

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 most remarkable record of Spirit manifestations that human literature contains—the Bible—speaks in certain passages plainly, and in others obscurely, of "Open Vision," as at one time common to some races of men, among whom it afterwards became more rare. The character of the record is, however, too fragmentary, and too little historical to permit of our knowing exactly in what this "Open Vision" consisted. But by glancing at the early history of other nations, we may gather the probability that it differed widely with different people. Among the Greeks, trance or oracle speaking seems to have been the most common form of Spirit-communion, while among the Romans the tendency was rather to what is now called impressional mediumship than to actual vision. Everywhere it ran into the grossest superstition and priestcraft, as it must do whenever there is little or no culture of positive knowledge, and no habit of exact thought. The richest soils produce the rankest weeds, when left uncultivated.

But it is not with the historical part of the subject that we would deal, further than as past experience may prove an index to a dawning future. That "Open Vision" did once commonly exist among Jewish and other Eastern nations, the best compilations of spiritual experiences we possess plainly declare. The legendary history of most other nations confirm the statement, and it appears highly probable—if coming events do cast their shadows before—that this "Open Vision" is about to be restored to earth among our own races, not as a remarkable and anomalous gift to a few, but as the common heritage, unsought and often unwished for. A consideration of some of the facts that have led us to this conclusion may possibly bring our readers to the same conviction.

The startling and entirely new phases of manifesta-

tions which have been developed of late years—such as spirit photographs, materialization of form, &c.—plainly point to a vast and ever increasing power among spirits to effect their purposes, and to operate upon matter. To what this is due we do not very well know, nor is it much to our present purpose to speculate as to the cause; the incontrovertible fact, and its probable consequences, are all to which we desire at present to draw attention. Of the reality of the fact, all are well aware who have followed the course of spiritualistic phenomena for the last five or ten years. Those of our readers who have not done so, will find these phenomena ably stated, and their importance duly summed up in Mr. Wallace's "*Defence of Modern Spiritualism*," originally published in the *Fortnightly Review* for May and June, and partly republished in the *Harbinger of Light* of August and September. We may also refer them to a previous article by Wm. Crooks, F.R.S., Editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, which was republished with the *Harbinger* of June.

But there is also another class of spirit phenomena, largely on the increase, occurring apart from the investigations of inquirers, or the attempted exposures of scientific men. To these unsought spontaneous phenomena we would especially direct the attention of those who seek to read aright the signs of the times, as affording significant indication of the overwhelming force with which our spirit friends will probably ere long clear away the clouds from before all eyes, and make themselves familiarly manifest among mankind. The *Daily Telegraph* is certainly no advocate of Spiritualism, yet twice within a month, recently, has it given to the public a narrative of incidents, the meaning and origin of which no Spiritualist can for a moment doubt, and which few even outside our ranks would have the hardihood to deny as belonging to those phenomena which have always existed in the world, however much it might be the fashion to ignore them, and which the known laws of natural science, apart from Spiritualism, cannot explain. These spontaneous phenomena do not happen only in distant lands, among people we do not know, and to professing mediums and believers, but are taking place in this very country, in our own midst; occurring to people who neither seek them, nor are willing to believe in them.

In one place, such a person, after retiring to rest as usual, was aroused by hearing some one playing on the piano. Thinking some intruder had entered the house, the master of the house went to eject him without ceremony. He found a stranger playing upon the piano music of the highest character. On his entrance, the stranger arose, turned to him as if to greet him, seemed to endeavour to communicate with him further, but finding the attempt vain, passed out of the room close to him, and disappeared from his sight. Similar visits became of frequent occurrence subsequently, and at last convinced the gentleman and his family that their visitor was no longer in mortal flesh.

Less than a year ago, a circumstance of a somewhat similar character happened in the streets of Melbourne to two gentlemen of known character and position, neither of whom were at that time Spiritualists, nor have they since become so in any sense of the term, though the sequel has more than ever impressed them with the unusual and supra-mundane nature of the occurrence. These gentlemen were walking together in the dusk of the evening in Spring-street, near the Parliament House, on that side of the street which, as most of our readers will know, has no other buildings in the immediate neighbourhood, when one of them started aside with an exclamation of surprise. A passer-by had nearly run against him, apparently intentionally. His companion had also seen the rude or careless action, and put up his hand to protect himself from a collision. Both gentlemen immediately looked in every direction for the perpetrator of the rudeness, but their surprise was greatly increased on finding that the wide open space about them was vacant, no one being within sight but themselves. Both felt certain that something had passed close by them; both had seen the same indistinct object and the same action, and the sudden apparition was equally inexplicable to both. The incident became public at the time, through the daily papers, and the Spring-street ghost, as it was called, excited a good deal of ridicule from some, and revived not a few parallel narratives from others, who, though they would have shrunk with horror from the obnoxious name of Spiritualists, had sufficient courage to give their confirmatory evidence, under cover of a newspaper signature, when somebody else had led the way. As time passed on, however, and no explanation was arrived at, both public and private interest in the matter cooled. The gentleman principally concerned found himself before long involved in circumstances of such painful difficulty as drove for the time all other thoughts from his mind. A sudden and violent death removed a near and dear friend, and he himself was subjected to a protracted trial for his life, under peculiarly distressing conditions. Months of mental anguish and varied suffering passed over him, and it was not until they were passed that his companion on that remarkable evening suggested to him, that, if there were any truth in the old Scotch notion of "wraiths," or warning spirits, he had good reason for supposing their Spring-street apparition might have been one. But, supposing this were so—a supposition we freely admit to be unsusceptible of

proof—of what avail, says the caviller, is a warning so indistinct, so shadowy, so imperfect? With the Spiritualists such an objection would have little weight. The desire of spirits to communicate with those they love and seek to guard, on the earth, may often be much greater than their power to do so. This would be more especially the case where there was neither a tendency to the mediumistic organization, a habit of seeking such communion, nor a belief in the possibility of it. Under these circumstances we can well picture to ourselves the earnest but vain efforts of the guardian spirits to impress their charge in any effectual manner with his impending danger; and we can well understand that, so long as a veil of incredulity hangs between the two worlds, those earnest and passionate efforts to help us must be futile. But the evidence of such efforts, taken in connection with other incidents, that seem to point clearly to the removal of this veil, lead us to the hope, and the belief, that the time of "Open Vision" is again about to be restored to earth, brighter, fuller, and more helpful than it could possibly be in the dark old times. Our friends on the other side of the veil may require to begin upon peculiarly susceptible organizations, may succeed imperfectly in their first attempts, or may utterly fail in this or that instance; but the immense increase of their power to manifest themselves which has marked the last twenty-five years—and more especially the last five—is a pregnant promise of the rapid increase of that power in the future, not only independent of our poor efforts to aid it, but in spite of all that can be done to hinder it.

By faith securely based on fact, we see before the human race a coming time, when the veil between the two worlds shall be so thin that the unhappy materialism of our days, in the church and out of it, will be no longer possible, even to the most doubting dispositions; when the light of the spirit world will shine soft and soothing upon the trials of our chequered mortal life; when their wider and richer experience will help our ignorance, even as amongst ourselves the adult teaches and helps the youth. We shall not then need to go superstitiously to "wizards that peep and mutter," as was done of old; nor as we must now do to mediums, who often become the channels of our communication at great sacrifice to themselves. But in that coming time every grief will be soothed, every loss made bearable, and many a danger, many a mistake, will be avoided, by direct intercourse with angel friends, who even now accompany each child of earth throughout his pilgrimage, but who cannot now reach the dull senses of more than one in seven, and who will then be audible, visible, tangible, to everyone among us. God speed that happy time, that harvest time of earth, the Golden Age that is yet to be!

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE LATE REV. P. MENZIES.

At a private circle held in Melbourne in June last, the medium (who usually passed into the trance state tranquilly) appeared to be suffering pain, and difficulty of respiration. He placed his hand on his chest, and apparently with great effort the controlling influence spoke through him to a member of the circle, thanking him for some words spoken by him before the speaker

left the body, which had been of value to him in his new state. He regretted his inability to control the medium, and promised to return when stronger. The gentleman asked who the spirit was, and with an effort the name "Menzie's" was spoken. It appeared that our friend had had several conversations with the late Mr. Menzie's during his illness on subjects connected with the future state, and that Mr. M. had exhibited a deep interest in our friend's views, which were on the spiritualistic basis. On the 6th and 27th July the medium was again controlled, the control improving on each occasion, and on August 24th a much fuller communication was received. The tone of voice and style of elocution were totally distinct from that of the medium, and were recognised by several present as peculiar to Mr. Menzie's. The following are literal transcripts of the shorthand notes taken at the times mentioned. We think the matter bears internal evidence of the authenticity of the source from which it professes to come.

6th July, 1874.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,—I feel grateful for the seeds of truth you were instrumental in implanting in my thirsty, famishing soul. I have been away; I have seen many things far beyond my comprehension—scenes that language would fail to describe—yet will I endeavour to so form my words, in time to come, that I may enlarge and endeavour to so open out your minds that you may have a foretaste of heavenly light while battling with the things of time and sense. Truly there is a life, there is a state, that it has not entered into the heart of man—it is beyond his comprehension for one moment—to conceive; there is a life of spirit; there is an unfolding of the earthly bud—so grand, so infinitely grand, in comparison with the finest and most God-like development of this, your earth.

I may not interrupt your circle to-night, but having promised you that I would return when my strength would permit, I have come, just that I may remind you that I still bear a strong, strong feeling of gratitude towards you for having assisted me to approach the light, though I knew it not, though I could not understand it, for it was not of earth. Darkness I clung to, rather than light, because of my pride; because of the superstition that surrounded me as a veil; because of my early education, and the circumstances in which I was placed. All these things kept me back, prevented me from deriving that benefit which I ought to have received from information given from time to time by you. Now, however, I am able to understand better many of the little suggestions, many of the little statements that fell upon me so strangely. I am growing strong, daily I am growing stronger, and more conscious am I that there is a work to perform; a work in which I shall be engaged, and will, in the future, be of greater service to mankind than if I were yet a member of your earthly society, still engaged in preaching a diluted form of paganism. Nevertheless, we trust that the work of truth will go rapidly on, whether it be from the Presbyterian platform or pulpit, or from the mediums of the present day, so that the condition of man may be lifted to such a state that he may welcome the new light, the more advanced truth—truly more excellent, more precious to him—that it may be brought within his natural comprehension. With this, good night.

