *praise* to be the abuse of *approval*, and *blame* to be the abuse of *disapproval*, so *revenge* will be found to be the abuse of *justice*. In this barbarous spirit our

laws are conceived and for the most part administered. When a murder, or any other crime, disturbs social order, society takes methodical vengeance by a system of retaliation. This temper is tried to be explained away, and almost apologised for, by saying that the penal measure is not so much to retaliate upon the transgressor as to inspire a wholesome dread in others; and thus our legal and religious systems oppose real progress by retaining in office the Devil and the Hangman. Taking the law of averages for our guide, how utterly absurd must appear the barbaric array of judges and barristers in horse-hair wigs, and sworn juries, collecting, sifting, weighing, and contorting, evidence for and against a shrinking wretch in a criminal's dock; where, in reality, it would be as rational to judge and condemn the earthquake for the ruin it scatters in its destructive path. Necessitism would take the only scientific and just view of the case. It would dismiss the savage, revengeful mockery of justice from civilized institutions, and would accept every crime and social outbreak as a symptom of something wrong in the social body. It would try and prevent dangerous individuals from acting as might be known they *must* act when circumstances impel them (we have a dawning perception of this in our treatment of lunatics), and at the same time would aim at setting causes into operation calculated to reform society, so as to dispense health, comfort, and security to its every member under the operations of this general law to which statistics so unmistakably point. Free Will is again convicted of being vicious since it creates the notion of individual *culpability*. Necessitism destroys the notion as unjust and impolitic—it perceives in the criminal the inevitable result of causes, not only tolerated, but sanctioned and licensed by society, and it would get rid of crime and criminal by reforming society itself.

The contrast between Necessitism and Fatalism must now be apparent. Fatalism is the absurd notion of a predestined future determining the present so as to bring that future about; Necessitism is the intelligent perception that the conditions of the present determine the future. Fatalism is destructive of energy, as purposeless; Necessitism inspires it, as all-important. Fatalism argues "What is the use of effort when what must be *must* be?" Necessitism argues "If proper means be not adopted, proper results cannot be expected to follow!" While Free Will preaches at the individual, warning and threatening by turns, Necessitism would not be a blind waiter upon Providence, but would use natural means to cultivate ourselves and our race in a natural manner. It would acknowledge the claims of posterity—*our children!* They more than all others helplessly depend upon the ignorant or intelligent administrations of the present. Free Will mocks them, Fatalism would neglect them, but Necessitism would *save* them.

If we reason from the *feeling* that we are free, and from the feeling that there *is* such a thing as evil in the world, we cannot avoid coming to conclusions inconsistent with the abstract notions of infinite goodness, infinite intelligence, and infinite power. Paul found himself in this very dilemma, and, as he could not reconcile his conceptions of divine policy with possible notions of justice, he was obliged to make God a powerful tyrant, irresistible in Will and arbitrary in act. (see Romans 9 chap., 10-24 v.). It is impossible to have true conceptions unless they freely harmonise with the highest and purest possible conceptions of an infinitely perfect cause, and in such a system of reasoning neither an evil principle nor the notion of individual free-will can find a place.

But this does not degrade man into a mere mechanical football of circumstances. If we could behold the fitness of things which compels man to gain knowledge by experience and reflection, so as to see the relation between cause and effect, the universality of law, we must also see in man the favorite of nature, rising by the force of necessity so as to be above every circumstance, and ranking next to intelligence—the abstraction of every necessity. At the outset Necessitism seems to operate in spite of man. As knowledge increases, man concurs and co-operates with necessity; working out his own

