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ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

EVIDENCES OF THE EXISTENCE OF JESUS.

[Being Chapter I of "Jesus, Myth, Man, or God," by J. M. Peebles.]

An angel from the heaven of the poets sang through the sensitive organism of T. L. Harris, in the "Lyric of the Golden Age":—

"Of late, I spent a long midsummer day
With Tennyson. He almost felt my hand
Upon his brow, and sensed my spirit-breath.
Wordsworth was with me, that calm, subtle mind;
We sowed within that gentle poet's brain
Sweet thoughts, as fragrant as the new-mown hay;
He knew not that the infidel Rousseau,
In Christ's most precious love made clean and pure,
Bent over him, and wove a coronet
Of truth-flowers for his intellectual brow."

Athiests, Deists—and Spiritualists, a few—feeling their way under an eclipse of inherited doubt, intensified by churchal perversions, deny the very existence of Jesus of Nazareth. The sincerity of these thinkers admits of no question. They have in their ranks men and women of true genius, whose free thoughts shine conspicuous in massive folios of art, literature, and science. Knowledge, however, is not the synonym of wisdom; nor does the sincerity of devotees settle beyond dispute the truth of any theory in philosophy, or dogma in religion.

Toleration is above creeds and councils, and "charity" is more excellent than faith or hope, according to the Gentile apostle. Only the stagnant-souled nail themselves to given opinions, pronouncing them finalities. To think—to work by precedent, becomes mimics rather than full-grown men.

It was an exhibition of the divinity of Jesus to exclaim, "I testify of myself." It was commendable in Emerson to say, "I affirm myself;" and equally praiseworthy in the American poet Whitman, to write, "I celebrate myself."

But did such a person actually exist? or is the whole "life of Jesus" a myth, conceived, born, and fashioned by the early Church Fathers? Witnessing, on Christmas last, in Rome, the Pope borne through St. Peter's Church, in "chair of state," upon the shoulders of eight men, and the multitude kneeling, falling before him in the attitude of worship—seeing most of the seven hundred bishops in attendance upon this Ecumenical Council, passing the grim image, christened

St. Peter, and kissing the brazen toe, I inquired, in the silence of meditation, *Is this Christianity?* Was there a substance to this shadow? Was there an original fire behind these incense clouds of lifeless formalities? Did Jesus actually exist? and, if so, what relation did he bear to the finite, and to the Infinite? *Myth, man, or God?*—that is the question for consideration.

Ancient cities, recently unearthed, are laying their treasures at the feet of modern research. The past lives again in the recurring cycle of the present. The old and the new, circled in fraternal fellowship, are entering side by side into the temple of science, to the end that doubtful historic problems may be solved, and the race better educated upon the important matters of duty and destiny.

Investigations and hieroglyphic readings from Egyptian obelisks, since the discovery of the Rosetta-stone, have firmly established the previously half-believed marvels and records of the historian Herodotus. Recent excavations in and around the city of Jerusalem, have fully confirmed some disputed points of biblical history in reference to the Jews. Mr. Wood's late explorations (under the auspices of the British Museum) in Ephesus, seat of one of the original Asian Churches, are bringing to light, and proving the credibility of many of those seemingly extravagant allusions found in the Roman and Grecian classics. Pompeii and Herculaneum, deluged in a sea of ashes and lava, and sealed from human sight for 1,700 years, now lay thousands of papyri manuscripts upon the altars of Italian museums for inspection and translation; and the long-entombed "Palaces of the Cæsars" are, under the patronage of Napoleon III., being resurrected in Rome, exhibiting ancient paintings, designs, inscriptions, and graffiti, in a wonderful state of preservation.

The director of the Museum in Naples, and member also of the Italian Parliament, after showing us the Pompeian papyri, and methods of unrolling and reading them, mentioned a remarkable caricature of Jesus Christ, discovered while unearthing and removing the rubbish from the walls adjoining the Palaces of the Cæsars, built during the close of the reign of Caius Julius Cæsar, who was made sole Consul and Dictator of Rome for the third time, in the year 45 B.C.

The evidences are abundant that political and personal caricatures flourished to a great extent among the ancient Romans. To this kind of inscription archaeologists have given technically the Italian name of graffiti. These scrawling, yet speaking inscriptions

are found in considerable numbers in Herculaneum, Pompeii, and the late excavations in Rome. The erudite Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., and corresponding member of the Imperial Institute, France, says, in his work on "Caricatures," that "after the Nuceri-neans had been defeated in a gladiatorial exhibition, and their complaint had been brought before the reigning Emperor Nero, who gave judgment in their favour, the Pompeians displayed their feelings in rude drawings upon the walls of the city." These figures, quaint and expressive, bear a striking resemblance to those often seen in the caricaturist sheets of this country. Those drawn by the Pompeians, to express their contempt for the Nuceri-neans, were exceedingly grotesque and mirth-inspiring. Under the principal figure in the group is this inscription, rendered quite classical by the translator:—*O companions! You perished in the victory with the Nuceri-neans!*"

This leads to the consideration of the caricature of Christ crucified. If Palestine had no artists, Pompeii and Rome had caricaturists. The teachings and reports of Jesus' mediumistic works gradually—there being neither telegraphic communications nor "express mail trains"—reached Rome and the rural districts. After a time the sensation became intense. The common people, and the cultured even, began to give adhesion to his doctrines.

The Jews, remember, had charged him not only with Sabbath-breaking and blasphemy, but of making himself "*equal with God*;" while the early Christians were accused by their more scholarly neighbours, the Pagans, of introducing into religious circles "*the worship of a new God!*" This "new god" was reputed to have been born in a Bethlehem manger, and what was more ridiculous to a polished Greek, or Roman flushed with national pride, he rode into Jerusalem, on the great feast-day of the Jews, upon an ass. This is the scripture record, "*Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass.*"

Capital for a caricature, said the artistic irreligious Roman! The caricature was made and sealed in the ruins of Rome—as Vesuvius buried and sealed Herculaneum and Pompeii—to be recently discovered during some excavations. While in Rome lately, we repaired, accompanied by Prince — and Dr. F. H. L. Willis, of New York, to Chirihirano, a celebrated museum, containing a large collection of relics, to see this very interesting caricature. It was important, as additional evidence of the existence of the "*new god*," Jesus. The full account is given in Wright's "History of Caricature," which we nearly follow in description.

During the extensions and alterations lately made in the old Palace of the Cæsars, it was found necessary that, to give support to the structure, a portion of the street which had remained hidden, and virtually sealed since the days of the reigning Cæsars, should be uncovered and cut away. Removing the ruins and the rubbish, the walls were found literally covered with pictures, scrawls, and drawings, under and around some of which were explanatory writings, similar to those found (and may be seen to-day) upon the walls, and in the deserted houses of Pompeii. The one discovered in the late Roman excavations, is a Pagan-inspired caricature upon a certain Christian, named Alexamenos, executed by some half-fledged artist, who evidently from hearsay, despised the Nazarene Syrian, and delighted to caricature his admirers.

In this figure we have first the cross, and then Jesus represented in the form of a man, the arms outstretched, the head shaped like that of the ass, and all extended upon this cross. The Christian Alexamenos is sketched standing on one side, hands upraised in the attitude of the worship of that period. Under the mock figure is an inscription exhibiting little knowledge of the classics. Translated, a portion reads thus—"*Alexamenos worships God.*"

A distinguished polemic, writing near the close of the second century, treats of "credulity" as related symbolically to the Samaritan Thartac, a god bearing

a scroll, wearing a mantle, and having the "head of an ass." The Samaritans and Pharisees, given to derision, accused the primitive followers of Jesus of being "vulgar," of inaugurating the reign of Thartac, and by substituting blind faith and superstition for culture and science. This ancient apologist of the second century, referring to the "origin of the accusations of the Christians worshipping an ass," says:—

"The calumnies invented to cry down our religion arise to such an excess of impiety, that not long ago in this city (Rome) a picture of our God was shown by a certain infamous fellow who got his living by exhibiting to the people wild beasts, and who showed the aforesaid picture openly to all comers, with this inscription: '*This is Onocrates, the God of the Christians.*'"—Ter. Ap., p. 71.

When these derisive and satirical scrawls were drawn, a degenerating Paganism was proud and popular, and primal Christianity, or adhesion to the teachings of the Galilean, a subject of more jest and contempt if possible than is modern Spiritualism in the social circles of a conservative Churchianic aristocracy.

It requires no master mind nor overplus of historic research to demonstrate that myths are not crude creations from nothing; neither are caricaturists sufficiently stupid to have no substance—no shadow of a reality—underlying their telling drawings. Results have corresponding causes; old ruins point to past civilizations. The existence of millions of Mahomedans without a Mahomet, or of a Socratic school of thinkers without a Socrates, would be quite as tenable as that position which, though admitting a Christianity (true or false), denies the very existence of a founder, aflame with great central ideas as the culminating forces of the ages.

The testimony of the celebrated Tacitus upon the events connected with his time is exceedingly important, especially as relating to Christianity and the existence of Jesus. This historian, born A.D. 62, flourished and wrote in the first century of the Christian era. His Annals, commencing with Tiberius and terminating with the death of Nero, in connection with his vivid sketches of Rome, from the time of the Emperor Galba to the death of Domitian, give an account of Christ and the Christians. After Pompeii, along whose quaint unearthed streets we recently strolled, had become thoroughly Romanised in the time of Jesus's advent, the wealthier classes, as mentioned by both Cicero and Tacitus, procured large landed estates in the vicinity. The doomed city was also favoured by the Emperors. Tacitus, speaking of this and the beauty of the villas, records in his Annals a serious conflict occurring in the amphitheatre, A.D. 59, between the Pompeians and the neighbouring Nuceri-neans, in consequence of which the former were prohibited from performing theatrical pieces for a period of ten years. Now, as none disputes the testimony of Tacitus upon the matter of this conflict in the theatre, why should they the following from the same historian:—

"*They (these Christians) had their denomination from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by the Procurator Pontius Pilate. This superstition was thus for a while repressed, only to break out afresh, not merely throughout Judea, where the evil originated, but throughout Rome also, where things atrocious and disgraceful congregated and find many patrons.*"—Tacitus' Ann., lib. xv., c. 44.

The evidence of the scholarly Pliny, the younger, born A.D. 61, and celebrated no less for his eloquence than the civil offices he held in the Roman Government, must ever carry great weight of conviction, because exceedingly clear and definite. Pliny, the friend of Tacitus, sent with proconsular powers by the Emperor Trajan into the provinces of Pontus and Bithynia, found there large numbers of Christians—believers in the Galilean Jesus—charged with infatuation and criminal offences. Hesitating as to the best method of procedure, he addressed a letter to the reigning Emperor, commencing:—"Pliny, to the Emperor Trajan,

wisheth health and happiness." This justly celebrated letter is too long to quote in full. Suffice it, that after informing Trajan that he had "not been present at any of the trials of the Christians," that he had "been perplexed to determine whether there ought to be any difference made in the punishment on account of their age," whether "the name itself, although no crimes were detected, ought to be punished;" he asked special advice concerning those who "had been Christians, but had left them—some three years before, some longer, and one or more twenty years" previous. Pliny further writes:—

"I prohibited assemblies. . . . for many of all ages, and every rank of both sexes likewise are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also and the districts of the open country. Nevertheless it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected." The worst that can be proved against these Christians is that "they habitually meet together on a certain day, before dawn, to sing a hymn to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by an oath (sacramento), not to the perpetration of any evil, but to avoid the guilt of theft, robbery, and adultery, and never to break their word or refuse the rendering back of that which has been entrusted to their care."—Pliny's Letters, x., 97.