27th July, 1874.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Before your guide takes control of the medium I may be permitted to speak a few words to you. I am pleased always to avail myself of the opportunity, and look forward to that time when I shall have more power over the medium, and opportunities given to communicate what I conceive may be for the benefit of your circle. Truly, it is more for satisfaction to myself at present, than for any pleasure that I may hope on your part. I am not well acquainted with the necessary conditions, but I judge that the circle is not this evening in such a good and receptive state for control as I have before found it. I find there is a difficulty in approaching near to you, and still a greater difficulty in controlling the medium. It occurs to me now that I have a better knowledge of the power of the

spirit world, that many of the impressions I had when in earth life came direct from that world—impressions made upon my mind by some departed friend or lover of truth. My soul frequently burned, as it were,—felt a warmth I did not always account for. It still remains a mystery to me because now that I have attained to this new state of being, new experiences, I am not able to form a correct estimate of the sensations of earth life—those of the body. Still I find great benefit from my earth experiences, now that I see them in this new light. Many truths may be found within the covers of the sacred book,—sacred because it has brought comfort to the souls of so many in all ages—sacred to me now because I see the germs, the living germs, of truth coming more brilliantly out as I better understand the true principles of unfoldment. Words that were clothed in mystery, surrounded by doubt and uncertainty, inexplicable when overhung with the dark curtains of orthodoxy, now become bright as noon-day, because all that lives of theory in the spiritual world is truth—all that is earthly and false remains of the earth. Only the spirit of man passes away, while his body returns to dust, and it is so with his teachings—only that portion is immortal that bears the impress of divinity. I have learned more of the character of Jesus since I entered the spirit world than during the whole time I lived on earth, though of the records available I read, though I was well acquainted with the various opinions of most advanced scholars, and all the light they could throw upon the words of that book seemed insufficient to bring out the true character of the man under our consideration, because he is considered among Christians as a second part of deity, which evidently robs him of that which would seem in a man most glorious. In him there were all the excellencies of a well developed human being—a most loveable character, and it is only when in the light of deity that the human mind fails to fully realise the excellencies of his individuality. This I have been able to do; I see the possibility of man attaining to that state; I see under favorable circumstances how much good a well organised being may accomplish in life,—and again there is a great connexion between a knowledge of this and of the superstitions, dark mysteries that at the present day perplex people on earth, for if they have not Jesus of Nazareth they have other gods; and to believe in the efficacy of a good man's life rather than to cultivate their own, rather than to develop the excellencies within, is injurious in principle and must end in dissatisfaction and grief.

I hope, as soon as the conditions of this circle become more suited to me, and I to it, to be able to enter more fully into a review of my new thoughts, for they are indeed new—or they may be old thoughts re-clothed in new garments that make them appear as new. I do not feel myself a stranger in this circle; I draw towards you with a strong feeling of brotherhood, and this evening as I approached near to the medium I heard the words of the invocation in which you were engaged, and in which you desired the assistance of brothers in the spirit world. The voice seemed so familiar to me that I felt encouraged to approach and see if I could be of service to your circle. To be so would gratify me immensely, and I look forward, I may say, with more pleasure than I can describe to the time when my ideas shall be clearly recognised, and fluently expressed by this means. In the meantime I shall withdraw to a short distance; I shall observe the progress of the circle, and trust that the controlling influence may succeed better than I have done. Kind remembrances to all my friends.

24th August, 1874.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—For a few minutes I am permitted by your kind circle to give vent to the strong feelings of gratitude I possess, and at the same time have that practice which is essential to the perfect control of the medium through whom in future time it may be my great pleasure to speak more fully. Among the many things that appear strange, and especially interesting to me in the spirit world, if there is one fact more interesting and instructive than another, it is the varied manifestation of thought and individuality. On earth you have your various representatives of the scientific

school, each giving their individual idea respecting the nature of man and the natural unfoldment of the world in which he lives, but who can form the least idea of those things which are hidden in the distant past with no means except the laws of nature to give that key by which the doors may be opened and the vision permitted to gather within its circle the various developments throughout times past? Theologians have taught, it is true, and should have the respect that is due to them. I am convinced, however, from observation both upon earth and in the spheres that the most correct explanation of the development of nature is from the scientific standpoint. You have your Huxley and your Darwin, and these men have done much to unravel many mysteries of past times. They have prepared the keystone, but are unable to fix it in the great arch that represents creation. They have arranged, they have built strongly the foundation, and stone by stone has been laid until the vast structure is all but complete, yet it is true it stands upon a support that must rot and pass away if it be not keyed with that stone which represents beyond all others power and strength—the spirit of the immortal being developing itself from every lower stage to stages yet to come. This I believe is represented in the philosophy that is higher than all others; even this much I have ascertained, and it may be found among those who call themselves spiritualists. How happy should the man be who, having all other knowledge, will be able to give to erring men this grand essential—above all things else so grand—the keystone of all the rest. Without it the whole structure falls; it matters not how long it has taken to build—it is of little importance whether the foundation is well and soundly laid, whether the stones be perfect or the masonry without fault—it is useless—it will not stand without this great principle, and happy is the man through whom such information comes. It is indeed a pleasure to possess books, to have before you a vast map, a record of the thoughts of all great men. While on earth I considered this to be a pleasure; I still think it a pleasure to those who are on earth, and you may imagine how much I appreciate that power of the spirit, of the disembodied soul, the free, the liberated man, that can go forth and read those books in living characters upon the minds of those about them. Great men, though far distant, have their principles written in the influence that surrounds them—truth and knowledge, love and wisdom outshine—throwing off, as it were, thoughts—living sparks of fire to kindle, to burn, and to bring forth its living, warm, life giving principle, in the hearts of those who receive them. And below we see the same. I descend into the earth's atmosphere, and here and there I see a man, or a woman, whose influence is clear, and soft, and beautiful, and I love to approach such—to feel myself drawn towards them in deep sympathy, and still closely bound together by these living ties, these brotherly and sisterly influences. I derive a benefit, I become strong by the absorption of light even from those who at one time I would have thought beneath my position and unworthy of my consideration. Blessed be God who has arranged all these things so beautifully that, now the curtain is drawn, I can behold truly the characters of individuals. There is no hypocrisy; all is truth, or all is false, but what it is so it appears to be, and now indeed I can feel a deep sorrow for those who err, for the reason I know the cause—which is no longer a wicked influence, a devil, an unknown cause of evil, no longer an antagonistic influence to supreme power. No; now I understand that that which appears evil, and indeed should bring forth feelings of sorrow to all who love humanity; now I know that it is but an effort of an undeveloped form of being to rise to a higher state, to throw off that which is objectionable, to gather within itself the bright influences of a better life, to unfold itself to a grand and a noble individuality, equal, superior to all that live on earth. It is a cruel doctrine, it is a wicked thing to say that God, who is the life and sustainer of all, the creator and the wise designer of all things and worlds, and space, and spheres, and universes—that he could have created a child under circumstances that would of necessity compel its eternal life to be spent in misery. But who can know better than yourselves that children are born like unto their parents, are born under the

most unfavorable conditions—are brought up without the example that shall make them better—influenced by the gross and diseased magnetism of unprogressed parents—in short, with the bright light and all that is capable of doing them good effectually shut out from them, and so, innocent little things who have no power, no means whatever of being other than they are, are allowed to grow, to live to maturity with all the faults of their nature developed, as by natural laws they must be. Yet it is true that the great teachings to which the world—the christian world—bow the knee—say that God will not take these things into consideration; that for them there is a place of punishment and that of eternal duration. Oh, to how many have I taught this horrible doctrine; how many souls now writhe and I cannot help them—feeling these things because they have found a lodging place in the sympathetic soul—because they have not been able to receive the light it has been my joy to receive! That seed I have cast into ground that was ready to receive it, as it was naturally receptive, and I have been the means of distressing many—and it must for a long time distress many a mother, many a father; place gulfs, imaginary gulfs, between brothers and sisters, between fathers and sons.

I will think no more of this. I will devote my better life to undo that which I did in ignorance, believing truly that it was best and God's will that I should teach these things; but for ever, I am glad to say for ever, these things that appeared to me as true have passed away as the light disperses the mist of morning, and soon will be the great sun of truth become positive to the darkness that now reigns upon the earth. How much will I rejoice when I see that day when the soul of man shall be as light and as joyous as the birds that sing! Then will I forget the troubles that now hang upon me. Many will I search for yet in the spirit world, and many will I bring away from dark scenes into a bright and happier home.

To Correspondents.

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

"THE CHAIRMAN'S" REPLY TO THE REV. THOMAS JAMES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—The perusal of the letter of the Rev. Thomas James, which appeared in your issue of this month, gave me great pleasure, as it enabled me to know for certain what his views on the subject of Spiritualism really were. Mere pulpit utterances are apt to be misinterpreted or misreported when conveyed from one mind to another from memory; but when one—as the Rev. Mr. James has done—commits his thoughts to writing, there is no difficulty in arriving at proper conclusions as to what he says. I am justified, therefore, in affirming that Mr. James frankly admits the genuineness of the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, and the validity of the evidence by which they are supported. This, indeed, is an important admission for the rev. gentleman to make, and shows, at least, that the evidence must be very strong which forces from one in his position such an admission. This knowledge enables Spiritualists to as frankly acknowledge the honest and independent position which he has taken up on the subject, and to say to him that further *impartial* investigation must inevitably lead him to a very different conclusion to that which he has too hastily come respecting the character and work of the communicating spirits.

I will not take up your space by any special references to the more personal portion of Mr. James's letter, as to whether he called the Spiritualists "a seedy lot of philosophers," or "the seedy apostles of Spiritism," but will gladly accept his explanation that he meant no "discourtesy" in a personal sense, and will at once proceed to deal with the more important portions of his epistle. His presence at Golden Square is rather agreeable to Spiritualists than otherwise, and notwithstanding that he may be "only an unctuous priest," let me

say he is held in very general esteem for his many good qualities as a man and a brother, and by none more so than the writer of this letter.

