

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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THE re-construction of the religious systems of European life, would appear to be one of the many great problems which lie before modern society waiting for solution. Solved we believe it must be, sooner or later, if not by our own, then by some more vigorous race. Our ground for this belief is the fact, patent to every thinking person, that no one of the existing systems of Christianity satisfies the religious wants of those types of character which fairly represent our modern life. Hence results the strange anomaly that our churches are largely supported by the most irreligious people among us—that is by people who frequent them for selfish and worldly ends; who are incapable of warm religious sympathies, or of high religious aspirations, and who chill and deaden the organisations to which they belong; whilst the most truly religious among us are driven by repulsions too strong to be argued against, into the solitude of their own hearts, or into little isolated coteries. The repulsions we speak of are manifold—too numerous to be specified—but they may all be classified under two heads—first, dogmatic or theoretic; second, the social or personal. The first class are an evil inheritance left us by our ancestors; the second class are an evil brood hatched from our own habits of arrogance and selfishness. If you wish thoroughly to study the peculiarities of the first, connect yourself with some Church, Wesleyan, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Roman Catholic, with any Church in which terrorism, in any form, is made the essence of religion. Compare the dogmas by which they claim to teach you a knowledge of God, and of the way to Him, with the principles of justice, mercy, and right, which prevail even in our present imperfect civilization, and you will not wonder that the men of the nineteenth century revolt from such a communion, except when some merely worldly motive draws them into it, or when

timidity of character drives them into it. If you want thoroughly to appreciate the force of the latter class of repulsions, enter unobtrusively, as an unheralded stranger, into some first-class Church of England connection, or even into some irreproachably respectable Unitarian association, and however much you may be pleased with the broad and liberal views you may possibly hear from the particular preacher occupying the platform or pulpit, you cannot fail to perceive that the bond of religious brotherhood is a thing unknown, and quite undesired by the well-behaved icicles around you—people who would dread, almost as much as they do hell-fire, any stepping out from their own accepted customs—customs as far removed as anything can be from Christ's teachings, from Christ's practice, or from sympathy with those general religious needs which are felt alike by rich and poor, by high and low, by educated and illiterate. We do not mention these churches as particularly open to criticism; on the contrary, we believe them to be among the best specimens of modern Christianity, but not the less do we believe them to be utterly out of harmony with the most earnest and religious minds among us, and utterly incapable of satisfying either the intellect or the heart of our times. And we believe that most of the so-called infidelity and scepticism, and even much of the cynicism of the age, is but the outcry of a profound and intense craving for a religious life more in harmony with the rest of our nature as it is now developed. Many of our readers will probably be disposed to jump at the conclusion that Spiritualism will, beyond doubt, fill the want that is already so generally and so deeply felt among us, and which is most likely destined to extend itself far beyond its present bounds, as knowledge and habits of thought extend themselves. We are quite willing to accept the suggestion, but it must be with certain qualifications; for, without them, it would show an insufficient comprehension of the magnitude of the need, and of the variety of natures to be satisfied. The belief in a continuous existence after death, and in the power to communicate with those already in that state, we feel sure will become so plainly proved, that they will be doubted no more than is now the rotundity of the earth, or the relations of the sun to the solar system. Spiritualism, as an expression of ascertained facts, will,

before long, be admittedly no mere matter of opinion. But just in proportion as the power of individual thought increases, so must the variety of thought increase. And Spiritualism in the sense of a certain series of beliefs, is, we think, no more destined to usurp dominion over men's minds, than men are destined to resemble one another in feature, form, and temperament. A certain general resemblance always has prevailed, and always will, throughout the race, closest among those of the same nation and the same period of time; but never exact uniformity.

So also with the Church of the Future, which must arise upon the earth. If it is really to satisfy and represent the men and women who are to evolve it, it will probably be more various and even diverse in expression than all the Christian Churches of the last eighteen centuries put together. We earnestly hope it may be more harmonious. Be that as it may, we believe that with all the diversity which increasing individualism must necessarily bring, certain salient features are already to be discerned in which the religious developments of the future will be a unity. Chief among these, we admit, that universal and profound conviction of our immortality which nothing can give but the logic of irrefutable facts—facts which shall remain accessible to proof by all. So far, and so far only, do we believe that the Church of the Future is to be Spiritualistic.

But there are other points in which we believe that the experience of the past may and ought to mould the future. It will be pitiful indeed if men ever again bow their necks to the yoke of a priesthood; if they do not, indeed, progressively and persistently continue everywhere, and in all Churches, to free themselves from that yoke, until the good time shall come when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord!' for they shall all know Him, from the least of them to the greatest of them." The history of Priesthoods is written all over the face of the fair earth, from the earliest times of sacrificial worship, down to the latest follies of revivals, in blood, in flames, in torture, and in madness. Vain indeed will be the teachings of history if we do not learn from them the sorrowful results to all parties of setting aside a class of men to stand between us and God, or between us and our own spirits.

Again, we think we see another point in which all the Churches of the Future will agree. Forms and ceremonies, no doubt, will exist among, and in some, perhaps, will form a very prominent part, for there will always be a numerous class of minds to whom they are an essential—who cannot live happily without them. But the belief that any forms or ceremonies can really embody a spiritual meaning, or convey a spiritual grace, is an idea so utterly incapable of proof, so at variance with all experience, that it must inevitably die out before the stricter tests and more careful examinations of advancing faith. In short Sacramentalism in all its forms, and the belief in the magical efficacy of any external acts, must be eliminated from the freer and more vigorous modes of thought that are growing with the growth and spread of knowledge.

On the vexed question of Prayer, and the place it will hold in the religious life of the future, we will only say

that we hold it to be an instinct so deeply rooted in the human heart, that it will never be superseded by any other mode of worship, however much it may be modified, and advantageously modified, by a better knowledge of the laws that govern the relations of the world of spirits and the world of mortals. Prayer is, after all, only a cry for help or sympathy, and were man deprived of the gift of speech, he would still find out some way to express these world-wide needs. For our own part, we believe that prayer will gain, not lose, by being quite stripped of its superstitious elements.

There is, moreover, another element of religion—the truest element of all religion—the strongest bond between man and God, and between man and man, that can exist, which we hope to see flourish in the Church of the Future, as the surest possible pledge of harmony and usefulness. It is association, on the basis and for the sake of good works, rather than of any community of beliefs or similarity of opinions. When this is the acknowledged and true bond of union, divergence of thought may safely be cultivated as an ornament, rather than dreaded as a danger. By good works we do not mean alone deeds of charity, we would include all acts of usefulness, and even of kindness, which may bind together the different individuals of an organization, and the different organizations in a community and we hail most gladly as the best signs of the times, acts which draw together in harmony those most widely apart in thought. As was well said by one among us on a recent public occasion, one act of kindness, or courtesy, or of mutual help, does more to unite us than any community of belief can do. Well will it be for mankind when the truth spoken eighteen hundred years ago, is fully recognised, "That the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath;" but better still will be the world's condition, and far more true and rapid will be its future religious progress when the belief becomes practical and general that the Church too is made for man, not man for the Church, and that its aims and office must comprise all that tends to the elevation and amelioration of man.

COMMUNICATION.

THE following beautiful communication was given through the organism of Miss C. A. Philips, of Sandhurst. It was addressed more particularly to the workers in the Local Association and Lyceum, but is applicable to all who desire to aid the progress of humanity:—

Little Band of Truth's Crusaders,
Bear your standard brave and true;
When oppressed by all invaders,
Who may strive to scatter you.

From the brightness of advanced spheres glad spirits greet you. Brothers, sisters dear, kindred in being and in destiny, accept our loving counsel, and aspire to that fair birthright which a tender Father designs for each of you. Seek to be in all things true and holy, worthy in thought and action, to be called "The Children of our God." Enjoy the beauties of your present state, and ever seek to render earth more lovely for your living. Win from the hallowed treasury of nature's hoard full blessings for yourselves, and learn to read aright the wondrous lessons Time has chronicled. Be earnest in a cause you find replete with every consolation, scattering day by day such blessings as you may bestow, where'er your path may lie. Bury sorrow, hope again; turn tears to smiles, refresh the weary, render balm to pain—nourish the hungry, give to those who thirst that

draught your means allow. Strengthen the erring with kind aid and counsel, and to those who feel the bitter sting of sin's remorseful pangs, whatever solace you may render them, give from your heart. Go bravely on, undaunted and serene, through the brief pilgrimage of earth, to those bright regions from which we return to aid your footsteps on the happy way. Progression makes the portion of us all. Receive our teachings in the kindly spirit that they are offered, but regard us only as faithful guides when we uphold the mighty laws our God has given to lead us to Himself; when we declare reason and justice, love and wisdom, the attributes of the Deity, which make man free—when we come freighted with kind intents, in deed and word, to win your souls to higher themes, your hearts to peace, believe us, and rejoice that spirit friends have come back to lead you on the way to heaven.

COUNSELLOR.

Poetry.

INSPIRATIONAL POETRY.

Rise in thy glory, Oh! Man;
Rest not in sloth or in sin,
For never since Being began
Stayed the Soul—since its freshness first ran
In the earth's mould, as within
The young plant, the fierce vigour o'erflows
when the
Leaf adorned Spring days begin.
Rise in thy beauty, Oh! Soul;
Leave thou thy circling sod—
Mingle in love with the whole
Wonder of creatures that roll
Fresh from the fountains of God.
That spring in profusion from out every
Pathway wherein he hath trod!
Look to the Future, so far
Beyond and above this short span;
Look where Hope's twinkling star
Wheels her Omnipotent car
Far from earth's cold-chilling ban.
Yes! look to the Spirit that lends all his
Greatness and glory to man.
Naught else is worthy or pure:
It is thy Life and thy Breath;
See thou preserve it secure—
See that thy patience endure
Strong on the bosom of Faith.
So shalt thou triumph o'er Life, and spring
Full of gladness thro' Death.
Into that region so fair
Thought cannot picture or paint;
No pain or sorrow are there,
Save the regret that those bear
Who were touched with earth's terrible
taint.
'Tis brighter than Heaven e'er gleamed in
The vision of prophet or saint.
See, then, thou miss not the way,
Sleep, or return, or grow pale
At the fear of the fierce, fiery fray;
Still thou thy conscience obey:
Let not thy countenance quail,
And whatever thy Fate or thy Fortune—
Though seeming—thou never shall fail.

[The above was written in our presence with great rapidity, at a recent sitting, by a newly-developing medium.—Ed. H. L.]

HOSPITAL SUNDAY.

The united Subscription at the Victorian Association and the Spiritualistic Propagandist Society services amounted to £15 1s. 9d.

THE Chairman informs us that "The Energetic Circle of Spiritualists and Friends, Sandhurst," have raised the large sum of £35 for the local charities on Hospital Sunday. This is inclusive of the profits of their late "Evening at Home."

To Correspondents.

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

REV. MR. JAMES AND SPIRITISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I will not assume that I was purposely misrepresented in your last issue, but will, instead, venture to beg you to have the goodness to correct some of the statements of your Sandhurst correspondent in relation to myself.