In further corroboration of the proofs of the existence of Jesus Christ and his admiring followers in this period of the world, the striking testimony of Suetonius, born in the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Vespasian (A.D. 69), may very appropriately be adduced.

Remember that Suetonius was contemporary with Tacitus, secretary of the Emperor Hadrian, and author, among other important works, of the "Lives of the Twelve Cæsars," still extant. The sceptical Gibbon characterises him by the epithets, "the accurate and the diligent." And yet this "diligent" and "accurate" Suetonius most positively affirms the existence of those "Christians" who, according to Tacitus and that learned work by contemporary Jews—the Toldoth Jesu,* originated from one "Christus" in Judea. Writing an elaborate history of Nero, who took his own life, A.D. 68, Suetonius says—"Punishments were inflicted upon the Christians, a set of men attached to a new and mischievous superstition."—Suetonius' Life of Nero, c. 16.

The clear-headed, deistical Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (vol. ii., p. 407), highly commends the integrity of Tacitus, and speaks in great commendation of the accuracy of Suetonius, adding, "the reputation of Tacitus would guard his text against interpolations."

There was no dispute for some hundreds of years after the Christian era, about the existence of Jesus or the origin of churchial Christianity. It was admitted on all hands, and more especially by men of erudition, to have risen in Judea during the reign of Tiberius. The satirical Celsus,† who lived before or about the

* Tol. Jesu, chap. i. ii.

† This Celsus, who flourished in the time of the Emperor Hadrian, was, if Origen may be credited, an Epicurean philosopher. Personifying a Jew in his work against the Christians, he makes him say to Christ—"When you were washed by John, you say that the spectre of a bird flew to you from the air. But what witness worthy of belief saw this spectre? or who heard a voice from heaven adopting you for a son of God, except yourself and some of your associates? . . . What occasion was there, while you were yet an infant, that you should be brought to Egypt, in order that you might not be slain? For it was not fit that a God should be afraid of death. But an angel came from heaven, ordering you and your associates to fly, lest, being taken, you should be put to death. . . . Let us grant that these wonders were performed by you; but they are common with the works of enchanters, who promise to effect more wonderful deeds than these, and as for those who have been taught by the Egyptians to perform in the middle of the forum for a few oboli, such as expelling demons from men, dissipating diseases by a puff, evoking the souls of heroes," etc. Celsus further says—"The Christians and Jews most stupidly contend with each other, and this controversy of theirs about Christ differs in nothing from the proverb about the contention for the shadow of an ass."—Apul. 9th lib. met.

middle of the second century, wrote a famous work against Christianity. Origen, a long time after, reviewed it. In this noted work of Celsus, after repeating the Jewish calumnies against Jesus and the "Virgin Mary," he proceeds to declare his intention of confuting himself henceforward to the "Christians' own books—the books of the disciples of Jesus." The learned Origen, in reply, states that Celsus "had long been dead," and places him in the time of Hadrian (A.D. 138).

Valentinus came from Egypt to Rome a little previous to A.D. 140. He was an iconoclast, and in some respects advocated an outrageous system. Still he admitted the existence of Jesus, and seemed to rely without reserve upon passages quoted from the Synoptic Gospels, and also from St. John's. Ptolemy and Heraclion were his two most distinguished disciples. Through Origen we have a few fragments of their writings.

Among the sceptical teachers of this period was Basilides, who must be assigned to an earlier period than Valentinus. Classical authors, as well as Eusebius, place him between the years A.D. 117 and A.D. 137. Agrippa Castor was his great antagonist. At one time he professed to be a Christian, and to have received his secret doctrines from Matthias, the one chosen to supply the place of Judas. But Christian or anti-Christian—sceptical and heretical as he was always considered,—he freely acknowledged the existence of Jesus, and quoted from the Gospel of John.

Marcion, who came earlier than A.D. 148, from Sinope, on the Black Sea, to Rome, cherished such violent prejudices against Judaism and the accepted Christianity of that period, that he utterly rejected several books now in the New Testament, and is accused of mutilating and altering others. Though denunciatory in style, he confessed that Jesus' life was not only actual, but beautiful and divine. The Christian father, Tertullian, wrote a treatise against Marcion.

Let it be carefully noted, therefore, that Jews, Greeks, and Romans—Celsus the sarcastic, and Porphyry* the classical, Hierocles, Valentinus, and others, during the first half of the second, or the last half of the first century, opposing or writing against, and all as anxious to overthrow Christianity as are orthodox Sectarists to demolish the citadel of Spiritualism, never, never, so far as we are aware, denied in a single instance the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, nor of Christianity's originating in Judea, under the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate. Celsus is definite upon this point. He not only refers the rise of Christianity to the province of Judea, but he speaks of Jesus as "the man of Nazareth who had existed not long before his time," which was A.D. 138.

Julian, at one time Governor of Gaul, and afterwards Emperor of Rome, died on the 26th of June, A.D. 363, in consequence of a wound received from a Persian javelin, while leading the Roman legions to battle. Julian's early education was entrusted to the care of Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia. Later, his tutor in Greek literature was Mardonius, a learned Christian eunuch. When fourteen, he was sent with his brother Gallus to Cappadocia, where while listening to discourses upon history, they were taught also the Scriptures, and even ordained lecturers. It was the intention of Constantius to make Julian a priest. To this end, after being ordained as a lecturer, he publicly read the Scriptural books in the church of Nicomedia. Pursuing his studies for some years in Constantinople, and afterwards going to classic Athens to finish them, he formed the acquaintance of Libanius, an accomplished orator; and further came into literary fellowship with several of the Platonic philosophers.

* Porphyry was familiarly denominated the "the old man of Tyre." He was scholarly in his habits and fatherly in his nature. The book he wrote against the Christians was publicly burned by the order of the Emperor Constantine.—Vide Fabric. Bib. Græc., Tom. vii., p. 313.

After more critically examining and comparing the two religions—the Pagan and the Christian—with the wonders, marvels, and moral tendencies claimed for each, he accepted the Pagan as 'the more scholarly, catholic, and divine. From this time the bigoted Church Fathers termed him the "Apostate." Upon assuming the purple and ascending the throne, he openly professed the old religion of Rome, issued an edict of universal toleration, and endeavoured to correct previous governmental abuses. Christians complained because he demanded that those who had ruthlessly torn down heathen temples should rebuild them. This was the period of struggle in Rome and the East between the old and the new in religion. The fierce invectives of Gregory and Jerome are unworthy of notice; yet judged by the narrative of Ammianus, by his contemporary the eloquent Libanius and by his own works, Julian must have been a man of amiable moral qualities and brilliant mental attainments. Church opponents even admitted the purity of his morals and the rigid austerity of his life.

Julian wrote several books against Christ and the Christians. Some of these Cyril attempted to refute. The Emperor's style, though classic, was sometimes severe. After penning pointed words against Jesus and John (see Hier., Epist. 83, b. 8), he says—"These things, therefore, we shall shortly discuss, when we come particularly to consider the monstrous deeds and fraudulent machinations of the Evangelists." Though living in the very blaze of Roman civilization and oratory, the Emperor Julian frankly admitted the existence of Jesus, and the genuine goodness of his life. And yet he insisted that his marvellous works were equalled, if not excelled, by Egyptian wonder-workers and Grecian thaumaturgists, and that his admiring disciples hurtfully magnified his virtues. In Libanius's admirable funeral oration upon Julian's life and death this remarkable passage occurs—"But when the winter had extended the nights, Julian, besides many other beautiful works, attacked the books which make a man of Palestine to be a god, and the Son of God. . . . In a long contest and with strenuous arguments in the execution of this work, he appears to have excelled the Tyrian old man."

The Mahomedan Rayzat el Saffa, famous as scholar and historian, writing an elaborate history of the world, in Arabic, near the close of the sixth century, not only mentions Jesus and the wonderful works ascribed to him, wrought in Syria, but considers him to have been the "intermediate prophet," between Abraham and Mahomet. Does some carping iconoclast say there have been "handed down to us no documents written by Jesus and the apostles?" Granted: and what of it? Manuscript-writing was the missioned work of scribes—not masters—in the Nazarene's time. Further, no original documents in the hand-writings of Zoroaster, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Socrates, or John the Baptist have reached us through the past periods. Is it wisdom, in consequence of this, to deny the existence of these moral teachers?

It may not be inappropriate to state that those—especially American Spiritualists—denying the fact of Jesus's existence, base their opinions principally upon the mingled facts and fancies recorded in Robert Taylor's *Diagnosis*. To flippant talkers he is quite as authoritative as Swedenborg to New Churchmen, or the old Latin Fathers to Catholic Christians. While none would dispute Mr. Taylor's excellent scholarship, it is plainly discernible that his imagination, irony, and prejudice often prevailed over his better judgment. His classical references, frequently one-sided, indicate more of a purpose to secure some strategic point than to elicit truth. His exaggerations admit of no apology. In the effort to show the similarity between Christianity and the tragedy of Prometheus, he says—"Prometheus was crucified on Mount Caucasus—not on Mount Calvary"—when the fact is, Prometheus was not

crucified at all. This is the passage from Schutz's *Æschylus* describing the punishment:—

"Thee, with indissoluble chains, perforce,
Must I now rivet to this savage rock!"

Taylor further affirms that Prometheus, "to rescue men from eternal death, ventured to expose himself to the wrath of the Almighty Father." This is not only incorrect or purely imaginative on the part of Mr. Taylor, the translator, but what is more unjustifiable, he avails himself of that ambiguity so often connected with the word death. Here is the true version of *Æschylus*:—

"For unhappy mortals
Had no regard, and all the present race
Willed to EXTIRPATE, and to form anew."

His translation—*Theophrastus on Superstition*—contained so many inaccuracies and wilful deviations from the text, that many of his sceptical friends reproved him, and others entirely forsook him. Reviewing and regretting his course, he set his face churchward again in the latter years of his life in France. Mr. W——, an English gentleman of erudition, occupying socially and professionally much the same position among Spiritualists in London that Judge Edmonds does in New York, recently referred us to the place where Mr. Taylor occasionally addressed the people, informed us why he was "arrested," and, further, furnished us with some of the reasons why he repented his sweeping course and fruitless efforts to prove the non-existence of Jesus Christ, with the ulterior purpose of overthrowing the Christian religion.

Failing to discriminate between religion as a natural sentiment, religion as an elemental principle of the human soul, and the perversions of religion in the name of Christianity, his labours proved utterly ineffective. That he sought in his last years to gain the confidence of the Christian Church is, so far as we are aware, universally conceded. Accordingly, the little prestige he once had faded from the mental horizon previous to his death. None acquainted with his history now quote him as authority. English sceptics long ago removed his candlestick from the altar in their temples; and yet he continues to be the text-book of certain American Spiritualists. These, quoting him authoritatively, usually conclude with the flourish—"Well, Josephus the historian and contemporary of the public ministry of Jesus did not mention him." Such blunders are quite unpardonable. Josephus was not born till sixteen years after the crucifixion of Jesus. His first work was not published till seventy-six years after, and his second not till ninety-three years after Christ. Bear in mind, then, that Josephus, who wrote more in the interest of the Romans than the Jews, was not the contemporary of the Nazarene. As to his famous passage concerning Jesus, some pronounce it a forgery, others, and more learned, genuine. The present tendency of classical critics, even in sceptical Germany, is to the effect that it is authentic. Ernest Renan, denominated alternately "Unitarian" and "Infidel," yet doubtless the most competent Semitic scholar in the world, contends for its genuineness. After speaking of the Gospels as "legendary biographies," written neither "after the manner of Suetonius, nor in the style of Philostratus," and the "crowd of scattered data respecting Jesus and the time in which he lived," he says:—

"Josephus's short notices of Jesus, of John the Baptist, of Judas the Gaulonite, are dry and colourless. We feel that he seeks to present these movements, so profoundly Jewish in character and spirit, under a form which would be intelligible to Greeks and Romans. I believe the passage respecting Jesus to be authentic. It is perfectly in the style of Josephus; and if this historian has made mention of Jesus, it is thus that he must have spoken of him."

