

# 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."*

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ONE of those great waves of psychological excitement which, at times, sway great masses of mankind, threatens to reach us before long, if not with the full force it has possessed in some other countries at least with power not to be despised. We allude to the so-called revival in religion, which has been successfully acclimatised in Scotland, and which it is sought to initiate here. Far be it from us to speak slightly of whatever touches the religious heart of any of our brothers, however widely we may differ from them in belief. Not only is a man's religion the tenderest and most vital part of his mental organism, but it is also that which, when once fairly aroused, impels him to the most impetuous and headlong action. It matters little what may be the dogma, creed or belief that is involved; however trivial, grotesque or horrible it may really be, so long as it embodies the existing religious sentiment of the individual or the community, it will act for the time being with overwhelming force. Truth and right, no doubt, must prevail at last; but the history of the past teaches us everywhere, in characters too clear to be denied, that truth and right may be swept back for centuries into darkness and oblivion by the irresistible torrent of religious enthusiasm. When in the dispassionate judgment of far removed periods of time we decide that truth and right have been thus sacrificed, we call the religious movement Bigotry; and, in its temporary success, we recognise a drawback to the progress of the race. But, when our passions or our prejudices bring us into sympathy with the thought of the time, we are very apt to consider it as "the hand of God." In view, then, of the mighty power for good or evil, inherent, though often only latent, in the religious element of man's nature, it is of importance, and must be of general interest, to know exactly what is meant by "the revival of religion" now

being preached and advertised both in Europe and among ourselves. Is it at all likely to attain to the dimensions of that great movement which, under the preaching of Savonarola, transformed Florence and thrilled all Italy? or of that equally remarkable one which, under Calvin, took possession of Geneva as of a great centre, whence swept waves of psychological influence that reached with almost unabated force to the wild shores of New England, and to the hills of Scotland, and the full tide of which has only begun to ebb within the present century? Or is it likely to be only local and circumscribed in its range, as are the "revivals" of modern America? And in either case what will probably be its characteristics and its results, and what is the relation that Spiritualism holds to movements of this class?

These are questions not merely of vague and general interest—curious subjects for literary research or speculation. They affect our individual welfare, our home circle, our social ties, our personal peace, so intimately and so powerfully that it becomes both a duty and a necessity for everyone to understand the bearings of the subject, in the light of the best knowledge that we can command. It may not be inopportune to say that for our part we speak but as individual observers, profoundly convinced of the immediate importance of the topic, and endeavoring to judge it as dispassionately as possible, but not wishing to condemn those who may differ from us, nor claiming to prescribe the position of Spiritualists in the matter.

We have spoken above of two classes of revivals, although we believe them to be identical in spirit, partly because we learn of them from different sources—partly because their results seem somewhat different. Of the two great historical revivals, which are all we have mentioned, though others might easily have been cited, there are many full, even minute accounts preserved in history, so that without prejudice we can study their causes and their effects through a long series of years. Of the more modern American revivals we learn either from direct personal observation, or from the report of those who have themselves witnessed them, and this is a more difficult kind of testimony to weigh because personal bias may influence the observer, and must therefore be allowed for.

Of the great Florentine preacher Savonarola it is pretty clear, to any one who reads his life with a knowledge of the present facts of spirit manifestation, that he was a medium, who, if he had had access to our wider experiences of mediumship, would probably have been a far more useful, certainly a far happier, man than he was. Guided, however, by the false lights of the Church, the *ignus fatui* of infallible revelation, he fell ruined by its inconsistencies, overwhelmed by the want of harmony between the light without and the light within, in both of which he believed. His work, however, was honest work; and so far as he preached against the profligacy and falsehood of his age and nation, he did good; not, perhaps, any permanent good, but real individual good. Temperate, chaste and true himself, and withal a centre of psychological power, he made even the vicious Florentines for a time temperate, chaste and true also, and so turned many an evil doer from his mistaken road towards a better and a happier course. But so far as he was a preacher of piety and of the fear of God, he was a failure; he preached a false principle—a theology—a figment and manufacture of priests' brains, and the rope of sand broke at the first strain. He mesmerised his hearers into remarkable devotional fervour; but, when at his overthrow they were left without the stimulus of his magnetism, this fervour, which had been but a reflex of his own, died out and left them much what they had been before.

More abiding in its character, but of more doubtful benefit, was the revival that reigned supreme in Geneva under Calvin, and that reached out the iron hands of its tyranny upon the hearts and homes of the new world. It was inseparably connected with the darkest theology that has ever blighted the life of civilized man. It was wholly founded on the supposition of an angry and implacable God, who would exact the uttermost farthing; hence it constituted the father of the family a stern and unbending judge, a censor of the most rigid kind; hence it made the law an avenger rather than a reformer, and under it all government was for repression, not for development. There sprang from this idea of overwhelming terror, moralities so harsh, habits of life so out of harmony with that poor human nature it was sought to crush, that the wonder was that the false teachings could ever have held their own, even for a year, against the general instincts of humanity. And yet the tide rolled on, impelled by the great personal force of brains so vigorous and hearts so earnest that their like have seldom been seen on earth. When such men as Calvin and John Knox pour out their eloquence with fearless zeal upon their countrymen—few, indeed, are those who can retain the balance of their own self-possession in the grasp of their own judgment. We think we see a few traits in the recent Scottish revival that assimilate it to its great predecessor of the 16th century; but we have not much apprehension that its career will be as momentous or as enduring. It is equally based upon the *fear* of God, the desire to save one's own soul from some vague doom of unimaginable horror, which is not a whit more definite for being described as "perdition," "hell fire," "outer darkness," "the wrath of God," &c. It is equally at war with the heaven implanted instincts and desires of human nature, which it vainly seeks to extinguish by grace. But it is promulgated by men whose force compared to that of Knox and Calvin is as the sound of a penny whistle to the blast of a whirlwind; and it is preached in the 19th century, when, though priests and lecturers may still talk nonsense from platforms and pulpits, their utterances are pretty sure to be canvassed and weighed for whatever they may be worth by thinking men, not under the magnetic influence of their presence or their eloquence.

The prime instigators in this latest of European revivals were a party of clergy and of laymen interested in the welfare of their respective Churches, who, wise in their generation, and keenly aware of the growing coldness towards themselves and their institution, sought some means of—as they said—"reviving the religious life of the perishing multitude;" in other words, of diverting the tide of popular religious feeling which was fast turning into other channels, back again to themselves. It did not long escape the notice of keen-sighted men,

well-informed upon the subject, that there is no Protestant country in the world where the churches have so strong a hold upon the AFFECTIONS of their people as in the United States, the very home of religious freedom though it be. Perhaps affection naturally flourishes best in an atmosphere of perfect freedom; but this did not seem to strike the directors of Scotch revivalism so forcibly as the remarkable results manifesting themselves in strong religious excitement under a certain preaching and praying process, common enough in America, though but little understood in Scotland. Human nature is the same everywhere, and, given the same conditions, there will be the same results. It therefore suggested itself to these gentlemen to secure from America the services of some who had there been successful practitioners in the line they were desirous of initiating just as it might suggest itself to Mr. George Coppin to fill the empty benches of the Theatre Royal, by importing some successful foreign star. It was thus that Messrs. Moody and Sankey (American revival preachers) became the chief movers of the Scotch revivals. The result was most satisfactory to the managers of the movement. True, nothing was left undone that good business experience would suggest as a desirable addition to the eloquence of the "stars." Advertising, runners, and agents of different classes, good music, attractive meetings, branch associations, sent forth into distant parts, handbills, &c., &c., were as much used as by shrewd energetic theatrical managers.

"Within four days 24,000 copies of Mr. Spurgeon's sermon have been issued for distribution among young men in the city; 12,000 more, we believe, will be put in hand to-morrow," says one account. "A body of the best singers organized themselves into a choir, sang hymns on Sunday evenings in Hunter's Square, spoke in the open air to the people there, and invited them to the meetings held under their auspices in the Cowgate Church."

In consequence of all this energetic action, combined with the undoubted eloquence, talent, and practical experience of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, churches that had been habitually half empty for years, were now well filled. "Meetings were thronged to hear the ordinary preaching of the word. A gospel sermon could hardly be preached without great results. All Christian workers, and especially faithful ministers, found their work doubled in the most blessed way. In their places surrounding the chairs each day at noon, scattered here and there at evangelistic meetings every evening, called on continually to speak to enquirers—one felt that unless special strength were given they could not meet the demands on them," says another authority. We may be pardoned for believing that THIS was the result sought and hoped for; and also for thinking that this is the way and these the means by which overstocked traders seek to dispose of wares that are heavy on hand, rather than the way in which the Almighty seeks to enlighten the spiritually blinded, and to draw men into salvation from evil. What we recognize in all this, is the work of men diligent in business, and eager after success, but not the "hand of God." Among the many reasons which have brought us to this conclusion are the following, to which, we doubt not, our readers will give due weight:—According to these revivalists themselves, the principal thing to be gained by this uprising of the religious element of man's nature into exceptional prominence, is reconciliation with an offended God, pardon granted by Him immediately, and only upon the sinner's consciously admitting that his sole hope of future happiness and goodness consists in allowing Christ to take his place and expiate his sin for him. To our rational faculties and to our profoundest convictions all this is but the fiction of a misguided fancy, and without it there is no worth or value in revivalism. We find no evidence either in nature or in man of this offended, angry God; but, on the contrary, abundant evidence of the beneficence and patience of the Creator, and in man abundant evidence of an inherent love of good and truth (that is to say of God) so inwoven into his very nature that he surely, though perhaps slowly, triumphs over ignorance and impatience, advances even by his own mistakes and failures, and rises towards the Great Source of his being.

If our position be the true one, and we believe that the facts of history and of science, as well as the testimony of Spiritualism, will uphold it, what weight can we attach to such "scares" as the following:—

"A young girl, fifteen years of age, was present at Mr. Moody's evangelistic address, on Friday evening last week. She became deeply impressed, and at the close went in among the inquirers. The lady who spoke with this young girl was used by the Holy Spirit to lead her to real rest in Christ. She went home and told her mother that she was now happy in the Lord. That very night she sickened, symptoms of scarlet fever appeared, and the fever made progress. When it appeared evident that she was dying she told her father that she was going home to Christ. . . . Saved just in time! *If she had not received Christ last Friday night where would she have been now?*"

ANDREW A. BONAR.

Glasgow, March 20th, 1874.

"At one of the last meetings held in Edinburgh by Messrs. Moody and Sankey, a miner in his working clothes was sitting near the front, obviously most attentive and impressed. At the close of the meeting he rose to go away; but, after walking down the passage, he turned and sat down again. There was more prayer and another hymn, and special conversation with himself. His heart was touched and changed; with his hard, rough grip he shook the minister's hand and said—'I have wondered if this might be true; I now believe it. It has brought peace to my soul. I know and trust my Saviour.' On the next day, while working, a mass of coal or rock fell upon him. The injuries were fatal. Death was close at hand. A fellow workman approached him. 'Oh, Andrew,' said the dying man, 'I'm thankful I settled it last night'—(From Lord Ardmillan's address at Greengairs).