Mr. James admits that he spoke of Spiritualism as "an apostacy." He says, "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. * * * 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." One on reading this statement of the rev. gentleman's belief, cannot but approve of his admirable candour, however much they may differ from his logic. On precisely the same grounds the Roman Catholic condemns the Protestant because the latter refuses to believe in the infallibility of the Pope, who claims to be the supreme interpreter of the Bible. In the Protestant Church there are sects innumerable, and all differing in their interpretation of "the one direct, infallible, and authoritative communication of God's will in things spiritual to man," therefore to carry out the reasoning of the rev. gentleman the Pope must be right, and "the maunderings" of the "vagrant" preachers of Protestantism nothing but heresy. How, let me ask, does the rev. gentleman propose to get out of this dilemma? If his reasoning as applied to Spiritualism be correct, is it too much to say that it can be applied by the Catholic with admirable effect to his (Mr. James's) position as the minister of a church which denies the infallibility of the Pope? Upon what better grounds does he uphold the infallibility of the Bible than the Catholic does the infallibility of the Pope? Spiritualists declare openly that there is no such thing as infallibility in either, Pope, Bible, church, priest or spirit, that there is no reliable evidence of such infallibility in either of them, but quite the reverse, and that therefore the only true interpreter of all supposed divine revelations is God's best gift to man—his reason. Further, that while admitting there is much that is good in the Bible just as there is in the Koran and the Zend Vesta, there is nothing to distinguish it from these and other spurious "revelations" which are all the works of priests, and that the only true revelation of God's will to man is His works. A love of truth compels me to state these facts concerning the Bible, and if Mr. James's "belief" compels him to call it "an apostacy," on the part of Spiritualists, there is no great harm done. It will only verify the old adage, "There is no case, abuse the plaintiff." To aver that a book so full of discrepancies as the Bible is can be the work of an omniscient mind is to make the Almighty appear as a little pedagogue with all the finite imperfections of humanity about him. So Spiritualists just do with the writings of the Bible as they do with the communications from spirits in our own day—accept what commends itself to their common sense, and reject the remainder as being on a par with "the maunderings of any vagrant spirit that may overleap the boundaries of his circle, and make a pretence of speaking to man" in the name of God. If the "belief" of the Rev. Mr. James enables him to accept as infallible and direct from God the story of the six days creation of the world, the apple story of Eve and the fall of man, the world being made flat, the sun and moon standing still to allow of a butchery being completed, of a ghost being the father of a child born in the usual way of a woman, and a mass of similar absurdities—and all for what?—I thank Heaven that I, as well as millions of others, have been freed from all such swaddling clothes of the dark ages. I make these few remarks in no offensive spirit, but as the honest expression of my own sentiments on the subject after the most mature study. But I will not quarrel with Mr. James over his belief. If it leads him to suppose that Spiritualism is a verification of what a spirit said in former days that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrine of devils," it leads its supporters to a very different conclusion. Applying to it the same test as Jesus did to his

works, we say as he said to the Pharisees who charged him with casting out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, "can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?" Spiritualism has brought joy to the hearts of millions. It has reclaimed the drunkard; it has opened the heart of the miser to give of his hoards to the poor and the suffering; it has arrested the sensualist in his career of crime and folly, and brought the murderer to his knees, as it has taught him that he must bear the full weight of his own transgressions himself with no hope of mercy from any other source. It proclaims that all mankind are brothers, and that the highest duty of man is to live for the happiness of others. If such teachings be "doctrine of devils," will the Rev. Mr. James point out where we are to find the doctrine of saints? I would remind him that Spiritualists do not anathematise those who differ from them. They do not use towards them such (infallible, I suppose) language as this—"he that believeth not shall be damned." No, the Spiritualist knows that his belief has come to him from the evidence of his senses, that it could not be forced, and that it is not his belief which will either make or mar him in the next world, but his conduct while here.

If Jesus were greater than a good man and religious reformer, there is no evidence on record to demonstrate it. I have repeatedly and carefully read over all his sayings and teachings, and though I agree with most of them, I see nothing in any of them of an original character, or that was not taught by others before and after him. I am his follower and disciple as I hope I am of every other excellent spiritual teacher, but I bow the knee in homage and worship only to the one living and true God—the universal parent of all mankind. The teachings of Jesus do certainly not rest upon Joseph's dream, but the principal corner stone of the corrupt system called Christianity as most certainly does. The truth of the leading dogma of christianity—the trinity—the three-one God—the spurious span of the bloody Constantine and his pliant council of bishops rests upon that dream, and let me add also upon the credulity, cant and hypocrisy of the mass of superstitious and unthinking dupes who still from one motive or another continue to support it. If the Rev. Mr. James has discovered any other origin for it than what I have herein stated, let him point it out; but I defy him to do so. Thank God that this priestly invention—the trinity—as well as that other one—eternal punishment—are doomed. Time and the schoolmaster are gradually strangling them. What a lavish expenditure of money and blood these twin dogmas have cost mankind; and how the saintly teachers of them have by their giant organizations and devilish agencies kept back the progress and happiness of the human family, let the bloody records of the past speak. It is a remarkable fact, and one which I desire to bring under the notice of my friend Mr. James, that the farther nations get away from the churches the more they love each other, and the nearer they get to Jesus. Strange but true. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

THE CHAIRMAN.

Sandhurst, 16th October, 1874.

SPIRIT MESSENGERS, &c.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I with two others, a lady and her husband, received an invitation to attend a private seance on Thursday, the 15th inst., at the house of Mr. and Mrs. R—; they are both mediums. We did not go for any particular manifestation, but just to see what might occur.

We were late in reaching our destination, and Mr. R— thought we should not come, so he left his home for the Mall a few minutes before we arrived. Mrs. R— being anxious for his return so that we might have a sitting said, "If any of our Spirit friends are here, I should be glad if they would let my husband know he is wanted at home. At the time this request was made Mr. R— was making some purchases in a shop, a voice came from the door, and distinctly called him; it was not only heard by him, but by others in the

shop, and the person that was serving him said, "Some one is calling you." He went to the door, he saw no one. He said "What is the matter; is anything wrong?" The voice said, "No, only friends waiting for you." Mr. R— then went down the Mall; he continually heard the voice telling him he was wanted at home, and he frequently heard the same voice on his way home. When he reached his home, almost the first thing he said was, "I should not have come home so soon, if you had not sent the Doctor for me," meaning his Spirit guide, Dr. Penfold. We who were waiting for him were quite surprised at what he said, and it brought to our minds instantly, what Mrs. R— had said to her Spirit friends.

We sat for some time after, and received some surprising tests. Mrs. R— says it is a common thing with her, if her husband is out beyond his usual time, and she is anxious about him, for her to send a message to him, and he invariably receives it. Our friends who are opposed to Spiritualism will of course, doubt the above statement, but the correctness of it can be vouched for by the five persons present.

JOS. WILLIAMS.

Sandhurst, October 19, 1874.

THE POSITION OF ANTI-VACCINATORS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A large and increasing number of intelligent persons both here and in England, are opposed to the system of compulsory vaccination. The boards of guardians of Cheltenham, Dewsbury, and other places, have resolved not to enforce the compulsory clause. The opponents of vaccination are stigmatized as ignorant and noisy demagogues. They are credited with no honesty of purpose, no acquaintance with the subject they agitate against. Is it possible that this protestation of a noisy minority can be without some foundation, or that their objections cannot be met? The subject is admittedly an unpleasant one to be ventilated before general readers, but as the public are really the interested parties, it behoves all to lay aside false modesty, and give the question that attention which its gravity demands. The first objection taken by anti-vaccinators is, that the present system encourages neglect of the real hygienic measures to abolish small-pox, and other zymotic diseases. All pestilences, diseases and premature deaths, were formerly regarded as manifestations of the wrath of a Deity, whom priests were retained to appease with bloody sacrifice. Science, the great teacher of this century, has opened the revelation that they are effects of certain causes, consequents of certain antecedents; that we can produce them without special reference to the Deity, as on a small scale we can imitate the lightning, or by mingling iron and sulphur, mimic the volcano. If then small-pox be one result of ignorance and filth, and if it be admitted like many other diseases, to depend upon preventable causes, it can be neither philosophic nor scientific, to abort it by the admixture of animal secretions with our children's blood. The false security engendered by inoculating our little ones with the disease as it presents itself in the heifer, is the opponents say, immoral in its tendencies, and vicious in its results. They charge it with diverting attention from the true source of small-pox and other diseases; with fostering negligence of Nature's laws; with allaying the fears and disquietude of the wealthy, and checking with false security, the zeal of the sanitary reformer. In reply, the advocates of vaccination can only point to the diminished mortality from small-pox, and to such tables as Lord Kimberley's, laid before the Imperial Parliament in 1870, which showed the deaths among the unvaccinated as $35\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., those said to be vaccinated as $21\frac{1}{2}$, those with one scar $7\frac{1}{2}$, with two scars $4\frac{1}{2}$, with three scars $1\frac{1}{2}$, with four scars $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. It cannot be denied that life has been saved, and that in the ignorance that prevailed in the time of Jenner, vaccination was an important discovery. The question now is, are there no evils connected with it? Are not general sanitary measures rendering compulsory vaccination needless? Is it not at best but the substitution of one evil

for another? If disregard of Nature's laws is followed by suffering, the moral effect of neglect of those laws cannot be obtained by evasion or substitution.

It is a fact that while the mortality from small-pox has decreased this century, the death rate from other diseases, as consumption, cholera, typhoid fever, and diphtheria has increased. Whether it be a coincidence or not, it is also a fact that some of these appeared in Europe for the first time after the abatement of small-pox epidemics. The convertability of such diseases as scarlet fever, erysipelas, puerperal fever, has been recognised. As long then as the necessary conditions of zymotic disease exist, if there be not small-pox, some other form of zymosis will appear. If small-pox be stamped out by vaccination, and the causes producing it exist, there will be pestilence of another kind, as diphtheria, typhus, or typhoid fever. The only rational and scientific remedy for small-pox is to destroy the existing causes, to remove the conditions necessary for its being generated; for that zymotic diseases originate in independent foci, and are generated de novo without necessary contagion, cannot be doubted. There have been from time to time in Victoria cases resembling small-pox; these have been declared by the most experienced to be varicella or chicken pox, but the similarity of mild cases of small-pox and severe cases of varicella induce the belief that the two diseases are but modifications of the same poison, differing only in degree.

But there is another ground that the opponents of vaccination occupy. They assert that other diseases have been, and are liable to be introduced by vaccination from a diseased child. For some years this has been affirmed by continental observers, as the result of evidence furnished by a series of lamentable cases well known to all medical men. Many however, in England endeavoured to explain away these results, and it was not until Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson brought forward the subject in 1871 and 1873, that it attracted the attention it demanded. A reference to the *Lancet* and *Medical Times* for these years, will show that the series of cases furnished by him with the opinions elicited by the discussion, afford evidence that the fears of the opponents are not utterly groundless. Of all diseases few occasion such lasting effects as syphilis. We know that the folly of our progenitors is a fertile source of disease, and we cannot without great culpability do anything which may by any possibility vitiate the constitutions of future generations.

The late Mr. Startin, from 30 years experience, declared "he had seen many cases of skin disease propagated by vaccination."

Mr. Ballard, in an excellent work, published in 1868, says, "there are cases on record in which it is difficult to arrive at any other conclusion than that the virus of the vaccine, and the virus of syphilis, were both taken by the vaccinator out of a vaccine vesicle, which presented at the time all the characters of a perfect vaccine pock." It must be admitted that as the case stands at present, the evidence points only to the possibility of the syphilitic or other poison being communicated. If through unskillfulness or ignorance on the part of the operator, blood be drawn from the arm offering vaccine, it is confessed that contamination may occur. If even a second supply of vaccine be taken from the same arm, it appears that this is recognised as a source of danger also, as serum, like blood, may be a poison bearer, the first product of the vesicle being the only reliable lymph.

Dr. Henry Lee, a specialist of great experience, admits that "vaccination has the power to light up anew any syphilitic taint existing in the system." The following then are legitimate deductions from evidence afforded by facts:—That the safety of the operation depends 1st. On the freedom from disease of the child vaccinated from. 2nd. On the freedom from disease of the person to be vaccinated. 3rd. On the skill and judgment of the vaccinator.