It matters little to our present purpose whether the passage in this Jewish history relating to Jesus be genuine or not, inasmuch as it is certain that in about fifteen years after Josephus's birth there appeared upon the stage Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, and others who

wrote of either Jesus Christ or the Christians. Granting—which, however, we do not—that Josephus does not mention Jesus Christ, he does mention John the Baptist (*Antiq. Jud.*, lib. i., c. 5, 6), and this John the Baptist, connected with a prior phase of Christian or Nazarene teachings, pointed to Jesus as one whose “shoes he was not worthy to unloose,” and who should baptize believers with the “Holy Ghost, and with fire”—that is, with or into a most searching, purifying spiritual influence.

Modern Spiritualism, duly celebrating its twenty-first birthday, is pointing towards thirty years of existence in America, since the “Rochester manifestations;” but what Josephus—what accredited American or European historian has even mentioned by name those early heralds of this spiritual dispensation, so musical with the love-ministries of angels?

“Aaron Knight,” the controlling intelligence of Dr. E. C. Dunn, connected with a band of ancient and highly-exalted spirits, one of which he denominates an “angel,” informs us that he has seen Jesus in the heavenly world companioned with Confucius, Pythagoras, Plato, and other holy intelligences, who shone in the twilight of their earlier ages, and whose names grace the page of history. Other—many other—spirits testify to the same.

A. J. Davis, not given to dealing with non-existences, was sufficiently intuitive, clairvoyant, and wise to give Jesus, in his *Pantheon of Progress* (Harmonia, vol. v.), a commanding position. Here we might rest the case. The proofs adduced showing the actual existence of Jesus are passages and references drawn, not from Christian authors or churchal historians, but from unwilling witnesses and sources denominated “Pagan” and “Infidel.” This in the estimation of sceptics, whose good we seek, must necessarily add to the force of the evidences. If the testimony of Tacitus, Pliny, and others required strengthening, we might marshal a host of later authors—Pythagoric, Platonian, and Christian—such as Ammonius, Hippolytus, Partuensis, Pantæus, Melito, Higgsippus, Tatian, Athenagoras, Pamphilus of Cæsarea, whose private library before or since has hardly been equalled, and others of the first centuries after the crucifixion.

Gifted with genius, ability, and fair self-assurance, friend E. S. Wheeler, connected editorially with the *American Spiritualist*, writing of the “Seers of the Ages,” “Men and Myths,” &c., says:—

“According to Pytheas, Inchofer, Manda, and present appearances, we must acknowledge not only the impersonality of Jesus, but also the non-existence of his prototype. Very good! for thus we are carried past Krishna—past the Buddhas—past all the breed of ‘Redeemers,’ ‘Saviours,’ ‘Sons of God,’ and other humbugs, until we reach the centre of the lodge, inside the temple. We should have been better satisfied were the assumed Jesus taken from the position of a myth and made positive as a veritable man. This was not attempted. Fundamentally our criticism upon the ‘Pastophora’ involved the discrimination, that as a historian, Mr. Peebles had been uneven and unreliable; inasmuch as he gave undue prominence to the assumed history of Jesus, without attempting to ‘prove’ even his existence.”

The “attempt,” under difficulties of travel and distance from the familiar face of our library, has been made in the foregoing pages. These evidences, selected from impartial and generally anti-Christian historians, embody some of the reasons for our belief in the existence of Jesus. Are they not sufficient to confirm, or establish, a reasonable belief in all well-balanced minds?

In the effort to negate them, Mr. Wheeler, taking the position he does, that Jesus Christ was only a “myth,” or one of the “breed of the sons of God,” will of course attempt—

1. To account philosophically for the foundation, of that “myth.”

2. To show how that force in the world (good or ill) called Christianity, born of nothing, or originating without the “filmy shadow” of a founder, could have produced such striking results.

3. He will be kind enough to show that those weird drawings caricaturing the Nucerineans and Jesus upon the cross, with the worshipping Alexamenos and the ancient Greek inscriptions, are all modern inventions.

4. Overthrowing the Hebrew Toldoth Jesu, the sole aim of which was to deride and defame Jesus (a “myth,” or mythical nonentity), he will perhaps hurl the destructive shaft of annihilation at the writings of the erudite Philo.

5. He will convict the Arabian historian Ravzat el Saffa, who despised Jesus and the Christianity of the centuries, of helping to make a manufactured “myth” a reality, perpetuating it through all time.

6. He will set the late German critics, and more especially the scholastic Renan, right about the celebrated passage in Josephus, that expressly speaks of Jesus, as well as John the Baptist.

7. Showing the falsity of Suetonius’ testimony with Gibbon’s emphatic endorsement of his historic “accuracy,” he will proceed to demolish the Roman historian Tacitus, who pointedly says the Christians had their origin from “*Christus in the reign of Tiberius*.”

8. He will sternly reprove the Emperor Julian for writing largely against Jesus and Christianity, and the Pagan Libanius for unwisely admitting in his oration that the Christians “made a man of Palestine a God;” when, with wordy assumptions, they might have ended the matter at once by denying the very existence of Jesus.

9. Impeaching that distinguished writer, Pliny the younger, and snubbing the spirits for testifying to having seen the ascended Nazarene in the higher kingdoms of God, he may delicately hint to the seer, A. J. Davis, the folly of lumbering a living Pantheon of Progress with a “mythic” nonentity.

Surely, to speak with a breath, or write with a dash of the pen, a Socrates or a Jesus, a Paracelsus or a venerable grandparent out of existence, because, forsooth, we did not happen to have been present at their birth, or because they made their *début* before our memorable era, is in good keeping with neither reformer nor philosopher.

A. J. Davis, never accused of so much as leaning towards Christianity, had the clearness and good practical foresight to give Jesus a distinguished position in his Pantheon of inspired teachers. Treating of the central thoughts of the Nazarene in the fifth volume of the *Harmonia*, he writes in this manner:—“Jesus, like every other fully-inspired spirit, put personality into his religious compound. His charity was transparent, comprehensible, undeniable, and over-mastering. . . . Jesus did not differ much from the wise and harmonious Essenes in his bye-laws and spiritual precepts.”

While Mr. Wheeler denies the existence of Jesus, he affirms in the most unequivocal manner that Pythagoras was a “sublime man—a grand historical character.” In proof of this position the testimony of Rev. J. O. Barrett and ourself, with references, is offered. Admirable *this* as a stroke of policy—nothing more.

Supposing I had adduced the testimony of two orthodox clergymen, with a few extracts from the Christian fathers, in demonstration of Jesus’ existence, would it not have been considered a magnificent exhibition of pitiable weakness? No, no,—our friend, ever heavily shot for battle, must not be let off so easy. The place of Pythagoras’ birth remains unsettled. Hardly a half-dozen men of research agree as to the time of his advent; while others, noted for erudition in the direction of antiquity, have denied the personal existence of this Samian altogether. Historic and incontrovertible evidences, therefore, are called for, settling the time, place of birth, and existence even of this “sublime man,” of whom, according to Mr. Wheeler, Jesus was only the “pale, filmy shadow.” The proofs, to be satisfactory, must be selected not from ardent admirers, of whom we are one, nor from modern writers prejudiced in favour of Grecian assumption, but from the contemporary enemies and haters of the Pythagoric school of thinkers.

Right here, we must introduce to our critic the Teutonic Zimmermann, who, with others of that class, persist in reducing nearly all the great historic lights of India, Egypt, Judea, Syria, and Greece, to myths or poetic imagery. Smiling, he would probably say, “Friend Wheeler, before writing further of that ‘thin, filmy shadow,’ prove the existence of your substance—Pythagoras!”

Given by temperament and organization to belief and trust, and admiring in our soul’s depths both of those noble personages, Pythagoras and Jesus, I take heartfelt pleasure in re-

saying, that if poesy needed a Homer—sculpture a Phidias—jurisprudence a Lycurgus—morals a Confucius—philosophy a Plato—and oratory a Demosthenes—the Israelitish nation, given to contemplation, required just such an intuitive, loving, self-sacrificing character as Jesus of Nazareth, the central personage of the Gospels.

THE SPIRIT-MESSENGER.

"THE REV. ROBERT TAYLOR" INTRODUCED,
WHO IS TO GIVE A SERIES OF CONTROLS.

A CONTROL BY "AMMONIUS SACCAS."

Recorded by A. T. T. P., January 23, 1884.

[The Medium, who in trance dictates these communications, is an uneducated working man.]

The Sensitive, when he came, said he heard a great deal of talking, and he heard the name of a man who had been long imprisoned and heavily fined for blasphemy.

Recollecting the trial of Carlyle, the bookseller, in Fleet Street, I mentioned his name. The Sensitive said:—

No, not Carlyle.

I then mentioned Robert Taylor, who was called the "Devil's Chaplain," and I said that must be fifty-six years ago. He recognised the name, and immediately went under control of "Ammonius Saccas," who said:—

Not fifty-six but fifty-three years ago; it was in 1831. We had a visitor last night in your little room, one from the astronomical sphere; one to whom a little knowledge spiritually had proved a dangerous thing. I am referring to the Rev. Robert Taylor, Bachelor of Arts, who filled, in the minds of orthodox divines, that position which you have named, and which was an established office in the early days of the Christian Church: namely, the "Devil's Chaplain." There was always in the early days of the Church a devil's chaplain; one whose office it was to point out the misdeeds of the man who was endeavouring to obtain an entry into the priesthood, and who attended every ordination to try to prove the misdeeds of his past life, the better to choose a man uncontaminated and fit for the ministry. Such rigid examinations into a man's past, when applying for the office of priest, was soon found extremely inconvenient to the applicants. The early fathers might have come out of the examination in a tolerably creditable manner, but, alas, for their successors in after generations. Their past lives would bear no such scrutiny, and so the office of Devil's Chaplain was abolished, until the early part of this the nineteenth century, this century of great changes, a man, coming from the very heart of orthodoxy, was unanimously elected by his incensed brother Christian divines to the office of His Royal Highness the Devil's Chaplain.

This chaplain of the great Christian Bogie, or rather the great Bogie of the Christians, preached from a devil's pulpit, situated in the Blackfriars Road, on the Surrey side of your River, at a place called the Rotunda, which, until his advent, had been used as a sort of Free-thought Hall, which had been honoured by the oratory of men who preached liberty and brotherhood. After the decease of the Rev. Robert Taylor, the orthodox divines tried not only to damn his teaching, but also resolved that the place itself should be degraded, and become infamous. Turning it into a resort for the idle and dissolute; not even giving it the name of a legalized play-house, but refusing it the authority of the law, and for many successive years it became what is known amongst the lower orders as a "Gaff" of the lowest description, so that not only his teachings were held in bitter derision, but the place, that had been sanctified by many of his words of wisdom and truth, was, by their malice, changed into a Hell lower than their imagination could conceive.