Not thus is man saved from evil, ignorance, or brutality. Not in these spasms of the soul is man's spiritual growth. It is the quiet, steadfast work of years that does or undoes, make or mars, the perfect human being. We have not one particle of evidence or of reason to suppose that that miner or that young girl, awakening in the spirit-world, were in any degree better, wiser, or happier than they would have been had they gone there direct from their habitual state of mind and customary life. Neither have we any evidence or reason to believe that, had they continued upon earth, this condition of religious enthusiasm would have been permanent. Experience proves that after *all* periods of excitement a very large percentage of those influenced return, more or less rapidly, to that previous frame of mind which is truly their own, the direct product of their own lives; while the exalted state, which has been but the result of special circumstances or of special associates temporarily affecting them, fades quite away. Only that development into which a man comes gradually, by the growth of his inner powers is permanent. Though a man may put forth a sudden brief exertion of physical force for a special occasion, or when excited by some extraneous cause, that will not constitute him a strong man, but only the gradually development of muscle or of skill. And this law, we believe, will be found to be as true of Christian progress as of any other. We cannot, therefore, place much confidence in the Christian conversion of "the two hundred who in four weeks professed to have found Christ." Nor in the forty young women who on Sabbath evening remained behind the rest of the congregation, "some of whom were already decided and some anxious about their souls." Nor can we admit that in all these doings "the Lord has come and wrought his wonders," and "is visibly working in the salvation of souls." But we do see a remarkable and instructive phase of human history from which much is to be learnt—much as to what to avoid, but much also as to what might be followed with advantage even by those who have no angry God to appease, no class of ordained ministers to support and to glorify.

It can hardly escape the observation of a dispassionate observer, certainly not that of any careful student of history, that the state of excitement and enthusiasm which form the distinguishing feature of these revival meetings, can be induced, irrespective of creed or object, in any considerable number of persons gathered together

under the mesmeric influence of an earnest speaker, of stirring singers, or even by the reiterated energetic utterance of words and sounds not remarkably touching in themselves. Exactly similar phenomena, and stranger ones are to be seen among the Dervishes of the East, the Mormons of the Far West, the Shakers of modern America, the Mænads and Bacchantes of ancient Greece. Gather a multitude together, pack them pretty close for some hours, and let them be freely exposed to prolonged repeated tones from some powerful positive individual, and it does not much matter what are the words said or what the theories advanced, provided they appeal in some degree to ideas already familiar to the hearers, the effect will always be to place their whole mental, and sometimes even their physical nature, more or less under the control of their bioligizer. Where results so similar are sure to follow upon even tolerably similar conditions, it is at least probable that some common law of nature will be found underlying the varying manifestations. And it is in mesmerism, electro-biology, or those kindred sciences which seek to learn the laws of one mind's power over another, that we must expect to find the key of these revival wonders, with their passionate intensity, their sudden outbursts, their fitfulness, and their utter blindness of the rational principle. But in no true sense do we see the faintest shadow of reason for calling them by the sweet name of religion, or of recognising in them the beneficent work of God.

But there are many valuable lessons which we may learn from these revival experiences, especially in the form which they have assumed of late years, both in America and in Scotland. We do not intend to do more than barely mention the risk of insanity, and of sexual immorality, which many of our calmest and best informed thinkers believe attaches to the arousing of this so-called religious excitement. Hepworth Dixon's work on "Spiritual Wives" gives a brief but interesting view of how the most scandalous communities of England, of America, and of Germany, all had their origin in associations started upon thoroughly revivalistic principles. And in the same book, Father Noyes, than whom no one has had better opportunities of judging, declares his conviction that the revival excitement and sexual excitement are so nearly allied as to pass imperceptibly one into the other. But perhaps this may be true of all very great excitements. It certainly is true that insanity is always approached, if not actually reached, by dwelling exclusively and enthusiastically upon any one set of ideas.

But we would rather turn away from the objectionable and dangerous points of the matter, to one with which we feel hearty sympathy, and which we believe it is quite possible to adopt with advantage among very different thinkers, and without imitating any of the undesirable features. We believe that nothing has endeared revivals more to the large class who advocate them, or has given them a closer hold upon the affections, than the kindly ties of personal sympathy which have then and there sprung up among the most widely separated individuals and classes. The work has not been all nor nearly all done by the clergymen and the public speakers. It has not been only the sermon, the lecture, or the public prayers, which have drawn "the sheep into the fold." In many instances these have only, so to speak, broken ground, or prepared the mind to respond more readily to the conversation and personal sympathy which, if anyone showed an interest, was sure to be promptly addressed to himself individually. After the public services were over, the rude workman found himself cordially approached by the student, the man of letters and of intellect, whom class habits usually removed from him immeasurably; his wants (at least his spiritual wants) were enquired into, his vague surmises and ill-defined doubts cleared up or answered, his rough hand kindly grasped with the assurance that he "shall be prayed for." Let us not smile with supercilious superiority at this promise; it must be sweet beyond description to many a hard lonely nature which has no home but the tavern, and no friendship but the chance companionship of fellow workman. The young girl of ardent imagination and tender feelings, little guided by judgment and unchecked by experience, is sure to be



met, as she pours forth her fears, and difficulties, and incredibly wild imaginings, with kind responsive sympathy and tokens of interest, and entreaties to return again. The mourner, in the bitter cold dejection of intense grief, is cheered and brought back to life by the friendly warmth of new-found companions. No doubt, too, the sorely tried and tempted are often refreshed and strengthened by the very informality of the sudden, unforeseen, strange friendships they form thus, lying for the most part, quite outside of their usual sphere. This remarkable unique exercise of personal sympathy among those who have no other common tie than that of their common humanity, is, we take it, the chief element of strength in revivals, and the only real use that they can possibly be to mankind. We see no reason why this should not be imitated without running into their many absurdities, extravagances, and risks.

### Poetry.

#### THE GOSPEL OF SCIENCE.

THROUGHOUT all Nature, Science sees  
Benevolent designs;  
In man, and beast, and birds, and trees,  
Creative wisdom shines.  
Love regulates God's works and ways,  
Administers His laws,  
Inspires Creation's song of praise  
To its Eternal cause.  
Mercy and truth dictate the plan  
Of Nature's works below;  
Reveals the love of God to man,  
That love to God may flow.  
His works and laws let us inspect,  
And mark and learn His ways,  
Thus in a measure we'll reflect  
His goodness, love, and grace.  
Science can not of God conceive,  
Confined to any place!  
For 'tis in Him we live and breathe,  
Who permeates all space!  
We see Thee deck the grass with dew,  
With stars the arch of night,  
The rainbows with their beauteous hues,  
The stars of heaven with light!  
The universe is all Thine own,  
Where suns and systems blaze;  
There, sitting on Thy starry throne,  
You hearken to its praise!  
Suns blaze, and wane, and pass away,  
Forgotten then they lie;  
But he whose orders these obey  
Reigns through Eternity!  
Death was, we know, a law on earth  
Before our race began;  
Beast, fish, and fowls, all came to birth,  
Returned to dust ere man.  
And vegetation fed on these,  
As these had fed on them;  
The animals, and man, and trees,  
The trees bear food for men.  
The fossil teeth of early days,  
With the destructive claws,  
Are proof carnivora were always  
A part of Nature's laws.  
The thunder cloud which ignorance  
Looks only on with dread;  
Knowledge perceives, with confidence,  
Will blessings round it shed.  
Thus oft men thoughtlessly condemn  
As evil, things that prove  
A blessing kindly sent to them  
In mercy from above.  
While ignorance perceives in death  
The wrath of angry heaven,  
Science, when God withdraws our breath,  
A higher life is given!

That self-adjusting are God's laws,  
Obedience they requite,  
And curb transgressions of his cause  
To turn them to the light.

But when from God they turn away,  
And paths of ruin choose,  
Death saves from endless misery  
The lives that they misuse.

Who violates the laws of God,  
Or to resist them tries,  
Converts each blessing to a rod,  
And, if persistent, dies!

God's love and mercy leads us here;  
In Him we'll hope and trust  
When entering on another sphere,  
Dismantled of our dust.

New faculties will fit the soul  
To fill a higher sphere,  
And clearer views of God's control  
In all things will appear.

New wondrous works we then shall see,  
Which will our souls delight;  
Fresh teachings of the Deity,  
More intellectual light.

As onward, upward, we progress,  
To what extent we'll rise  
In wisdom, holiness, and bliss,  
Is hid from mortal eyes.

Enough, Oh Font of life and light!  
Of peace, and joy, and love!  
At length with exquisite delight  
We'll share Thy bliss above.

R.

### To Correspondents.

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

#### THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR.—Before commencing to grapple with Orthodoxy allow me to offer a few more remarks, respecting the way Science exercises its judgment, and gathers information concerning the Will, and the Laws of God, from the great and glorious Book of Nature, which our common Father has spread open before us for our information; as I intend to compare the conduct of Scientists and their Book, with the Book, and conduct of the Right Reverend Doctor Orthodoxy; that your readers may be able to exercise their judgment between them, and follow the best.

While God has furnished Animals with INSTINCT, by which to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong, he has endowed man with the faculty of REASON, as the fundamental principle by which to govern all his investigations, and his actions through life, and has also given to man his various senses as tests; the object of which is to furnish accurate information for his Reason; on which it may sit in judgment, decide what is true or false, good or bad, just or wrong, what is for, or against our interest and happiness, and govern our actions accordingly. Now it must be obvious to every reasoning mind, that unless accurate, truthful information be obtained on which to form its opinions, the result of that judgment must be erroneous, deceptive, and unjust; and consequently opposed to the will of God, and to the interest and happiness of him who formed it.

But Science is not satisfied with Reason alone, as a test for truth; unless it amounts to demonstration; being always suspicious of traditions, bigotry, ignorance, and prejudice; and knowing the deceitfulness of the heart; how easily it is reasoned into anything that suits its own interest, prejudice, or which flatters its vanity; it consequently demands experiment, the evidence of the senses, or unquestionably reliable witnesses; being convinced that nothing on earth is so excellent, reliable,

profitable, and precious, as Truth, and that the more we examine into its certainty the clearer and brighter it appears to shine, and the firmer our reliance in it.

Scientists search after truth with a devotion and minutiae of which few men have any conception, and observe what others pass by unnoticed, they analyze things that are invisible, tell the speed of light, weigh the planets in the heavens, inform us what material the sun is composed of, and what is consuming in distant stars. They have invented marvellous instruments to assist them in their researches, of which the microscope, the telescope, and spectroscope are not the least remarkable; by means of which they have discovered many of the before hidden wonders of Creation; while the more minutely they investigate, the greater the variety, multitude, design, order, extent, harmony, connection, and magnificence they discover, surrounding them every where in the universe, till the soul lost in admiration, fills with ecstasy, at the grandeur God reveals! and realizes what Pope felt, when he wrote:—

"All Nature is but art, unknown to thee,  
All chance direction which thou canst not see,  
All partial evil, universal good;  
And spite of pride and erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT."

Orthodoxy reverses the teachings and experience of Science. It receives as true, things that cannot stand the tests Science requires. The Orthodox rest their FAITH upon traditions, opinions, and feelings even though opposed to reason, experiment, and the laws of Nature. And so far from having any new revelations for their flocks, God has withdrawn from them all direct communications and spiritual gifts, said to have been enjoyed by the early church, and they have substituted human learning in their stead.