I have always contended that a mere denial of the claims of Spiritism proved nothing, excepting, perhaps, the bigotry of the person in the first place concerned in such denial; that those claims were entitled to unbiased and dispassionate consideration; that it did not become believers in the Bible, at any rate, to question concerning supernatural manifestation *per se*; that many persons, whose concurrent testimony on any other subject would be credited, uniformly attested the verity of spiritualistic developments; and that, so long as neither science nor experience could agree on a theory that accounted satisfactorily for the admitted phenomena, it was only fair to admit their evidence as to the facts, so called, whatever the value of these might be. This, no doubt, has afforded a colorable reason for the surmise, on the one side, that, "like our good friend Mr. Tyerman," I "was about to come over" to Spiritualism; and, on the other, that I was an example of dangerous latitudinarianism, and could not be safely trusted by the orthodox on this subject. Is it not the common fate of those who decline to make a party cry their shibboleth, excepting on the clear ground of reason and conviction, to be construed after this manner? Mr. Wesley once said to Dr. Adam Clarke, on another subject, "Meanwhile, so long as you speak the truth and do right, expect to be blamed by both sides." In the "Memoir of a Brother," by Thomas Hughes, there is this passage about a very good man:—"Men of all parties speak of him as belonging to their clique. This proves to me . . . that he has reached the point where all true patriots meet, and there he foregathers with all parties, who, throwing aside party prejudice, act and think for the good of their fellow creatures." I hope I may be pardoned—if my own case be, in its way, an example of this sort—if I take to myself the comfort that I am, in this regard, found in reputable company. I have never been nearer to Spiritualism as a new form of religion than I am now; nevertheless, I have always held to Spiritualists, in common with all others who differ from me, the language of honorable deference and courtesy. If this be my twofold transgression—first, that I cannot be a Spiritist, and next, that I have not the heart to abuse those who are Spiritists—I can only say that I am an unrepentant sinner, and hope, in this respect, to remain so.

Your correspondent says:—"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." If I am here as the result of any design outside the ordinary Church reasons that govern the case, I shall be glad to be informed accordingly, as I am entirely in the dark beyond this; moreover, I have never had a quarrel with the Adelaide Conference, paltry or otherwise.

Your correspondent seems to resent it that I spoke of Spiritism as "an apostacy." How else could I speak of it from my standpoint? I believe that the Bible is incomparably the best of good books; that it is also entirely unique in that it is the one direct, infallible, and authoritative communication of God's will, in things spiritual, to man: differing in its inspiration, not only in measure and degree, but in essential character, from the inspiration by which Sophocles, Shakspeare, and the like have commended their ideas to the judgments and consciences of men. Whereas Spiritists—the while they confess that sixty per cent. of spirit utterances are unreliable—contend that the maunderings of any vagrant spirit that may overleap the boundaries of his "circle," and make a pretence of speaking to man, are equal to the utterances of the Bible. How could I, believing

that the "more sure word of prophecy" is confirmation stronger than the evidence of the senses, and that "the Scriptures cannot be broken," do other than characterize a direct departure from this doctrine as an apostasy? Furthermore, I believe in the absolute Divinity of Jesus Christ. To me, it is as plain as it was to Coleridge when he said, "It is clear that Paul and John were not Unitarians," that this is the doctrine of the Bible in the case. I find also that, by the best historic testimony, for the reason simply that he declared himself to be the Son of God, he was put to death. The Spiritists bring him to the level of Mrs. Cora Tappan and Andrew Jackson Davis. I cannot accept this. To me the defection is fundamental, and I could hardly hesitate, in strict logical justice, to reckon as apostate from the common faith any who openly discredited the Bible as the word of God, and denied the proper Deity of Christ. As for Spiritism, so called, I am not wholly unprepared for that, for "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrine of devils."

Your correspondent says: "The faith of Christianity rests upon Joseph's dream." He may have sources of information that are closed to me. It is my misfortune to have lived so obscurely, and in such ignorance, that I have never before even heard of this theory. As there is a bare possibility, however, that the mistake may lie on the other side, I may be pardoned if I venture to suggest that "the Chairman" might save himself and others some trouble if he would condescend to suspend his spiritualistic investigations until such time as he could make himself acquainted with the real foundations of Christianity.

I should not have troubled you with this letter but for a reason to which I have not yet adverted. In a P.S. it is stated:—"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.'" This would make it appear that I spoke with rude discourtesy of the kindness of the gentleman who was good enough to send me the paper in question. I think I could in no case so far forget myself, and certainly not in this; for I not only sincerely thank him for his kind attention, but have also always held his general character in high estimation. I admit that I used the words "thank you for nothing," but it was in relation to the assumption that Spiritism discovers and declares a new and better immortality, and not in any relation to my friend's kindness. For the other matter, I am quite sure I did not use the words attributed to me, but I believe I did, in passing, speak of "the seedy apostles of Spiritism." I must trust to my spiritualistic friends of their pity to forgive me this, seeing they have such an immense advantage over me in awakened intelligence and advanced thought. They will find no difficulty in exercising, from their lofty standpoint, the magnanimity which will be as becoming in them as it can be suitable to the case of one who is only an "unctuous priest."

Yours, &c., T. JAMES.

Golden Square, Sandhurst, Sept. 19, 1874.

THE BISHOP'S ENDOWMENT FUND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—The public mind has of late been exercised on the subject of art unions. One of 3000 subscribers has been drawn, and another of 10,000 members at one pound is proposed, which is confidently anticipated will be a success. Now, this latter sum is precisely the amount required to complete the endowment fund for the prospective Bishop of Ballarat; for not contributing to which I and other baptized members of the Church of England are charged by the *Argus* with parsimony and meanness. Is this a just charge? Is it the real cause of the lack of funds, and of the four hundred thousand members under nominal Anglican rule holding their hands? We number among us the wealthy, and those of generous impulse, who have hitherto not been chary in responding to calls upon their resources. Money was never more abundant, wool never commanded a better market. If we are not poor, then, or

parsimonious, or mean, what is the true cause of this earnest appeal for money failing to open the hearts and purses of the Church people? Before the public subscribed to the Ballarat Art Union they required evidence that it would be conducted on principles of equity. Before they exhibited their confidence and faith by taking tickets, they had to be convinced of the *bona fides* of the committee of management. They believed in it *then*—they exhibited their faith in the prospectus.

Now, a little thought will solve the problem why the money is not forthcoming to complete the endowment fund as readily as to the proposed art unions. Bishops are an ancient institution, venerable in the past from associations with Laud, Bonner, Sharp, and others. They may have been needed when the Church really represented the advanced thought, the knowledge of the day, or when it advocated and upheld the liberties and social progress of the people. Does it fulfil these conditions now? Are they leaders in social or sanitary reform; do they favor scientific knowledge? Do they, or those under them, meet the real difficulties of religious thought in a fair manner? Do they know anything of the spirit of the times? Is it not apparent to every thinking, reasoning man or woman, that the clergy are behind the age? They are no longer the leaders of thought, but are led by the people. Years ago we were taught by Bishops and Priests that eternal torment was a dogma necessary to salvation. The people have ceased to believe this, and now here and there some daring clergymen—like Professor Plumptre—are writing and preaching that the next state is one of progress, "I am convinced," says J. J. Murphy in his *Scientific Basis of Faith*, "that this (eternal torment), more than any other, is the question of life or death for Christianity. It has borne the load of these doctrines till now, though suffering grievously from the strain, but it can bear them no longer. If this question is not at least left open by the Reformed Churches, a revolt against Christianity will come, not from what is worst, but from what is best in human nature, and it will be rejected by the moral sense of mankind." Is the doctrine of substitution and justification by faith, as taught by orthodoxy, accordant with reason and justice? Can it be just to visit everlasting and infinite torment as a punishment for finite sins? Can it be right that the equivalent of such punishment should fall on an innocent person, even with his own consent? Can anything be right in God which would be terribly wrong in man? If such things are taught by Bishops, and our cultivated reason and conscience rebel against them, are we honest in supporting Bishops? Surely our spiritual faculties and intentions are as much the gifts of our Creator and revelations from Him, as are any translations of records made by anonymous authors thousands of years since. The wickedness around us is absolute demonstration of the failure of Bishops, who have had 1800 years of opportunity to reform vice.

It must be evident that we are passing through a period of great change. The very foundations of all faiths are being examined with a scrutiny never before permitted. "The clergy have lost the ear of the press and the people," said the Rev. Mr. Haweis; "they waste their time and learning over theological figments and fossil liturgies, and the sorely-pressed men and women, who have no time to waste, go their way without them." "Truth is strong next to the Almighty," said Milton. "The way of truth," says G. H. Lewes, "is the way of scientific research and verification. The appeal must be to facts of whatever order. Private judgment must be guided by science and facts." "If there be anything in the world," says the Rev. F. W. Fowle in his *Reconciliation of Science and Religion*, "to which the term divine may be properly applied, or which may be truly said to be the operation of God, it is facts. The unknowable translates itself into facts in order to meet the moral and intellectual necessities of mankind." The first step of progress, then, either by laymen or Bishops, is to subordinate the belief based on authority to belief founded on facts. The first Bishop who does this will have no difficulty about an endowment fund.

A BAPTIZED MEMBER OF THE CHURCH
September 21, 1874. OF ENGLAND.

SCIENTIFIC RELIGION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir,—In your last number you made mention of two instances of mental derangement, lately caused by religious excitement; and in the street where I write, not long ago, an old man, a constant attendant upon chapel, cut his throat through similar impressions. In the language of Orthodoxy, "he was awakened, and brought under deep convictions by the Spirit of the Lord!" Certainly a curious effect to be produced by "*the Comforter*," and in my mind more likely to proceed from the spirit of the deceiver. Jesus warned the people to beware of false prophets; that they "should know them by their fruits." When, therefore, we find men coming in his name, professing to teach "Glad tidings of great joy," which, instead of producing comfort, lead their recipients into despair, it becomes us "to try them who say they are Apostles of Jesus," but who may be of the Synagogue of Satan; that, if possible, we may deliver the poor and needy, and aid them out of the hand of the wicked. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness."—Psalm lxxxii. 4.

In the teaching of Jesus, as recorded in the first three gospels (that said to be by John I hold to be spurious) Jesus taught no doctrine that would discourage the greatest of sinners, or the meekest and most sensitive, from the hopes of salvation. His teaching was simple, his doctrines few. He taught of the One Universal Father, and One Universal Brotherhood, and that to love God with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves, were the two great duties—the substance of the law and the prophets, and "more than all the burned offerings and the sacrifices;" "that if we, being evil, knew how to give good gifts to our children, how much more would our Heavenly Father give good things to them who ask it?" He told the Jews at Nazareth that he had come "to heal the broken-hearted," and the Pharisees, that "*God desired mercy, and not sacrifice*;" and to his disciples that, if they forgave, they should be forgiven, but on no other condition. Look again at his parables—"The Lost Money," "The Lost Sheep," and that of "The Prodigal Son," in which he represents Our Heavenly Father as full of mercy and compassion. He used no threats of hell, and fire, and brimstone; no dogmas hard to be understood, and still harder to be believed; he inculcated not only justice and forbearance, but even love to their enemies! He pointed to the example of our Heavenly Father as the very essence of love, mercy, and forbearance, exalted far beyond the reach of human attainment—yet so much the better as an example—and commanded his disciples to "be merciful, even as their Father in Heaven was merciful!"