I tell you, dear Recorder, that a little knowledge spiritually is a dangerous matter, and yet how earnestly some men pray for spiritual knowledge. There is a time and a season for all things. It was neither time nor season for the Rev. Robert Taylor to receive spiritual knowledge. Some men are of a calm and passionless nature, whereas his was a nature sensitive to the greatest degree. He prayed for spiritual knowledge with all the earnestness of his soul, and through intuition and by means of clairaudience he became aware of this truth, that if he received it, it would be like the waving of a magician's wand: things would then be viewed in a different light; his duties would be differently considered. He was a priest of an Established Church, whose doctrine, resting on alleged infallibility, was what was expected to be his teaching; and if he received spiritual knowledge, his intellectual gifts, his moral perceptions would become the anguish of his daily life, if he continued in his ministry. He was reminded of his college fame; of the nights and days of earnest and weary study; of his ministerial fame already overshadowing the sober reputations of his fellow divines. He was advised not to awaken the emotions of his shrewd, hard, iron understanding. The

time was not ripe to have such faculties as these elaborated and etherialized by spiritual communications. His lips already had gained for him spiritual surroundings with all their hopes of immortality still abiding with them. If he would wander into higher paths of truth, then voices would come down; those who were afar would be drawn nearer; those who were indistinct would become clear, and the light of spiritual truth would proclaim herself. He would have to climb the high mountain-peak of earthly faith, and receive the substantial earthly reward of earthly sanctity; but if he would still persist, then he would find that truth will keep him down, even on the level with the lowest on earth; but even if the lowest of earth would deem it degradation to listen to his words, yet should angels listen to him, and angels answer him. Angels belonging to the Brotherhood of Humanity, his heart vibrating unseen with theirs, if he accept truth. And if he should accept truth, then truth shall send him a crop of pain. Through tens of thousands of hearts his persuasive eloquence shall be the foundation on which should be built a greater change than ever has befallen humanity in the past. The voice further said:—

"They look on you now as a mouthpiece of heaven's messengers of wisdom and love. Your congregation thinks, that the ground on which you walk is sanctified. Old and young would wish to be buried and lay their bones side by side with yours, so that they might be the first with you on that great day of universal ascension. But if you adore the truth, all things else are but shadows. The truth, you know, lasteth for ever. If, then, you are still decided on truth, I, 'Busiris, the Ancient of Days,' have warned you; warned you with more than a father's parental love. You know not now spiritual truth. Beware, lest knowing it, you become a liar and a hypocrite."

So spake "Busiris" to him; yet would he know at all risks, making good the words which I have spoken, that often a little knowledge spiritually is a dangerous matter.

The voices asked him:—"On what subject he would like to be enlightened?" And he answered: "Let the theme be of Christianity," and he was answered by a series of spiritual lectures, delivered to him clairaudiently, from which, after many sorrowful heart-searchings, he preached. These lectures were named "Mythology: Mythology as the source of Christianity, as proved by the science of Astronomy, through past ages." He received truth, as all men receive it, in fear and trembling. Oh, dear Recorder, when a solemn voice speaks through surrounding space, the circumstance itself stirs the immortal soul; but when it speaks in unmistakable language the words of truth, which bring sure conviction, the appealing power is felt in the deepest intensity. So it was with the Rev. Robert Taylor. He became, instead of a contented orthodox minister, loving and beloved, the dimmest of all shadows in the black garments of earth's priesthood: turning heavenward; holding communion, yet acting a lie before the Most High Omniscience of God. He, whom the people looked on as clothed with the sanctity of an Enoch; he, whose footsteps lighted with brilliant aura the earth track of all he loved; he, who breathed the dying prayer over his parting parishioners; he, so revered and trusted, was living a life that was both a pollution and a lie. Oh! the agony of that heart-searching. He knew he did not believe in what he taught; he knew that he was drawing the wrath of God by teaching humanity a lie. He would clear his throat with a preparatory "ahem," to tell his listeners that there was no vicarious atonement; no shedding of blood, and no salvation outside of self-hood. But could he see the change in these faces; could he bear for them to start up from their seats, and tear him out of the pulpit which he had defiled? Yet he loved the truth; he loved not a lie. He was punishing himself, and bearing a keener anguish than if he had scourged himself, until the scourge dropped with his blood.

There are low spirits; there are spirits who delighted in his anguish, as there are bad men on earth. Spirits who grinned at, and mocked him during these struggles, whilst his surroundings ascended sorrow-laden into higher and more ethereal spheres: and then came his friends and companions who had passed away in the days of his youth, standing in shape before him. His white-bearded father, with an orthodox Christian frown on his furrowed face; and then came his mother; both father and mother remembered the struggle they had endured to give him his college career; yet in those days of his anguish even his mother appeared and turned her head away from her son. Methinks she might have thrown a pitying glance on her son.

There is unspeakable misery in a false life: He will tell you this when he controls. To the untrue man the whole world is false, and will impalpably shrink to nothing in his grasp. The only thing that is real is the soul's anguish; there is nothing else real.

Then came his first sermon, deeply tinged with unorthodox views, and with it the surprise and consternation of his flock: his arraignment before the Bishop of his Diocese, who tried to pooh-pooh away his scruples, and who did seriously convince him, that it was necessary for him to earn his bread before he could eat it, and said:—"As expiation will be necessary, for the complaints against you have been most urgent, you will be dismissed from your Curacy, until this escapade has been forgotten, and I will not forget you after the needed time has passed. I will find a vacant living for you" (that I believe

is the term for preferment in the church), as he had to go through this expiatory term of penitence.

O God! what perfection of mockery: a soul trifling with itself. It was a mockery at which spirits blushed and wept, and bad spirits rejoiced and jeered: a mockery born of cowardice. Truth is for the iron-nerved. He had been told this, he had been warned, and had accepted the choice to endure it. He shrieked aloud in his anguish, yet bread was necessary for him. He must live; so this expiatory term went on, but there came no notice of any vacant living. So the journey is taken again by him to the Bishop of the Diocese, to know the reason. Then the mask is thrown on one side. The ill-clad, half-starved suppliant is less dangerous to Orthodoxy, than a favoured minister in the full zenith of popularity, who has unfortunate scruples; and the Bishop felt that the position was greatly changed. The first position demanded a given promise and certainty with the intention of keeping it; the second position were an entirely different aspect.

The man had evidently not got rid of his scruples, although his lips answered to the Articles of the Church, and gave adherence to the Christian Creed, yet his heart gave back again the indignant lie. This could be seen in his inspired face, expressive of soul. It was sadly paler, pitifully emaciated, but truthful in every line; and the unbidden protest of the soul took that form: "I must have bread to eat." But the worldly Bishop did not recognise this necessity. The worldly Bishop remembered his persuasive eloquence of old, in the days of his prosperity, and he was not going to give him a chance to repeat it. His place in the future was to be in the back ground, far back, and so he told him, and there was one more aching heart added to the great number existing amongst men.

Well, Will has a short journey on earth. It is well to live out life for truth. After this commenced the preaching of some of the most remarkable lectures that had ever fallen from the lips of men, respecting Mythology, the foundation of Christianity, and which he intends renewing through this Sensitive, and which he prays you patiently to record. He says, that the subject matter may border on what may be deemed by thousands coarse and ridiculous; but he considers that ridicule is a legitimate weapon wherewith to combat hypocrisy and lies. At the same time some of his controls (that is, if he exerts the same power that he exerted last night) will be wise, and breathe a high and holy, God-loving spirit.

Last night inspiration seemed to breathe through his lips; seemed to descend on him, and possess him. His theme was "The Relation of God to Humanity." Had you heard him foretell the high and glorious destiny of newly-formed humanity, you would have thought that the wisdom of all the prophets of the Hebrews was speaking through him. His transitory stay with us, was as if it were an angel in our midst. It was a visit full of triumph; in such a mood he claimed from us the proudest eminence of superiority possessing the gift of intellect; rich in angelic love, with such a pervading eloquence that I had never heard equalled. It is only when he descends into ridicule, that the spirit of soul-bitterness betrays itself. For, dear Recorder, what is he else but a man, and he remembers his manhood's wrongs; and he remembers the class at whose hands he received those wrongs. Yes, he is less angelic and more human in his ridicule, but he is here, and he asks of me, "Ammonius Saccas," to introduce him to you, which I think, I have done effectually. So I leave it for him and you to judge.

This I know, that I have spoken from the remembrance of his visit, and of his words, and I say further, that although his brothers here on earth gave his services to the devil, yet he now claims for his spiritual companions, as friends and equals, the highest of your surroundings. May God, who enables humanity alike to bear the joys and ills of earth, bless and keep you in time and throughout eternity. "Ammonius Saccas" bids you good day.

Before going I asked for a little conversation, and asked for some explanation on certain points.

"Ammonius Saccas," with this present seance, had controlled at six consecutive seances, and had, in two or three of them referred to the work of my co-worker, Wm. Oxley, of Manchester, and as I could not make out the bearing of the allusion, I asked what they meant. He said:

Your co-worker has been endeavouring to show that the foundation of the doctrine of Christianity was founded on Egyptian mystery, the base being astronomy. The Rev. Robert Taylor, who came to the same conclusions, will endeavour to give his views and carry on the work still further. It is proposed by your surroundings, if conditions permit, that "Robert Taylor" will give a series of controls on the astronomical foundation of all religions.

This I trust I shall get, but I cannot command conditions. As an earnest, however, of intention, I may say, I have had a control by "Robert Taylor," whom I shall leave to tell his own story.

Miss Lottie Fowler remains at 33, Downing Street, Manchester, for a little longer. Then she purposes going on to Belper, and after that, Liverpool.

BURNT PAPER RESTORED BY SPIRIT-POWER.

To the Editor.—Sir,—If you have space free in your weekly publication for the insertion of the following, it may be found to interest some of your readers; the truth of which can be verified by myself and others.

We are in the habit of sitting with our MEDIUM (Edward F. Shearin) every Sunday evening, alone, when we receive most interesting and edifying communications from our spirit friends. (vide "Gleanings from the Spirit World," Published by J. Burns, 15, Southampton, Row W.C.) The last two Sundays, having received permission to do so, we invited a lady friend to join our circle, she being desirous of investigating the truth of Spiritualism.

The late "Lord Byron" took control, and after conversing on various subjects of interest, some relating to events of his past life, also present experiences, he proposed to give us for the benefit of our friend, some physical manifestations, with the view of convincing her of the power of the Spirit, etc.

He then requested that one leaf from a cigarette book lying on the table, should be torn in half, while its counterpart was to remain in the book. This was done, and the latter was taken possession of by our visitor, and went home with her. We were then directed to light a candle, and to hold the torn-off half in the flame of the candle until utterly consumed, we being witnesses of its entire destruction. This was fully accomplished. "Byron" then informed us, that we had not seen the last of that piece of paper, as it was his intention to restore it to us again intact, and that it would be found to correspond exactly with its fellow portion from which it had been severed. He expressed a hope of being able to convey it to the home of our friend that same night, but could not promise to accomplish that.

On her way home the same evening, our friend suddenly became alarmed, by the horse becoming restive and unmanageable. It backed, ran on the pavement, reared, and refused to proceed forward. An impression entered the mind of our friend that perhaps "Byron" or some spirit might be near, and that the horse was frightened from this cause. She then mentally implored any spirit that might be there to leave her. Immediately the horse recovered itself, and went on its way quietly as before.

The following Sunday, she was relating this adventure to us, which "Byron" afterwards corroborated as being perfectly correct; that he had himself accompanied our friend, with the intention of conveying the paper to her own home, but fearing the spirit-power to be on the wane, gave it up, but purposely frightened the horse, and impressed the lady's mind with the real cause of its fear, as a test to her of his presence. He expressed regret for not having accomplished the restoration of the paper that night, but promised she should find it this evening before she would leave our circle. After the seance was over and light restored, there on the table before her was the identical paper, which upon examination with its counterpart CORRESPONDED EXACTLY, each jagged edge meeting in perfect correspondence with the other, and upon it a sentence had been written, with the initials of a dear spirit-friend.