They look with great jealousy on scientific men, and usually speak of them as Infidels; while they in return, look upon good Pastors as God's nurses for the intellectual infants of the age, and are delighted to see a gradual but very slow progression among them.

The Orthodox whose claims we shall examine, tell us that they are divinely authorised ambassadors of God, sent forth to preach salvation through the blood of Jesus. They produce no credentials! offer no proof of their divine commission! but expect us to believe it without any evidence! assure us of eternal happiness if we do, eternal torment if we do not. See Rev. I., 2.

They inform us that the universe contains two great immortal powers, God and the Devil, who are antagonistic to each other. The Earth they tell us was created perfect, but Satan seduced God's creatures, and frustrated his will, for many thousands of years, Satan conquered, and retains possession of all "the kingdoms of this world;" he offered to restore to their Creator, (Matt. IV., 9. Heb. I., 3.) if He would fall down and worship him! This He declined to do, "the Devil put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him," He was crucified!

For a short time there appears to have been a revival in Judea, but, a great multitude being converted at Jerusalem, and "churches planted throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria walking in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost" Acts IX., 30. Satan seems to have brought the Romans against the people, slaughtered the inhabitants, desolated the city, dispersed the churches, and carried the people captive into all nations.

According to prophecy Satan is to retain the supremacy over the earth as long as it exists; "evil men and seducers are to wax worse, and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" so that "the heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved unto fire, against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly Man" See 2 Peter III., 7-16; Matt. VII., 13; XXIV., 30, 37-39; XXV., 31-46; Rev. VI., 12; XII., 3-6; XII., 2-8.

If these passages be true, the Creation of this earth has been a sad failure; Satan has overpowered his Creator, conquered, taken possession of, reigned over, and spoiled a good world. During the struggle, Satan has invariably persecuted and triumphed over God's people, who finding it impossible to restore His lost

dominions, and subjects, determines to consume them with fire, in His wrath, to consign the rebels to eternal tortures. It must not be forgotten, that the Enemy, the Subjects, and the Earth, are all the work of His own hands, and consequently if not made perfect, none else is to blame but Himself. According to this system, Christianity is a deep tragedy, an overwhelming catastrophe, from which but few escape, and for which God alone is responsible by the Orthodox's own account. Science of course cannot credit it for lack of reliable evidence; and look on it as a most degrading fiction.

I remain,  
Sir, &c.,

R.

#### OUR CRITICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—As several of the members of the Energetic Circle anticipated, the extraordinary direct spirit-writing published in your last issue, has called forth adverse criticism from portions of the secular press. They either cannot or will not be candid enough to investigate the subject of Spiritualism for themselves; and yet they, from one cause or another, do their best to ridicule the efforts of those who do so. Having no knowledge of the question, they presume to dogmatise on, except what they accidentally pick up from its opponents, they yet affect to know all about it, and to speak of it and its adherents in true sir oracle style, for when they open their mouths let no dog bark. Discerning persons, however, will not fail to see in such conduct on the part of your secular contemporaries, nothing but a shallow display of ignorant bounce and sophistry not at all calculated to raise them in the good opinion of "my gentle public," as Mr. Fawceter was wont to say. Were a Judge to sit in judgment upon a case and to condemn his prisoner, without hearing the evidence, what would be thought of him, and what effect would such a decision have before the public? And this is precisely the conduct of which such writers as those in the *Daily Telegraph* and *Australasian* are guilty towards Spiritualism. Of what value, then, is their opinion? Their condemnation of it under the circumstances is simply an insult to the intelligence of their readers, who naturally look up to them for correct and reliable information on all subjects they have the temerity to deal with. Such writers but verify the old proverb, "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." They are either too indifferent or too lazy to investigate themselves, and as it pays best to condemn, they condemn accordingly. They never can see anything in Spiritualism, but "twaddle" or "drivelling imbecility." No, and they are never likely to neither, for as Archbishop Whately has wisely remarked:—"When people have resolved to shut their eyes, or to look only on one side, it is of little consequence how good their eyes may be." For instance, your *Daily Telegraph* friend could only perceive one hand-writing on the paper published, whilst everybody else could see three. It was evident he must have persistently looked "only one side." But our infant cause has nothing to expect from such critics as he is but their hostility. As an aspirant for clerical favors he must be a dutiful son, and be prepared when occasion requires it, either to pray like a saint or lie like a trooper. Does not the end justify the means?

Your Brobdignagian critic the *Australasian* comes the patronising dodge. "Our poor friend the *Harbinger*!" and then follows the usual talk about "drivelling imbecility, lunatic asylums and idiots." It is really wonderful that these literary critics when they think so meanly of us, should expend so much of their brains and time in writing and speaking so about us. Most thinking people when they read such uncharitable attacks upon our cause will be apt to conclude that, where there is so much smoke there must be some little fire. In this case the writing which has called forth the vituperation of your great critic was published to let your readers see it. It was simply a series of small messages to the circle, and was not given forth as

communications of any importance. Our mediums are not writing mediums for receiving such communications; but the writing came to us under such extraordinary circumstances, that we thought your readers would all like to see it, as well as read the accounts of it, and hence its publication. The fact of its being received as it was, has been conveniently passed over in silence by all your critics. And it was that fact that I wished to impress on the minds of your readers when I forwarded it for publication. But notwithstanding the gasconading of the *Australasian*, I beg to say there was nothing in the writing to justify his ill-natured remarks about it. For a spirit to say "Be kind towards all mankind," or to clothe a moral precept in a poetical dress as thus:

"He who his arm will not outstretch  
To save one drowning, is a murderous wretch,"

is only, according to your literary critic, a sign of "maundering, drivelling imbecility"; but for the son of a Jewish Carpenter to say "Do unto others as ye would be done by," is to entitle him to be transmogrified like as the ancient Roman Emperors were into a God. There is no accounting for tastes. It is easy for such literary shrimps as the writer in the *Australasian* to throw an air of ridicule around the most serious of subjects, but I would remind him that laughter at strange things is not argument, but is often "as much a proof of ignorance as of knowledge; and I believe it is so in this case." The Sandhurst Energetic Circle however meanly their critic may think of them, will not be deterred from proceeding with their investigations, "for fear of hurting their reputation for good sense," and it strikes me very forcibly that they will yet make their *Australasian* friend before they have done, cut but a sorry figure. I would remind him in the language of Baron Humboldt:—"Presumptuous scepticism which rejects facts without examination of their truth, is in some respects more injurious than unquestioning credulity."

Before I conclude, I have a few words to say to a critic of another kind, I refer to the Rev Thomas James, Wesleyan minister of Golden Square. This worthy minister of the "Gospel" has of late been giving forth strange sounds on the subject of Spiritualism. Considerable discussion has been going on about his views, and many, from vague utterances which have from time to time fallen from him in the pulpit, were of opinion that he, like our good friend Mr. Tyerman, was about to come over to us. When, therefore, it was announced last week, by advertisement, that he was to deliver a lecture "On the true position of Spiritism as a Religious Creed," much interest and curiosity were evinced to hear what he had got to say. The lecture proved a great draw, the large church being crowded, thus shewing the deep interest taken in our despised Spiritualism. But those who expected to hear a minister preach a heretical discourse in an Orthodox pulpit, were completely disappointed, as the Rev. gentleman though acknowledging the genuineness of some of the phenomena, came out strong against the new faith, denouncing it as "an apostasy," and declaring with true priestly unction that there was nothing in it to be compared to "the blessed book," and "no Salvation except through the blood of Christ." Close observers now see a deeper design in the presence of the Rev. Mr. James at Golden Square, than a paltry quarrel with his Conference at Adelaide. And those who expected to see an oily, sleek priest desert a fat living to follow in the thorny paths of an unfashionable cause, have calculated without their host, for the Rev. gentleman to use an expressive Scotch phrase, "ken's a trick worth twa o' that." Mr. James affects to be wroth with Spiritualists for not believing in the Trinity. As the faith of Christendom rests upon Joseph's dream the truth of which has never yet been properly explained or corroborated, let him satisfactorily clear the matter up, and Spiritualists will be only too glad to be in the fashion by believing. Let me put the question to him in this way.—Why did not the angel of the Lord appear in broad daylight before the people and corroborate Joseph's statement?

Yours truly,  
THE CHAIRMAN.

N.B.—I forgot to add that the Rev. Mr. James called the Spiritualists "a seedy lot of philosophers," and also attacked the spirit-writing from our circle, which, he said, a Spiritualist had sent him, but for which he had to say "thank you for nothing." The reverend gentleman would have done well to have remembered when expressing his extreme contempt for it by offensive gestures and words, that, at least, it was genuine, and that is more than can be said of many of the writings in that "blessed book" which has proved such a rich mine of wealth to the sacerdotal caste. (See the interposition anent the three heavenly witnesses.) Spiritualism is becoming a Godsend to the clergy now-a-days, as the preaching of the Gospel fails to draw an audience, as formerly. It is making its silent action felt in the continued withdrawal of whole families from the church, and hence the bitterness of the holy fathers. So my Spiritualist friends continue your sapping and mining bravely.

#### ANSWERS TO SEVERAL IMPORTANT QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

(THROUGH MRS CORA L. V. TAPPAN.)

A writer in one of the spiritual newspapers has propounded several pertinent inquiries concerning the manner of existence in the spiritual life; and it is for the purpose of answering these queries that we shall give an address this evening touching the absolute nature of the spiritual existence, and in what manner it corresponds to the temporal or earthly life. Notwithstanding Spiritualism has been in the world a quarter of a century, and notwithstanding the writings of Swedenborg and others who have been inspired of the spirit, there seems to be, not only among those who are new in spiritual investigation, but also among Spiritualists, such varieties of opinion and such perplexities concerning the substance and nature of spiritual substance, that we consider no authoritative expression has yet been given by which the mind can judge of this existence, although there have been innumerable lessons. The chief difficulty, however, rests with the investigator himself. When the spirits state to you that the spiritual world is as tangible as your world, straightway the investigator concludes that it is therefore a material world. The difference between tangibility and materiality is very distinct. That may be tangible to the spirit which would be in no wise material to your senses; and the substance of which spiritual existence is composed cannot be measured nor judged by the laws that control materialised substances on earth. With these premises the investigator starts fairly; but when the spirit affirms that spiritual existence is really quite as tangible as earthly life, the man of science straightway believes that he can judge of that materiality by the same standard that he gives to the gross forms of matter around him, and judges that the shore of spiritual existence is made of grains of sand that can be weighed and measured by the ordinary methods of science; also, that the mountains and valleys must be made of the varied kinds of rock and soil that are found upon earth; also, that the rivers must be of the same kind of water; and, altogether, makes spiritual life an exact representation of earthly life.

The queries to which we refer propound, first: Is the scenery of spiritual life an exact counterpart of earth? If it be not, what is the substance of which the spiritual is composed? Now it is known by all men of science that there are an infinite variety of substances imperceptible to the touch of man, yet which are nevertheless material. It is known by all men of science that the most subtle substances are those very refined qualities that cannot be analysed unless they are specifically acting upon much grosser substances, like electricity, magnetism, and the other subtle powers and forces of nature. Now the substance of which thought is composed no scientist has yet professed to analyse; yet so palpable is it to the spirit that, upon entering this room, one endowed with the gift of the spirit, or a



spiritual being, perceives the quality of your thoughts just as readily as you perceive the quality of one another's garments. This may, of course, sound strange, but in spiritual science it is an actual reality.