Turn we now to the Day of Pentecost, where Peter addresses the crucifiers of Jesus. What is there to intimidate or discourage the humblest or most sensitive? Let results speak for themselves: "They that gladly received the word were baptized the same day, about three thousand souls." These, we are told, "continued daily in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of heart, praising God."—Acts ii., 46, 47. Let us give one more example of primitive Christianity. In chapter 8, we are told that "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them; and the people with one accord gave heed to the things which Philip spake, and were baptised;" and we are told, "*there was great joy in the city*."—v., viii.

Now it will not do to tell us that the same gospel which invariably delivered from all anxiety concerning guilt, and communicated "joy and peace in believing" to all who willingly received it, in the Apostolic age, now produces despondency, delirium, and death—the opposite effect! The laws of nature are the same, man is the same, and "God changeth not." Similar causes under similar circumstances always produce similar effects; but here, as the effects are different, it is plain the cause must be different too. We therefore conclude that where despondency and despair have appeared at revivals, instead of "joy and peace," a spurious gospel has been substituted for that of Jesus. The Mother of

Harlots and her daughters make "the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornications," instead of giving them "the water of life to drink freely." Error, like strong drink, blinds, stupifies, deceives, and produces delirium, and ends in suffering and death.

The beast that carries the woman receives its power and authority from the dragon.—Rev. xiii., 1, 2; while she is represented as "drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus," and along with the beast and the false prophet, to be utterly destroyed at the second coming of Jesus—(compare xiii., 1, 2, with xvii., 1, 6, and xix). Yet she and her daughters are perfectly blind to their origin, condition, and fate, and profess to be churches of Jesus Christ. In chap. i., 3, it is written, "Blessed is he that keepeth, and they that read the words of this book, for the time is at hand!"

It is an easy thing to find fault with our neighbours, but not to appear faultless to them! Let us ask ourselves what moral standard do we lay down for our guidance? or, will we admit men of all characters and all creeds into our society, provided they believe that the spirit survives the body after death?

Without some understanding among us as to morality and order, there can be no confidence, harmony, or union among us. The sooner this matter is considered and settled the better; till then we will form but a rope of sand.

Any rules, or bond of union among us, must be simple, consistent with holiness, reason, the laws of nature, and society. I need hardly state that most of the precepts of Jesus above referred to, are, eminently so; bearing on our duty to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. The rules ought to refer to conduct only, not to opinions, or belief; for each is entitled to free liberty of thought, but not to annoy his neighbours with his views; yet forbearance is indispensable.

Science demands accuracy, truthfulness, order, investigation, and proper instruction and supervision, or progression in righteousness is impossible.

I remain, Sir, &c.,

R.

SANDHURST PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALIST AND FREE THOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—At the close of another month it affords me pleasure in forwarding you the report of the doings of the above Association. Our services have been conducted at the usual time and place each succeeding Sabbath. On each occasion the meeting has been presided over by the President, Mr. W. J. Martell, who opens the service by giving out a piece from the selection used, which those present join in singing. We are then treated to a reading from some author of advanced thought, after which we again sing; then Miss Phillips ascends the platform under spirit control, and those assembled are addressed by the controlling spirit on some appropriate subject. I may mention that some time since some of the more thoughtless who have been present at our seances had endeavored to render the addresses of the control ineffectual by creating disturbances, which have been promptly suppressed by the employment of gentle but firm measures. Now, however, a very marked change has taken place in the disposition of the auditory, for instead of the manifestation of a hostile spirit, there is present a disposition to listen and be instructed. The various readings by the President, in conjunction with the varied addresses passed through the organisation of the medium by those unseen intelligencies who are ever present to aid, instruct, counsel, and guide us into all truth, are making such deep and lasting impressions on the minds of those who visit us from time to time, that curiosity is not only excited but the conviction of truth and the reality of spirit presence and power are fastened upon the mind, insomuch that the sarcastic sneer is fast giving place to the spirit of earnest enquiry, and the desire to investigate if these things are so—the darkness of ignorance and superstition is fleeing before the sunbeams of knowledge and truth, and prejudice, the offspring of educational bias, is tottering and decaying before the sure advancing march

of increasing light, intellectuality, and liberalism. Of the good that has been effected by the agency of these services, the friends of the movement have received many cheering testimonies; and thus they are encouraged to prosecute their labor of love and duty by perseverance in well-doing. I may here state that these services have been initiated at the request of our spirit friends, and hence the good that has been accomplished has been effected by them, through our instrumentality. Although passed away, they are often near us, and still are one with us in sympathy and in every good endeavor; and they promise us that what has been done is as nothing to what they will yet achieve—in fact, is as a shadow to the substance, a drop to the unfathomed sea, a flickering taper to the sun in all the majesty of his noonday splendour.

The attendance is now acquiring such proportions that the hall which we occupy at the present is far too small, and the Committee are endeavoring to procure a larger place that will be more suitable and adequate for our growing requirements. Well might it be said the small one is becoming a great nation. A movement which is so unpopular, having neither the prestige of rank or state to recommend it to popular favor, which has had to contend with the most determined hostility from Pulpit and Press, is made strong in weakness and waxes valiant in fight. Having adopted "Progression" as its motto, Truth as its author and end, "peace on earth and good will to men" as its badge and bond of fraternity, it dares to wage warfare against the stronghold of dogmatic orthodoxy and all systems of false teaching which has long enclosed and held in indisputed possession the Spiritual man; and with a strength above and beyond itself, but yet imparted to it by those bright intelligences who come from their ethereal home to disperse the darkness of error's night, it will go forth conquering and to conquer, until the earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the truth, and all shall rejoice in its freedom, and the light from above shall enlighten every man that cometh into the world.

I may further add that our third quarterly re-union was held Thursday, 26th August. There was a much larger attendance of friends and visitors than on any previous occasion. At half-past seven those who were present sat down to a very enjoyable repast, to which ample justice was done, and which was catered for them by Mr. Alpress. The demands of the physical man having been satiated, the hall was cleared and recreation provided in the shape of music, singing, and reciting. Mr. and Miss E. Finster performed an opening piece on the piano, and Miss Finster delighted the audience by rendering a solo which was greatly enjoyed and universally admired. Mr. A. Fletcher and a lady sang together a duet, which proved a great treat, and for which they received an encore, to which they generously responded. Mr. Martell read a selection from *Pickwick*, which proved a rich treat and provocative of much amusement. Afterwards, dancing was indulged in by those who felt so disposed, and those who were unable to join in this healthful exercise indulged in other rational amusements as their tastes dictated. The music was supplied by Messrs. Finster and Butler, who cheerfully gave their services gratuitously, and who were the means of rendering the enjoyment of the occasion memorable. There was one very remarkable feature present, viz., the utter absence of the distinction of class and caste, each regarding one another in the bonds of brotherhood, and endeavoring to contribute to one another's happiness. At one o'clock the assemblage dispersed, having spent a very happy and pleasant evening in social intercourse, looking forward to the return of another quarter, and only wishing that such re-unions were of more frequent occurrence.—
Corresponding Secretary.

NEWS FROM THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.

DEAR HARBINGER,—Since my last letter to you our circle has passed through many changes, some of a very pleasant and cheering character, and others attended with sorrow and gloom. Thank God, however, the worst is past, and our barque is once more in a calm sea. Such is human life, with its alternate clouds and sun-

shine. Our "Evening at Home" was a very pleasant gathering, and brought joy to all our hearts. We met old friends, spent a few agreeable hours in their society, congratulated each other on the growing importance of the cause of Spiritualism, and bade each other God speed, irrespective of creed, race, or social position. A clairvoyant present said she saw a large number of bright spirits in the room, enjoying the sight of our happiness, though invisible to us. Our seance on the 30th August was attended by several distinguished visitors from Melbourne, who felt amazed at all they witnessed. One or two recognised their friends, and others saw, for the first time, the materialised spirit-face. On the following Sunday, we had a still more successful seance in the presence of several visiting friends. One venerable lady recognised her spirit-daughter as she knew her in life, and several of us saw her as well. I can truly say I never saw a more beautiful face. The expression was angelic, and the features small and exquisitely formed. In fact, words fail to convey to you or your readers the beauty of this angel-visitant from the higher spheres. It left a deep impression on the minds of all who saw her. Her dear mother was filled with a joy unutterable, and received—per Katie King—a small portion of her daughter's robe, which, on inspection, proved to be of fine Indian muslin. Notwithstanding these interesting and extraordinary manifestations, the spirit of John King was constantly complaining to me of a want of harmony in the circle, and requesting me to adopt means to remove it. I had, accordingly—acting upon instructions from King—to perform the unpleasant task of reducing the number of members of the circle, as he found it too large to secure that complete harmony so necessary for his purpose. So six have retired, thus leaving fourteen of the most harmonious members to form the circle. Since these changes we have, to date, held two seances. We have still our principal medium—the male medium, and through whom our greatest and most reliable manifestations have always come—and being now in thorough harmony with each other, King has informed us that in three weeks from last Friday we shall have regained the power lost by the sudden breaking of the chain, and will then begin to have greater manifestations than we have ever had before. And if last Sunday night's seance is to be taken as a criterion of our future success, we have good reasons for congratulating ourselves on the changes which have been brought about. It proved a most delightful meeting to us all, and to four visiting friends as well. I saw the upper part of John King's face, the lower part being enveloped in white drapery. King said as soon as he had power enough to show himself distinctly, we should all know him by a long black beard, which he would wear as in his portrait in "The (London) Medium." He further added, that they had been kept back very much by one who was now gone, and he was—as all their spirit band were—greatly pleased with the changes which had been made in the circle. He also said that the Energetic was the only circle he attended in Sandhurst, and their medium the only one he controlled; but he was aware that others came to different circles and took his and his daughter's name. Katie was also seen by several, and Mrs. G.'s daughter was very plainly seen by four persons. The face of a child was also seen by four, a lady present being impressed that it was hers, and King rapping approval that she was right. Twice during the seance the most delicious perfume was inhaled by all; also, cold breezes were felt. King's light was very vivid and beautiful, and burned for at least twenty minutes, the circle singing all the time. The light is evidently becoming larger and more luminous, and assumes all sort of shapes and sizes. Lately luminous letters have also appeared, as if the spirits were attempting to form a name. King and George Abell informed me that bad influences had hitherto kept them from writing on the sealed packets, but that "they did not forget." "Peter," King's attendant spirit, came for a short time. I asked him if the circle should sing his tune. He jocularly replied, he "didn't want tuning," which provoked some merriment. At our seances, in the presence of our visiting friends, the harmony has been increased very materially by the excellent singing and playing of the

lady organist. The Te Deum (Jackson's) was beautifully rendered by her, and, at the conclusion of the seance, Pope's Ode, "Vital Spark." No more visitors are to be admitted for some time, but they will lose nothing by waiting, as the longer they wait the more they will see.

THE CHAIRMAN.

Sandhurst, 16th Sept., 1874.

A GREAT SCANDAL.