After this, we had some light objects, brought from different parts of our house, thrown upon the table before us, and which appeared to have come down from the ceiling!

The physical manifestations were given (as we were afterwards told) to convince our friend on this her first investigation of the truths of Spiritualism.

Signed by us

ELIZA F. TIETKENS.
ERNEST A. TIETKENS.
G. H. (Lady friend).

A GHOST-HAUNTED CHURCH.—Strange reports have been given currency to by our contemporaries respecting "unearthly musical sounds," at St. John's Church. We are sorry that we are unable to throw any light upon the subject. The "Devon County Standard" says:—"It is whispered about that on more than one occasion soft music has been heard stealing through the hushed silence of the church at times when the verger and other officials ought to be in bed and asleep; but on reaching the organ chamber the instrument has been found locked as usual in the intervals between the services, and if the organ had been played at all, it must have been done by unseen fingers. Other gossips say the sextoness has been scared by seeing something walking about the chancel at unearthly hours! Again, that the spring bell used to call the choristers to duty has been set a-ringing most mysteriously; and I don't know how many antics this 'ghost' has not been kicking up!" The "Western Times" has the following:—"The gossips of Torquay have been pretty busy during the past few days circulating a story that would form a suitable subject of inquiry by the psychologists. A clergyman of good standing in the town was attending vespers a few days ago at his church, and happening to be for a time in the edifice alone, he distinctly heard the organ play, and looking up saw a person sitting at the instrument, whom he at once recognised as the gentleman who had occupied that position up to a few weeks ago, when he died. The Vicar has repeated to several members of his congregation this extraordinary story, with all the details of his alarming discovery, and declares emphatically he has not been mistaken."—"Torquay Directory."

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THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1884.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Through the kindness of "Lily" we are enabled this week to give the whole of Mr. Peebles's first chapter of a work which he wrote under the same roof beneath which we pen these lines. We read the proof sheets with him. We wish we could reproduce the whole work, but as it costs only 1s. 6d., it is within the reach of all. The sequel shows the relation which he institutes between the introductory chapter and the main portion of his work.

What a mass of "Conflict" we give our readers this week! Nearly all sides of the question are presented. That there is so much difference of opinion is the best possible argument on behalf of the cry for "more light." It is impossible that the existence of any man can account for ideas and acts which existed thousands of years before his time, and are in vogue amongst us to-day: the "Egyptian Darkness," as one correspondent puts it, held up by modern sects as a Divine light, vouchsafed by heaven for themselves, and them alone. It is our sole object to remove the "Darkness," be it Egyptian or British, and allow that Light to shine forth which is universal, and belongs, not to times, persons, nor places in particular.

We may remark that Mr. Peebles was brought up a Sectarian minister, and he has always had strong "Christian" tendencies, which of late years have perhaps gained a decided ascendancy. It is possible that he would not now print such a book as the one from which we quote this week. In his recent articles in the newspapers, he has dragged in Christianity as the grand thing, in season and out of season. This is what all must try to steer clear of—and that is partisanship. The same materials in different hands assume a vastly different result, according to the quality of prejudice with which they are manipulated.

We hope we have got to the end of the fierce portion of the discussion. The search for truth is indeed endless, and so, we regret to observe, is the tendency to interrupt and attack. We do urge correspondents to state facts, and leave personalities alone.

It is opportune that "Robert Taylor" comes on the stage just as Peebles sets him forth in his worst light. It is not true that he has been set aside by English sceptics. The fact is, that the progress made by Taylor has been so far eclipsed by modern sceptical research, that to repeat his gropings after the origin of myths would be unprofitable. Such workers as Gerald Massey have presented the field of operations in an entirely new light. Twelve years ago he was a Christian; now he has cast aside the views given in his work "Concerning Spiritualism," written at that time. Those who investigate alter their opinion; those who do not, think themselves too omniscient to learn anything.

Those who defend the existence of Jesus as an historical fact, seem to overlook the late Professor Denton's book—"What was he; or, Jesus in the light of the Nineteenth Century." We intended noticing the book where it came out, and even reprinting portions of it. In addition to a critical study of the Gospel, there is added the evidence of psychometry as to the subject mat-

ter. Our impression was, that the deductions were too much biased by the force of prevailing opinion, an error of which there is great danger when psychometry is employed. The sphere of the idea, rather than the thing itself, may be gauged.

Britons make a very free use of "sacred" names. The white elephant has been "re-Christened Buddha," the newspapers tell us. In the first place, how could he previously be "Christened," when he came from a country where Christianity is unknown? Secondly, the term is inappropriate, as it is not stated grease was used, and it would be going too far to assume that the "sacred animal" has been made a member of the "mystical body of Christ." Thirdly, it would be absurd to "Christen" any creature, by naming it after a rival god. So much for the insolent way in which we treat the official name of the "second person of the Godhead." Turning to Burmah?—How would we like it, if the people of that country imported an English race-horse, and by a "pagan" ceremony called it Jesus Christ!

HOW OSIRIANITY BECAME CHRISTIANITY.

We have now received the first portion of Mr. Oxley's concluding chapter on "Egypt," and an astronomical engraving, which we will give next week. To promote the circulation of this last chapter, we offer 11 copies per parcels post for 1s; 30 copies carriage paid for 2s. 6d. 120 copies per rail for 5s., carriage extra; 500 copies for 21s. Orders must be received by Wednesday.

We have printed an extra quantity of this day's issue, which we offer for distribution on the same terms.

Mr. Towns will spend next week at Longton, in the Potteries. His address will be—Care of T. D. Bradley, Esq., Clayton Street, Longton, Staff.

Friends in London and the Suburbs would do well to keep Mr. Colville busy during next week, get together good drawing room meetings of intelligent inquirers, and Mr. Colville will afford them much satisfaction. Applications should be sent on at once to Mr. Colville, 15, Southampton Row.

As Mr. Towns will be absent at Longton, Staffordshire, on Tuesday, he cannot attend his usual seance at 15, Southampton Row. Mr. Colville will therefore occupy the evening, and we hope, in addition to the usual Tuesday evening company, there will be a large accession of other visitors. Mr. Colville will also hold a meeting next Friday evening, to close his visit.

Mr. W. J. Colville will lecture in Neumeyer Hall, on Sunday, Feb. 3, at 3 p.m., when the subject of oration and poem can be chosen by the audience. If time permit, questions will be replied to after the discourse. During the service a fine selection of sacred music will be performed. Mr. Colville will be glad to hold one or two receptions in London, between Feb. 3 and 9. Address—15, Southampton Row.

Mr. J. M. Dale desires to say that he does not attend at 167, Seymour Place, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, for seances, but to engage in a work and explain how the aged poor may be benefitted without pauperizing them. This can be done by the saving of waste, and without imposing a tax on any one.

GLASGOW.—Mr. J. Watson, junior, speaks highly of Mr. A. Duguid's clairvoyance: "his descriptions being wonderfully penetrating and true, as far as I actually know." Mr. Watson is filled with a noble spiritual enthusiasm, which augurs well for his future usefulness.

GATESHEAD.—If our Members do not endeavour to assist by their presence amongst us, we will be compelled to close our Hall in Gateshead for Sunday services. We had Professor Carr as lecturer last Sunday. His subject was "Human Nature." We thank him kindly for the instruction he gave us, and wish him God speed. Mr. Oyston on Sunday next, on "Man the Epitome of the Universe."—JOHN GEO. GREY.

MR. HAWKINS.—For the benefit of others I desire to testify to Mr. Hawkins' powers of healing, I was exceedingly unwell and prostrate, and visited Mr. H. twice, when I was astonishingly (in so short a time) stronger and greatly revived. I take the opportunity of not only thanking Mr. Hawkins but the good angels that use him for this grand and noble purpose; and that it may enable me to show my love more for my Heavenly Father, as my strength returns.—Sincerely yours, L. LICKFOLD.

NEW ORLEANS.—Mr. J. R. Burrell, enclosing a paragraph on General Grant's conversion to Spiritualism, says:—"Spiritualism is steadily gaining ground here. The New Orleans Association of Spiritualists hold a public trance lecture every Sunday morning in the Oddfellows' Hall, Camp Street, the subjects being chosen by the audience. Meetings were formerly held in one of the ante rooms, until the attendances became so numerous, that to meet their requirement the Association was compelled to rent the large hall."

MORLEY.—On Sunday, Feb. 10, a very able choir selected from most of the choirs in the town, will give a service of song in the Co-operative Hall, at 2.30, with the view of clearing off the cost of making the alterations in the Spiritualist's Hall. Mr. Gillman, of Leeds, will preside. In the evening at 6.30 Mrs. Butterfield will give an address on "The Religion of Humanity," in the same Hall, at 6.30, Mr. Gillman will preside. Friends are earnestly invited to be present, and give a brotherly hand in the matter of expenses.

THE THEOLOGICAL CONFLICT.

WILLIAM OXLEY STATES HIS POSITION.

To the Editor.—Sir,—To show the wide-spread and increasing interest in the subject which forms the base of your "Theological Conflict" column, I adduce the following, which is of interest in more ways than one.

Last Sunday, our Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford preached in the church of the Holy Name, and in the course of his remarks, "warned his hearers against reading what might tend to weaken or destroy their faith to be found in the literature of the day, which, he said, was Rationalistic and anti-Christian." He mentioned Mr. Herbert Spencer, Mr. F. Harrison, and Mr. L. Stephens, whose writings, he said, "fed the minds of hundreds of thousands of readers," and, "these men denied the truths of Salvation altogether, and the truth of a personal God." "How was it," he said, "that these men, having acute intellects, had persuaded themselves of the truth of their own conclusions, which were diametrically opposed to theirs (the Catholic): and which they (the Catholics) believed to be darkness and death itself? It was by the use of their free will. Rather than accept their conclusions, they would gladly lay down their lives a thousand times."

Surely this last sentence is either a piece of cheap bravado, or a bit of irony, on the part of his (Catholic) lordship, for who on earth can conceive of a Bishop in these days being placed as Defendant on a charge of "heresy" against Agnosticism, and if found guilty, condemned to the torture and death? Possibly the Bishop might have been struck with the thought of a Nemesis, and dreamed what his predecessors had done to *their* heretics—when they had the power—so it might perchance be done unto the modern hierarchs of the same system. It is amusing to think of the apostles of Freethought turning Inquisitors, with all the paraphernalia of the rack, dungeon, and faggots behind them, ready to inflict the same upon the unfortunate wights who dared to put into practice what these very apostles inculcated.

This teaching (of which I only give extracts) was taken up by our Anglican Bishop of Manchester, who has commenced a series of lectures upon the "Evidences of Christianity." His lordship commenced as follows:—"The Christian evidences were not demonstrations singly, nor were all of them put together. They moved in the sphere which Bishop Butler called 'probability,' and which ranged from the lowest presumption to the highest moral certainty. Demonstration, where it existed, did not admit of accession or cumulation. If they understood the proof of the fifth proposition in the first Book of Euclid, he defied them to add to the force and cogency of it. It stood proved once and for ever. In probability, however, it was otherwise. The single links of the chain were strong, but when all were combined the strength was increased in a geometrical ratio, and yet never amounted to demonstration."

These words from an Anglican Bishop, uttered in the ears of a Manchester audience, within four days of my writing, need no comment of mine. When such an authority can announce that the Evidences of Christianity rest upon no sounder base than—Probability! I find an ally in a most unexpected quarter.

In a matter so important—involving as it does, according to ecclesiastical dogma, the risk of the loss of the soul, and an eternal punishment into the bargain—it is high time either to have a certainty, or to drop the dogma.