When therefore you consider that thought is in itself one of the grossest of spiritual substances, you will have some data whereby to judge of the other substances which surround and compose spiritual existence. All those elements that exist within the atmosphere of life, that are not perceptible to your material sense, and that form the avenue or agency of mind conversing with mind, are the elements which make up the spiritual life.

Swedenborg has enunciated the doctrine of correspondence, whereby he affirms that every earthly form has its corresponding shape in spiritual life. But he does not therefore say that every spiritual form is a literally transcribed form from material existence: hence he does not therefore say that every house, building, and valley has its exact prototype in the spiritual state. He also may not affirm that there is something in spiritual existence that for spiritual purposes answers to flowers, trees, birds, substances, landscapes, mountains, valleys; but that is his meaning. The substances are, as we have stated, not only within the atmosphere of the earth, but the more exalted of them are lying beyond the pale of earth's material atmosphere in that which is known as space.

When you judge of a material object here on earth, you judge of it as something outside of yourself, and the man of science and the metaphysician concludes that any object which is independent of your will, and has a form of its own, and laws of its own, is not to be controlled by your especial mind. But in the spirit-life all this is reversed; that which is objective to you becomes shadowy and vague to the spirit. This room, apparently solidified and tangible, is to the spirit almost as vapour, and forms no impediment whatsoever to the approach or departure of spiritual beings. The substances that you consider the most formidable and, least to be moved are to the spirits almost as vapour seems to you; while the thought or the essences of those substances that are to you intangible are to spirits reality. Hence where it is said by spirits that there are scenes and landscapes, mountains and valleys, rivers and flowers, birds and all things corresponding to your earthly life, they enunciate a spiritual paradox, unless they also affirm that those substances are spiritual in their nature; that the spirit enters just such a sphere in spirit-life as the quality of his or her thought and the power of his or her will can create and draw around them spiritually; and that vast numbers of spirits go either on plains that are shrouded by darkness, or among valleys, or mountains that lift their heads up to the light, and are shrouded only by thought, just in proportion to the combination of their will and the power of their minds to control those atoms of matter.

You know in science of such a law as chemical affinity. The substances the mind draws around itself in spiritual life correspond to this law upon earth, and the spirit is clothed upon, is draped, is surrounded by those qualities of atmosphere or atmospheric substances that he or she has the power to attract. Be those substances light and beautiful; be they formed in the shape of mountain or valley; be they of level plain or of lofty and towering heights, it depends upon the nature of the mind that there is the centre of life and of influence. Upon this earth matter has its own stubborn laws—its own unyielding, unintelligent laws. The blind forces of nature seemingly work out their way, resisting man's aggression for ever. In spirit-life this is the reverse. Matter is not objective; it is not resistive; it does not impede; it does not prevent the passage of spirits—of those forms that spirits possess; and the scenery that they are surrounded by may be changed at the will of one or more individual spirits. The geography of the spirit-world—if we may say so—is not a fixed and immovable thing like the geography of earth, except so far as it relates to the planets and worlds themselves, but that inter-stellar space that composes the vast realm of spiritualised existence is

filled with a kind of substance that spirits govern and control at will; and therefore the scenery which abounds there is of the kind that spirits themselves can fashion. Lofty souls endowed with consciousness and knowledge surpassing your understanding may so govern the atoms of spiritual substances in that light as to make vast pictures—plains, temples, valleys, mountains, and living things—in response to the thought or desire that it shall be so.

You read in ancient times the spirit of God descended in the form of a dove. There have been at various seances and other places where spirits have manifested themselves, flowers, birds, symbols of various kinds witnessed by many persons, and the question has naturally arisen, Are these realities? They are spiritual realities. The spiritual form is such that if a spirit desires to represent to you a flower, it only requires the thought to do so, and a knowledge of the laws that govern the direction of atoms to produce that flower to your vision; and in spiritual life it only requires that those substances of which spiritual flowers are fashioned shall be gathered together to surround the spirit with whatever form he or she may choose to require. Understand us. All these things are governed by law; but they are not the laws that govern your material substances. They are spiritual laws, having their origin and seat in the will or volition of the spirit itself, and thence reaching out and controlling and governing matter.

You know what rapid strides science has made in the control of the elements of earth by humanity. You know how much force and power the will and mind of man has even over the clod of clay you call your material bodies. In spiritual life, when these substances become subject to the spirit instead of aggressive to it, you can readily perceive that all the functions of the spirit are absolute and positive, and not as they are here, negative and obedient to the laws of matter largely.

Another mistake that investigators make is this: that they do not sufficiently remove themselves from the usual custom of measuring all things by the standards of earthly knowledge and earthly science. Spiritual science has its own laws; spiritual beings have their laws; and it is an utter, an absolute mistake to suppose that because spirits sometimes do and are permitted to materialise themselves in a gross form for your earthly vision, that they therefore are always compelled to occupy gross forms. It is a mistake to suppose also that the gifts of the spirit will tend towards the constant reproduction of those physical forms of life there. They will not. Spiritual existence only expresses itself through your earthly forms because that is the only way it can reach you. But in spiritual life souls are so amenable to the power of the spirit, that it is a realm in which thought is supreme, in which mind abides, in which all leading graces and virtues, all goodness, all aspirations, take tangible, actual form. The thought goes out from your mind and is lost amid the waves of materiality that surround you, and you have not power to follow it; you do not realise it after it escapes from your lips. But in spirit-life the thought goes out, and it reaches the mind for whom it is intended—is a substance, and has a literal, actual vibration corresponding to sound.

The person who proposes these questions also desires to know if the spirit is dependent upon vocal utterance and upon hearing for the transmission of thought. We are sure the man, if he had measured the meaning of the word spirit, would not have asked this question. Thought is the power of expression of the spirit, and instead of the employment of words, which are mere vibrations upon the external atmosphere for the purpose of reaching the material sense, the mind that is advanced converses with mind through will. You know it is oftentimes the case upon earth that two minds who are very similar and in perfect sympathy can almost read one another's thoughts. You know oftentimes, when sitting with a friend, some sentence is uttered, and you say, "Why, I was just thinking of that same thing!" You come to speak of a person, and say, "That person was just in my mind," showing the power

one mind has to influence another. In spiritual life where would be the necessity of language when thought expresses itself directly to thought? Those spirits, therefore, that are most advanced have least need of the materialised expression; and when they do express themselves in physical language, it is only in the grosser forms of spirit-life that are nearest to your earth.

But this person also says that there is a language of the spirit corresponding somewhat to the ancient Hebrew. There are several languages employed by spirits in their intercourse with mortals, sometimes corresponding to your earthly language, sometimes symbolic; but there is no necessity for vocal or written messages between spirits in spirit-life. The thought itself is sufficient to reach the minds of whomsoever is in sympathy with the persons expressing the thought; and where would be the need of physical expression when there is no necessity for hearing, or for any of the material senses.

Then, says this person, do we require a material form? It is said that the spiritual form actually resembles the human form, only it is more perfected, more etherealised, more spiritual. We answer, the functions of the spirit-form are spiritual, expressing the highest form of thought that the spirit itself has attained. Angels, spirits, all forms of departed beings, are represented as having forms like those possessed on earth, only more beautified and more ethereal. Now, says the questioner, if there be no necessity for voice or hearing, or any of the senses that we possess upon earth, why does the spirit possess an exact prototype of the human form? We answer: each feature, every expression of countenance, every lineament of the human form or face, represents also a spiritual quality. Soul possesses not any of the senses you term material, but one supreme sense; with the spirit, however, it is one concentrated sense, perception.

You are aware that when a person is blind the sense of touch is unusually intense; when a person is deaf, the sense of sight is unusually acute; when mute, the sense of hearing is exceedingly active; showing that the soul's sense is but one, and that those are the varied expression of the soul's sense upon which you are dependent in the physical body. The spiritual body represents the sense of the spirit only, and that is perception. There is no better name for it. We therefore give it that name for your understanding.

If you can read the thoughts of your friend, shall you, therefore, speak words that are, at best, too feeble to convey your mind if you can fully sense the power of that thought instead of the vibration and the dull sense? and if you were to live on the elements contained in the air and atmosphere, where would be the necessity for those forms of nourishment and nutrition you usually make use of? Does the spirit hunger and thirst? We answer: Yes; but the spiritual food, we have said before, is spiritual, not material. Those elements that form the substance of the spiritual body are in the atmosphere of the spiritual life. The spirit sustains that spiritual body by the constant attraction and rejection of atoms that correspond to it, and are required by it. There is hunger and thirst, but not the grosser forms of your physical wants; you are aware that they can be much modified by attention to the laws of health and materiality; and it may be in some distant time, when the atmosphere is more and more refined, that you shall not require the gross forms of nourishment that you now require. There is no reason to suppose that this is a finality; because your present comprehension of spiritual life illustrates the fact that the spiritual form can be sustained and resupplied with life, vitality, and nourishment from the elements that surround it.

By the material mind accustomed to judge literally of every expression that emanates from spiritual life we have no hope that these words will be understood. But by those minds that are accustomed to judge of spiritual things from the standpoint of spirit, we know that they will also be understood. You can imagine, indeed you may have experienced, periods of exaltation and of unusual occupation, when hunger and thirst and all bodily requirements seemed secondary, and only those

substances were taken that were actually required to sustain life. There have been several instances on record of persons under high spiritual exaltation who have lived a month or two, subsisting entirely upon the atmosphere; and there is one or two instances of persons now upon earth who, it is said, have not taken physical nourishment for several years; showing that in a refined state of physical body you all, or earth's inhabitants, will be enabled to attract from the atmosphere those particular elements that are required to sustain the physical body. Of course this must be many centuries hence; but the fact that this has been done measurably proves it may be done wholly in the future; and the fact that it has been done measurably will serve to indicate something of the manner how spirit-beings subsist.

We have said the food of the spirit is thought. We mean by this, that whatever the spiritual body requires, that, without any particular care other than volition, the spirit is enabled to absorb to itself, and that it creates its own physical form, and sustains its own physical life without any of the dull processes by which your spirits are worn down and overweighted upon earth. Its garments are also similarly composed of the elements of spiritual life, and whatsoever atom of matter is requisite to adorn the spirit the soul can attract to itself in proportion to its purity and knowledge, in which we have said the soul arrays itself. Consider the lilies how they grow. From within the germs unfold, absorbing little by little the substance from the soil, impalpable to your sense. The lily unfolds its leaves, and then its buds, and then its petals; and all the while the rays of the sun, the dew and the elements of earth have been silently obeying the summons of that simple power that is within the germ of the flower. Transcendently above this is the power of the soul of man to clothe himself, to adorn his spirit, to grace his spiritual life with the substances and quantities that correspond to his development; and not more perfect is this white snowy flower than the thought and mind and clothing of the man whose spirit is advanced and perfect; and not more noisome is the weed in the slimy pool than is the spiritual existence of him whose thoughts are cramped and low and unspiritual.