GREAT scandals, like great storms, sometimes clear the moral atmosphere when it is too heavily charged with elements out of their right place, or out of their due proportions. But sometimes during the storm some stately tree is shattered, and remains ever afterwards a scathed and blackened stump; or, some beautiful building, dedicated to the noblest uses, is struck and set on fire, and nothing remains but a memory and a heap of ruins. And so, too, oftentimes, when a great scandal has raged, and has, perhaps, cleared away much that was evil and pernicious, we cannot but mourn over some noble heart, bowed down and blasted—some life of usefulness—true usefulness to others, however false it may have been to itself—for ever ended. A late Californian mail brings the news of a great storm, which has raged over the city of Pittsburg and the neighbourhood, many miles of country were made desolate; homes destroyed, property ruined, and more than two hundred lives were lost. But in the same country a greater moral storm is raging—the end of which we cannot yet see. Two of the greatest thinkers and teachers ever produced by that country of vigorous free-thought are the centre of the tempest—*Henry Ward Beecher* and *Theodore Tilton*—but not with their fates will its mighty consequences end. If it could end with them we should not for a moment have thought of bringing the matter to the notice of our readers—for to disseminate scandal is no part of the aims of the *Harbinger of Light*. But they are, in a certain sense, representative men, and with them will stand or fall the faith, the confidence in human virtue, and much of the moral hopes of thousands of their fellow-beings, both in their own country and abroad. It is the wide-spread spiritual desolation which must follow the fall of either of them, that makes the present crisis so very terrible to contemplate, and that one or other of them must fall from the high dignity of the position he has hitherto occupied before the world, seems only too certain. Theodore Tilton accuses Beecher of the greatest moral wrong that can well be urged against any man; not merely of immorality, but also of treachery, breach of hospitality, hypocrisy, and slander of the most horrid character, and declares himself able to prove circumstantially what he asserts. Beecher meets the accusation as a calumny invented to destroy him. Either the greatest preacher of liberal Christianity, and of the religion of high morality, is a whited sepulchre, fair-seeming externally, but within full of all uncleanness, or else one of the sweetest writers on morals, one of the ablest advocates of equal rights amongst men, is himself no respecter of any rights or of any morals, but a base calumniator and traitor. It is not yet clear which of these two sad alternatives we must finally accept; but that there is no middle course to be hoped for between them, seems even now painfully plain.

One thing, however, seems to us to be surely wise, even in the comparatively distant position that we here occupy to the principal parties concerned; it is, not to shrink from or to be prejudiced in our enquiries into the matter. It is no mere matter of idle gossip told to-day, and forgotten to-morrow, but one of the most momentous personal quarrels that could have occurred among the men of letters and of thought in our times. Let us try earnestly to know the truth of it. Let us worship no false gods, and set up for admiration no false heroes. Let us believe in nothing that is not true, and respect no one who is not in the right. On whichever side the honest man is to be found, there let us pay the honor due to him, unblinded by prejudice, unswayed by prepossession, and unmoved by the strife of party-tongues.

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.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 694).

IN speaking of the "spirit-world," Mr. Graham repeats views which have too long prevailed in the world, and the falsity and bad fruits of which could be easily proved, did not their discussion involve theological questions, not directly connected with the subject in hand, and for which I have not space. For example, he speaks of the "Holy Spirit" as a distinct personality, producing certain effects on the "spirits of men;" but this is only a dogmatic assumption, utterly incapable of proof. What are those effects, and where are they to be found? He also appears to regard "holy angels" as a distinct order of intelligences, though the Bible itself supplies evidence of their being only disembodied human spirits. In referring to "the angels that kept not their first estate," he evidently endorses the Miltonian fiction of a wicked rebellion in a *sinless* heaven, and the subsequent expulsion of the great leader, Satan, and his followers, and their consignment to "everlasting fire," which Christ says was "prepared" for them—and prepared by their *Heavenly Father*, a God of *infinite love*! He further asserts that "Jesus Christ . . . reigns in the spirit-world." This, too, like many other statements he has made, is not only one which he cannot prove, but which is emphatically contradicted by the visitors from that world, who are in a position to speak on this point with far greater authority than our clerical opponents. Most Christians cherish the belief that at death they will be borne on angel's wings to the presence of Christ, and will spend eternity in the sublime duty of admiring his lovely person, gazing upon his transcendent glories, magnifying his almighty power, and chanting his matchless praises. This glorious prospect is said to fire them with ardent devotion in life, and yield them unspeakable comfort in death; but woeful is their disappointment, and bitter their anguish when they wake up in the other world and find none of those seraphic beings they expected, ready to transport them to the "open arms" of their "dear Redeemer." Some of them can hardly realise for a while that they have passed away from earth. Instead of being met by "angels," with flapping, goose-like "wings," they are welcomed by their own relatives and friends, who had gone before them. Instead of ascending to the magnificent little "heaven," which their sectarianism had pictured for an "elect few," they find themselves in a vast world, as real and natural as the one just left; and marked by similar gradations in life, similar diversities of gifts and graces, and similar degrees of happiness and misery. And instead of receiving from Christ the "reward" they expected he would bestow upon them, for "trusting in his merits alone for salvation," they meet no such personage—the *man* Christ being in a sphere much higher than they can reach at present—and the only reward they obtain is that which is their own by *natural right*, for such virtues as they cultivated, and such good works as they performed while on earth. If Mr. Graham will examine the literature of Spiritualism, he will find many communications from those who died in the Christian faith, fully confirming these statements—and communications quite as "authentic" and trustworthy as those he accepts because they are in the Bible.

It is not an agreeable task to have to dispel those popular and cherished delusions about Christ "reigning in the spirit-world," but fidelity to truth and the interests of mankind demand their exposure; and it would be well for Christians themselves if they could realise in this world how groundless much of their faith and many of their expectations are, instead of having to meet those crushing disappointments which assuredly await them in a world to come, if they die in the orthodox belief concerning Christ and heaven.

Respecting "the spirits of the just," Mr. Graham remarks:—

"The Bible assures us of their continued conscious and intensified life, and speaks of them as a 'cloud of witnesses,' who surround our Christian course. That they think of us, feel for us, long to welcome us to their life of eternal peace and joy, I cannot doubt."

And he adds:—

"There is then, according to the Bible, a world of fleshless spirits encircling this world of spirits still in the flesh. Its atmosphere is around us, though we cannot breathe it; its waves ripple on our shores, and its music pulsates all around us, though our ears cannot hear the spirit sounds. Alas, alas! how dead is our Sadducean age to the inmates, the joys, the interests of the spiritual universe, and how dull our efforts to be prepared for the voice of God, that shall summon us to drop these vestments of flesh, and join the spirits of the just made perfect."

The question naturally arises, who are the "just made perfect?" "Those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Mr. Graham will no doubt reply. I suppose he holds, in common with Christians generally, that mankind, spiritually considered, are divided into two, and *only two*, classes, the so-called "righteous," and the so-called "wicked;" and that the other world consists of two, and *only two*, places, called "heaven" and "hell," which are to be the eternal homes of those divisions of the races. The nature and limits of this Vindication will not allow me to bestow that attention on this prevalent belief which its importance deserves, but I cannot refrain from making one or two remarks on a question which has ever been fraught with mischievous consequences to society.

The Bible makes a most artificial and unwarranted division of the human family into two parts, and all the churches in Christendom strive to keep up that unjust and monstrous distinction. Those who assent to a given set of ecclesiastical dogmas, and perform a prescribed round of religious duties, are assumed to be on the bright side of the dividing line, the adopted children of God, and the possessors of rights and privileges of inestimable worth; while those who cannot accept the dogmas nor fulfil the duties, called Christian, no matter how noble in principle or pure in life they may be, are declared to be on the dark side of the line, and coolly told that they are the children of Satan, the slaves of a "totally depraved" nature, and the heirs of eternal wrath! But can the Almighty be the author of this arrangement, which enlightened reason and benevolence condemn? Has He made spiritual and eternal blessings depend upon conditions which many are intellectually and morally unable to fulfil? Does He withhold His Fatherly smile from those who conscientiously reject what others honestly believe, and feel under no obligation to discharge certain duties in which others take great delight? Assuredly not. The orthodox teaching on this subject savors too much of the littleness, injustice, and petty favoritisms of man, to be worthy of God. And how completely is this arbitrary and injurious dividing-line swept away by an impartial survey of the world! Instead of the race presenting itself in only two vast groups, almost innumerable divisions are discovered. Among those theologically called the "wicked" is found as much genuine goodness and true religion as among those designated the "righteous;" though the latter excel the former in pious cant and self-righteous professions. No member of the human family is "totally depraved," or hopelessly lost, either in this world or the next; nor is anyone absolutely "perfect." The difference between the best and the worst of men is only one of degree; all are alike the children of God, and alike created for final and everlasting felicity, though the progress of some may be very slow; nay, though they may for a time retrograde and give little hope of recovery. It is, no doubt, very flattering to the vanity of self-styled "saints" to regard themselves as the favourites of Heaven, the inheritors of precious "covenant blessings" here, and the heirs of a glorious "inheritance" hereafter; and to be able to look down upon, and affect pity for, those *they* call "sinners"—many of whose principles and conduct put their own to shame; but this presumptuous vanity cannot be too severely rebuked, nor these groundless pretensions too soon demolished. Who authorised them to erect their theological partition-wall, by which they have separated the human family into two unequal divisions, the largest of which, as such, they have excluded from the Divine

favour, and placed under the dominion of a semi-omnipotent being called the Devil? And what right have they to limit God's relation to, and interest in, any portion of mankind, by their own narrow sectarian creeds? Thank Heaven for Spiritualism, which not only levels the barriers by which sectarian theology has too long separated people on earth, but, above all, rectifies the unjust division which that theology had made of the future state, and reveals a region of certain progress and ultimate happiness for *all* men, irrespective of creed and country.

But though there are no "spirits of the just made perfect," by the process and in the sense Mr. Graham means, yet if we apply what he says of these mythical beings to our spirit-friends generally, we may accept his statement as strictly true. They do "think of us, feel for us, and long to welcome us to their life of eternal peace and joy"; which proves that they are not wholly absorbed in serving God "day and night in His temple," as the Bible declares they are. And as it is admitted that they still remember us, and cherish a lively interest in our welfare, I would ask our Christian opponents what can be more *natural* than that they should desire to return to us, watch over us as guardian angels, and, by such means as they are able to command, demonstrate to us the fact of their continued existence, and the reality of the unseen world that awaits us? Could they serve God in a more pleasing, practical, and effectual way than by ministering to those they have left on earth, and assisting them to bear the burdens and conquer the evils of this rudimental state of being? And as Spiritualism affords abundant evidence that they actually do this, it does seem strange, and as sad as strange, that those who admit that the departed still "think of us" and "feel for us," should ignore the natural outcome of such thought and feeling, and treat with such scepticism and injustice the movement which *proves to be a fact* what was formerly only a pleasing fancy.