In view then of these conclusions, it is evident that sooner or later the Legislative enactments enforcing vaccination will have to be re-considered.

W. L. B.

Melbourne, October 1874.

REV. MR. JAMES AND THE BIBLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I was much pleased to see the name of the Rev. T. James appear in your journal for October. He is a gentleman I had the pleasure of hearing preach when Superintendent of the Castlemaine Circuit, and always considered him in advance of his brethren as a learned, conscientious, and diligent inquirer. However, there is one or two subjects in his letter which if you allow me space I beg to refer to.

In the first place he says: "I believe that the Bible is incomparably the best of good books;" although doubtless aware that it is a compilation of fragmentary Scriptures culled out of the sacred writings of several different nations by 318 bishops of the Catholic Church who convened for this purpose at Nice in the year 325, being convoked by the most arbitrary and unscrupulous tyrant of the fourth century, to whom the civil power of Rome and the ecclesiastical authority of all christendom became at once subservient; that these censors of all human authorship, having determined that four out of about fifty narratives of the life and teachings of Jesus, together with now and then a parchment, and here and there an excerpt of Hebraic, Arabic, Chaldaic, and Egyptian Holy Writ even worth preserving, fashioned and finished this text-book of Divine Revelation in such wise as their own wits suggested; and that the same has been subsequently turned into English and accepted by us as the Word of God, because the people have generally supposed it was, because all the successive functionaries of the church from then till now have so taught, because the Council of Nice so decided, because Constantine so dictated: all this is as true as anything in history.

The Bible is so far from being what some suppose it—the simplest and easiest of all volumes to be understood and comprehended—that I consider it the most complex, the most difficult to be apprehended of all the volumes extant in the English language. All commentators and elucidators of the Scriptures, with their tens of thousands of readers, are necessarily disbelievers in the literal, verbal, and plenary inspiration of the Bible; as no reader of commentaries, much less commentators themselves, can be ignorant of the numerous words and sentences that have been corrected by our biblical scholars and critics; and yet, so fearful are some religious persons of admitting that the Scriptures contain any errors, that, despite their own knowledge to the contrary, they stick up for the Infallibility of the Bible! Nay, even Ministers of the Word, whose professed object in life is to propagate truth and root out error are averse from our having a revision of the "authorised version" of 1611, lest the exhibition of the thousands of inaccuracies "should shake the confidence of weak minds in the oracles of truth!" Such timidity I look upon as superlative weakness and pregnant with evil; indeed to me there is something shocking, something repulsive to moral feeling, in anyone's preferring known error to truth under any circumstances whatever. A good deal of invective has been levelled at Freethinking. The only distinction worth attending to on this point is that between accurate and inaccurate, true and false. Thinking can never be too free provided it is just.

In the next place, Mr. James says: "I believe in the absolute divinity of Jesus Christ." With earnest and honest minded men the doctrine of the Trinity is, after due investigation, either sedulously upheld, or unequivocally disowned—according to men's different views of Scripture; having clothed their minds as they clothe their bodies—after the fashion in vogue. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of professed Christians are what they are from sheer accident—mere copies of those by whom they have accidentally been surrounded; and might have belonged to any other denomination, just as easily and as thoughtfully as the sect to which they are now allied; for whether their parents and associates had happened to be Romanists or Protestants, Calvinists or Armenians, Baptists or Quakers, or Israelites, they would have been professedly the like mere fractions of a mass, constituting any religious body whatever, wholly irrespective of its name or tenets; believing anything, adop-

ting anything, subscribing anything—emphatically, Anythingarians! I was a Trinitarian by education; I am now a Unitarian from conviction; the Wesleyan Pulpit, and still more the Wesleyan Hymns, not the Scriptures, impregnated my mind with Trinitarian notions; and up to 40 years of age I had never once examined the doctrine of the Trinity for myself; but, sir, I can truthfully say, Once I was blind, now I see. Whatever change takes place in any man's opinions, are we not bound to abide by the latest opinion as being the most matured. Many (like Dr. Whitby and Dr. Watts) who long ranked amongst Trinitarians, became Unitarians in their riper years.

We read, Mr. Editor, of Cleopa's speaking "concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;" of Peter's proclaiming "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God;" also of his telling the Jews, "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you," and of Jesus saying unto John, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets," but nowhere in the Bible is Jesus ever called the God, the title given to him by uninquiring Trinitarians.

Not one of the Evangelists, not one of the Apostles, not one of the earliest Christians, have even the most distant idea of either a Popish Duality or of a Pagan Trinity; they were one and all, Unitarians. During his life Jesus eat and drank, fasted, prayed, and gave thanks; worked at the carpenter's bench, and associated with his fellow men; at 30 years of age he entered on the Ministry, made choice of certain Disciples, who afterwards became fellow-workers; yet, not one of these daily companions had the slightest idea of his being the God who made them, the Creator of all things visible and invisible—never did such notions enter one of their heads; their whole conduct towards him demonstrates the contrary; they never believed, never once thought that He had a particle of participation in the Godhead; for, they one and all forsook him—even sturdy Peter who said, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and unto death," denied all acquaintance with him, and swore he knew not the man! In their most endearing friendships with him, in their most enthusiastic moments, they simply believed that He was what He represented Himself to be—the Son of God, the Son of Man; the whole of their behaviour towards him, as well as his behaviour towards them, shows that not one of them ever for a single instant believed, or once thought, that he was God! It is utterly impossible, that the Great, the Only, the Living, the Everlasting, the Almighty, the Most High God, the One Jehovah, ever became man, ever died in ignominious death—for spirit cannot become flesh; Immateriality cannot become Material; Infinite cannot become Finite—therefore God could not, never did become man, never died the just for the unjust; nor does he require more at our hands than that we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him; for, "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive"—or, this sacred volume (the Bible) mocks us all.

Laymen are as much interested in the truth of Christianity as Churchmen are; and in this enlightened age are as capable of seeing what is revealed in the Bible.

The last paragraph to which I shall at present refer in Mr. James' letter, is where he states, "Your correspondent says: The faith of Christianity rests upon Joseph's dream," and that it is his misfortune to have lived so obscurely, and in such ignorance that he has never before even heard of this theory. I am sure it is needless to direct Mr. James to the first chapter of Matthew, 20 verse, where he will find the words written, "Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee, Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Having read the passage, will it not occur to him how absurd it is to place reliance upon dreams, and how much more absurd to make them a foundation for religion; yet the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Ghost, a being

never heard of before, stands on the story of an old man's dream. After this we have the stories of three or four other dreams; about Joseph going into Egypt; about his coming back again; and this story of dreams has thrown Europe into a dream for nearly 2000 years.

All the efforts that nature, reason, and conscience have made to awaken men from it, have been ascribed by Priestcraft and superstition to the workings of the devil, and had it not been for the universal right of conscience and free discussion, this religion of dreams had continued to be preached, and that after it had ceased to be believed. Those who preached it and did not believe it, still believed the delusion necessary. They were not bold enough to be honest, nor honest enough to be bold.

Yours, &c.,

LAYMAN.

We are in receipt of a letter from a lady, signing herself, "A lover of Harmony," finding fault with the insertion of certain communicated articles which have appeared in our paper, and complaining of our want of discrimination in inserting them. The title "Lover of Harmony" is a misnomer in this instance, as the letter is personal and sarcastic, and imputes unworthy motives to a number of private individuals. We trust our fair correspondent will give us credit for exercising discretion in this instance in withholding her letter from publication. We shall be happy to insert any fair criticism on the articles she complains of, if free from personalities or apparent animus.—Ed. H. L.

THE TWO GOSPELS.

It has been suggested by the Reverend Mr. James that we examine "the foundations of Christianity." Permit me in this paper to examine its *Gospels*. In my last I pointed out some of the admirable doctrines taught by Jesus. In this one I intend confining my remarks chiefly to the facts contained in the Gospels; to these I regret I cannot ascribe the same amount of approbation, being convinced they have sprung from a totally different source, viz., Priestcraft; but to the proof!

The books of the New Testament contain two distinctly different and contradictory gospels. "The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven," or "of God," and what is called "The Gospel of Jesus Christ." The first of these was taught by the Prophets, Luke I., 68, 75, by John the Baptist, Matthew III., 1, 3, by Jesus IV., 23, and by his Apostles X., 7, and is found in the first three gospels in the commencement of the Acts, and in the Book of Revelations, and is not now taught on the earth though commanded to be so! Matthew X., 7, XXIV Luke XXIV, 46, 48.

The second is the Gospel taught by Paul, and in the Gospel said to be by John.

Those two Gospels are antagonistic to each other, and both therefore cannot be true! for truth is always consistent with itself. Paul seems virulent against "the Gospel of the Kingdom," for he writes, "If we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel to you than that which we have preached let him be accursed," Gal. I, 8.

Mark states the Gospel of Jesus as follows:—"Now after John was put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the Gospel," Mark I, 14, 15, and such as credited it were baptised with "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

The Old Testament contains several Gospels, the non-fulfilment of which warns us of the necessity of receiving others with caution.

We refer first to the Gospel as preached to Adam, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; this we are told was fulfilled in Jesus! Now Luke tells us that Satan caused Judas to betray him into the hands of the Jews; who crowned him with thorns, and "smote him on the head with a reed," "he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," while

according to prophecy, Satan still reigns over the kingdom of this world, and persecutes "the seed of the woman," Rev. XIII, 7, 8. This prediction, therefore, so far has not been falsified!

Abraham, too, we are told had the Gospel preached unto him. God promised to give to him, and to his seed after him, in an everlasting covenant, all the land "from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates" (which neither he nor his seed ever got) that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, and that "his seed shall possess the date of his enemies."

Paul tells us that Jesus and believers in him "are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. III, 16, 29, Gen. XXII, 7, 14, XXII, 17). If so assuredly they are not in possession of their inheritance!

David also preached the Gospel of "the kingdom of God" or "heaven" to King Nebuchadnezzar in interpreting his dream. He informed him that in the days of four Kings four of his successors (I, 41, VII, 17), "the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom, which would break in pieces and destroy" his successors' kingdoms, and that it should "stand for ever." This it is certain christianity did not do! for all the territory held by Nebuchadnezzar has successfully resisted christian teaching and force of arms if ever used to take it.

In the seventh chapter the conqueror of these kingdoms is represented as coming in the clouds of heaven to obtain glory and a kingdom, and that all people and nations and languages should serve him, and we are told "the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom and possess it for ever," VII, 18. No doubt then will be fulfilled the promise contained in the 149th Psalm. "The Lord will take pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation; let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds, let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron."

Messiah is described as a king and a distinguished warrior! "I will make her that halted a remnant!" said Micah, "and her that was cast off a strong nation, and the Lord shall reign over them on Mount Zion, from henceforth and for ever." And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall come the first dominion, the Kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." Arise, O daughter of Zion, for I will make thy horn iron and thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people, and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord," Micah IV, 6, 8, 13.