You drape yourselves, you clothe yourselves, you feed yourselves with the substance of spiritual life, just in proportion to the power of thought, knowledge, and goodness that you possess. Men do not inherit their spiritual habitations. There are no large tracts of land you can become possessed of by inheritance. There are no mountains, valleys, buildings that are yours by the law of primogeniture. You possess nothing that you have not yourselves created. In that spiritual life that the lowest and most undeveloped souls inhabit there is a dearth, a seeming void, a waste, a pronounced shapelessness without form, except shadows have form; without beauty, except deformity is beauty; and only by the culture of the highest and the noblest attributes can the spirit even imagine what the life and power and purpose of spiritual existence may be.

The questioner also wishes to know if spirits are dependent upon walking for locomotion, or if they can move about from place to place at will, showing again that he commences most externally to reason towards the spiritual world, instead of first considering spirit and then spiritual laws. The power of the spirit is will, mind, volition. Just in proportion to the elevation or knowledge of the soul is its power to move from one place to another. You think of New York, and straightway you are there in mind; you think towards China; if you have been there, your thought does not stop and traverse all the intermediate stages of that journey, but straightway you are there. You think of your home, of your own little room, of all those that there are attracted to you: these walls form no impediment; there is no necessity for you to walk there; and if you have will through power and knowledge of the spirit; you are there without the encumbrance of your physical bodies. As soon as you cast off these physical bodies of yours, the spirit is wheresoever it wills to be—the desire forming the power by which



the spirit moves. Flight is not a proper term, since there are not the fabulous wings. It is simply the power of floating or motion, and it depends wholly upon the strength of the spirit in spiritual knowledge whether its flight be rapid or slow, whether it be instantly transported or go by degrees, or whether it do not go at all. There are souls that cannot lift themselves; they remain attached to the clod of clay they have left behind, so little spirituality have they. Haunted houses, graveyards, those unresting spirits that torment the sensitive ones of earth—these are of that nature. Sometimes they cannot move from one place because their spirits are held there by the chains and shackles of their past deeds. But the power of spirits that are free from these misfortunes is *pure will*, and then their rapidity of transition from one place to another is swifter than lightning, since that takes up time that may be measured by your chronometer. For thought there is no such division of time. It takes time, but of so slight a nature that you cannot measure it by any method of calculation upon earth. Instantly your loved one is by your side if the will, the prayer, the volition be there.

You therefore will understand by these answers to questions that the whole subject of spiritual life, of its methods, of the forms of existence there, of the nature and quality of the soul, of the land that spirits inhabit, of their occupations and employment, their abodes in the realm they inhabit, is such an unknown subject to earthly minds that you must, forsooth, pause first to learn the alphabet ere you can know the language of spiritual life and its importance; because that with which you are accustomed to judge of time, of sense, of material things, of space and form and occupation here is directly the reverse of spiritual form, spiritual life, spiritual occupation, and spiritual sensation. That which you term reality is to the spirit the veriest shadow. The mountains that you consider impassable are vapour to the spirit. The substances that you value so highly as gold, silver, and precious stone are dross; and the most delightful of earthly habitations is but a feeble, vain representation compared to the habitation of the spirit that is woven of the very meshes of your own thoughts and deeds. We will picture to you the abode of a spirit whose earthly life and whose spiritual life are made perfect by knowledge.

Each thought and aspiration here of goodness becomes an immediate reality, and rises to the sphere of spiritual life, which will await that soul when freed from earthly form. It assumes some shape of harmony—bird, flower, or tree; some color of light—the rainbow hues that perfectly represent the shining light of heaven. The aisles, the corridors, the domes, the entrance, are all shaped in accordance with the deeds and thoughts of earthly life. Everything is symbolised. You will find not one thread of the fabric of your minds lost. The whole is there, woven in the fine tissues of the substances that make up your spiritual forms; and, instead of the trees and gross forms that we call here the earth, you will find the interstices of these spiritual mansions filled with images that you have thought upon earth. Sometimes unwelcome thoughts will look out from some corner of your abode in spiritual life; some thought of envy and malice; perhaps a little demon of discord; lurking in some closet you knew not of. But chiefly, if your aspirations are good and high, the walls will be the greatest grandeur of the edifice; its loftiness, its power, its beauty, its art—all will be made subservient to the soul that is within you, that has wrought its divine progression; and if there be images of loveliness on earth, how far shall these transcend them that are born of the graces of good deeds, of kindly charities, of the exalted mind! Each loving deed becomes an angel that straightway sinks upon a pedestal of lowly love, and immediately you enter he salutes you with songs and thanksgiving. Each deed of your life that has been done becomes a living embodiment there, and in the shape of an angel or bird proclaims the praise that is due for these good deeds. Each aspiration and prayer becomes a white-winged bird, or a lovely flower that adorns the way of that life you shall enter. But chiefest of all, those

kindly charities with which you graced the lives of your fellow-beings, behold they blossom out like white lilies around the greenness of your new abode; and, transcendent and above all, that supreme and perfect love that forms the entire empire of the soul, that transcends all knowledge and all strife, all love, creates the shining dome; and the stars that sparkle there are the thoughts and deeds and words of your loving heart here.

This is no dream picture. It is so much reality that the angels in their abodes and the spirits of those whom you love are even now helping to fashion the walls and arches of this temple that shall greet your vision; that even now the thoughts that fill your minds rise like white clouds on wings of aspiration, and float to that realm that will one day meet you as you enter; and the very thought you have here to-night will start out to greet you from its hiding place there; and if it be of praise it will be white as a lily, and if of scorn it will not seem beautiful to you.

These are the realities of the spiritual kingdom; these are the substances of which souls are made; these are the powers that govern and rule in spiritual life; these are the elements that may help to adorn and beautify your earth, take you away from the meaningless forms of clay that you idolise now to the realities of the living soul, the life, the power, the spirit that is within you.

### SPIRITUALISM VINDICATED.

Being a reply to a discourse by the *Rev. John Graham*, of Sydney, entitled—"SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY; THEIR REVELATIONS AND EVIDENCES COMPARED." By J. TYERMAN.

Spiritualism in its modern form has been before the world about twenty-six years. During that time it has had to encounter the most fierce and unscrupulous opposition. Everything that malice could prompt, that ingenuity could invent, and that shameless audacity could lay hold of, to arrest its progress and banish it from society, has been tried. Its alleged phenomena have been attributed to wilful imposture; its teachings have been rejected as the imbecile utterances of fools and maniacs; its mediums have been branded as mercenary tricksters; and its public advocates have been denounced as unprincipled traders on the ignorance and credulity of the people. The Press and the Pulpit have vied with each other in their efforts against it; the arm of the law has been solemnly invoked to suppress it; and repeatedly the public have been assured that its pretensions were completely exploded, and the day of its doom had arrived. But all the sneers and ridicule, the misrepresentation and slander that have been heaped upon it, have failed to keep it down in obscurity and weakness. The attacks that have been made upon it, have clearly proved its inherent strength. Attempts to expose it have only revealed its intrinsic merits and heavenly grandeur. What was intended to destroy it has indirectly helped greatly to popularise it. So completely has it falsified the predictions, defeated the designs, and triumphed over the opposition of its opponents, that it is now engaging universal attention, and is one of the great questions of the day, whose claims can be no longer rejected or ignored.

The following extract from a leading article in *The Mount Alexander Mail*, July 14, 1874, clearly indicates the change that is rapidly coming over the public, in reference to this subject. The admissions in this extract are the more weighty and significant from the fact that that paper has hitherto been decidedly opposed to Spiritualism. The writer feels that the evidences in its favour, which are accumulating so rapidly, and from all parts of the world, are becoming irresistible. There are many others who are conscious of the same fact, but have not the courage or candour, or do not deem it expedient, just yet, to publicly admit it. In dealing with Mr. Wallace's first article in *the Fortnightly Review*, the writer says:—

"There is no use in attempting to disguise the fact any longer that the great question which is exercising the mind of the civilized world just now is Spiritualism and its pretensions. Wherever

we look, into whatever path of literature we may stray, we are sure to come face to face with it in some form or another. At first hovering about the domain of Charlatanism, it has now been lifted into the region of science, and has been given an established position among the problems which it concerns humanity to solve. It has a literature of its own, a priesthood, a propaganda, and all the machinery of an ancient cult. Whether it will supersede the popular idea of Christianity altogether time will show, but *there can be no question that it has already exercised a qualifying influence upon some of the dogmata of the Christian creed.* Its adherents would appear to be drawn from all religious sects and from every class of society, and among its most prominent recruits and its strongest advocates are *the very men of science who were engaged to expose it as an imposture.* With these facts before us it would argue a timid mind and not a sceptical one to ignore the phenomena that are continually being presented to the public by way of testimony to the truth and authenticity of the pretensions of Spiritualism. When men of acknowledged scientific ability like Professor Crookes, Mr. Varley, the electrician, and Mr. Wallace, the naturalist, stake their reputation upon the reality of the things they record, men of no science, who have only their naked reason to depend upon, are placed at an insuperable disadvantage. Their reason has a poor chance against the logic of facts, and the influences left by *experiment.*" The italics are mine.

Among the most bitter and persistent opponents of Spiritualism I regret to say that the clergy, with a few honourable exceptions, have played a conspicuous part. This, however, is not surprising. Lamentable and suicidal as their conduct in this respect has been, and still is, it was naturally expected by those best acquainted with their position and claims. They have only vindicated the historic character of their order, as being the most obstructive of all obstructionists—the most determined of all enemies to every really liberal and progressive system. All the greatest and best movements the world has witnessed have, in their early days, had the priesthood marshalled against them in battle array. The religious teachers of Judea were the first and fiercest adversaries of Christianity. They obstinately resisted the claims of its founder at every step, and endeavoured to stamp out the enthusiasm he had kindled by putting him to death. Nor did his followers escape the destructive storm of their holy wrath. And were not the orthodox clergy the most virulent and powerful enemies of the Reformation? Its advocates were denounced as godless heretics, and pursued in a spirit of unrelenting intolerance and persecution. Spiritualism is a *New Reformation*, the grandeur of whose principles and the sweep of whose designs eclipse all former reform movements. But it did not originate with the clergy; it has not sought their endorsement as a passport to popularity; nay, it has rejected their sacerdotal pretensions, exploded many of their favourite dogmas, and inaugurated a state of things that will culminate in every man becoming his own priest, the keeper of his own conscience, and the arbiter of his own eternal destiny. As a matter of course, the clergy, whose position rests on the assumption of a *Divine Commission*, which includes exceptional rights and special functions, from the first set themselves resolutely against this radical, democratic movement. For a time they denied that the system had any foundation in fact, and scouted the whole thing as a deliberate and wicked imposture. When the reality of its phenomena was established by incontestable evidence, and the agency of disembodied intelligences in their production was demonstrated, they gradually changed the ground of their attack, and finally saddled Spiritualism on that ever convenient and broad-backed scapegoat—the *Devil*! Most of its phenomena and teachings are now admitted to be produced by spirits, but they are declared to be "*evil spirits*," with Satan at their head!