Mr. Graham may well exclaim, "Alas, alas! how dead is our Sadducean age to the inmates, the joys, the interests of the spiritual universe." This is, indeed, a "Sadducean" age, and well it may be. The clergy preach a future state, but how many of them *really believe* in it, at least in the one they preach—a state in which the vast majority of their fellow-men are doomed to indescribable torments, and that *for ever*? Their ambition for magnificent churches and palace-like parsonages; their eagerness and industry in the pursuit of "fat livings"; and their investments in colonial banks and cottage property, prove how little many of them think of the soul in comparison with their care for the *body*. and how much more faith they have in *this world* than in the next, of which they preach so much. And as for the people under their charge, the ill-disguised worldlimindedness, the over-reaching selfishness, and the anxiety to lay up for themselves "treasures upon *earth*"—in violation of the emphatic prohibition of their professed Master, Christ—which characterise most of them, show how little real interest they take in "heaven," where they say their "heart and treasure" are. *The practical infidelity of Christians themselves* is the chief cause of that "Sadducean" state of things they affect to deplore. Their preaching, and praying, and sanctimonious professions may well fail to arrest the progress of scepticism, and convince the unbelieving of the reality of a future state, when their general conduct shows how little influence their belief in it has upon their own lives. But even if they were to exemplify ever so sincere a belief in a life beyond the grave, they are not able to supply that evidence of its existence which the scientific and intellectual scepticism of the present age demands. Their speculative arguments for immortality, and the traditional evidences they adduce from the Church and the Bible, alike fail to convince a rapidly increasing number of cultivated minds. Something more is needed, and Spiritualism professes to be exactly adapted to the existing state of things. Just as a self-sufficient science begins to publicly ridicule the popular belief in immortality as an antiquated superstition, and a ruthless materialism ventures to openly trample on humanity's dearest hopes, the angel-world

develops a system that will inevitably humble the one and demolish the other. Spiritualism supplies that *present sensible, practical demonstration* of immortality which unbelief so defiantly challenged. And how is it received by those who profess to believe in a future state, and to regard a proper attention to its claims as of supreme importance to man? Do they hail it with emotions of gratitude to God and the angels, for vouchsafing it to the world just when scepticism rendered it most necessary? Alas, alas! it is met in a spirit of uncharitableness and determined hostility. We behold the melancholy spectacle of most Christians opposing Spiritualism with as much unfairness and rancour as the majority of materialists! and for the same reason, that it happens to clash with their preconceived notions, for which they virtually claim infallibility! With one breath they deplore the "Sadducean" spirit of the age, and with the next they inveigh against the only movement that can effectually crush that spirit!

Mr. Graham admits, on the authority of "the Bible," that both "good spirits" and "evil spirits" "repeatedly and visibly communicated with men" in olden times. Then why may not spirits of all classes communicate with mortals in our day? They must have done so then under *natural* laws and conditions, and as the laws of nature are immutable, what was possible then is possible now. And is there not as *much necessity* for spiritual visits and communications in *our* day as in ancient times? Can our Christian opponents point to a single passage in their Bible which limits those visits to the period covered by Biblical history? If they cannot, what right have they to fix the limits which the authority they regard as infallible and final has not imposed? Hence, for anything they can show to the contrary on Scriptural grounds, both "good" and "evil" spirits may be as much or more in the habit of communicating "with men" now as in the days of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles. And as they can prove nothing to the contrary on Biblical, still less can they do so on natural and rational grounds.

On page 7, Mr. Graham quotes Deut. xviii., 10—19, which contains the Mosaic prohibition against intercourse with spirits; and remarks upon it—"Here necromancy, or consultation of the spirits of the dead, together with all the usual unauthorised methods of access to the spirit-world, is forbidden to God's people." On this hackneyed passage, which has become a stock objection with the Christian enemies of Spiritualism, I would make the following brief observations:—1. It clearly implies not only the possibility, but the *actuality* of spirit intercourse. Why prohibit what did not, and could not take place? True, I have heard Christians—logically-minded enough to perceive that what was possible in this respect in the past is possible now—who, rather than admit that communion with spirits is real in our day, vigorously denied that it was real in the time of Moses; but Mr. Graham does not agree with his fellow Christians on this point. He will not do his God the monstrous injustice of charging him with legislating against an impossibility; for, as we have just seen, he concedes the reality of communion with spirits in Bible times. 2. Unless it can be proved that the thing condemned is *identical with modern Spiritualism*—and that, I hold, can not be done—the prohibition is not applicable. The people no doubt held actual intercourse with spirits, but the practice appears, from the context and other parts of Scripture, to have been surrounded with objectionable features, and turned to unworthy purposes, which Spiritualists condemn as heartily as Moses. Mr. Graham quotes, to support the above passage, the parallel one in Isaiah viii., 19, 20, which speaks of "wizards that peep and that mutter;" but I know of nothing in Spiritualism that answers to this. Seances are not "*peep*" shows. 3. It must also be proved that *this part of the Mosaic law is binding upon those who live under the Gospel dispensation*, before it can with justice be used against Spiritualism. In addition to those parts of the Mosaic economy expressly annulled in the New Testament, there are other laws and commandments of the Pentateuch which Christians live in habitual violation of. And if they, on no higher authority than their own private judgment, practically set aside certain parts

of the Old Testament, as inapplicable to themselves in this age, surely they cannot consistently blame others, who, in the exercise of the same right of private judgment, reject the law in question as not being in force now, and consequently not applicable to modern Spiritualism. 4. Those who insist so strongly on this Mosaic prohibition should *be honest, and carry it out fully*. In Lev. xx., 27, we read—"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them." Are our Christian opponents prepared to "*stone*" and "*put to death*" us Spiritualists, and have *our "blood" upon "them?"* The question is not whether they are cruel-hearted enough to do this—though I have seen sufficient to convince me that some of them are quite capable of it, notwithstanding their vaunted charity—but, I ask, can they, dare they attempt it? If not, why do they so frequently quote this, and parallel passages against us? Why do they so persistently confront us with a law whose *penalties* they are not prepared to inflict upon us—penalties which have to be inflicted upon the *body* in *this world*, and not such as they say are left to be inflicted upon the *soul* in the *world to come*? And how can they expect unprejudiced observers to regard them with feelings other than those of mingled pity and contempt, for so menacingly flourishing the first half of this prohibition in our faces, and so cowardly shrinking from the intended application of the second? Seeing, however, that they do ignore one part of it, we are surely justified in following their godly example, and ignoring the other part; and, therefore, between themselves and us this famous prohibition falls to the ground! 5. But even supposing that Moses did prohibit all intercourse with spirits, and that his prohibition is held to be still in force, *it is only binding on those who acknowledge his authority*. Let those obey him, whether Jews or Christians, who believe that he legislated as God's infallible representative, and for all time; for myself, I regard this as not only an untenable, but a most mischievous assumption. As a man, Moses was wise for the day in which he lived, and there is much that is excellent in the religious system that he established; but it is equally true that there is much that is absurd, oppressive, unjust, and utterly unsuited to the present age. It is high time that Christendom emancipated itself from degrading bondage to the past, and asserted its right to think and act for itself, to the fullest extent, in religious as in other matters. I deny the right of Moses, or any other ancient writer to either authorise or prohibit a certain line of conduct for me; and maintain that we of the present are better able to judge of and provide for our own religious wants than the ancients were. Spiritualism, while esteeming both for many things, refuses to bow to either Moses or Jesus as Master; and insists upon being tested by the light and requirements of the present day, and not by the crooked and rusty standard of the dark, superstitious, and barbarous past.

If Mr. Graham and his fellow-Christians will reflect upon the foregoing observations, they will perhaps see how useless it is attempting to disprove the claims of Spiritualism by urging the Mosaic prohibition against it.

(To be continued.)

"AN EVENING AT HOME" OF THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE OF PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTS AND FRIENDS.

SUCH was the title given to the annual social gathering of the Sandhurst Energetic Circle, held in the Rifles' Orderly Rooms, on Monday evening, the 31st August—and never was title better bestowed, for it was, in every sense of the word, "An Evening at Home." There was a large and fashionable audience, numbering nearly three hundred ladies and gentlemen present, and fairly representative of all classes in the community. The rooms were most tastefully decorated with flags and green boughs, artificial roses (the work of the ladies of the circle), of all sizes and colours, having been profusely, yet neatly, interspersed amongst the branches, and which

tended to give the large room a very cheerful aspect. Above the orchestra was placed the union-jack, surmounted by the royal arms; and on the large door was suspended a fine German flag. On the opposite end of the room, and extending across it, was the well-known motto, "Peace on earth, and goodwill towards men," in large black and red painted letters, and above it a very beautiful Prince of Wales feather, with the motto, "Ich Dien." Hallas's band for private parties conducted the music, which was played in such a masterly manner as to call forth the repeated plaudits of the audience. Mr. W. Watkins was the M.C. on the occasion, and, as well as the band, received at the close a hearty vote of thanks for the efficient manner in which his onerous duties were discharged.

The decorations were the work of Messrs. Hogg, Tuck, Scott, Druce, Vruppel, and other friends, and elicited warm praise from all. The hon. sec. (Mr. Denovan) also received a vote of thanks for his services. Amongst the audience we noticed Mr. and Mrs. M'Ilwraith (the Mayor and Mayoress of Melbourne), Master M'Ilwraith, and Miss M'Ilwraith; Mr. Carson, Mr. D. Carson, and Mr. W. H. Terry, all of Melbourne; and Mr. Finlason (Castlemaine), Mr. and Mrs. Aspinall (the Mayor and Mayoress of Sandhurst), Councillors M'Dougall, Bayne, Hattam, Clarke, and Woodward, with their ladies, and many other of our principal citizens. The company being nearly all in evening dress, and there being a large attendance of ladies, the room presented a brilliant appearance. The entertainment consisted principally of dancing, which was largely patronised, but there was an agreeable variation, in the shape of singing. Miss W—— sang in capital style, "Sweet Spirit, Hear my Prayer," and received loud applause, and Mr. L—— favoured the company with "My Pretty Jane," his fine voice being heard to great advantage. He was also warmly applauded. Mr. Hallas (by request) played a solo on his cornet. It was the fine old air, "Auld Robin Gray," and so beautifully was it played that the large audience were hushed into complete silence. At the close of it Mr. Hallas was repeatedly cheered. For the non-dancers there were cards and draughts, and many availed themselves of the privilege. The refreshment room was open during the whole time, and was largely patronised. Mr. M'Leod was the caterer, and gave very general satisfaction in having provided so well for the comfort of all. Dancing was kept up till two o'clock, the last dance being "Sir Roger de Coverly." The whole audience then joined hands and sung "Auld Lang Syne," with great gusto; and then the finale, "God Save the Queen," and thus ended—to use the phrase in every one's mouth—"one of the pleasantest evenings ever we spent in Sandhurst."

HOW THE "COMING RACE" WILL CREMATE.

"WHILE these two were talking, my attention was drawn to a dark metallic substance at the further end of the room. It was about thirty feet in length, narrow in proportion, and all closed round, save, near the roof, there were some small round holes, through which might be seen a red light. From the interior emanated a rich, sweet perfume. Then the corpse, covered by long ceremonies, was tenderly lifted by six of the nearest kinsfolk, and borne before the dark thing that I have described. I pressed forward to see what happened. A sliding door, or panel, at one end was lifted up, the body deposited within on a shelf, the door was re-closed, a spring at the side touched—a sudden whishing, sighing sound was heard from within—and, lo! at the other end of the machine the lid fell down, and a small handful of smouldering dust dropped into a patera placed to receive it. The son took up the patera and exclaimed:—'Behold, how great is the Maker! To this little dust he gave form, and life, and soul! It needs not this little dust for Him to renew form, life, and soul, to the beloved one we soon shall see again!' On the lid of the patera were engraven the name of the deceased, and these words:—'Lent to us' (here the date of birth); 'recalled from us' (here the date of death)."—LORD LYTON.

PRESENTATION TO MR. G. A. STOW.