salvation, not with fear and trembling, but with joy and confidence in the reliability of natural law. Ignorance is the cause of error, and not the will to do wrong; knowledge is the cause of right actions, and not the will to act rightly. Will is the result of comparative knowledge, since it is the result of deliberation, which we mistake for choice. We do not consider alternatives because we have choice, but because we are ignorant of the best course to adopt. The savage has so few motives to affect him that but little consideration is required. As social wants increase a greater conflict is occasioned between notions of self interests and ideas of social duty—between individual liberty and social restraints. This discovers a power in association with the will, which is mistaken for the dominant and controlling power. Progress goes on in epochs and periods, from plane to plane. On a certain plane motives and impulses overmaster and enslave the Will. The stronger passions defy opposition, and the mind is powerless in their grasp. As knowledge increases, and human disposition and social circumstances improve therewith, the Will becomes emancipated from the influence of inferior impulses, and yields to that of intelligence alone. Knowledge reigns as empress of the affections, and the passions are subdued and regulated in obedience to its supreme behests. The spiritual Intelligence, so long enslaved, emerges from its subservient condition, and claims its heaven-born influence over every circumstance, subject only to the clear perceptions of truth to which it has attained—an *everlasting and ever-extending necessity*. Prof. Jackson, in his *Myths of Antiquity*, says, "As we advance in the plane of perception, we pass from the mere experience of the senses, from the concrete to the abstract." When knowledge arrives at its higher spiritual plane it will use mental power to accomplish with ease and lucidity, what the efforts of the mere intellect but clumsily and doubtfully perform. Knowledge may be reflected from mind to mind by an intuitional process which may carry with it true convictions that can be conveyed by the ordinary process of argumentation and experiment. The age of intellectual reasoning seems to be a lower grade of mental development. Error has to be removed before truth can be communicated. The process is laborious and painful, and requires the strict logic of external facts. The mind is so dull in its sensibilities that it cannot perceive but to a very limited extent at a time. With caution and uncertainty, like a blind man it gropes with hands and feet for fear of stumbling. When the mind is cleared from the wrong intuitions which burden and blind it, and when its senses are quickened, and permitted to act with natural and fully developed freedom, its intuitions will spring forward in rapid strides, and with a certainty which matter of fact knowledge never dreamed of. It would be very unsafe to trust to intuitions at present. Error's reign is still too firmly established, and the ground is far from being sufficiently clear for the safe exercise of intuitional reasoning. Some minds so act, and lead thought. Speculative philosophers have always led to the discovery of great truths, but they generally transcend the wants of our age. It requires great effort and skill to bring down knowledge to the comprehension of the popular mind. Its natural affinities have been so perverted, and its sensibilities so blunted, by the doctrines which tuition and false reasoning have implanted in it. Prejudice and want of mental tone are the chief barriers to rapid progress. If the mind expanded with knowledge and the freedom it gives, its own intuitions would perceive truth so clearly that no elaborate argument would be necessary. Intuition would develop into a *reliable sense*, and be in itself a direct test of right and wrong, as *seeing* is said to be *believing*.

Thus mind emerges from its subservient and enslaved condition to be the controller of circumstances, intuitional reasoning supersedes the groping doubtful logic of argumentation, *thoughts* become *facts*; and the human mind owing no allegiance but to intelligence, is enabled to be a creative power—a very God! The necessitism which works out this glorious result we ought to invoke with our whole soul, as the only means to develop ourselves and redeem humanity. "Tis the Divinity which stirs within us" and without, "working in us both to Will and to do."

Country Agents:—

Castlemaine—H. Bamford, Barker Street.

Sandhurst—T. C. Southam, Pall Mall.

Pleasant Creek—Jas. McLean.

Ararat—McAlpin.

Agents wanted for all parts of the Colony.

Advertisements.

MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS

Devoted to Spiritualism, &c., on sale at
W. H. TERRY'S Book Depot, 96 Russell St., Melbourne

HUMAN NATURE. A Monthly Magazine.

The Philosophic and Scientific character of this Journal, and the marked originality of thought displayed by its chief contributors have given it a standing throughout the world. It is eminently unsectarian, and free from creedal bias, its objects apparently being the discovery of truth. PRICE 10d., 9s. per annum.

THE SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE. A London Monthly, devoted chiefly to Spiritualism.

This is the oldest English Magazine, and the original organ of Spiritualism in England. PRICE 10d., 9s. per annum.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK. A London Weekly Paper. Mail copies price 3d., Ship ditto, 2d.

This is an excellent paper, keeping the reader well posted up in all the Spiritual News.

THE (LONDON) SPIRITUALIST. A Monthly Paper, containing interesting matter. Price 6d.

THE BANNER OF LIGHT. The leading American Spiritual Paper, contains 40 columns of well written Articles, Lectures, Facts, Experiences, and general interesting matter. Weekly 6d., per ann. 25s.

THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL. } Published at
THE PRESENT AGE.

Chicago, U.S. Weekly 6d.

THE REVUE SPIRITE. Paris Monthly. 1s. 6d.

REVUE SPIRITUALISTE. Paris Monthly. 1s. 6d.

N.B.—Back numbers of Banner of Light 3d per copy.

CHEAP & COMPREHENSIVE WORKS ON SPIRITUALISM, &c.

THE SPIRITUELLE: or directions in development. By Abby M. Laflin Ferrec. 1s.

DEATH AND THE AFTER LIFE. Three Lectures by A. J. Davis, together with A Voice from the Summer Land. 1s. 6d., cloth 2s. 6d. Enlarged edition, with Five additional Lectures, 2s. 6d. & 3s. 6d.

SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA. By Epsilon. 3d.

THE GIST OF SPIRITUALISM. Six Lectures by Warren Chase. 2s.

HOW AND WHY I BECAME A SPIRITUALIST. By W. A. Danskin. 3s. 6d.

PLAIN GUIDE TO SPIRITUALISM. By Uriah Clark. 5s. 6d.

MODERN SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS: are they in accordance with Reason and Past Revelation. Small 8vo., 68 pages, 1s.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS REALIZED. By A. E. Newton. 1s.

A LETTER to the Chestnut Street Congregational Church, in reply to its charge of having become a reproach to the cause of truth, in consequence of a change of religious belief. By J. S. Adams. 1s.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM. A Lecture by T. G. Foster. 6d.

PROFESSOR HARE'S LECTURE ON SPIRITUALISM, with illustrations. 1s.

MEDIUMSHIP: its laws and conditions. By J. H. Powell. 1s.

HEAVEN OPENED: or Messages for the Bereaved from our little ones in Glory. Cloth, 1s. 3d. Paper, 6d.

JUST PUBLISHED, a Collection of 110 HYMNS and ANTHEMS, appropriate to Spiritualists, and other Unsectarian Congregations, selected by the Committee of the Melbourne Association. 16mo. Cloth, 1s. 6d. Imm. Morocco, 2s. 6d. By Post, 2d. extra.
W. H. TERRY, 96 RUSSELL STREET.

JUST RECEIVED, ON THE SPIRIT CIRCLE and the LAWS OF MEDIUMSHIP. A Lecture by EMMA HARDINGE, also the Inspirational Poems, "Evermore," and "Over There," Price 3d.

W. H. TERRY RUSSELL STREET.

THE FITZROY SECULAR ACADEMY,
CORNER OF NICHOLSON & GERTRUDE STS.,

FOR

Young Ladies and Young Gentlemen.

This Institution is Conducted by

MR. MANN'S,

Assisted by Competent Teachers; and is Established with the view of supplying what is felt to be one of the Great Wants of the Age, namely, an *Educational Establishment of a Secular Character*, not teaching any Creed nor Dogma, but inculcating principles of Morality, and cultivating a true sense of Honor. Vacancies for Boarders.

Terms Moderate.

Prospectus forwarded on application to Principal.

PHOTO-ART.

BATCHELDER & Co.,
(Established 1854.)

EXECUTE Commissions in all branches of Photographic and Coloured Portraiture on moderate terms. See Specimens and References.

41 COLLINS STREET EAST.

JUST RECEIVED, "SPIRITUALISM versus SATANISM" with Appendix containing Rules for the Spirit Circle. Price Sixpence.

W. H. TERRY, 96 Russell Street, Melbourne.

SEWING MACHINES.

REDUCED PRICES.

SINGER'S
NEW NOISELESS

LOCK-STITCH SEWING MACHINE

The Best in the World,

At

GREATLY REDUCED PRICES.

STANFORD & CO.,

CORNER OF BOURKE & RUSSELL STREETS,
MELBOURNE.

BOOKS ON PHYSIOLOGY, &c.

SEXOLOGY, AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE. Willard. 8s. 6d.

SEXUAL PHYSIOLOGY. Dr. Trall. 5s. 6d.

PHYSICAL PERFECTION. Jaques. 7s. 6d.

MARRIAGE AND ITS VIOLATIONS. Dr. Ellis. 6d.

THE MENTAL CURE. Evans. 5s. 6d.

THE HERALD OF HEALTH. Per vol., 1s. 6d.

THE EMPIRE OF THE MOTHER. H. C. Wright. 4s.

W. H. TERRY, 96 Russell Street, Melbourne.

MRS. LANG'S NEW PATENT ECONOMICAL

DOMESTIC WASHING TABLE.

PRICES IN MELBOURNE:

ONLY 37s. 6d. EACH.

BEING THE

Cheapest of all WASHING MACHINES.

ON AN ENTIRELY NEW PRINCIPLE.

If two Trestles are required, price 7s. 6d. extra.

It saves time, saves labour, save soap, saves fuel, saves water, saves the clothes, and washes them very clear and quite clean. No friction is employed: no injurious chemicals are required: soap alone is used.

The Washing Apparatus without trestles is all that is essential: it can be placed upon any convenient table. The trestles are required where there is no table.

AGENTS

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES AND NEW ZEALAND,

JAMES McEWAN & Co., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

Printed by E. Purton & Co., at their Office, 106 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, for the Proprietor, W. H. Terry, and published by him at 96 Russell Street, South, Melbourne.