The Sydney clergy appear to form no exception to the rule thus briefly pointed out. If fairly represented by those of their order whose utterances on this subject have been published, they have assumed a decidedly antagonistic attitude towards Spiritualism. The lectures I recently delivered in their city on Spiritualistic and Freethought subjects, and the interest thereby excited, evidently troubled them. Their craft was in danger, and up went the cry from every pulpit—"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" I issued a challenge to discuss the subject on a public platform, with anyone whom they might put forth to represent them, believing that that would give the public a better opportunity of

judging it on its merits, than the mere unquestioned statements of a lecture or sermon, for or against, could do; but no one responded to the challenge. Our clerical opponents preferred to make their attack upon Spiritualism from the vantage ground of what has been aptly designated, "Coward's Castle"—the *pulpit*. Their conduct, if not courageous, was at least safe. There they could denounce it, safe from rebuke; misrepresent it, without fear of contradiction; and throw round their hearers the charm of their favourite system, with the certainty that no hostile hand would dare within the walls of their sanctuary to dispel the illusion. I understand that nearly all of them referred to it more or less in their sermons. Several of them delivered special discourses against it, some of which, fortunately for us, have been published.

The vile slanders of Elder Wanzel, who sought to identify Spiritualism with "free love," in the sense of "free lust," will be allowed to sink into the filthy depths from which they were fished up. Nor will time be wasted in repelling the vulgar and spiteful assault of Pastor Allen, who invoked the authorities to employ the "law" to exterminate this new heresy; and thus proved how thoroughly his sectarianism had inspired him with that inhuman spirit which martyred some of earth's noblest sons. The Rev. A. W. Webb is a more respectable opponent, but there is very little in his lecture that is entitled to a special reply. A gentleman, whose strongest weapons are the objections of Professor Faraday, which were exploded some years ago, and who is apparently ignorant of the latest scientific experiments in Spiritualism, which have fully demonstrated its truth, is a sort of clerical Rip Van Winkle, and can hardly be considered competent to deal with the subject as it appears before the world to-day.

The Rev. John Graham is an antagonist of a more pretentious and formidable character. If not the most intellectual and scholarly, he is certainly the most popular preacher in Sydney. His utterances command a fair share of public attention, and have considerable weight with a certain class; and, therefore, in this Vindication of Spiritualism I shall confine myself chiefly to his published sermon against it, entitled "*Christianity and Spiritualism; their Revelations and Evidences Compared.*" I have read it calmly and without conscious prejudice—for Mr. Graham is a total stranger to me—and my deliberate opinion is that the more intelligent of his admirers will hardly consider it worthy of his reputation. The limping hesitancy of some parts, the unwarranted assumptions, and the constructive weakness and logical inconclusiveness of the whole production, will at once strike the mind of the critic. Its essentially *ad captandum* character will also force itself upon the attention. Mr. Graham is admittedly a master in one special department. He has accurately gauged the mental calibre and religious tastes of the people he addresses; and the shallowness and deficiency of his sermon are amply made up for by the pious clap-trap and cant phrases, which do such capital service for argument with many Christians, especially of the *evangelical* school.

Mr. Graham's discourse is based upon the following text:—

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God."—1 John iv., 1.

It is difficult to conceive why such a text as this was chosen for a sermon against Spiritualism. The first thing that strikes a common sense reader is that it distinctly recognises the *fact of intercourse with departed spirits*! We can scarcely believe that the apostle would have exhorted his fellow Christians to "try the spirits," if such beings were not in the habit of communicating with mortals. The central idea of the passage is that all spirits are not truthful, and that their communications must be carefully tested. This is precisely what Spiritualism teaches. And when it is remembered that the truthful and the untruthful are found on earth, that persons of both classes are daily entering the other world, that death effects no radical change in their character or principles, and that progress in mental and moral excellence is necessarily gradual in the other world as it is in this,—the unreliability of some spirit teachings is, from the very nature of things, to be ex-



pected. But shall we reject all their communications, because some of them are of a false or doubtful character? Certainly not. To do that would be as irrational and inconsistent as to deny all the intercommunications of social life, because some of them are admittedly false. The wiser and better course is to "try" them by such methods as we can command, as St. John advised those of old to do.

But I object to the *standard of truth* which the apostle applies. He says, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Surely this is too narrow and arbitrary to be a fair test of a spirit's moral character. There are untold millions of spirits who never heard of Christ while in this world, and probably many of them have not yet heard of him in the other world. And even among those who did hear of Christ in their earth-life there are many who honestly denied that such a being ever appeared in the "flesh," and held that he was merely a mythological personage. They of course died under that conviction, and some of them no doubt still conscientiously cling to it. Such was the peculiarity of their mental structure, for which they were in no way responsible, that the evidence which satisfied others of the historic reality of Christ entirely failed to satisfy them. Now, if spirits of these two classes return to earth to communicate with its inhabitants, and "confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," does it necessarily follow that they are "not of God"—that they are untruthful, evil spirits? By no means. Notwithstanding their denial that such a person as Christ once appeared "in the flesh," they may be among the purest and happiest of spirits. As a matter of fact, however, most of the spirits that communicate in Christendom do admit the reality of Christ's existence, but deny that he was God incarnate. And hence the dispute between Spiritualism and Christianity is not as to whether such a being ever lived, laboured, taught, and died on earth, but as to *who he was*, and what was *the mission* he came to accomplish. Spiritualists willingly admit the truth of much of Christ's teaching, the general excellence of his moral character, the beneficent nature of most of his works, and the noble self-sacrifice of his death; but when it is asserted that he was "God manifest in the flesh," most of them maintain that there is not a particle of evidence in proof of his Godhead, but abundance in disproof of it; and when it is claimed that he is the "Saviour of the world" they point not only to the whole of Heathendom, but even to Christendom itself as a triumphant refutation of the claim. The character of Christ, however, is not the subject of discussion at present, and therefore I shall dismiss Mr. Graham's text by simply repeating its excellent advice to those who are investigating, or who may hereafter be induced to investigate, Spiritualism—"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but *try* the spirits whether they are of God."

In beginning his discourse Mr. Graham thus meets by anticipation the charge of personal prejudice against Spiritualism:—

"I think I can truly say that I am not in any way so prejudiced against Spiritualism itself as to unfit me for impartially examining its character and claims, and accepting it, if fairly substantiated. It professes to give us revelations from and concerning the spirit-world, and to put us in closer communion with it. If God were pleased to grant us this, why should I not accept it with joy?"

And, again, on page 6, he asks—

"If God were to throw the gates of the celestial world ajar, who should so welcome its authentic voices and splendours as the ministers of the risen Christ?"

There is an air of candour and openness to conviction about this statement that is prepossessing, and I should have been glad if a careful perusal of the whole sermon had sustained the hopes it raised; but I regret to find evidences of decided prejudice cropping up repeatedly, notwithstanding this disclaimer. "If God were pleased to grant" us any fresh "revelations"—"to throw the gates of the celestial world ajar," and afford us a few glimpses of the "splendours" beyond, Mr. Graham would have us believe that he would "welcome" the fact "with joy." May I ask—who made him the judge of what it might or might not please the Lord to do? Has he

been admitted to the council chamber of the Most High, and obtained a knowledge of the Divine intentions respecting the human race? What does any man know of the purposes of God, except as they are revealed in the natural course of events? If Spiritualism is a truth, and a truth calculated to bless mankind, in that one fact will be found the evidence that God *has* been "pleased to grant" it, whatever the clergy, who were not consulted in the matter, may say to the contrary. Mr. Graham will not believe that God has "thrown the gates of the celestial world ajar," unless the "voices" that speak from the other side are "authentic," which being interpreted means orthodox;—in other words, he makes the agreement of Spiritualism with his theological views a *sine qua non* of his accepting! Here the infallible pope, and not the honest truth-seeker, unveils himself. If spirits endorsed his sectarian doctrines—if they echoed back from heaven the revolting blasphemies and debasing errors, which ascend from so many pulpits, in the name of religious truth, he and many more would heartily "welcome" Spiritualism as an inestimable boon which God had been "pleased to grant" to the world. But our spirit friends emphatically condemn most of orthodox theology, and teach more rational and elevating views of God, of man, of the laws and conditions of happiness, of life and death, and above all, of the *other world*—on which they are necessarily better authorities than the inhabitants of this—and of course their teachings are peremptorily rejected by the professional advocates of sectarian Christianity, as not being "authentic," that is, not orthodox! It is a sad thing for society when its recognised religious teachers make it their first and chief object, in dealing with any new system, to discover how far it confirms their doctrines and strengthens their priestly position, rather than to examine it on its *real merits* and ascertain if it is *true*, no matter whether it supports or overthrows existing beliefs.

Mr. Graham further states in the above extract that he is not against "accepting" Spiritualism if its "character and claims" are *fairly substantiated*. I trust I shall not be considered impertinent if I ask whether Mr. Graham has fairly tested the claims of Spiritualism by a *personal investigation* of the subject? How many *seances* has he attended? What phenomena has he witnessed with his own eyes? Can he tell his congregation that he impartially investigated Spiritualism, say for twelve months, and fully *proved its falsity by careful experiments*, before he ventured to publicly condemn it and warn them against it? If he has to return a negative answer to these questions,—if he has formed his judgment of it chiefly as burlesqued in the gossip of hungry newsmongers, and misrepresented by critics whose every stricture bears evidence of ignorance combined with the bitterest prejudice—how can he consider himself competent to sit in judgment upon it, and what weight does he think his pompous dictum will have with intelligent lovers of fair play? "Fairly substantiated" indeed! Pray what evidence does the rev. gentleman deem sufficient to substantiate a disputed question? I will prove before I have finished this Vindication that the claims of Spiritualism are "substantiated" by evidence vastly greater in amount, variety, directness, and competency, than that on which our clerical opponent and his fellow believers accept the Bible and Christianity. If any disputed question was ever "fairly substantiated" by careful experiment and abundant testimony, it is Spiritualism. Millions of living voices attest its truth, not as a matter of educational training or traditional belief, but of *personal knowledge*. The most hardened sceptics have approached it with a contemptuous sneer on their lips, but have become the captives of its irresistible evidence, and remained to testify to its glorious realities. It needs no further evidence in proof of its claims. It would secure a verdict in any court in the world on the abundant proofs it can adduce. Those who still talk about waiting till its pretensions are "fairly substantiated" are either lamentably ignorant of the subject, or hopelessly prejudiced against it. In support of my position I will quote an extract from the second article of Alfred R. Wallace, the eminent naturalist, in his "Defence of Modern Spiritualism," which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, May 15, 1874.

After describing the mass of evidence for Spiritualism Mr. Wallace asks:—

"And what have the other side brought against this overwhelming array of consistent and unimpeachable evidence? They have merely made absurd and inadequate suppositions, but have not disproved or explained away one weighty fact! My position, therefore, is, that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in their duration and completeness to those of its advocates; and when they can discover and show in detail either how the phenomena are produced, or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers,—then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer."

I will leave the reader to judge who is the best authority on Spiritualism—Mr. Graham, who evidently has no personal knowledge of the subject, or Professor Wallace, who, as a scientific man, has examined its phenomena and studied its teachings for years.

(To be continued.)