MR. G. A. STOW, who has long been connected with the Spiritual movement here, and for a considerable time held the office of Secretary to the Victorian Association, and more recently of Vice-Conductor of the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum, left here for England by the Agamemnon, on the 12th August. Mr. Stow's resignation of the office of secretary was received at the committee meeting of the Association held on the 1st ult., and, in accepting it, a very general wish was expressed that the committee should testify in some public manner their appreciation of Mr. Stow's services on behalf of the Association. A motion was carried unanimously, that an illuminated address be presented to Mr. Stow, and a draft having been submitted, a sub-committee were appointed to prepare it, and it was arranged that the presentation should take place after the services on Sunday, 6th August. Accordingly, on that occasion, before the concluding hymn was given, the chairman, Mr. Brotherton, called Mr. Stow to the platform, and, with a few appropriate remarks, presented the address. Mr. Stow made a suitable reply, feelingly acknowledging his appreciation of the kind sentiments conveyed in the address, and whilst expressing his wishes for the progress of the Association, said he should look forward with pleasurable anticipation to his return. Friends, hearing of his intended departure, had spoken of his going "home," but he felt that he was going *from* home. His home was here, and he hoped ere long to return to it, and join them again in the good work they were engaged in.

The following is a copy of the address, which was beautifully illuminated by Mr. S. B. Bonney. The design showed the world rising out of the clouds of Bigotry, Ignorance, Intolerance, &c., an angel form descending in a ray of light, bearing a scroll, on which is inscribed "Let there be Light;" beneath this design is the Lyceum banner and flags. The address was mounted in a handsome gilt frame.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTS.

To MR. GEO. A. STOW.

SIR,—The Members of the above Association, having been informed of your speedy and unexpected departure for England, desire to express to you their high appreciation of your just and upright character together with your courteous and obliging disposition, as exemplified during several years' experience of you as a Spiritualist, and for some time as Secretary of the above Association.

In conveying to you their good wishes and desires for your prosperity and happiness during your absence, they hope to welcome you back again in renewed health and benefitted by cheerful and profitable experiences.

H. BROTHERTON, President.

W. H. TERRY, Treasurer.

JOHN VEEVERS,

WILLIAM BOWLEY,

J. B. MOTHERWELL, M.D. } Members.

SAML. B. BONNEY, Hon. Sec.

Melbourne, September 1st, 1874.

An address conveying similar sentiments was presented by the Lyceum.

The business which has called Mr. Stow to England is not likely to detain him long, and his return may be expected in about eight months.

LETTERS FROM HENRY T. CHILD, M. D., OF PHILADELPHIA, AND ROBERT DALE OWEN.

WONDERFUL MANIFESTATIONS AT THE HOLMES SEANCES.

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPIRIT OF KATIE KING.

In a former letter I gave the readers of the *Banner of Light* a brief account of the first appearance of Katie King in Philadelphia, which occurred at the seance of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, on the 12th of May, at eight in the evening.

After giving her name, she said, in reply to my question, "I have been at a seance in London to-day." The

difference in longitude is about five hours, being earlier there. She came nearly every evening, and at her request I wrote to Mr. Wm. H. Harrison, of the *London Spiritualist*, who has published my letter. I also wrote, by her direction, to Florence Cook, her medium in London, and to Mr. Blackburn. On the 21st of May, she said, "I have been at a seance in London this evening." You have published the interesting account of her farewell, which took place on that day.

After this she told me she was not able to deliver a message to her friends in London because she was not attending any more seances there.

On Friday evening, June 5th, Robert Dale Owen was with us. John King said, "If you will sit back a little, and turn the light down low, we will open the door and let you see Katie in full form." We did so, and were favoured with the sight of a very beautiful shape, clothed in white robes.

At one of our seances I handed a sheet of paper to Katie; the next day she returned it to me, with the following communication written upon it:—

"Flowers are not trifles, as we might know from the care God has taken of them everywhere. Not one unfinished; not one bearing the mark of a brush or pencil.

"Fringing the eternal borders of mountain ranges; growing on the pulseless head of the gray old granite; everywhere they are harmonizing.

"Murderers do not ordinarily wear roses in their button-holes. Villains seldom train vines over their cottage doors.

KATIE KING."

On Sunday evening, June 7th, we had a long conversation with Katie at the cabinet window. At my request she permitted me to count her pulse, while she held her arm out in plain sight. It was about seventy-two per minute, and a perfectly natural pulse. She also permitted me to see her tongue, and then asked playfully if I thought she was "right well."

A lady in the circle said to her, "I have a ring I would like to give you if you will accept it." She replied, "Of course I will."

Mr. Owen placed it upon her finger; she seemed much pleased. Other presents have been given to her: a string of white spar beads, and a white pearl cross, which she habitually presents to us at the seances.

I will not detain your readers from Mr. Owen's letter, in which he gives a statement of his opinion of these wonderful phenomena.

I bespeak for this, and the communication from Katie—which she gave me in my own study—a most careful perusal and thoughtful examination.

LETTER FROM ROBERT DALE OWEN.

Dear Dr. Child,—Accept my grateful acknowledgments for your kindness in inviting me to witness the phenomena in spirit-materialization, now presented in this city through the mediumship of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes.

I had kept up with the recent European experiments in this field, and had hoped for much; but the reality has far exceeded my expectations. All my former experience in Spiritualism, favoured as I have been, pales before the new manifestations witnessed by me in the course of last month. After the strictest scrutiny, with every facility promptly afforded me by the mediums, to detect imposition had it been attempted, I here avow my conviction that the phenomena are genuine; that I have again and again—on more than twenty occasions—seen, heard, and touched forms to appearance human and material, and to sense tangible; that these forms have stepped up close to me; that I have held conversations with them, occasionally receiving advice, sometimes having my thoughts read and adverted to; that I have received, written under my very eyes, by a luminous, detached hand, a communication of some length, purporting to come from an eminent English clergyman who died twenty years ago—the style and the signature serving further to attest its genuine character. Finally, that I have seen the form which had spoken to me a minute or two before, fade away till it became a dim shadow—to re-appear, a few minutes later, in all its brightness.

If to many, even of those who esteem themselves experienced Spiritualists, such things seem but as the phantoms of a "Midsummer Night's Dream," and if, in consequence, many receive this new phase of spirit-communication with doubt or disbelief, so be it! Thomas was quite right in disbelieving until he could see with his eyes and touch with his hands. Those of us who have seen and touched can afford to wait. Truth wins the battle at last.

I am an old soldier in the spiritual field, and have smelt the powder of ridicule and contempt—to say nothing of incredulity—so often, that these missiles have lost their effect upon me. But indeed, under the present aspect of affairs, there is, in avowing the conviction, little to risk, and no excuse for faint-heartedness. In England, men of scientific eminence—William Crookes, and C. F. Varley, both Fellows of the Royal Society, Alfred Wallace, who shares with Darwin the honour of promulgating the great principle of natural selection—such men as these have already been pioneers in this special field of inquiry, and have quite recently recorded their conviction that the phenomena of materialization are genuine. The advance we have made beyond their experience is but one of degree, such as, in the progress of all phenomenal experiments, is to be expected. I have seen, during a single sitting of an hour and a half, three separate forms, completely materialized, walk out from the cabinet to within a foot or two of where I sat, have touched all three, have conversed with all three; and this has occurred in the light, *without any one in the cabinet*, both mediums sitting beside me. Again, I have witnessed on six different occasions, the levitation (that is, floating in the air) of a materialized form. So far as I have followed the English record, this goes beyond anything there set forth. But in the main, our experience on this side is but the counterpart of theirs. Nor do I believe that we could have succeeded as we have, had not the way been prepared for us by them. The Annie Morgan, better known as "Katie King," who appeared to us is, I think, without all peradventure, the same spirit that has acquired, during three years, experience with Florence Cook as medium, the skill—if I may use the earthly expression—which enables her to present herself in veritable human guise, as a messenger confirming to man the reality of another world.

How far the beautiful form and features with which "Katie" is invested, here in Philadelphia, resemble or do not resemble those under which she appeared to her London friends, we have no means of judging, the English photograph not having yet reached us, and no one who saw her at Florence Cook's having visited our seances. Nor can the question of identity be so decided; the mediums from whom a necessary portion of the elements to materialize are undoubtedly derived, here and there, being entirely different. This question must be determined by internal evidence; and I have found that evidence to be overwhelmingly in favour of the identity I have assumed.

I consider the communication you have been fortunate enough to obtain, by impression, from "Katie," touching the moral and intellectual condition of spirits who take upon themselves earthly investure, as an item in corroboration, besides being a most valuable and suggestive addition to spiritual literature. There is also the narrative of her life, as imparted to you; bearing similar evidence of substantial truth.

I cannot give the details of my experience during twenty sittings, and of the evidence I have obtained touching "Katie's" identity in a letter. Life and health permitting, these shall find a place in a work which I propose still to write, perhaps under the title of "Phenomenal proof of a Better Life to Come."

If now I am asked where all this is to end; what is to come of it, in case familiar converse with visitors from another world shall continue to be permitted here, I reply, that that is not our affair. We have to deal, for the present, with facts, not with results from facts. We are not the governors of this world, and need not trouble ourselves with predictions looking to the ultimate consequences of natural phenomena. Cosmical order has never, so far, been disarranged by any new class of

truths; and if we fear that it ever will be, we shall merit the reproach of, "Oh, ye of little faith."

Faithfully yours,

ROBERT DALE OWEN.

To HENRY T. CHILD, M.D.

Philadelphia, Penn., July 1st, 1874.

Postscript, 3rd July.—Since writing the above I have seen one of the London photographs of "Katie," taken by the magnesium light. It corresponds to what we have heard of the striking likeness between her and her medium. The resemblance to the photograph of Miss Cook, with which I have compared it, is unmistakable. But neither in features, nor yet more especially in expression, does it resemble the "Katie" whom I have met daily for four weeks past—the forehead only corresponding. The face of the London "Katie," smiling as she looks down at an old gentleman, suggest the adjectives, *pretty* and *interesting*. The face of "Katie" is classic in its regularity. Earnestness, with a passing touch of weariness, is its habitual expression; and even its smile, though bright, has an occasional dash of sadness in it. One thinks of it as strikingly handsome, as full of character, as intellectual, and withal as singularly attractive—but one would never term it pretty. The nose is straight, not aquiline, as in the London photograph, and the large eyes are rather dark, and bluish gray in colour. The face is perhaps a trifle wider in proportion than that of the Venus of Milo, but both features and expression more nearly resemble those of that noble statue than they do the lineaments and looks of Florence Cook, or the spirit materialized through her mediumship, so far as, from the photographs, one can judge of either.

NARRATIVE OF KATIE KING, GIVEN THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF HENRY T. CHILD, M. D., OF PHILADELPHIA, PENN., JUNE 5, 1874.