In the second Psalm we read, "yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for a possession, thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." In the Revelations we read, "he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end to him will I give power over nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter they shall be broken in shivers even as I received of my Father," II, 26.

We could quote many other passages to the same effect, and recommend our readers specially to read over the LXXII Psalm before we proceed farther. R.

CONVERSAZIONE.

THE Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists gave a soiree at the Masonic Hall on Friday, October 23rd. The newly-decorated hall was improved by the addition of flags and flowers, and presented a gay appearance. An excellent concert was given under the conductorship of Professor Hughes, after which a quadrille party was formed, and dancing kept up with spirit till midnight. The catering was superintended by a committee of ladies, and gave general satisfaction. There was a good attendance, but the hall was not so crowded as at the April soiree. The return ball of the previous night, and the farewell concert of Madame Goddard, having kept many of the usual attendants of the Spiritualistic soiree away. The next conversazione will be given in January.

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 707).

Mr. Graham introduces another passage from the Old Testament—that relating to Saul and the woman of Endor—which Christians almost as frequently quote against us just as the Mosaic prohibition just disposed of. He says:—

"Saul, when he had forsaken God, betook himself to the woman of Endor, as a spirit medium, who was attended by a familiar demon, who impersonated the dead; and to her dismay God sent the real Samuel to warn Saul of his coming doom. If this woman were *not* a medium, and if the real Samuel did *not* appear, the whole narrative is calculated to favour superstitious delusions. Read 1 Samuel, chapter twenty-eight." Page 7.

The chapter referred to affords a very suggestive glimpse of the prevalence of a certain form of Spiritualism in those olden times. "Mediums" abounded, and through them the people held communion with their departed friends. But that was what Mr. Graham calls one of the "unauthorised methods of access to the spirit world;" that is to say, it was "unauthorised" by the Jewish *priests*, and that constituted its criminality. The priests of all religions have claimed to stand between the people and their God, and in order to keep the masses under their self-created authority, they have enacted the most stringent laws and enforced them by the most terrible penalties; and then have had the unblushing audacity to assert that they received those laws direct from *God*! What! have "access to the spirit-world" independently of them? The "medium" displace the "priest?" No! The thought cannot be tolerated for a moment! Their prestige, position, influence, and above all, their emoluments would be endangered! And hence a law must be made, and the sanction of the Almighty claimed for it, to exterminate those "unauthorised" encroachers on priestly prerogatives; and Saul, who, like many other kings, was little better than a tool in the hands of a selfish and unscrupulous priesthood, must be stirred up to execute the so-called divine law! He obeyed, for we read in the third verse of the chapter that "Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land." The woman of Endor, however, by some means escaped, and Saul himself afterwards visited her, in the hope of receiving a message from Samuel through her mediumship.

Mr. Graham admits that she was a "spirit medium;" but what authority has he for saying that she was "attended by a familiar demon who impersonated the dead?" The Bible does not warrant this assertion. Preachers have such a habit of *amending* that book to make it fit their views, and saying for it what it does not say for itself, that their deliverances must be received with the greatest caution. The passage referred to says that this ancient "medium" was attended by a "familiar spirit," and not a "demon" as our opponent states. But even if the latter name had been used, the rev. gentleman must be aware that the ancients believed in two classes of demons—good and bad—and there is nothing in the narrative to show that she was attended by a bad spirit. Socrates believed that he was constantly attended by a "*good* demon." Nor has Mr. Graham the slightest authority for stating that the spirit in attendance upon the woman of Endor "*impersonated* the dead." The case under consideration, which is the most clear and striking of any related in the Bible, teaches the exact opposite of this supposition. Instead of any one "*impersonating*" the spirit which Saul wished to commune with, *Samuel himself* appeared! Such loose and unfounded statements respecting scriptural narratives constitute a serious impeachment of either the candour or carefulness of the rev. gentleman, in using the Bible against a movement to which he is opposed.

It will be seen in the above extract from his sermon that Mr. Graham not only admits the genuineness of the woman's mediumship, but also the reality of Samuel's appearance to Saul. This saves further controversy with him on the case quoted. He says—"If this woman were

not a medium, and the real Samuel did *not* appear, the whole narrative is calculated to favour superstitious delusions." The italics are his. And yet the majority of the clergy, whose published utterances on the subject I have read, have positively denied that the real Samuel appeared. Rather than admit that there is any Biblical warrant for Spiritualism, they have had the hardihood to deny a fact which is as clear as language could make it; and thus, to use Mr. Graham's words, they have made at least this part of the Bible "*favour superstitious delusions!*" I will only adduce one illustration of this class—the Rev. C. S. Y. Price, of Geelong. I instance him, because he is a minister of the Congregational denomination to which Mr. Graham belongs. In a lecture lately delivered against Spiritualism he is reported to have said that "Saul's anxious frame of mind, his fatiguing journey, and long fasting, all contributed to render him unusually liable to deception, and that the witch, who was assisted by her emissaries, was doubtless aware of his position, was able to describe the appearance of Samuel, and by her ventriloquial powers simulate his voice, and in reply to Saul's inquiries to predict the defeat of his forces and his own death." This is one of the most gratuitous and barefaced attempts to explain away the obvious meaning of a passage that I have met with for some time. There is not a tittle of evidence in the narrative that the woman was a "ventriloquist," that she was assisted by "emissaries," and that a gross "deception" was practised upon Saul. No wonder that so many thinking persons have begun to distrust the professional expounders of the Bible, when such conflicting interpretations of a plain matter of fact are given by ministers of the same sect.

I will now notice the principal passages quoted by our clerical opponent against Spiritualism from the New Testament. They are intended to show that should "spirit communications" be received "in times posterior to the apostolic," they would only be from "spirits of evil," and would prove "a source of fearful delusion." As the two principal passages already disposed of were pretty sure to be made to do duty for the Old Testament, so were the following two from the New—1 Tim., IV., 1—3; 2 Thess., II., 9—12. The first passage speaks of "the latter times" when some should "give heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." Before Mr. Graham can justly apply this text to Spiritualism, he must prove that *these* are the "latter times." I suspect that the miserable failure of the attempt to make this passage fit certain movements in the past, will prevent such an acute opponent from undertaking so hopeless a task. It is well known that in nearly every age since the time of the apostles the "latter times" were supposed to have come, just because certain sectarian fanatics fancied they discovered "doctrines of devils" in views opposed to their own. It is quite clear from other parts of his writings that St. Paul believed that the "latter times" had dawned in his day, and that the end of the world was "at hand;" but as events have proved him to have been at least *eighteen hundred* wrong in his calculations, Mr. Graham must excuse me for not accepting him as an authority on this point. So long as religious superstition and intolerance reign, and the Bible is allowed to enslave the intellect and conscience of men, so long will this and kindred passages be hurled at liberal movements, in the hope of arresting their progress; and so long will unreasoning bigots think they see in the diffusion of progressive principles, "signs" that the "latter times" have at last arrived. But seeing how invariably persons of this class have hitherto been mistaken in their reckoning, and how often they have been compelled to shift their dates further ahead, one would have thought that a minister of Mr. Graham's sagacity would have paused before he applied this passage to Spiritualism, lest time should prove him to be as mistaken as his predecessors.

I do not, however, object to the use our opponents make of this passage merely because it cannot be proved that *these* are the "latter times." A brief analysis of it will show still more conclusively how utterly inapplicable it is to Spiritualism. It states first of all that "some shall depart from the faith." But what is meant by "faith?" and whose "faith" is referred to? This is the

very point in dispute. Mr. Graham complacently assumes that the apostle had the "faith" of the Congregational Church in view. Dean Macartney has no doubt about the "faith" of the Church of England being intended. Archbishop Vaughan is quite sure that the "faith" of the Roman Catholic Church was meant. And so with other Churches. Let the different conflicting sects of Christendom agree upon some definite and rational system of doctrine before they charge others with "departing from the faith," simply because the views of some narrow and intolerant party are repudiated. When such a system is put forth we Spiritualists will examine it on its merits, and if compelled to reject it, we will try to show that departing from "the faith" of Christians is not necessarily synonymous with departing from the *truth*. We act on Paul's advice, and endeavour to "prove all things," and only "hold fast" what appears to us to be true and "good." We reject many of the present dogmas and customs of the different churches, because we believe them to be essentially false and bad. They formed no part of primitive Christianity; and even if they did, the ancients are not our tyrannical masters. I believe, however, that Spiritualists generally exemplify far more of the *real* religion of Christ than those bigoted sectarians who talk as though they had a monopoly of that religion, and denounce as anti-Christian all those who cannot accept the lies, fables, and blasphemies which they teach for truth. Again, we are said to "give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." I challenge Mr. Graham to prove that the spirits now communicating with mortals are "seducing spirits" in the sense in which he evidently wishes the passage to be understood. So far as reading and observation have enabled me to judge, I say unhesitatingly that instead of trying to seduce persons from the path of truth and rectitude, the great aim of their teachings and efforts is to draw them from error and evil, and make them truer and nobler men. Even those we call "evil" or undeveloped spirits come back more to warn others against the sins that beset them, than to drag others down to the depths from which they are slowly rising. As to "doctrines of devils," let me ask what is there in the teachings of Spiritualism of which this is an accurate description? If to teach that all men are equally the children of God, irrespective of creed and country, and therefore ought to love and help, rather than quarrel with, oppress, and murder, each other, as all nations, including those called Christian, have too long done; that true happiness consists in being and doing good, rather than in embracing certain beliefs and making certain professions; that vice, according to the natural constitution of things, inevitably sooner or later entails its proper punishment, while virtue reaps its deserved reward, and that in this fact we have a sufficient warning against the one and an incentive to the other; that those who have passed away from earth still live, have carried with them into another world their remembrance of and love for those they left behind, and are able under certain conditions to return to us, and impart needed advice, consolation, and help; that in the future state men are rewarded or punished according to their principles and conduct, and not according to their creeds; that punishment there is remedial and reformatory in its object, that progression is the grand law under which all are placed, and that consequently purity and happiness await all the human family, as the ultimate object for which the Eternal Father called them into being—if these and similar teachings are "doctrines of devils," I for one gladly accept them, and can only say that "doctrines of devils" are much more reasonable, beautiful, and humane, and vastly better calculated to elevate and bless mankind, than nine-tenths of the "doctrines" of Christian theologians. Further, if this passage applies to modern Spiritualism, the following will be the distinguishing characteristics of those who profess it—they will be guilty of "speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry; and commanding to abstain from meats." Now will anyone with an intimate knowledge of Spiritualists venture to say that this is descriptive of them as a body? I am not aware that they are more in the habit of "speaking lies in hypocrisy" than their Christian neigh-

bours. I have certainly found them at least quite as truthful, open, and straightforward as I used to find orthodox professors when amongst them. Nor do they "abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving," nor "forbid to marry," though their views of what constitutes *true* marriage may not be identical with those of some religionists. As to "having their conscience seared with a hot iron," I maintain that this is much more descriptive of *Christians* than Spiritualists. Both the "conscience" and benevolence of Christians must be "seared" by a false and barbarous theology, or they could not, for example, believe that a God of *love* would banish the majority of His children to *eternal punishment*, and that while they themselves are safe in heaven, they will be able to hear the wails and witness the agonies of lost souls across the "great gulph,"—probably the wails and agonies of some of their own nearest relatives,—and yet through ceaseless ages will not once ask God to mitigate their sufferings, nor in any way exert themselves to rescue those tormented souls from their terrible doom! No true Spiritualist is capable of such a shocking belief and such inhuman conduct as Christians glory in. Instead of Spiritualism "searing" their conscience, and making them as callous and unfeeling as Christians are, especially when contemplating the destiny of the wicked, it has quickened their sense of justice, roused their benevolence as it never was before, made them considerate and merciful towards even the worst of men, and determined them never to cease their efforts for the good of others, so long as there is a single soul in darkness and misery, either in this world or the next.