### THE LIFE AFTER DEATH.

In our last we briefly alluded to a lecture under the above caption, delivered by Dr. C. W. Rohner at Wangaratta. Dr. R. has since re-delivered the lecture at the Chiltern Athenæum and it is printed verbatim in the *Federal Standard* of August 8th., and two following numbers. The introductory portion of the lecture is devoted to a scathing criticism of Balfour Stewart, and other scientific men of the materialistic school, who ignorantly ignore all evidences of Spiritualism or the existence of anything that cannot be demonstrated by what they call "Physical Science," affirming that man is simply a machine, or a correlation of physical forces. In reference to this part of the subject, the lecturer says:—

"I was myself, some four or five years ago one of the most uncompromising and confirmed materialists, bred in a medical school of unmistakable materialistic tendencies, and a devout student and admirer of Comte, Mill, Bain, Spencer, Büchhner, Moleschot &c., the fact of my having abandoned the ranks of this exclusive school of philosophy might at least be a kind of guarantee to you that I may be a little acquainted with both sides of the argument, and that, such being the case, I would not on trifling grounds, have exchanged philosophical views and tenets entertained for more than a quarter of a century, for an almost diametrically opposite creed."

He then proceeds to relate the circumstances which led him to investigate Spiritualism, and brought him to the final conclusion "*that there is an immaterial and undying principle in every man.*" On this point the Doctor says:—

"This conviction of the truth that there is in me and in all of us a mysterious, intelligent principle that exists, lives, and manifests itself, to us, under certain favourable conditions and circumstances, even after the death of the body, has now become so profound and deeply rooted a belief to me that, for me, it amounts to an absolute certainty. This deep conviction, this firm belief, this positive certainty, I beg to remind you, is not, as you might perhaps imagine, in the slightest degree owing to or produced by an overheated imagination on my part, neither is it to be explained by a sudden access of fervent enthusiasm which, afterwards, became crystallised into a fixed idea; but it has, on the contrary, been produced by a calm, earnest, long continued sceptical study of the phenomena of ancient and modern Spiritualism and magic. For years I have fought strenuously against this ultimate conviction thinking it possible that, by a searching investigation and study of the equally much abused and ill understood science of magic, I might arrive at a solution of all the difficulties connected with a proper appreciation of the mysteries of spirit life. My principal authorities on this recondite subject of High Magic were, first, the splendid work of Baron Dupotet, entitled "*La Magie Dévoilée, ou principes de science occulte*," a very expensive work, printed only for a limited and esoteric circle of readers, and second, the system of "*Haute Magie*," by Eliphas Levi. These highly interesting and profound books fascinated my mind for a long time, and still now retain a strong hold upon me, but they utterly failed to satisfy the irrepressible cravings of an inexorable logic which cannot content itself with a method or principle of explanation that applies only to a few minor details of a subject, instead of furnishing, a comprehensive solution of the whole of the strange phenomena now produced so abundantly all over the civilised world."

The incident which first awakened his attention was as follows:—One Sunday in November 1869, while sitting at dinner with his family, three distinct raps came on the open door of the room, he walked to the door, but as no one was visible, concluded that some person was playing a trick, and returned to the table, but he was no sooner seated than the three loud knocks were repeated. The door opened into the verandah and on the repetition of the knocks, the Doctor rushed from his seat out on to the verandah, and examined all round the house, without discovering anything which could possibly account for this phenomena. He returned to the dining-room, and unable to divest his mind of the idea that some person was playing him a trick, sat down in a position from which he could see whoever or whatever approached the door, when to his astonishment the three knocks were repeated with such force that he could distinctly see the door vibrating and moving under the momentum of them. The whole of the phenomena were witnessed by Mrs. Rohner and three other members of his family, but in spite of the amazement produced, the Doctor thinks it probable that the circumstance would have been forgotten, had it not been for a curious coincidence in respect to the occurrence which indicated a spiritual origin. It appears that about two hours after the knocking a horseman arrived, summoning the Doctor to see an old and intimate friend at Rutherglen, who was stated to be dying. On his arrival at Rutherglen, he found the friend had died at 2 p.m. The exact time when the raps occurred, that Dr. Rohner's name was the last on his lips, and that he had most earnestly desired his presence, believing that he could save him. Only four possible modes are suggested to account for the phenomena, viz: Hallucination, Unconscious Cerebration, the assumption that an Electro-magnetic connexion existed between two or more of the brains of those present, and lastly, the Spiritual Hypothesis. The lecturer examines the various theories, and shews the insufficiency of the first three, and the sufficiency of the last, to cover the whole occurrence, and after citing several eminent authorities in support of his position, concludes by showing the adaptability of Spiritualism to the requirements of the time. The lecture is an able and interesting one, the arguments logical and conclusive. Want of space alone prevents our reprinting it for the edification of our readers.

### PROGRESS OF CIRCLES.

WE learn from the chairman of the Energetic Circle Sandhurst (latest dates), that the extraordinary and interesting manifestations anent the bodily and visible appearances of spirits at that circle still continue. Since the return of the lady medium the power of manifesting has again increased, and under King's wonderful light several materialised spirit-forms have been seen by all the circle. Lately the white drapery is much finer on Katie King and J—e than on some of the others—so fine, indeed, as to surprise all who have felt it, and all are made to breathe the most delicious perfumes. The male medium has got orders from John King to sit for spirit-photographs in about two months from date, King remarking that when "they wanted to do a thing they didn't do it by halves." The male medium has also, by direction of the spirits, got on him two sealed packets, one from Melbourne and one from Sandhurst. The result of this latest experiment for direct spirit-writing is not yet known, but should there be writing on either or both, it must of necessity do the cause essential service, as the conditions are of the very strictest character.

The Energetic Circle were to have given "An Evening at Home" last night (the 31st) at the Rifles' Orderly Rooms, an account of which we hope to give in our next. Several ladies and gentlemen left town a day or two ago to be present at it, and from all we have heard it is likely to prove a very pleasant and successful affair. Nearly 300 tickets have been sold, and many more could have been had there been more dancing room. The rule was to be evening dress, but all classes of the community would be well represented.



## REVIVALS.

Since our leader was written, the following local instance of the pernicious influence of the so-called Revivals, has come under our notice:—

An exceedingly painful case came under the cognisance of the Geelong Bench on Wednesday. A young woman named Fanny Robinson (says the *Advertiser*) was brought into the body of the court charged with lunacy. She was poorly dressed, and directly she was ushered into the presence of those in court she stood up, and with fixed gaze and hands devoutly folded, commenced to harangue her audience on the excessive wickedness of the world, the deplorable destitution and misery that prevailed, winding up her remarks by expressing the fervent wish that she was only rich and able to relieve poor suffering humanity. She was stated to be suffering from religious mania, and had been brought in from Portarlington, where her parents resided, by Mounted-constable Mulcahy. It has transpired that her mother is in a still worse condition, and requires the constant care and attention of her husband and friends. The mother and daughter are reported to have been regular attendants at the evangelical meetings held in the neighbourhood by Mr. Matthew Burnett since his return to the colony, and this is assigned to be the probable cause of their present affliction. The unfortunate girl was remanded till Monday. A week or two ago a young woman had to be escorted to her employer's residence one Sunday evening from a little church in Geelong, in which a popular preacher was holding forth. She was in such a state of mental excitement from, it is believed, the very vigorous discourse to which she had listened, that a medical man had to be called in, and she had to be ultimately sent home to her parents at Little River, in order that a change of air and scene might restore her reasoning faculties to something like their original tranquillity.

## MR. A. R. WALLACE ON SPIRITUALISM.

In our last we gave some brief extracts from an article entitled "A Defence of Modern Spiritualism," which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for May. The June number of the *Review* contains the conclusion of Mr. Wallace's article, which, considering its brevity, is one of the best we have read. Mr. Wallace advances very little that is new, but he puts the known facts of Spiritualism in a forcible and logical, yet agreeable, manner. The first portion of the June article is devoted to spirit photography, and in reference to that important subject Mr. Wallace says:—

1. If a person with a knowledge of photography takes his own glass plates, examines the camera used and all the accessories, and watches the whole process of taking a picture, then, if any definite form appears on the negative besides the sitter, it is a proof that some object was present capable of reflecting or emitting the actinic rays, although invisible to those present. 2. If an unmistakable likeness appears of a deceased person totally unknown to the photographer. 3. If figures appear on the negative having a definite relation to the figure of the sitter, who chooses his own position, attitude, and accompaniments, it is a proof that invisible figures were really there. 4. If a figure appears draped in white, and partly behind the dark body of the sitter without in the least showing through, it is a proof that the white figure was there at the same time, because the dark parts of the negative are transparent, and any white picture in any way superposed would show through. 5. Even should none of these tests be applied, yet if a medium, quite independent of the photographer, sees and describes a figure during the sitting, and an exactly corresponding figure appears on the plate, it is a proof that such a figure was there.

Every one of these tests have now been successfully applied in our own country, as the following outline of the facts will show.

After citing testimony to show that clearly recognised portraits of departed friends had been obtained, Mr. Wallace states that only a few weeks since he had been to Mr. Hudson's studio, and obtained an unmistakable likeness of a deceased relative. He cites a number of instances where spirit photographs have been obtained in England by both amateurs and professionals, and sums up this part of the subject as follows:—

We find, then, that three amateur photographers working independently in different parts of England, separately confirm the

fact of spirit photography,—already demonstrated to the satisfaction of many who had tested it through professional photographers. The experiments of Mr. Beattie and Dr. Thomson are alone absolutely conclusive; and, taken in connection with those of Mr. Slater and Dr. Williams, and the test photographs, like those of Mrs. Guppy, establish as a scientific fact the objective existence of invisible human forms, and definite invisible actinic images. Before leaving the photographic phenomena, we have to notice two curious points in connection with them. The actinic action of the spirit form is peculiar, and much more rapid than that of the light reflected from ordinary material forms; for the figures start out the moment the developing fluid touches them, while the figure of the sitter appears much later. Mr. Beattie noticed this throughout his experiments, and I was myself much struck with it when watching the development of three pictures recently taken at Mr. Hudson's. The second figure, though by no means bright, always came out long before any other part of the picture. The other singular thing is the copious drapery in which these forms are almost always enveloped, so as to show only just what is necessary for recognition of the face and figure. The explanation given of this is, that the human form is more difficult to materialise than drapery. The conventional "white-sheeted ghost" was not then all fancy, but had a foundation in fact—a fact, too, of deep significance, dependent on the laws of a yet unknown chemistry.

This is followed by a summary of the more important physical and mental manifestations and the historical teachings of Spiritualism; the latter throws considerable light on the supposed miracles of Scripture, the ancient oracles, the demon of Socrates, and explains the philosophy of prayer. Mr. Wallace briefly outlines the moral teachings of Spiritualism as follows:—

1. Man is a duality, consisting of an organized spiritual form, evolved coincidently with and permeating the physical body, and having corresponding organs and development.

2. Death is the separation of this duality, and effects no change in the spirit, morally or intellectually.

3. Progressive evolution of the intellectual and moral nature is the destiny of individuals; the knowledge, attainments and experience of earth-life forming the basis of spirit-life.

4. Spirits can communicate through properly-endowed mediums. They are attracted to those they love or sympathise with, and strive to warn, protect, and influence them for good, by mental impression when they cannot effect any more direct communication; but, as follows from clause (2), their communications will be fallible, and must be judged and tested just as we do those of our fellow-men."