My Dear Friend and Brother,—I should be very sorry if you inferred from the manner in which I appear and speak to you and other friends, when I am materialized, that that is a criterion of my present condition, and that the rude and trifling manner in which I express myself on these occasions is a real reflection of my interior state. I desire to impress your mind so that you may present to the world the fact that spirits, either in or out of the form, as you call it, are, to a very great extent, subject to the influences of the material elements with which they are clothed; and if I could have you spend a little time with me, in an appreciative manner, in my interior home in spirit-land, you would not know me as the same "Katie" that calls you all "stupid," and uses expressions which are often quite repulsive to my inner consciousness. The laws of spiritual manifestation are absolute, and whenever a spirit approaches a medium it must be more or less materialized—first, in order to come into the atmosphere of the earth, and then into that of the medium—and, if it presents itself in form, it is obliged, under a law, to appear as nearly as may be as it was when it passed from the earth. Thus a child of earth, though grown to maturity in spirit-life, returns as a child. Deformed persons present their deformities with precision. Spirits retain not only the recollection of their earthly conditions and appearances, but also the power of assuming them in spirit-life whenever it is desirable.

You will see the importance of this power of maintaining, or recurring to the primitive conditions of spirit-life, at least for a time, and until all those to whom a recognition is necessary shall have passed into that state; and this power is retained so as to be easily exercised, until after all who are living on the earth at the time a spirit enters this world shall have passed on, so that a new-born spirit cannot fail to recognize its friends and relations. I am requested to say to you that all spirits, when they return to earth, whether they communicate or not, are absolutely subject to this law. They *must* assume the conditions they had when they left the earthly form, although they may bring to the earth many thoughts and ideas which they have acquired in the interior life; but even these are somewhat modified by being presented through the necessary conditions which surround them at the time; for instance, scholars from the spirit-land, speaking through mediums who are ignorant of language and the rules of grammar, may be

compelled to use the incorrect expression of the medium. It is a truth that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," and every spiritual communication that has ever been given has been more or less modified by the channel through which it has passed, as well as by the essential materialistic conditions which spirits may have been compelled to assume when they came into the earth's atmosphere and into *rapport* with the mediums.

There is a very important lesson here, my brother, which will find an illustration in the earth experiences of most persons. The mission of the spirit in its earth-life is to realize the character, conditions, and laws of matter, and to do this fully, it is obliged to become materialized, and to express itself, as best it can, through matter.

All human life is an expression of the feelings and desires of the spirit, given through and modified by matter. The soul of the drunkard speaks through an intoxicated body, and though it may know much better than it can act or express itself, it is scarcely conscious of the fact that it is the slave of its surroundings. All the rudeness, imperfection and crime that mark the career of man on earth, may be set down to the mixed influence of matter and spirit, doing justice to neither of them. The ancient idea that matter is evil, and the relationship of the spirit to it is a curse, arises from this fact. We could present thousands of illustrations of this in human experiences. You often see it clearly in the circles which meet for the reception of spiritual manifestations; one individual may, by improper conditions, not only interfere with the manifestations which would come to him, but with those for the whole circle, so that all are losers thereby.

All through human life the thoughtful mind will perceive illustrations of this important truth, which are calculated to teach lessons of charity and forbearance. You should remember that as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," so out of the conditions of life all expressions must come, and be modified thereby. Before referring to my experience which I, in common with most spirits, desire to have presented to the world, I will answer a question which has frequently been put to me, and which I see in the minds of many that have never uttered it. Why do the spirits who have been in the spirit-world a long time, desire, or even submit to come into the material conditions of earth, in which they are liable to suffer, and are so generally misunderstood? I answer for myself. Nearly two hundred years of earth's time, as the record will show, have passed down the stream of life since I landed upon these peaceful and beautiful shores, and during that period I have spent much of my time among those who were producing physical manifestations from the spiritual plane. My father's mission, as you are well aware, is a very important one in this great work, and my relations to him, which he has so kindly expressed through you, have had a very considerable influence in keeping me at this, which might seem to be rather an uncongenial labour; but it is not, because the results are very satisfactory, and bring to our minds peace and rest. I submit to be materialized, as you are well aware, very often, because I can not only bear it better than most others, but I can do more for our spirit friends and for humanity, and therefore I am not dissatisfied with the labours which I am performing, although at times there are discordant conditions which cause us temporary regrets, yet they always illustrate and confirm important laws, and often are the very best lessons one can have.

THE "ENERGETIC CIRCLE," SANDHURST.

THE readers of the *Harbinger of Light* will have read with interest the reports published from time to time of the progress of the Energetic Circle at Sandhurst, which, by its energy and perseverance, is developing some of the wonderful phenomena which is attracting so much attention in England at the present time. Favored by an invitation from the Chairman, endorsed by the spirit guides of the circle, we proceeded to Sandhurst on the 30th of August, to avail ourselves of the opportunity of being present at an ordinary meeting of

the circle, to take place on the 30th. The room in which the circle meets is on an upper floor in one of the principal streets of the city. It is an oblong, about 22 x 14 ft., the walls and ceiling plastered, and the room lofty; the door is at one end, and the only window at the other. A six-foot wooden partition divides about a third of it, making the first part of it an anteroom. At the extreme end of the longer apartment is a cabinet organ, upon which a lady member of the circle performed some excellent music whilst the circle were assembling. The members of the circle sat in chairs, arranged in an oval, and occupying the entire length of the room, the chair at one apex being occupied by the lady musician, and that at the other by the chairman. Besides the members of the circle, numbering fifteen, there were present eight visitors, all from Melbourne, viz.:—Mr. M— (a gentleman holding a prominent public position in Melbourne), his wife, son, and daughter; Mr. C— (the writer of the letter signed "J. C.," which appeared in our July number), and his two eldest sons, and the writer. The visitors were seated outside the circle, against the wall of the room, extending from the organ to near the chairman's end of the circle, where we were seated. All the visitors had some personal experiences, we shall, however, confine ourselves to what we personally experienced, or what came under our particular notice. The proceedings commenced by the chairman reading the minutes of the previous meeting, after the confirmation of which a hymn was sung, with the organ accompaniment. The lights having been extinguished, the circle joined hands, and sang, "Shall we gather at the river?" during which the air became pervaded with a most delicious perfume, and in a few minutes a pale blue light appeared about the centre of the circle, and moved about in various directions, and a voice, speaking through the medium, was heard giving instructions to the chairman. The circle again sang, when the light became somewhat brighter, and the medium under control passed round the circle, speaking to the visitors, and telling them to come forward promptly when directed. After some more singing, the gruff voice of John King was heard, directing the visitors to come forward one at a time. The medium stood in the middle of the circle, and, as we approached, told us to put our hand on his shoulder, and put our face near the light (which was floating before him). Immediately behind the light there appeared a small female face and neck, the head covered with a gauze-like drapery. The light was moved up and down before the face to enable us to see it more distinctly, and emitted a perfume similar to that we had observed earlier in the evening. On Mrs. M— approaching it we heard the sound of a kiss, and were told by her that the spirit had kissed her. Whilst this manifestation was taking place, the lady medium was in the anteroom, and a chair placed before the entrance to prevent her ingress. After the disappearance of the spirit form she entered the room, and passing round the circle came to the visitors, patting them and making passes over their heads. Taking our two hands in hers, she placed them on a head, which appeared to be at the front of her, and about four feet from the floor. We drew our hands slowly down over the face (which, though rather cool, was lifelike), and then down the drapery with which it was surrounded. There appeared to be no body to this head, the gauze or muslin terminating at a point about one foot below the neck. Taking our hand, the medium raised us from our seat, and placing the left hand on her own face, she took the right and placed it upon another face, apparently in a recumbent position at the front of her. This face was warmer than the last, and we could distinctly feel the breath as our hand passed over the mouth. Our attention was next attracted to the light, which was moving rapidly about the room, now rising near the ceiling, then descending to the floor, it became stationary near the lower end of the circle, and Mrs. M— was directed to watch it, when it assumed the form of various letters, which spelled out the name of her spirit daughter, who was present; then showing the whole name in luminous letters (this latter we did not see). The lady medium, still under control, came to us again, and taking our right hand, and the left hand of the gentleman sitting next to us, she placed them both on her head, the other two hands were then

placed on the head of a spirit form before her. The hair on this head appeared to be curly, and covered with thin muslin. Again she took our right hand and placed it on another head. The shoulders and bust in this case were palpable, though the lower portions of the body were not so. Very little of note occurred after this. John King informed the chairman that he would appear to them in form in nine weeks if they observed the conditions. Katie and John King, through the mediums, wished the circle and friends good-night; and, after some more music, the circle dispersed.

THE SANDHURST LYCEUM.

Being in Sandhurst on Sunday, 30th August, we availed ourselves of the opportunity to visit the local Lyceum, held at the Rifles' Orderly Room, View Point. The weather was particularly unpropitious, being wet and squally, and we expected a very small attendance. We had, however, miscalculated the zeal of the Sandhurst youth, for by the time appointed for the commencement of the session more than three-fourths of the whole roll of the Lyceum had put in an appearance. A few minutes after 11, Mr. Martell, the conductor, called the Lyceum to order, and gave out a song from Davis's Lyceum Manual, which was very creditably sung by the children. This was followed by the Golden Chain recitation, the responses to which were given in excellent time. Next, the calisthenic exercises. These, we believe, have only recently been introduced, and, considering the limited practice the children have had, were creditably performed. After another song, with harmonium accompaniment, the conductor called for a question to be suggested. Several were proposed, the one selected being "Which is the best way to be happy," which was written on a piece of paper, and sent to the several groups. The answers were given by the little ones to their leaders, who wrote them on the slip, under the question. In about ten minutes it was announced that all the answers were recorded, and they were read out by the conductor to the Lyceum as follows:—1. To be good to our parents and love God. 2. To do our best always. 3. To be good. 4. To do good and obey our parents. 5. To be good and kind to everyone. 6. To speak the truth. 7. Love and obedience to God. 8. To obey Nature's laws, and be kind to all things. Three of the officers form a committee to decide upon the best answers, and they gave the palm to No. 8: "To obey Nature's laws, and be kind to all things." There was some difficulty in deciding which should stand second, but No. 6, "To speak the truth," was approved, because it was considered that he who spoke the truth would do all that was suggested in the other answers. Some well selected poetical recitations were given by the children, and after another song, the Lyceum marched out in double file, to the music of the harmonium, and the session closed. From information furnished us by the conductor, we find that the first session of the Lyceum was held on the 10th of May last, with an attendance of twenty-six children, which formed three groups. There are now sixty-seven members on the roll, divided into seven groups. All the officers of the Lyceum, and most of the children, subscribe to a pledge of total abstinence from alcoholic beverages and narcotic preparations. The names of the officers and leaders are—

Conductor and Treasurer ... Mr. W. J. Martell.
Assistant-Conductor ... Mr. Fletcher.
Guardian and Leader ... Mrs. Simpson.

Leaders: Messrs. Quilty, Adams, Mann, & Mrs. Mann. Other volunteers are ready to take office when required. The Lyceum is supported by voluntary contributions from visitors and children. The regalia and paraphernalia is as yet incomplete, but will be procured as soon as funds admit. Messrs. Finster and Kennedy, though not directly connected with the Lyceum, have given their services as musicians, and several books have been given by friends for the best answers to questions. The Secretary enters the latter in a book kept for the purpose, and the concise yet comprehensive definitions given in many instances by the little folks are very interesting. All connected with the Lyceum appear to work with earnestness and in harmony, which gives promise of increasing good results in the future.

* "OUR FATHER."