It is precisely on the question of Evidence as to the literal actuality of the Bible narratives, that the "Conflict"—if such it be—will rage. It is on this, and *this alone*, that I have spent so much time and labour to ascertain; and what I saw with my own eyes in Egypt, in addition to the ascertained knowledges from other sources, have compelled me to come to the conclusion, that these narratives are non-historical, and, what is more, they never were intended to be considered as such by their authors; but for the selfish, and otherwise, interests of the Sacerdotal Caste, they have been used—not for the purpose of uplifting, but to enslave the minds of their simple-minded and unquestioning votaries.

Permit me, Mr. Editor, to speak as a Spiritualist to Spiritualists. I claim their soul sympathy, for, I am endeavouring to show, in my humble way, that Spiritual Truth *must* be *spiritually discerned*, and in rescuing the Bible, as a Record of *Spiritual Verities*, from the grasp of a dominating Sacerdotalism, I would place it beyond the cavils and "criticisms"

of the mere literarian, as well as from the mere pietist and sectarian, who use it for their own personal and system's inflation; and who *dare* to place—not the Bible—but *their opinion* of it, between the reverent and enquiring soul, and the object of his search.

The enquiry now addressed to the Church is: What is the evidence that you can produce to substantiate the terrific—what you call—truths (you allege) as having the authority and seal of God? What these bewildered ecclesiastics cannot supply, is in the hands of Spiritualists. One says, You must receive the evidences we produce on faith. Another says, The "probability" is in their favour, but it cannot be demonstrated. The Spiritualist comes to the front, and says, I know! for I have the evidence, which neither doubt nor dogma can overturn; for my evidence does not rest upon statements made in writing 1,800 years ago, and which depend for their veracity upon interested chronographers, but upon actual facts within my own cognizance. It is these facts that convince me of the truth, that when I die I shall live again; and that instead of being immured in a hopeless and eternal hell, for not believing what I cannot understand, there is—according to accumulated evidence—an eternity of progression, &c., &c.

In presence of agnostic, scientific (so called), and cleric foes, all allied to "destroy the life of the Young Child," now born into this world, *i.e.*, The Spirit of Truth, as yet, but barely recognised: I say—Is it wise to fall out by the way, and contend for individual supremacy? Such a policy is suicidal, and will assuredly bring to grief all who indulge in it. The present aspect of the mightiest movement which the world has yet felt, is an emphatic protest against the folly of attempting to again establish hero-worship, whether that hero be the personal self or the self-proclaimed missions and messengers from on high, who, willing enough to disregard the susceptibilities of others, yet are acutely sensitive when their own are touched.

As if there were not enough Christian "claimants" to the new Messiahship, we have the same competition witnessed in India, and now again in Mahomedan Egypt. The Mahdi, or the Great One of God, is but another effort of the decaying tree to send out new shoots, and maintain the systems of the past, and he—if successful—would be the second and greater Prophet of God.

My hope is that the Mahdi will come on, and throw himself on the phalanx of the Infidel! This time the Infidel (to the Arab), will be the British People, and if the conflict come, the Infidel will be a match for the Arab God-sent Prophet.

May I, in conclusion, refer to the "Gospel of Spiritualism" for certainly it has a Gospel (Good-spell) of its own. In its Gospel there is not a single damnatory clause. It does not proclaim Salvation—but Progression. Its utterance is—"Nothing is lost." Then how can a human soul be lost? The Artificer of the Universe; the Builder of this Earth; counts, has counted, and will count up every atom of which it is composed, and now that the Spirit of Love, from which is born the Spirit of Truth, has come to the fore, *She* proclaims: "There is no Power that can rob me of my own Life-atoms." This, methinks, is a more beautiful Gospel than has yet been preached from Ecclesiastical pulpits, and resting, as it does,—not upon probabilities, nor upon faith! but upon known facts, it will prove itself to be a mighty attractive Power that "will draw all unto itself."

WILLIAM OXLEY.

N.B.—I cannot, nor will not permit myself to be placed in a false position. I have no theory to maintain, to which I try to make ends meet and tie. My sole aim is to help to dissipate the thick cloud of human ignorance on Spiritual verities—which is composed of nothing more solid than human traditions, piled up from antiquity—so that pure and undefiled Spiritual Truth, and Divine Love and Wisdom, may be seen, revered and loved.

CLAIRVOYANCE AND THE EXISTENCE OF JESUS.

Dear Editor,—The Theological Controversy, now becoming famous in the columns of your valuable paper, might have the assistance of my clairvoyant experience in regard to the subject under dispute. Your own leanings are toward a clear and unbiased solution of the difficulty, and as this grand central doctrine is at this moment moved from its old foundations, we also look for a more spiritual and certain rendering

of the truth regarding the existence of Jesus. It is not wise to say that such a thing is of little moment, or does not in any great degree interfere with the growth of spiritual thought; for, from my experience, five-sixths of those who adhere to the movement of Spiritualism, are more or less embarrassed with the idea; and in many quarters it is unmistakably a bone of contention.

To those who look on the Bible as a spiritual book, or that spiritual verities are clothed in earthly meaning, then the grounds of dispute are taken away, and the only difference of opinion is in regard to the form or mode of expressing what lies behind the outer form of truth. Every Spiritualist who truly represents that name, must receive every bible statement qualified by this interpretation, and even all phenomena are the embodied expression of some great law or principle or fact existing in a spiritual state. And I think the controversy will not only set to rights the doctrine which forms the centre luminary of the Christian system, but also invest the whole transactions of the spirit-circle with a better meaning, and lead persons to look below the surface, and learn the meaning of those great truths which they are being taught in this strange manner.

In my own mind, I fear nothing as to the existence of truth being touched or injured in a controversy of this kind, if allowance is given and Orthodoxy kept out of the way. To settle the claims for the personal existence of Jesus, will not satisfy the minds of those enquiring after the whole truth; every bible character and incident is in the same position. And should we think it possible, after we have seen his identity fully established, and all claims to his meritorious position put right, to separate him from other incidents and persons in the book—which, to the mind, are not satisfactory and good—is ridiculous. The whole book in its separate parts is an entirety of truth, and the good and bad mix together as a harmonious revelation, or not at all. The existence of Jesus is the acceptance of the New Testament as a whole, and all parts must stand or fall together. A person is not termed Atheistic, now-a-days, although he reject the Divinity of Jesus, as a large part of the Christian constituency cast aside that doctrine; but it is plainly, from a literal standpoint, a denial of the truth of God, and an absurd conclusion to draw from the book. The virtual teaching of the New Testament is the illustration of a person with divine powers, and the functions of Godhead within him; and therefore a person or power, denuded of this authority or function, is not compatible with the meaning of the book. When the Bible is made a text book, any system or society using it without this meaning, is using a lifeless power, and cutting off all supplies from a spiritual life-centre. Those, then, who hold to the literal rendering of the text of Scripture, and at the same time deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, cannot be classed under any other form than atheistic.

But the point of controversy is not the natural or spiritual meaning of that doctrine, but the plainer truth as to the actual existence of the man or the God-man. For if we are only seeking after the bare existence of a man, we might be better employed in underrating or supporting the claims of some living hero, whom we all know. My experience in reading history shows me, that the bitterest curse the world has borne is the sustaining of the efficacy and power of the very name of Jesus; and it seems as if the people and the nations together were fighting a man of straw. And although we have glimpses of true heroism on account of this name, any truth borne under the pressure of wrong will elicit expressions of genuine sympathy, and call out deeds of heroic valour. I conscientiously say, that from the light of the world's history, it had been better they had never known such a person. The cross stands in oceans of human blood, and the bitterest animosities at this present day spring from adherents of the cross. But, like Mr. Oxley, I regard the Bible not as a profane book, but as a volume almost universally profaned by its literal rendering, and until we get at the proper meaning, we only waste time and material.

Your correspondent, J. Humphries, alludes to visions that have been seen corroborating the existence of Jesus, as a being who exists in a spiritual world; and also the assurance that he will manifest to all persons, when in a suitable frame of mind. Yes, it is true, that such representations have been seen at spiritual seances, and sitters have got so infatuated with the presence of such an illustrious visitor, that the phenomena have in many cases done immense injury. I know of many circles that have brought mischief on themselves, and endangered the life of the medium, and in some instances

insanity has taken place, through the conception of this idea.

I will now give an incident, from a clairvoyant standpoint, as to the actual or imaginary existence of this person.

A lady of estimable qualities, and also a medium of no mean character, had received instructions through her controlling guides to paint a picture. She was professionally an artist. This picture was to be of colossal dimensions, symbolical of a great spiritual truth. I was asked to be present at the inaugurating scene, and to give the assistance of clairvoyant vision. I remember seeing in the room, and right in front of the blank canvas, a majestic person clad in all the robes that artists familiarly gather round the person of Jesus. This ideal representation of this famous individual, made me say to the little company and to the medium artist: "You are intending to paint a likeness of Jesus, and the recognised form of the Master is in front of the canvas." There was a sensible and undoubted understanding in the mind, that this was a true thought, or that the lady had formed such an idea. I said further: "your picture will represent nearness and also an infinitude of space, or be something characteristic of heaven and hell."

After this interview, she went to work, and under guidance began to work out a most elaborate survey of human nature, in all shapes and forms; and in course of time hundreds of people and scenes, all dealing with poor humanity, in degraded and low as well as more refined attitudes, were depicted on that canvas. I wondered at this curious interpretation of my view of the matter, and reserved judgment until I saw clearly. In this motley grouping of humanity, I began to notice the presence of order, and soon the outline of the picture gave the view of three distinct phases or states of human life. First: man and woman, included in a low or bestial condition; secondly, undergoing an ordeal of persecution and restitution; and, thirdly, a purified and apparently glorified state. From the lowest form to the highest type of human nature represented, there was a consecutive chain of incidents, and all through the scene the overarching presence of Hope, and the guiding power of Destiny.

This remarkable expression of one idea or a person, seen at the beginning, was very suggestive, and led my mind from the idea of personifying spiritual truths, but allowing all such revelations to have a wide and comprehensive meaning, embodying facts which relate to all things that have connection with human life. If the above experience is given for the purpose of illustrating the true meaning of the Jesus idea, then we see the infinite grasp of the subject, and the redeeming power of the truth; but if we are to look on the whole thing as a contradiction of the original, then it must remain amongst the things not clearly understood.

The symbolism of Mr. Oxley is not a new thing, and would have been the universal meaning attached to Bible scenes, but for the crafty hindrances of the Priesthood. Now as a people freed from this yoke, we are rising with the experiences of a nightmare; and everything hideous and unformed stands before the view. This state will pass away, and a clear and intelligent representation of the facts will take possession of the mind. The truth embodied in the personality of Jesus will never pass away; but the finality of truth is infinitely beyond the highest and most elevated conception that any one can have of the life and character of Jesus. With all reverence I say this, and with the intention of destroying no one's faith or hope. We have outlived the personality, and must get at the spiritual foundation of this and all other biblical allegories.

A. D. K.

REPLY TO LETTERS IN LAST "MEDIUM."

To the Editor.—Sir,—If I do not presume too much, I will again venture to address a few words to your readers on the trio of letters which appeared in last week's MEDIUM, and as that leg of the tripod, represented by the contribution of Mr. Humphries, stands nearest to me, I will pass a brief comment on that first.

"J. HUMPHRIES."