It will thus be seen that this celebrated passage from Timothy describes a state of things to which there is nothing in Spiritualism that corresponds; and that consequently our Christian opponents are totally unjustified in so frequently flinging it in our face.

Upon the second stock passage which Mr. Graham has introduced from the New Testament, I will only make one or two remarks. Part of it reads—"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess., II., 11, 12. Mr. Graham emphasises the words "strong delusion," the more deeply to impress upon his readers his belief that Spiritualism is the thing referred to in the passage. I might argue, in reply to him, that we are quite as willing to receive "*the truth*" as Christians are, but then we must be convinced that it *is* the truth, and not some cramping and destructive *error* that has assumed the mask of truth. I might also adopt the reasoning just employed in dealing with the other passage, and show that we as a body have no more "pleasure in unrighteousness" than our pious opponents in general have, and hence, that the passage is as irrelevant as the others quoted. I might also point out that the phenomena of Spiritualism are as plain, palpable matters of fact as the ordinary things which our physical senses cognise, and respecting which their testimony is accepted by all men, and that, therefore, they are not "delusions." But it is not necessary to do these things. I only wish to show that the God who can "send" any of his intelligent creatures a "*strong delusion*," because they conscientiously reject as error what other men, differently organised, educated, and interested, deem to be "truth;" and who, having induced them to "believe a lie" by the "delusion" he has sent, will then "*damn*" them for it to all eternity, is only the creation of an *imperfectly developed human mind*, and is *not* the God of the universe—the Infinite Father. He is the God of the Bible, and the God of orthodox Christianity, but he is not the God which Spiritualism recognises as worthy of adoration and love. The God who could expel angels from heaven for their *first* offence, and never seek to bring them back again; who could place a strong temptation before an innocent man and woman and then *curse* them for falling into it; who could hold *us* under condemnation for something said to have been done by others six thousand years ago; whose wrath could only be averted and favour obtained by a system of reeking sacrifices, which culminated in the immolation of his *own son*; who could allow a mighty devil to "devour"

nine-tenths of the people, whose salvation he professes to "will;" and who could permit the souls of men to writhe in unspeakable horrors for ever for the sins of a brief lifetime on earth—Such a God I admit would be capable of sending his creatures a "strong delusion," and then "damning" them for believing it; but he is not the God I worship. He is a revolting monstrosity, who has too long dominated the pulpits of Christendom. And well would it be for Mr. Graham and his friends if, instead of flourishing the impotent threats of this imaginary deity in our faces, they would cast him from them as a degrading idol, and turn to the worship of the *Father*, who reveals His wisdom, power, and goodness in the great Bible of Nature, and will assuredly in due time bring even the most prodigal of His children to the paths of truth, virtue, and happiness.

I have thus disposed of the principle passages in the Bible which are used by its believers against Spiritualism. They have been dealt with at considerable length, because in replying to Mr. Graham I am answering our Christian opponents generally, who make such a persistent and unfair use of these passages. I trust I have succeeded in showing that the passage about the woman of Endor, which has the most obvious and direct bearing upon Spiritualism, is decidedly in favour of it—for, if she was a genuine "spirit medium," and the "real Samuel" could communicate through her, as Mr. Graham is constrained to admit, it is preposterous to deny that other spirits, both good and evil, may be able to communicate through genuine mediums in our day. And with respect to the texts from the New Testament, I think any unprejudiced reader will see that, whatever else they may apply to, they certainly have no reference to the movement I am vindicating.

(To be continued.)

THE ECLIPSE OF FAITH.

A lecture delivered at the Masonic Hall on Sunday September, 29th, 1874, by Mr. James Forster.

A Solar Eclipse is one of the novelties of nature, and in our early years is watched with considerable interest. The man of science tells us at what hour the dark intruder is to come, and we wait and watch with a sense of awe. At the hour the intercepting body comes, and as it creeps across the sun's bright face, we are enveloped in the shadow of a seeming night. We remember that a circumstance so unusual and so significant, impressed us very deeply. The darkening of the Sun is awful as a giant's sorrow. An Eclipse of Nature is highly typical; it is illustrative of certain states of feeling and thought. Our social life is darkened with unexpected shadows. A commercial panic, a rash investment, or a physical accident may place us suddenly in the clutches of necessity.

More frequent, however, is the Eclipse in the changeful horizon of morals. We are beaten in the conflict with a strong temptation, or held by the chain of a ruinous habit. We violate truths, virgin purity with a lie to hide a crime. We betray some social saviour or sink to the degradation of some secret sin. These varied evils, if we are pure enough to be susceptible, raise up at intervals the grim spirit of remorse. An Eclipse in morals brings over us an acute darkness.

An Eclipse of Faith is that sense of scepticism which assails the mind of the thinking man, the contemplative mind even from antiquity has been harassed with this indomitable shadow. It is the high but solemn prerogative of man to doubt, it is demanded of him to distinguish between the truth and the lie, and the line of demarcation is dim and hazy. To arrive at a true belief, it is necessary to unbelieve, and this process is extremely painful, as only the sceptic with large susceptibilities can know.

A man's religion may be dearer to him than his dearest friend, yet he must tear it from his heart. It may inspire him to the evening of his life, yet in the presence of the bitter end, he, if he is brave, may have to cast it behind him. The building of one's religion is necessarily a work of difficulty, and must be attained mainly by the independent operation of the reasoning faculties, the apprehension of an abstract truth is quite

distinct as a mental process, from the recognition of a fact in Nature.

In forming our opinion of natural objects, we are guided by the testimony of the senses. No sane man who has seen the two creatures would confound the elephant with the rhinoceros.

I desire, however, in the matter not to be misunderstood. The evidence of the senses is not wholly reliable, in watching some of the phenomena of Nature, or the dexterous performance of a magician. The eye misrepresents, imposes on us the sense of hearing, of touch, and taste have also sometimes been unfaithful.

In cases where the judgment is enfeebled, such as extreme spiritualism, religious ecstasy, or temporary delirium imagination gives objectiveness to shadows, and the insulted soul lives in the society of phantoms, but with these exceptions the senses are faithful and helpful.

In first facing the momentous question of Religion, we find ourselves in possession of certain prejudices. Each person has a kind of despotic mental originality, and analyses his religion in his own way. In childhood we are trustful, we repose in the strong arms of parental restraint; our father is our social Hercules; he provides a suit of fustian or broadcloth for our body, and a Gospel for the growing soul, to the boyish mind the moral outfit is often more satisfactory than the material, it is accepted without criticism. A God is presented to us for worship, doctrines for our spiritual guidance, a heaven for our desires, and a hell for our intimidation. To the mass of men, the religion that had piloted their ancestry to heaven is sufficient, whether it be Buddhism or Catholicism. Even in riper years this class of persons do not question or criticise; they are conservative and dogmatic in the wide theatre of controversy; theirs is the grammar of assent. There is another, and large class of persons who have no religious predilections—the Spiritual link is imperceptible; they have none but secular interests. The first of these two classes are shrinking and deferential, to minds of narrow reach and easy bias they may be poetic natures, sensitive to beauty, but not to the profound; they traverse to the end without the interception of the shade of doubt. The other class who pass by religion are the slaves of some secular passion. To the one the dream of faith is firm as the philosophy of Comte; to the other it is nothing. When we were young we also burned with this fervid zeal, and went out with our theological axe and crowbar, and stormed the citadel of blasphemy. But bye and bye we were thrilled by that darkness we indignantly invaded, and laid down our weapons in silent sorrow.

To earnest men and women these are amongst their most impressive reminiscences. It is a blow direct upon the soul, sudden and prostrating; faith reels, and hope is obscured in the increasing darkness, we wander and grope between St. Paul's dogmatism, and the brilliant scepticism of David Strauss, St. Peter and Montaigne. In this Egyptian darkness our home made idols crumble into air. The God of the church dear to us, in spite of his attributed deformities, falls upon the sword of his own henchman. The bitterness of this Eclipse can only be felt as succeeding a sincere belief. They who have not fully trusted cannot gauge the acuteness of a wasted passion. The heart sinks in its solitude as in a deep dark sea. The doubter stands in the midst of a society that worships the God that he has loved and lost; at this time the enigmas of life press heavily on him. The perpetuity of Paganism, the fecundity of the race and Pauperism social. The criminal freaks of Nature, the apotheosis of evil. In its moments of despondency, the mind resolutely despairing, challenges a reconciliation between presiding goodness, and present evil, but these hysterical outbreaks are futile. Nearly every great man, whether philosopher or poet, not professionally identified with the Church, challenges its doctrine or policy; is it not singular that this Eclipse should have fallen upon nearly every brilliant layman, except those who are salaried to keep the old faith bright and burning. The argument that scepticism is the product of an exclusive and scientific training, breaks down immediately it is analyzed; the best known sceptics are those

who have made theology their study. Such men as Colenso, Theodore Parker, Greg, Newman, Strauss, or Renan are bible students of the profoundest type, and two of these—Parker and Colenso—renounced the old religion at the risk of losing their means of livelihood, and in the teeth of a virulent persecution. All honor to that man who is high souled enough to abandon worldly prospects in obedience to the Sovereign voice of conscience, for in his martyr pilgrimage its quiet music is his helpful angel. Great men traverse Ishmael like the way of doubt, and find for us also a truer light. This path of sorrow, is it not consecrated by the elite of the race, but the mind, accustoms itself to its changed experiences; it perceives that light fringes the bordering gloom, out of this mental chaos is gradually shaped the unity of God, and the simplicity of religion. That mental depression which the Christian attributes to remorse, or a sense of the divine desertion is the state of hesitancy in which the soul feels in the gloom for a firmer footing, and which gradually wears away. He begins to feel that the speculative attitude is natural, and that his occasional failures are disciplinary. The poet Herbert, says—

"He stumbleth least."
Who walks in stumbly ways.