After a criticism of Mr. Huxley the moral influence of Spiritualism and its rationality are ably portrayed, and he concludes as follows:—

It will thus be seen, that those who can form no higher conception of the uses of Spiritualism, "even if true," than to detect crime or to name in advance the winner of the Derby, not only prove their own ignorance of the whole subject, but exhibit in a marked degree that partial mental paralysis, the result of a century of materialistic thought, which renders so many men unable seriously to conceive the possibility of a natural continuation of human life after the death of the body. It will be seen also that Spiritualism is no mere "physiological" curiosity, no mere indication of some hitherto unknown "law of nature;" but that it is a science of vast extent, having the widest, the most important, and the most practical issues, and as such should enlist the sympathies alike of moralists, philosophers, and politicians, and of all who have at heart the improvement of society and the permanent elevation of human nature.

In concluding this necessarily imperfect though somewhat lengthy account of a subject about which so little is probably known to most of the readers of the *Fortnightly Review*, I would earnestly beg them not to satisfy themselves with a minute criticism of single facts, the evidence for which, in my brief survey, may be imperfect; but to weigh carefully the mass of evidence I have adduced, considering its wide range and various bearings. I would ask them to look rather at the results produced by the evidence than at the evidence itself as imperfectly stated by me! to consider the long roll of men of ability who, commencing the inquiry as sceptics left it as believers, and to give these men credit for not having overlooked, during years of patient inquiry, difficulties which at once occur to themselves. I would ask them to ponder well on the fact, that no earnest inquirer has ever come to a conclusion adverse to the reality of the phenomena: and that no Spiritualist has ever yet given them up as false. I would ask them, finally, to dwell upon the long series of facts in human history that Spiritualism explains, and on the noble and satisfying theory of a future life that it unfolds. If they will do this, I feel confident that the result I have alone aimed at will be attained; which is, to remove the prejudices and misconceptions with which the whole subject has been surrounded, and to incite to unbiased and persevering examination of the facts. For the cardinal maxim of Spiritualism is, that every one must find out the truth for himself. It makes no claim to be received on hearsay evidence; but, on the other hand, it demands that it be not rejected without patient, honest, and fearless inquiry.

We trust Mr. Wallace's excellent articles will be printed in a cheap form for more extensive circulation. They should be read by all who desire to know something of the facts, philosophy, and status of modern Spiritualism.

## MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

At a special meeting of the Lyceum held in July last, Mr. Stow was entranced, and the controlling Spirit delivered an address on Lyceums in the Spirit world, suggesting alterations in the Melbourne Lyceum with the view of assimilating the system so far as practicable to the spiritual one. At a subsequent meeting the suggestions were taken into consideration, and it was determined that all officers should resign, and a committee be formed to frame a new constitution. The committee chosen were Mrs. Loudon, Messrs. Williams, Lang, Terry, Stow, Borrowman and Powell. The committee held two meetings, and on Sunday, August 9th., presented their report, the constitution prepared by them being accepted, with a few slight amendments. It was determined to proceed at once to the election of officers under the new constitution, and the following were elected, viz:—

*Conductor.* ... Mrs. M. Loudon.  
*Vice Conductor & Treasurer.* ... Mr. G. A. Stow.  
*Guardians.* ... Messrs. Williams, Terry and Veevers.  
*Secretary.* ... Mr. Jas. Borrowman.  
*Librarian.* ... Mr. Powell.  
*Musical Director.* ... Mr. Hughes.  
*Leaders.* Mrs. Syme, Mrs. Broyer, Miss Bonny,  
 Messrs. Martin, Clay, Brotherton, Lang, Edwards.  
*Guards.* ... Miss Jaffray, Messrs. Sanders and Bonny.

The new Constitution so far works well, and promises to be an improvement upon the old one.

## THE LIGHT SHUT OUT.

SOME eighteen months since, during the advent of Mr. Peebles, the Dunedin folks were aroused from their lethargy on religious matters, and the agitation of thought then excited bid fair to bring about a greater liberality of opinion on religious subjects. But the expulsion of Mr. Logan from the Presbyterian Church, and the less public persecution of others who had dared to dissent from the prevailing dogmas, appears to have checked for a time the progress of rational opinions, by putting a gag upon the speech of those who were inclined to give vent to the more enlightened ideas which had begun to germinate in their minds. The narrow-minded bigots, however, not content with shutting men's mouths, are now desirous of closing their eyes also to anything of a religious nature which does not comport with their narrow views. At a meeting of the Athenæum committee, held at Dunedin August 4th, it was decided to exclude the *Harbinger of Light* and the *Banner of Light*, both of which had hitherto had their place on the free table, of the Athenæum. In the course of the debate a Mr. Hay asserted that the writers in the *Harbinger of Light* went out of their way to wound the feelings of those who differed from them, and the tendency of them was to lower those who read them. Capt. Hutton thought the paper had a tendency to lower the minds of its readers by teaching superstition—things that were contrary to common sense. The reasons given are amusing. Superstition and common sense forsooth! There is a plethora of the former in the kirks and amongst these pious committeemen, but we ken the latter is less plentiful. How careful are these Christians of the feelings of those who differ from them! what charitable and Christ-like articles have appeared in their local Evangelist in reference to Spiritualism and Spiritualists! Had these men a little more common sense they would see the folly of the course they are adopting—they are not putting out the fire, it is beyond their power to extinguish it; they are merely covering up the embers with inflammable matter, and ere long they will raise such a blaze as will astonish them. Do they imagine that a living thought which has entered into a man's mind can be destroyed? Never; he may be induced to hedge it round and hide it from the public gaze, but as far as that man is concerned he cannot destroy it, and sooner or later it finds expression either in words or actions. Truth never suffers by comparison with error, and if they have confidence in their *Evangelist*, *Tablet*, *Church News*, and *Christian Record*, which were ordered

to be received, they would not fear to compare them with the errors of the *Harbinger* or *Banner of Light*, for if they contained truth it would shine out more resplendently by comparison with falsehood or error. One of the committee evidently had doubts as to the wisdom of their proceedings, for he ventured to suggest—"If it goes abroad to young men that we have excluded these they will seek for them!" It has gone abroad, and we have no doubt the young men, and some of the older ones, will seek for them; and we shall do what we can to facilitate their getting them, believing that out of the apparent evil good will come.

## THE TRIALOGUE.

1. You shall accept the faith that your soul and judgment each day give to you.

2. You shall live upon and up to that faith as nearly as you can. This shall be your worship.

3.—You shall do to all others as all others have the right to ask of you, and more; for by raising others shall you be elevated.

So shall your life grow. If I were to give commandments, these only would I give—and what others are there?

Let us look each morning out into the day, and if we see, in our relations with our daily task and with our fellows, two paths, one wherein, by giving up some cherished selfishness, we give some one his rights, and the other, wherein, by asserting and insisting upon ourselves, we keep from some one his rights, as we see, let us choose. And which shall we choose? When the principles are incorporated in our natures, we will not need to ask daily questions of ourselves, for that incorporation in our natures will work a solution of our whole lives.

We can go on and dip deeper into things; we could attempt to teach you what you can only partially conceive of,—stages through which you will eventually go,—to show you some imperfect visions; but your life, where you are, will, at the end, leave you far more capable of coming into sympathy with the future, when you enter it, if you do the things nearest you now.  
 —*The Life.*

## LIFE.

THE greatest difficulty in your life on earth is in the continuing in efforts of unrecognized, unrecorded, unknown, nay, slandered, goodness. There is no difficulty which you should so strive to overcome. Secret acts are unseen angels to those who do them, and the very failure of the world to recognize them works the highest health to the soul. A midnight deed of mercy is more yours, so long as it is unknown, than it ever is after it becomes discovered. Discovered virtues bring you the love of others, but your own are growing in your soul for ever. It requires a broad soul to appreciate this, but a transcendently superior one to live upon it. Only he who lives the life does it. In your business you note degrees of capacity. The common laborer supplies the wants of each day with each day's labor. He will not provide for the inevitable season of sickness. If a fortune were suddenly given him, he would, ere long, waste it, and return to his vocation. Money has to him only one value—its present use, to satisfy to-day's demand. The further seeing man will forego convenience in health, and deprive himself for the present, to provide as he may against the inevitable next year. The still further seeing man provides for all the possibilities of his own old age, and for his children's beginnings. The more he is far-seeing, the greater and larger sacrifice he will make, if it seems necessary, in robust health, for the remote future. Now place these stages one hundred degrees further on; what sacrifices would the improved man make of a lifetime to secure the great hereafter? This is the lowest view—merely in the light of prudence—selfish protection. Now take the highest of motives, and give them to the most far-seeing, and what a result you have! I would I could



give reasons so strong, so overwhelming, in favor of the great future, that the pitiable plea of present necessity would quail before them! I would teach men to climb the great future on their dead selfishness as stepping-stones, to be led there, not by themselves, but by the hands of those they lead.

### SANDHURST PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.

Since my last report our services have been held at the usual time and place. Miss Phillips' trance medium has occupied the platform on each evening with the exception of one, when Mr. Kennedy delivered an address on "Co-operation and its distribution." The addresses which have been passed through the organisation of the above lady medium, have been of a very interesting and instructive character. The interest taken in these services by the outside public is made manifest by the increasing attendance from Sabbath to Sabbath. The hall which we occupy is now much too small for the concourse of people who assemble from time to time, and many who at one time were disposed to treat these spirit utterances as the result of a fruitful imagination or a disordered brain are awaking to the fact that they are grand realities streaming down from the higher life to enlighten, instruct, and to elevate. The principles of justice, truth, and love which are inculcated by those unseen intelligencies are laying firmer hold of the popular mind. Many are the testimonies received by the friends of the movement as to the beneficial effects produced—the dispersion of darkness and ignorance, the breaking down of prejudice and superstition, and the liberation of captive souls long held in bondage by the shackles of orthodoxy. Many are the expressions of gratitude which ascend to the great spirit—the father of us all—for the light and liberty which has visited the doubting and the disconsolate, and is still streaming down from the spirit home, assuring us that there awaits us a grand and glorious hereafter, and that now we can work out our own redemption, and shape our destiny in that world where the friendships of earth are renewed and consummated, and parting for ever unknown. And this is only the beginning—the earnest of what our spirit friends promise to accomplish. If such be the seed, what will be the flower? The seed sown is springing up and present results tell a future harvest which is calculated to exceed our most sanguine hopes and highest expectations.

I may also state that the Lyceum is progressing very favourably, a report of which I trust to be able to furnish for the next issue of the *Harbinger*, as well as report of our social re-union, which takes place the close of this month.—*Corresponding Secretary.*

August.

### REASON.

Of blessings God has given to man,  
There's none so great as reason;  
By it we learn to judge and plan  
And do all things in season.

Decide of what is right or wrong,  
Of what is good or evil,  
What things do to the Lord belong  
And what unto the Devil.

Whatever's reasonable is right,  
Judicious and is pleasing;  
Just such as make our hearts feel light,  
From care the conscience easing.

It is the pleasing voice of love,  
To guide our footsteps given;  
A light suspended from above  
To lead us up to Heaven.

There is no test so good and strong,  
For book, or man as reason;  
Who disobeys it must be wrong,  
'Gainst Heaven commits high treason.

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