I was greatly astonished when I saw the portrait of my humble insignificant self, limned by Mr. Humphries in the first paragraph of his letter. Had he not said he did it all in a "kind spirit," I could scarcely have received it with philosophic equanimity. But, of course, I am bound to believe him on that score, though I shall feel it again to be my duty to exhibit his mistakes on other points. Christians have always exerted themselves on behalf of heretics with the most "kind spirit." It is far better, they have argued, that the unchristian mind should be well tortured in the body, in the remote hope of bringing him to a sense of his benighted condition, than that he should frizzle eternally in the nether furnace. Mr. Humphries

in a former letter, threw out an ominous threat of something horrible looming in the future, unless certain dogmas were respected, and if his God takes vengeance on people who cannot see eye to eye with him, why should not Mr. Humphries? A vengeful God makes vengeful devotees; and this kind of God has always occupied a front place in the tactics of polemical Christians, who, if they can find no fault in their antagonist, they set to work and manufacture faults. That is how they served Martin Luther. The story was put about by his adversaries that the "furies," or some mythical hellish creatures, were his real parents, and consequently it was only an act of true necessity to clear him off from the earth-plane, and return him to his rightful kindred in the infernal abodes.

It is a Christian necessity that the antagonist, or in other words, the lover of truth, should be painted in the blackest colours. It altogether saves the use of arguments, or the exercise of the intellect, a duty which is laborious and distasteful to some people. Of course, if the Christian polemic can make his adversary appear utterly despicable and unworthy, then there is no use in attending to his arguments: they are, as a logical necessity, unworthy of notice; for good arguments could not come out of a bad man.

I wish I had said in my former letter, that I wrote in a "kind spirit." As I did not make any kind of presumptuous or pharisaical profession, Mr. Humphries has been forced to recognise in me a very bad man. My poor letter was written in the most unassuming spirit, and yet Mr. Humphries discovers in it that I was setting myself up as "the only Bible student," and giving myself airs that I had no business to covet. But I have read my letter, and can see no grounds for Mr. Humphries' sneer, except that my letter appeared in big type. How this happened I cannot explain; * all I can say is, that I am utterly innocent of any attempt to merit the slight affront of Mr. Humphries. But I am "low" and "malicious." I do not find one personality in my letter, or one low word or malicious insinuation. I did not feel so. But I am so thankful that Mr. Humphries acts in a "kind spirit." It is such a blessing that I am not the centre of a pile of faggots, with your correspondent holding the torch. My wife and children join with me in receiving Mr. Humphries' gentle treatment in the "kind spirit" in which he bestowed it.

Having expressed my gratitude to your correspondent for the very little harm he has inflicted, I will take a glance at what he says further on. First, I will tell him what is meant by a "silly" argument. In the language of the dictionary, it is one that is "witless," "pointless," and "foolish." This is not "low" nor "malicious" language, nor is it aimed at Mr. Humphries personally. It is simply his printed letter that I deal with; and in future I will thank him to attend to the contents of mine, and leave my moral character alone: even if he chooses to attack it in a "kind spirit."

Yes; I repeat, Mr. Peebles has no more authority than anyone else for stating that the Apostles held actual communion with the spirit of Jesus, hence to base an argument upon Mr. Peebles' testimony is "silly." Nor has your correspondent pointed out where any of my statements are "confused or contradictory." According to the Gospel record, Jesus appeared as an ordinary spirit to those who knew him, and not in any divine character at all. If I had any authority for stating that the term "Christian" was first applied at Antioch, I would gladly do so. But the Book of Acts is not an historical authority. It was written solely to bridge over the gulf between the Pauline books and the Gospels. These Pauline parts are, as far as I can learn, the oldest portions of the New Testament, and are devoted to an exposition of the mystical "Christ," which was not a human being at all, but some ineffable spiritual principle, which could root itself in man's interior nature. This was altogether a spiritual, not an historical or mundane, idea. But in course of time the Gospels cropped up, speaking of a fleshly Jesus, who had a personal existence, and therefore claiming an historical position. It was urged by some that the universal "Christ" idea, became somehow the personally limited Jesus. To unite these factions, the book of Acts was written, in which the spirit of Jesus is made to come back and tell Paul that he is the "Christ."

Now these opposing ideas—the "Jesus" and the "Christ" systems—were often in deadly conflict. The history of this conflict requires to be written before much can be said of the merits of the systems, as at present muddled up in Christianity. Perhaps Mr. Oxley will be able to help on this needful investigation. For even in Egypt, there was the Osiris, and the body of the Osiris.

In speaking of the Bible as a mixture, Mr. Humphries commits the same heresy as I did. Why does he not permit me to pick out the "gold" for myself? If he insist upon quartz being gold, he has quite liberty to do so, but he must not dogmatize, and abuse those who, as "miners," are alone responsible for their own "out-put."

Unfortunately, the stars called the "Southern Cross," are not visible in the northern hemisphere, where Christians presume that their "Cross" idea originated. This looks very much like another "silly" argument. (Beg pardon—I say this in a "kind spirit.") Nor is the Cross the only symbol "writ-

ten in living light." But the cross is a "dead" light, the symbol of spiritual darkness and affliction, and, consequently, to the spiritual mind is obnoxious, not "sacred." The truth is, that the cross does not allude to that southern constellation at all, but to the progress of the sun—the most conspicuous "living light" in the sky—in its equinoctial crossifications.

A man denying himself is not bearing a "cross," but, on the contrary, going "straight"! To be "cross" is to be unspiritual and contradictory, like the Christian mythology, and not a few of its defenders.

If Mr. H. had read the "Egypt" articles, he would have discovered that the "Hyksos," or "Shepherd Kings," dominated Egypt for about 1000 years, about 4000 years ago. Their names do not appear in the "List of Kings," showing that the shepherds were "An abomination to the Egyptians," in a more intelligible light than is stated in Genesis.

Your correspondent has utterly failed to make it appear that his catacomb inscriptions have the slightest connection with Jesus; thus it is no argument at all. It would be a misuse of "silly" to introduce it here. So Mr. Humphries, this time, falls short of his usual compliment.

And he talks of "Buddha" as if he had been a man! There were many Buddhas. As for Spiritualists, it would be well for them if they set their own mental and spiritual house in order, and did not lust for the patronage of apostles, Buddhas, and other conceits that can do them no good. Man's spiritual growth must come from within, not from visiting spirits.

How is "Lily" making us "wiser and happier"? What have poor ignorant men like myself to thank her for? She is evidently unacquainted with ecclesiastical history, and relies on "authorities" that do not elicit respect. I have had the "Illustrated London News," of a few weeks ago, placed before me, and in the "Echoes of the week," Mr. Sala states that Paley's "Evidences" were, in the parts quoted by "Lily," plundered bodily in many portions from an old Dutch book! This Christian Luminary, that "Lily" tries to dazzle us with, is only a common literary plagiarist, a form of theft, and who knows but the classics he quotes are barefaced forgeries!

"Like draws to like," and the spirit of the "Catholic Priest," claimed your correspondent as a bird of his own feather. The Catholic is the only true Christian, and he who dares, in any particular, to exercise his own mind, is only worthy of being pitched into, in one form or other. But the incident has not mended Mr. H.'s manners, as to how he speaks of others. Nay, he imitates the Catholic in trying to afflict those who differ from him. As to the idea of the Godhead, or His junior, leaving the throne of heaven to quell a fracas between a couple of virulent Christians! why, the idea is preposterous. Jesus would never be a moment "at home" if he went out on jobs of this sort! The psychological explanation is, that when Mr. H. drew his fangs out of the Catholic, and thought of his own needs, the positiveness of mind thus induced rendered him invulnerable to further attack; and some good creature in the spirit world was, no doubt, called into his sphere by his pitiful plight.

"LILY."

I am getting too tedious, or I would like to say a word on "Lily," only I observe that my former remarks have been ignored by her. Last week she endeavoured to put Mr. Oxley into some odious position, but her attempt is scarcely intelligible. If we regard him as the most assiduous scholar, "exemplary boy," in the spiritual school, and who has a great lesson on hand, but the schoolmaster, "Lily," wants him to recite the whole book before he has got half through with the study of it, then we can understand her allegory. On the other hand, if Mr. Oxley is the vile schoolmaster that "flogged" a good boy, it is thereby implied that he is amenable to the law for writing on Egypt, and that if "Lily" had her will she would punish by imprisonment all who would inquire into the origin and nature of the dogmas before which she has prostrated her better nature. I am truly glad that we are not in the position of being made "wiser and happier" by the means suggested in "Lily's" ill-considered paragraph. It shows that the spirit of the Inquisition lingers amongst us yet, if "kind" and Jesus-worshipping Christians had the power in their hands.

I read Mr. Peebles' work on "Jesus" when it came out, and a more unchristian book is scarcely to be found. In the opening chapter he attempts to show that some person of the name of Jesus had been crucified; but what of that, if the Christian system existed prior to that event? In the latter portion of his book, Mr. Peebles shows what a foul thing Christianity is, and concludes with a dissertation on the "Positive Religion," that ever exists independent of historical incidents. That is how Christians mislead: they exaggerate the importance of that which is in any degree favourable to their hobby; then they ignore or destroy all that is opposed to them. This is a very flagrant form of falsification; but a crime has ever been meritorious if committed in the interests of Christianity.

"MARIE CAITHNESS."

"Marie Caithness" (Lady Caithness, I presume), in indicating her connection with the trade and calling of a sexton, does not say whether it is the grave of Spiritualism or Christianity she is engaged in preparing. Her letter is as illogical and contradictory as a woman's letter possibly can be. In addition to

* As we have just sufficient type to fill the MEDIUM, we have to use it all in some form; and the letter of our correspondent was set up in the large type to suit the convenience of the printers.—Ed. M.

being a Papist and a Spiritualist, she has got an interesting variety of Jesuses on hand. One of them is a "Jesus Christ," another is a "Nazarene," and another is clothed in a panther's skin! Which is the right one, or is it another case of "Three in one"? As the co-type of Bacchus, Jesus is the Sun-God, as one form of the name literally implies. As such he is a mythical God, and therefore not a Nazarene. There may have been Jesuses not a few, who were spiritual mediums, but then they could not be at the same time heathen deities. The "Jesus Christ" is the kind of hybrid modern conception, by which it is sought to amalgamate the mythical and human attributes.

The subject is long and interesting, and I look with eagerness to Mr. Oxley's next chapter, as an aid to its clearer perception. I hope "Lily" will kindly refrain from bringing him before the "beak" for "flogging the exemplary boy," till he has got his chapter finished.

To all readers and writers, I desire to say that my merry style of writing is adopted as a kind of safeguard against the objectionable insinuations, that so frequently mar discussions of this sort, and reduce them to squabbles.

With thanks to the "tripod" for giving me this pleasant task, I am, dear Mr. Editor, yours,
A BIBLE STUDENT.

"HAFED" AND "ANGELIC REVELATIONS" ON JESUS.

Dear Mr. Burns,—Permit me to express a few thoughts on the "Theological Conflict."

First I would ask: On what foundation are we, as Spiritualists, building? Are the ancient writings and pagan myths to entirely supersede the revelations given in our day and generation? Is the well-known book, "Hafed," a tissue of falsehoods, also "Angelic Revelations"? The greater portion of "Hafed" is a positive testimony to the earth-life of Jesus, confirming the Gospel history. "Angelic Revelations" may not be so well known to your readers, so I will quote an extract from Vol. III., p. 83:—

"Recorder:—Will you, Angel, first set us right upon one point, that is: Are we to consider these two (Vishnu and Jesu Christ) as actual human beings, who once appeared as such on our earth?"