The other imputation, that he suffers from a sense of the Divine desertion is repudiated by the logic of the sceptic's life. In the place of religious ecstasy there is in his nature a calm and strong vivacity. Their life is redolent of the beauty of their teachings; the life of one that we have noted was an embodied prayer, and the other diffused a charity that helps without degrading. The God of the doubter is a sympathizing certainty, and to use a phrase of Greg's, "immortality a solemn hope." Is it then conceivable that God should leave that child that leaves so much for Him, that searches for him in the dim obscurity of doubt and sorrow, that child that has lost so much to find the All. Nay, we rather think the Great Father would cling closer to that child who is lonely in his love for Him.

We are not unmindful that the passing of the Eclipse is a time of danger. Man doubting stands between extremes; the Romish priest who doubts nothing, and the Apostle of secularism, who doubts everything, wait His decision. We are acquainted with men whose wrestling in the dark, seems to have made blind, the religious consciousness, seems eliminated. They ride alone—

"Without a pilot
On a skyless sea."

More than one majestic figure has strode proudly this unbroken gloom, and at the end welcomed the dreamless sleep. But to a class of mind this mental phase is dreadful, and some thus harassed have worn themselves to melancholy or madness, as the sensitive child dreads the darkness of its chamber, so does the ever-sensitive truthseeker shrink from the shadows that his soul projects. It is urged by some that the logical outcome of doubt is materialism, but this is denied by experience and history, well balanced minds escape the fatality of extremes. They are the exceptions that have split on the cold reef of atheism. The God of the rationalist though indefinite, is of the highest type; He is a Being in which the heart and intellect repose, real as a mathematical demonstration, His future tapering into shadows is lit up with the gleams of a high probability; even to him the white lips of the dead do not speak the language of despair.

In this age religion is losing its romance; the God we serve must be higher than poetry or controversy. A great German poet, Schiller, has written—

"He only loves
Whose love is without hope."

Our hope may be dim, but it is genuine, and enwraps itself around the necessary God with his infinite possibilities. God is too great to be defined, yet He is too palpable to be distrusted. Scepticism has raised religion from the condition of a mere enthusiasm to that of a philosophy. After passing the stormful changes of

doubt, we are tranquil in the sense of the Divine presence.

That we most dread that which makes misery and evil, is the Eclipse of duty. Science, physical and metaphysical, is continually startling us with surprises. Strange phenomena invade the routine of common life, phenomena which either physical or psychological, seem predicative of a mysterious, a less material life. Common places are consecrated with inexplicable manifestations. We have lost the unctious of our early dreams, but mystery rises at the angles of our life and blocks our way. We sit child-like in the lap of the Great Unknown. Our main hope is in our disposition to do our duty. As we live we learn that in proportion as our lives are kind and brave and true, they are beautiful and redeeming. Self-sacrifice is the highest expression of the Divine in man. The highest product of the Christian Church is not to be compared to that man, who, unassisted by its grace, by sheer self-restraint and self-sacrifice, developes the manliest forces of his character.

That is an easy piety that can go to Heaven for believing, but that is a grander piety that is scrupulously just, that will not take advantage of its neighbor, that will with a Divine courtesy forget its own interests in the interests of others.

Faith and virtue, like Jesus of Nazareth, are often crowned with thorns, and like Him, deserted by their disciples.

We are not Christians in the modern acceptance of that term, although we love those virtues that constituted Christ's originality. Reverently we bow before that life that was embodied goodness, and closed in the highest instance of moral martyrdom. If as the Church allege, we cannot pass through the gate of heaven, but by the virtues of that sacrifice, then we will hope to migrate to a better place. We dare not insult the moral Majesty of Christ by trading with his virtues. Jesus was born illustrious, and walked by the path of rectitude to the martyr grave. We rest in the keeping of the Great Spirit that He served. He hath put us here in this strange world, knowing how easy it is to be vicious, how hard to be virtuous, how exceptional to be just, how impossible to be holy. Besides mystery and sin, He has wreathed our path with goodness, intellect, and beauty. A few there are who smooth and soften the pilgrimage of the miserable. Some of these Divine ones have passed away. But it is said they come into this world beatified and whisper of a land that has no death or sorrow. Who shall resist the footstep of conjecture? The Immortal must be wiser than we who have to die before we learn the mystery of life. We look into the dim hereafter with the saddened curiosity of those who must pass into its darkness, and to us who have so much doubted; the Great Father.

"Folded round with night
Seems stepping from that darkness with a smile."

The night and day are beautiful to us. On bright mornings, we are moved to ecstasy vegetable life; even the poor grass blade waits yearningly with its dewdrop tear for the mother Sun. Music of the Great Master peals from foliage of bush and tree. This beautiful vivacity thrills the heart. This is the poetry of pantheism, but in the evening we are less rhapsodic, in its thought, inspiring silence and darkness, alone with the great Alone we meditate or pray, under the solemn Majesty of the star world; we are a thought environed by unconscious beauty. Is there not a deeper music, a rarer beauty in the human soul, and may we not hope to live that our quiet life may be reflective and inspiring, reflecting truth and goodness, and inspiring hope, then when we are gathered to the pale repose; they whom we leave may read its story as a sacred poem.

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Subscribers are respectfully reminded that the subscription for Vol. 5 is now overdue, and requested to forward same at their earliest convenience. Several subscriptions for the fourth year are not yet paid.

A FEW PHENOMENA APPARENTLY RELATED
TO A CERTAIN KIND OF MAGNETISM.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—To me there is at present hardly any chapter in the Book of Nature of more importance than that of magnetism. The knowledge of the mode in which forces act upon it, and again the mode in which it is used as a force and the results therefrom, may reveal to man explanations of phenomena which in importance probably rank highest among the discoveries he was to this day destined to make. Our relations to our fellow beings, animals, plants, minerals, spirit spheres, and reciprocal actions and consequences, all these mysteries before which even the most enlightened of us at present stand as with bandaged eyes, to my mind can probably not be understood until the laws of magnetism are made clear.

Experiments have given us here and there small indications of the mighty force it constitutes in the hands of those that use it consciously or unconsciously, some times for a noble, some times for a degrading purpose. But all we know of it, or think we know of it, and the law or laws under which it may act, is insignificant compared with the important and large field that presents itself for exploration.

To draw a larger attention to these matters I apply to your generosity, and beg you to insert these few lines into the *Harbinger of Light*. At the same time I wish a mind who has studied this subject would come forward, and state the force or forces, and, if possible, formulate its mode or their modes of action, that produce the following phenomena:—

1. B. coming within the atmosphere of any person finds himself more or less attracted or repulsed.

2. C. coming within the atmosphere of a person here or there feels suddenly aroused sexual desires, which generally are in a state of dormancy.

3. D.'s bed was made and room arranged by a person who on account of some mental troubles had not been able to sleep for some nights past. This time D. spent a restless night in his bed.

4. E. places the palm of his hand in that of F. Sometimes one or both have a sensation. (Kissing on the mouth, breathing on a person, &c.)

5. G. is in a healthy and strong, and H. in a weak condition. They are sitting in the dark at a writing table with the palms of their hands on it. G.'s back of head is turned towards south, that of H. towards north. After the expiration of about ten minutes G. has the sensation of swollen fingers, shooting pains down the forearm, and after about twenty minutes he also feels shooting pains in the forepart of his cerebrum. The experiment is stopped. They walk together for a mile and a half, then separate. On returning G. finds himself giddy, cannot walk in a straight line, feels exhausted.

6. S. had face-ache. T. with her hand made passes over the parts aching, and relieved her partly, but had next day also face ache. The husband of S., when pain of T. was very severe, made passes over the places paining, and thereby gave temporary relief, but never (caught the disease) felt the face-ache.

7. R. stands before L., who sits in an easy chair, holds the palms of his hands for a little while over L.'s head, makes passes over his body, and L. becomes physically unconscious, that is, L. does not see, taste, smell, hear, or feel through the medium of his physical senses.

8. O. had many times in his house made passes over P., and placed him thus in an unconscious state. P. left for a place 72 miles distant. An hour had been arranged before leaving when O. should make passes towards him at his new residence. At the appointed time O. lifted up his hands horizontally, and when they came in this position in the direction of P., O. received a sensation like a small electric shock. He then made passes in the air towards the direction thus indicated, when P. became partially unconscious, as was afterwards proven.

9. J. R. Newton, M.D. in America, sends his photograph to a person in Melbourne. Some persons that take it in their hands with the object of looking at Dr. Newton's picture, experience a peculiar sensation.

10. Mrs. Mettler, in America, sends a letter to a gentleman living at a distance of two thousand miles. He

has for a long time been confined to bed with rheumatism. On reading the letter the patient unexpectedly feels the pain leaving him.

11. The same J. R. Newton, M.D., writes: "While healing in Syracuse, New York, a stranger, who had just been cured, asked me whether I would go to Fulton, New York, and cure his wife, who had been bedridden for over three years, and unable to sit up during that time. I told him that I could cure her without seeing her, as well as to go there; and taking his right hand, I said: "Keep your thought upon your wife; I will give her a shock like an electric battery, and with it her disease will instantly leave; she will arise perfectly well, dress herself, call a witness, and note the precise time, and then walk out-doors. When you arrive home she will meet you at the door, and say, Nathan, I am well now." That is your name? "Yes," said he, "my name is Nathan Rowley." I had never seen him but a few moments, and never heard his name before I called. This was on Tuesday. I lectured in Oswego the next Sunday, when Mrs. Rowley appeared in the audience, came upon the platform, and related the wonder of her cure; said she never heard of healing at a distance before; that she received a powerful shock, and felt that she was cured; she arose, noted the day and hour, and called a woman to witness what appeared to her a miracle."

"This cure took place precisely at the same time that eliminated the influence through her husband, and every word that was told to him was verified. She came 11 miles to make a public statement of the facts, unsolicited."

I intentionally have confined myself to these few phenomena, leaving for the present untouched the immense number of astounding facts that could be cited. To those that have come in personal contact with similar facts the above short description will be sufficient; to those that have only read about them no description of them may suffice. These had better become experimenters.

I remain, your friend,

W. PHILIPPI.

Albury, N.S.W., October 18, 1874.

DUNEDIN NEWS.