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH'S sermon is another illustration of the great "mind movement" going on both within and without the Churches. The sentiments it contains are such as could not be objected to, even by members of the Anglican or any Christian Church, but his doctrine is in a theological sense unsound. His fault is that he has spoken too plainly and honestly his views on matters affecting the dogmas of the Church, and this has brought upon him the censure and prohibition of the Dean. Had he allowed policy to control principle, he might, by the avoidance of a few words, have delivered his sermon without fear of censure. But it is evident from the tone and style of the matter that it was written without fear or consideration of personal consequences upon the writer, but as a spontaneous expression of his views in relation to the so-called Christianity of the day. He sees and feels that what is now called Christianity bears little resemblance to the religion of the founder, and realizes the necessity of a resuscitation of true Christianity, as exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus, to meet the urgent demands of the time.

In a preface justifying his sermon, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh says:—

"At my ordination I made the solemn declaration that 'I feel moved by the Holy Ghost to take on myself the ministry of the Word.' That ordination was merely the human ratification of that higher call to which I had long previously responded by consecrating my life to the service of my fellow-men. As a minister I shall work while God gives me life. If I am debarred from preaching in temples built of stones, I know that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, and that the work of a minister and follower of Christ is to build up living stones, and lies not in churches, but in the hearts and minds of his fellow-men—to them I shall humbly, and, I trust, faithfully, minister to the death, after the example of Him who came not to be ministered to, but to minister to others."

May his example be followed by the many in the churches who think as he does, but as yet lack the moral courage to give public utterance to their opinions. The sermon and preface are worthy of a fuller notice, which want of space alone prevents our according it.

PICTURES UPON WINDOW PANES

RECENT notice has been attracted in many parts of the world, notably on the Continent of Europe, and in America, to what is generally supposed to be a comparatively new phase of Spirit Manifestation. Our readers will recall the article in the August number of the *Harbinger of Light*, page 673, on "Window Pane Spectres," by Hudson Tuttle, as presenting some interesting experiences. Pictures, usually representing faces, sometimes of persons who are still living and are easily recognised, sometimes of unknown individuals, have appeared on windows, without any visible agency assisting in their production. This has been done, too, in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of trick on the part of those who might be supposed to seek a little amusement for themselves by playing on the credulity of their friends. For instance, the face has at times appeared very faintly and with varying distinctness, appearing and fading, and only settling into a distinct image after having been closely watched for some days. In other cases the appearance has not been so much that of a picture drawn upon glass, as the exact representation of a person on the other side of the window, looking in through the glass. On raising the window the whole thing has disappeared both from the glass and from before the beholder's face. These apparitions have frequently occurred at a considerable height from the ground, in inaccessible windows, and under circumstances which separate them from all probable connection with persons already known as Spiritualists or as mediums. They have much increased in frequency and in variety within the last few years, and are to be met with now in places where they were formerly quite unknown.

The first case of which we have any personal knowledge, was brought to our notice fully twenty years ago.

* "Our Father:" A Sermon preached in Melbourne on Sunday, July 26th, 1874. By Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh. S. Mullen, Melbourne.

It was not in any way supposed to be connected with Spiritualism, at that time hardly recognised as anything more than an obscure superstition. It was narrated as a fact known to several of the persons present, and within the power of all there to verify, however much it might baffle explanation.

It occurred in a large, well-built old-fashioned house, in one of the busiest parts of a populous, commercial city. Formerly the house had been used as a family residence, but changes of fashion and the growth of the business parts of the town, had so altered the neighbourhood that it was no longer used for anything but countinghouses and warehouses. The only persons who resided on the premises were the family who had care of the building, and they were the first who saw the apparition. Subsequently, however, it was seen by numbers of persons, at very different hours, and by no means always at the same window. In this last particular it differed from any similar manifestation we have been able to hear of. It was a pale, sad, wan-looking woman, with a sort of dark blue hood drawn over the head, so as to conceal the head and shoulders, and everything but the features of the face, which were entirely unfamiliar to any one of the numbers who saw it, while its history and the object of its visits remained to the last unexplained. Had no similar manifestation ever occurred in the experience of others, we should have hesitated to mention it to our readers as an example of spirit-power; but confirmed as it is by many parallel cases, in many widely-separated parts of the world—occurring to people who have no communication together, we think the subject becomes worthy of the attention of investigators, and add our mite of experience to the general stock. In some respects, in particular, this class of phenomena does not seem to accord with the usual laws of spirit-manifestation. As yet they seem to occur independent of the presence of any known medium, a remarkable exception to all we yet know of the power of spirits to produce manifestation. The subject is, however, too new, and has been too much merely wondered at, and too little really examined into, to admit of our framing any hypothesis concerning it, other than that it seems likely that our spirit-friends and watchers are seeking to open up yet one more way of making their presence and their powers known to us. If this is so, it will be well that we should co-operate with them carefully and wisely; if it should prove to be a deceit, whether it comes from among spirits or from among men, it cannot be too quickly or too thoroughly exposed.

A NEW AND INTERESTING MANIFESTATION OF SPIRIT POWER.

LAST Sunday my wife, Mrs. Julia M. Carpenter, being on a visit to our friends, Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Swain, Lynn, Mass., a circle was improvised in the evening quite unexpectedly, composed of a few friends invited in, making in all some dozen persons, during which one thing happened somewhat out of the usual line of manifestations, which I presume will prove interesting to your numerous readers. After the circle was formed in the usual manner, the first thing that happened after the medium, Mrs. C., was influenced, was, a sprig of spearmint was placed in her hand, fresh and very fragrant, which the spirits had brought from some place unknown. I ought to mention here that the room was sufficiently light to make everything in it perfectly visible.

After the spearmint was brought, the medium became wholly entranced, and her spirit-guide, Dr. Brown, said: "We are going to make some medicine for a lady that is sick"—a Mrs. Taylor, sitting in the circle—"and the conditions are so very favorable, we think we can materialize it so it can be seen." Then the medium moved about within the circle, making passes, and apparently gathering something from the atmosphere.

The spirits then called for singing, and the medium approaching a gentleman, Mr. Winchester by name, asked him to hold his hands one above the other, about a foot apart, when she, placing her hands between his and rubbing them together a moment, dropped into his hand beneath hers a pill about half the size of a pea. She continued this process until the gentleman's hand

was filled full of pills, the materials for which had been taken from the atmosphere. Just before and while the making of the pills was going on, a strong smell of medicine pervaded the room. At first the pills were soft and plastic, but afterwards became hard. The lady for whom they were intended was directed to take one each morning. Whether she will be cured or not remains to be seen.

The fact that the pills were made in the manner that I have stated is certain, and will be testified to by all the persons present, whose names will be furnished to any one who desires to investigate this matter further. I think this is about the only case on record where materialization of a solid substance has been made, and the thing materialized remain intact. The pills are evidently possessed of great medicinal qualities, as they are very pungent both to the smell and taste. In view of this fact—what next?

A. E. CARPENTER.

—*Banner of Light*, July 4, 1874.

INFLUENCE.

WE throw off our magnetism all around us, carrying with us our own atmosphere. According to the condition of our minds, our influence imbues the house in which we live. Very sensitive persons can feel this quite distinctly. On entering a room, they know, by the impressions they receive, whether the persons there living are good or bad. A person being in the habit of going every day, at a certain hour, into a closet to pray, drew such heavenly influences around him, that the whole closet was filled with them; and others, on entering that little room, felt such divine sensations, that they dropped involuntarily on their knees, and prayed fervently. A virtuous man, not knowing what had transpired in a certain room, inhabited by vicious people, on entering, felt directly a very disgusting and oppressive feeling—a shudder of horror shook his whole frame. And why? The magnetism of these wicked people was left in the room, and the virtuous man felt it. We cannot set our feet upon the ground without leaving an impression, a part of our magnetism behind us. We must be very careful with whom we associate, because we are drawn into their magnetic atmosphere, and absorb their peculiarities. Many persons, without knowing the cause, have adopted the habits of others, by exposing themselves carelessly to their magnetic influence. If two persons meet, both being very positive, there will be a harmonious blending of feeling. If one be positive and the other less so, he who has more magnetism will impart to the one less favored, till both are equal. But, if one is positive and the other negative, there will be a clashing. An antagonistic feeling will arise between them. This explains why, at the first meeting of some persons, they feel instantaneously drawn towards each other, or the reverse. Those who are of one mind, who are spiritually minded, of a refined and elevated culture, feel their souls flow together as drops of water. But those whose desires are of a more earthly nature, cannot find their happiness in the intimate fellowship of the pure-minded. Neither will the last-mentioned blend with the worldly-minded, but both seek the society of like-minded persons, each living in his or her own appropriate sphere.

Our Creator has so constituted the human race, that they act and react upon each other, and are dependent upon each other for strength and support, both temporal and spiritual. We cannot come in contact with any one, but our emanations impart something to him or her, and we in return receive. Every silent thought, as well as the utterance of our thoughts, helps form our character. They work into our spiritual natures, and leave an enduring impression on our souls; and the influence is felt, sometimes years afterward. The Angels exert their influence over us, more than we are aware of; and if we would live more spiritual lives, we would be more able to commune with the blessed Angels, and the loved ones gone before, who are in close association with us. Our spiritual eyes would be more opened, our inward senses more quickened, and we could behold the rapturous beauty and glory of the Spirit-land. We could better

appreciate the benedictions, the tender watchful care and protection of our resurrection Spirit-Guides.—*Shaker and Shakeress*.

SPIRITUAL INFLUX.

THE laws regulating spiritual influx are but little known. Even the spirits themselves seem by no means well informed upon this subject. Explanations are frequently offered, but these only demonstrate the fact stated above. There is a growing desire, however, to know more, which is hopeful; and many experiments are being made tending to throw light upon it. One thing is certain, clearly led up to by the known principles of philosophy and science, and confirmed by the general experience of circles all over the world, viz.:—That influx from the spiritual world is universal, and the various productions of mind, and the phenomena of the sensible or natural world are direct outbirths from that mighty theatre of causation, lying just out of sight, yet immediately contiguous to our own—the plane of effects. We extract, *apropos* of this thought, an interesting account of the origin of Longfellow's "Psalm of Life." The scene is a bright summer morning in 1838, as the poet sat between two windows at the small table in the corner of his chamber, in Cambridge. The poem was a voice from his inmost heart, and he kept it some time in manuscript, unwilling to part with it. It expressed his own feelings at that time, when he was rallying from the depression of a deep affliction, and he hid the poem in his own heart for many months. He was accused of taking the stanza, "Art is long, and time is fleeting," from Bishop's poem, but I happen to know that was not in his mind, and that the thought came to him with as much freshness and originality as if nothing had been written before. "There is a reaper whose name is Death," crystallized at once, without an effort, in his mind, and he wrote it rapidly down, his eyes filling with tears as he composed it. "The Light of the Stars" was composed as the poet looked on a calm and beautiful summer evening, exactly suggestive of the poem. The moon, a little strip of silver, was just setting behind Mount Auburn, and Mars was blazing in the south. That fine ballad, "The wreck of the Hesperus," was written in 1842. A violent storm had occurred the night before. As he sat smoking his pipe about midnight by the fire, the wrecked Hesperus came sailing into his mind. He went to bed, but the poem had seized him, and he could not sleep. He arose, and followed the promptings of his inspiration, and that thrilling and beautiful ballad is the result. It did not come into his mind by lines, but by whole stanzas, hardly causing him an effort, flowing without let or hindrance. "The clock was striking three," he said, "when I finished the last stanza."

JAMES F. FIELDS.

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