The *Otago Daily Times* of October 15th contains an account of a social meeting held at the Masonic Hall, Dunedin, to bid farewell to Mr. Thomas Redmayne (formerly president of the local society for the investigation of Spiritualism) on the eve of his departure for California. There were about 150 persons present, the chair being occupied by R. Stout, Esq., M.P.C. After eulogising Mr. Redmayne's public and private character, he alluded to his connection with Spiritualism as follows: "It was, however, necessary to present another character in which Mr. Redmayne had appeared, and that was as the first President of the first Society formed in New Zealand for investigating Spiritualism.—(Applause).—In those days there was a danger of people hiding their opinions in order to please their neighbors. So far was this concerned, that people came to have no opinions at all.—(Laughter.) Everyone, whatever his opinions were, ought to be fearless and bold, at the same time that he was tolerant. Everyone should recognise the possibility that in religious opinions he might be mistaken. Have this recognised, and there would be more harmony and less bigotry. In reference to Spiritualism, he would say he was not a Spiritualist himself; but he believed the subject should be properly investigated and discussed—he believed that it and all other subjects should be brought under the test of observation. In the investigation of all questions, whether religious or otherwise, we should begin with the facts of observation. This was what the Spiritualists were doing. This was the only true scientific method. The great cry some three or four years ago was, "Why do not the scientific men take up the subject?" Well, Crookes for one had taken it up, and what was now said of him? Why, that he was crazy, like all the rest.—(Great laughter.) Unfortunately, perhaps, for those who held these advanced views, they were not, it appeared from recent doings in

the community, entitled to any consideration. People dared not even read their papers. It was thought by some that the tide of advancing opinion could be stemmed by attempting to stop the reading of certain books and papers; but that could not be done—it would put a stop to all progress. (Applause.) Mr. Stout referred to the moral basis of the progressionists, which was, that every immoral act brought punishment. As we could not infringe what were termed physical laws without suffering, so one could not offend against the moral laws without meeting with punishment. And yet some ignorantill-informed people talked as if the new philosophy was sapping the basis of morality. He referred to Mr. Redmayne as a private friend, and assured him that while wishing him God-speed, they would be glad to welcome him back again. He then presented Mr. Redmayne with an elegantly illuminated and framed address, signed by several friends on behalf of the meeting."

Mr. Redmayne made a brief but appropriate reply. The report concludes as follows:—"The meeting must have been most gratifying to Mr. Redmayne, who, by his straightforward and upright conduct, and manly independence, had made so many friends."

CREATION AND REDEMPTION.

The supposition of the Divine design of a revelation is the result of a foregone conclusion in its favour, and not suggested by antecedent probability. Divines assume that a communication of this nature is in accordance with reason, and was necessary for the salvation of the human race, simply because they believe that it took place, and no evidence worthy of the name is ever offered in support of the assumption. A revelation having, it is supposed been made, that revelation is consequently supposed to have been contemplated, and to have justified any suspension of the order of Nature. The proposition for which evidence is demanded is viciously employed as evidence for itself. The considerations involved in an assumption of the necessity and reasonableness of such a revelation, however are antecedently incredible, and contrary to reason. We are asked to believe that God made man in His own image, pure and sinless, and intended him to continue so, but that scarcely had this, his noblest work, left the hands of the Creator, than man was tempted into sin by Satan, an all-powerful and persistent enemy of God, whose existence and antagonism to a Being in whose eyes sin is abominable, are not accounted for, and are incredible. Adam's fall brought a curse upon the earth, and incurred the penalty of death for himself, and for the whole of his posterity. The human race, although created perfect and without sin, thus disappointed the expectations of the Creator, and became daily more wicked, the Evil Spirit having succeeded in frustrating the designs of the Almighty, so that God repented that he had made man, and at length destroyed by a deluge all the inhabitants of the earth, with the exception of eight persons, who feared Him. This sweeping purification, however, was as futile as the original design, and the race of men soon became more wicked than ever. The final and only adequate remedy devised by God for the salvation of His creatures, become so desperately and hopelessly evil, was the incarnation of Himself in the Person of "The Son," the second Person in a mysterious Trinity, of which the Godhead is said to be composed, (who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary,) and His death upon the Cross as a vicarious expiation of the sins of the world, without which supposed satisfaction of the justice of God, his mercy could not possibly have been extended to the frail and sinful work of his own hands. The crucifixion of the Incarnate God was the crowning guilt of a nation whom God himself had selected as His own peculiar people, and whom He had condescended to guide by constant direct revelations of His will, but who, from the first, had displayed the most persistent and remarkable proclivity to sin against Him, and, in spite of the wonderful miracles wrought on their behalf, to forsake His service for the worship of other gods.

We are asked to believe, therefore, in the frustration of the Divine design of creation, and in the fall of man into a state of wickedness hateful to God, requiring and justifying the Divine design of a revelation, and such a revelation as this, as a preliminary to the further proposition that, on the supposition of such a design, miracles would not be contrary to reason.

The whole theory of this abortive design of creation, with such impotent efforts to amend it, is emphatically contradicted by the glorious perfection and invariability of the order of Nature. It is difficult to say whether the details of the scheme, or the circumstances which are supposed to have led to its adoption, are more shocking to reason or to moral sense."—*Supernatural Religion*.

TO TRANCE-MEDIUMS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I should feel much obliged, if the different trance-mediums now active in various parts of the colonies would have the kindness to favour me direct or through the pages of the *Harbinger of Light* with the sensations they have experienced during their development, and which they now experience, on arms, hands, legs, feet, diaphragm, lungs, heart, throat, cerebrum, cerebellum, spine, &c., and the order of gradual disappearance of senses, when going into trance, and the sensations, &c., when coming into a state of consciousness again; also, with the information whether these sensations have been or are altered, when they (trance mediums) have been or are magnetised by different operators, or by an alteration of food, bath, &c., or by a different state of health, atmosphere, &c.

My address is W. Philippi, Albury, N.S.W.

I remain, your friend,

W. PHILIPPI.

Albury, October 19, 1874.

TILTON'S CREED.

The following beautiful lines, published by Theodore Tilton many years ago, are worth reprinting now:—

As other men have creeds, so I have mine;
I keep the holy faith in God, in man,
And in the Angels ministrant between.
I hold to one true church of all true souls,
Whose churchly seal is neither bread nor wine,
Nor laying on of hands, nor holy oil;
But only the anointing of God's grace.
I hate all kings, and caste, and rank of birth;
For all the sons of men are sons of God:
Nor limps a beggar but is nobly born;
Nor wears a slave a yoke, nor czar a crown,
That makes him less or more than just a man.
I love my country and her righteous cause,
So dare I not keep silent of her sin;
And after Freedom, may her bells ring Peace!
I love one woman with a holy fire,
Whom I revere as priestess of my house;
I stand with wondering awe before my babes,
Till they rebuke me to a nobler life.
I keep a faithful friendship with my friend,
Whom loyally I serve before myself.
I lock my lips too close to speak a lie;
I wash my hands too white to touch a bribe;
I owe no man a debt I cannot pay,
Save only of the love I ought to owe.
Withal, each day before the blessed Heaven
I open wide the chambers of my soul,
And pray the Holy Ghost to enter in.

Thus reads the fair confessions of my faith;
So crossed with contradictions of my life,
That now may God forgive the written lie!
Yet still, by help of Him who helpeth men
I face two worlds, and fear not life or death,
O, Father! lead me by thy hand! Amen.

THE SUNDAY QUESTION.

By the rejection of Mr. Woods' motion the Sunday question is for the present shelved, but we would urge all free-thinkers and progressionists not to allow the matter to be lost sight of. From the beginning of the agitation to the present time the arguments have all been on the side of the Anti-Sabbatarians, the issues raised by their opponents being side ones, and fully answered even in the resolutions of the Sunday Freedom party. One of the stock objections to the opening of the Public Library was that it would necessitate the employment of several persons on the Sabbath. We opine that there are as many persons employed in conducting a good sized church, while the moral, intellectual, and spiritual benefit derivable from the two are all on the side of the Library, apart from the much larger number it would be patronised by. The position of the Sabbatarian party is, to say the least, a selfish one, and must ultimately give way before the advancing tide of liberal opinions.

NEW CIRCLES.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMS AND CIRCLES.—We understand that for some time past a circle has been formed in Sandhurst similar to the Energetic. It is presided over by Mr. W., and the medium is Mr. A. Both are earnest and persevering investigators, as all the members are. They have their regular nights of meeting, and the proceedings are conducted methodically. The result is as it is certain to be—success. The medium, (who is a trance medium, and is made occasionally to deliver some very beautiful trance addresses,) is now being developed for the materialisation of the spirit-form. Already figures are beginning to make themselves visible to the sitters while all hands are joined, and the medium is locked in an adjoining room. The members of this circle all being in earnest may look forward to achieving great things. Let them trust their spirit-guides, and be mindful to their medium, and a rich reward is before them. There is a similar circle at the house of Mr. F., who is himself a medium, and where spirits are seen. They also are making good progress, and deserve it by the manner in which they persevere. At the private residence of Mr. Thiers F. in another part of the city, extraordinary table phenomena occur. The table is levitated without contact. Several persons of position have been to witness this wonderful phenomena. They also are progressing.

Advertisements.

MARRIAGE.

DAVIDSON—ROGERS.—On the 12th inst., at Christ Church, Castlemaine, by the Venerable the Archdeacon, William Davidson, of Sandhurst, third son of the late John Davidson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, to Miriam Annie, widow of the late William Rogers, Kangaroo-flat, Sandhurst. No cards.

JUST RECEIVED, ex "Prince Arthur," from Boston—"The Science of Evil, Joel Moody," 6/9; "The Life," 2/3; "Sexual Physiology," Trall, 9/-; "Sacred Gospels of Arabula," 4/6; "The Temple," 6/9; "Underhill on Mesmerism," 6/9; "Debatable Land," R. D. Owen, 9/-; "The Eye-opener," 3/6; "The Spiritual Harp," 9/-; "The Contrast, or Spiritualism and Evangelicism compared," 6/9; "Radical Discourses," Denton, 5/6; "Beginning and End of Man," 1s.; "Social Freedom," by Barrett, 1s.; "Ministry of Angels realised," Newton, 1/3, A. J. Davis's Works, &c; Banner of Light, 4d. copy. W. H. TERRY, 96 Russell-st.

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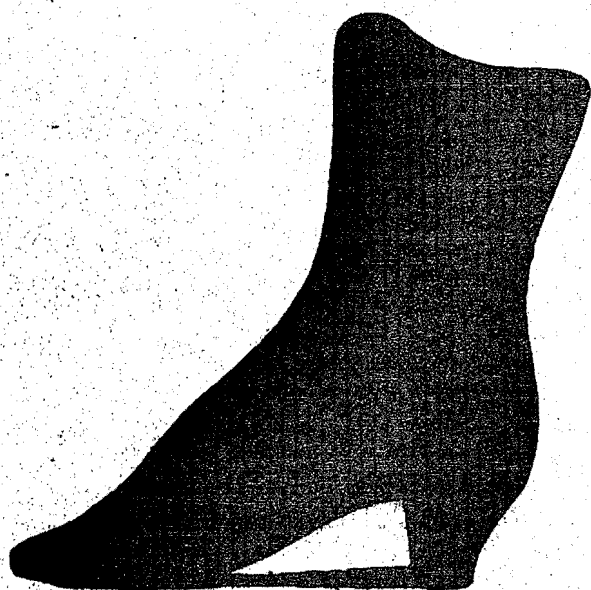
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