"Angel of Love (Lily):—In the mighty future, when the present revelations are considered by the nations of the earth, it shall be asked: Were these inhabitants in human form? to which the reply shall be given, even as we give it in the present—namely, in the affirmative." Also, page 339, the confirmation of the personality of Jesus is again given. Even after this plain declaration, the subject was again a controversial point. At the request of the writer, a special meeting was convened for the definite answer—to the above and other subjects—from the angel, who again confirmed the former statement in plain words, that no one could misunderstand: "If we cannot accept these portions as the truth, coming from (professedly) such an interior source, other portions are not reliable, and the sooner they sink into oblivion the better for all truthseekers." But the writer has not as yet read any statement in the voluminous work on "Egypt" to alter her former convictions of the reality of the earth-life of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

Will not the pure germ of truth be ever given through the divine intuitions, rather than the labourings of the intellect? Our spiritual sisters know the foundation on which they are building, and the builder, even the Jesus Christ, they shall see face to face, and know, even as they are known.

There may be those who prefer the bondage of Egypt, but as children of the Light, let us walk in the Light of to-day.—
Faithfully yours,
CLARA ROWE.

Church Road, Urmston, Manchester.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

PROGRESS IN THE PEAK.

To the Editor.—Sir,—Spiritualism still lives in the Peak of Derbyshire. It is now some few years since your correspondent I. Thompson wrote you from the neighbourhood of North Derbyshire, upon the progress of Spiritualism at that time. On Sunday last, January 20th, accompanied by two friends, Messrs. Ross and Lightbown, from Manchester, we had the pleasure of meeting our friend, and proving to him that the "Funeral Sermon" promised us, was in no wise likely to come off at any early date. Our able president Mr. J. Lithgow, of Hayfield, filled the chair, whilst one of our visitor friends—Mr. Lightbown, efficiently took charge of the Harmonium. After opening the meeting with the usual exercise, our chairman spoke of the present re-union, and referred to the pleasure he felt in being able to bring before his audience one whom they all well knew on account of his past services to the Cause in that locality, and also to introduce to them another whom he was glad to welcome amongst them in the person of Mr. Ross, whose genial face had been with them on a past occasion some months previously. In conclusion, he thought the stranger ought to have the preference, and called upon Mr. Ross to say a few words, who upon rising expressed a sense of pleasure in being able to meet once more his friends of New Mills. It

had at all times in his history been a source of pleasure to him to investigate any principles which came before him, by a spirit of earnestness and a sense of charity, and he felt glad that one School and Congregation in Manchester he could count amongst them many very dear friends whose sympathies and charity were not estranged, though he had been forced by circumstances to sever his connection from them. Mr. Thompson was now called upon, and taking a historical glance of the progress of ideas and opinions in relation to the religious world, he shewed to his audience that throughout its development there had been too much of the self-h material predominating, and in whatever manner the spirit of progressive ideas should be seen, the orthodox element of its day was sure to decry down, and if needs be, begin to persecute. The Romish Church tried it on with the Protestant, whilst the Protestant carried out the same rule with the Dissenting element, and now the whole combined were in arms about the poor Spiritualist, who at one time was a fool, and at another the knave—just as it suited their purpose. He referred them to the charges laid against Spiritualism—as a principle—because of the doings of individuals, and read to them several extracts from the other side where scandal had arisen, and asked—are we, as Spiritualists, to blame Christianity because some of its leaders should thus bring their office and principles into contempt, and concluded by saying: "No! no more than any Englishman should feel his character stained, just because another Englishman had picked someone else's pocket." The meeting was subsequently terminated, after a brief trance address from our local medium, Mr. Bowman. Thus ended a re-union, amid congratulations and friendly greetings.—Yours, etc.,
JOLTI.
New Mills, Jan. 21, 1884.

MR. COLVILLE AT HALIFAX.

Sunday, January 27, Mr. W. J. Colville delivered three inspirational discourses in Central Hall, Halifax. The day was very cold and stormy—rain, snow, and hail falling copiously at frequent intervals. The audience in the morning was very good, considering the weather, though the hall was not full. The subject of the lecture was, "The Signs of the Times considered Spiritually." In a brilliant and lengthy speech, the guides of the lecturer referred specially to the present discontent among the working classes in England, and between England and Ireland; the late war, and subsequent cholera in Egypt; the unsettled condition of affairs in various parts of Europe; the strivings now so rife in theological and political circles; and the generally trying state of the weather, and the unexpected departure of numerous celebrated personages from the scene of their earthly activities. Considered spiritually, all these signs are encouraging, as they point to a new and brighter day, which could never dawn were it not for the night that preceded it. The evening and the morning, the darkness and the sunshine, following each other, must ever constitute a spiritual as well as a material day.

In the afternoon and evening the spacious room was crowded. The old friends of Spiritualism, of whom there are many in Halifax, turned out in full force, and there were also a great many strangers present. The afternoon lecture was on "The Law of Mediumship, and the modus operandi of spirit control." This lecture was a peculiarly valuable one, both for Spiritualists and investigators. We hope to be able to present it to our readers very shortly.

In the evening, an eminently practical and soul-stirring discourse on "The Ideal Commonwealth, or the coming Utopia," was given in Mr. Colville's best and most effective style. The audience was deeply moved and impressed, and though the guides of Mr. Colville do not encourage applause on a Sunday, the audience could not refrain from expressing their appreciation of the noble sentiments uttered, by some hearty hand-clapping when the most telling points were made. It seemed greatly to surprise many who were there, that a speaker of no extraordinary powers of physical endurance could deliver three long lectures, prefaced by invocations and followed by poems, in one day, and then sing a tenor solo near the close of the evening service, as lustily as though he had been saving his voice all day for the effort. Such a speaker as Mr. Colville does very much wherever he goes to convince the public outside the Spiritualist ranks that there is something in Spiritualism, that cannot be laughed down or attributed to chicanery.

The Cause in Halifax is progressing rapidly, and to facilitate the carrying on of spiritual work in this important town, the society has secured a fine room, to be devoted entirely to spiritual work. This room was opened by Mr. Colville, on Monday, January 28. Particulars next week.

HASLINGDEN.—On Thursday evening, January 24, we had a splendid discourse through the mediumship of Mr. W. J. Colville. The subject, chosen by the audience, was, "Are the controlling spirit or spirits, that speak through you, commanded by God, or do they come, as inhabitants of another world, on their own accord?" The subject was grandly handled, to the satisfaction of an intelligent audience. We passed a very enjoyable evening, and we feel sure that Mr. Colville is doing a great and glorious work. May God speed the Cause of Truth! Spiritualism is making headway in Haslingden, new inquirers are growing up on every side, and we are determined to go into it, hit or miss.—D. NEWELL.

BATLEY CARR.—On Sunday last, Mr. Hepworth, of Leeds, occupied our platform in a very able manner. His spirit-guides based their discourse on "Our Spirit Homes, and how they are formed." In the course of their remarks they described the spiritual habitation of the sin-laden and crime-stained soul, as one of utter desolation; and that misery, woe, and despair were pictured on every lineament; and showed in telling language the consequence of a career of dissipation, selfishness, and crime. They then passed on to that of the drunkard. This was somewhat better than the other in outward appearance, but inside, all was barrenness. Passing over the remainder of the dark scenes of the spirit world, they next described the spirit-home of those who had striven for peace and harmony while on earth. The result of this was, they now enjoyed the rich fruit of their labours. Their spirit-home was most pleasing to behold; both exterior and interior were in the most beautiful order and harmony. On every hand surrounding this home were flowers indescribable in their beauty. There were groves and glades, whose grasses seemed to sparkle as they viewed them, and all went to make up a home of happiness and rest to the soul. Those happy souls dwelling in these homes never tired of praising the Great Maker and Giver of all life. They then passed on to a stately mansion, whose grandeur and architecture was perfection itself. The material of which it was composed was of a lustrous transparent nature, for it seemed to shine and send forth flashes of light as they gazed upon it. They approached and entered its portals, and as they did so they felt they were nearing the presence of noble, illustrious souls, and in reverence they bowed their heads. They entered a spacious reception room, and there beheld assembled in conference, philanthropists and poets whose brightness surpassed that of the noon-day sun, which bespoke a life of high and noble integrity, and a love for the true and the just.—I wish to announce that on Sunday next, Mrs. Butterfield, of Blackpool, will deliver two addresses in the above room: one at 2 p.m., and in the evening at 6.30. We hope to see a goodly number of old faces. Tea will be provided for friends from a distance, at 6l. each. A collection will be made at the close of each service.—**ALFRED KITSON.**

MANCHESTER.—On Sunday our President, Mr. Brown, delivered two discourses upon the "Predictions for 1884." During February we will have the following speakers: February 3rd, Miss Allen, Birmingham; 10th, Mr. R. A. Brown; 17th, Mr. W. Johnson; 24th, Mrs. Groom.—**W. LAWTON, Sec., M.S.S.S.**

PLYMOUTH: Richmond Hall, Richmond St.—On Sunday last, our usual Circle was held in the afternoon, over thirty present, the majority non-Spiritualists. Three of the sitters, who a few weeks since were unacquainted with the subject, gave unmistakable proofs of mediumistic powers. In the evening Mr. Clarke was the speaker. After singing the opening hymn, Miss Marshall, a young lady who is likely to make a most excellent medium, was controlled to give the invocation. Although we have many ladies who are mediums, this is the first who has taken part in our public Services. The usual lessons followed, after which Mr. Clarke was controlled and gave a splendid oration on "Jesus, the man and his mission," which was evidently very much appreciated by the audience. On Sunday next in the evening Mr. Clarke will reply to written questions from the audience.—**JOHN T. B. PAYNTER, Sec.**

BRADFORD.—At 2.30. Mr. Collins Briggs spoke in the Walton Street Church, on "The Creation" giving a spiritual explanation of the statements made in Genesis. At 6 o'clock Mr. Briggs again spoke, "Music" being the theme, with which he associated other topics. He was followed by Mr. Walter Hillam, who reviewed the great progress which Spiritualism is making all over the earth, and in all conditions of Society.—**COR.**

BIRMINGHAM: Oozell Street Board School.—Last Sunday evening, Mr. Mahoney delivered a most eloquent address on "Spiritualism and Social Progress," to an intelligent audience, and they seemed highly pleased. Some questions were asked and answered. On Sunday next, Mr. Wallis will lecture on "The Love of Life, and Life of Love." On February 6, Mr. Mahoney's party at Baskerville Hall, dancing, etc.—**COR.**

SUNDERLAND.—On Sunday, the Sunderland Spiritual Evidence Society's platform at the Albert Rooms, was ably occupied by Mr. F. Walker, who gave a very interesting and instructive address, which was greatly appreciated by a good audience. Although Mr. Walker is only a hard-working man in the coal mine, he is a deep thinker, and gave some very pointed utterances. He is a most energetic speaker, and he can make his audience understand every theory he advances. He was ably assisted by Mr. V. W. Pinkney, who officiated as Chairman, and gave a few happy and instructive remarks.—**G. H. PYNNE JONES, Sec, S.S.E.S.**

FALMOUTH.—On Sunday, the 19th instant, Mr. R. S. Clarke, of Plymouth, delivered two inspirational discourses in the Town Hall. Mr. R. Gloyn presided. The subject for the afternoon was, "Is Spiritualism opposed to the teaching of Jesus?" After which written questions were invited from the audience, bearing on the condition of humanity here and hereafter. A number of questions were sent up to the chairman, and were satisfactorily answered by Mr. Clarke's guides. The subject of the evening discourse was—"Why does not God kill the devil?" The orthodox dogma of a personal devil, and the

doctrines thereon taught in the churches, were shown to be utterly inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent Deity, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love, who must have created such a being with the foreknowledge that he would mar his own purpose. The audiences were large, and very attentive; and, we hope the seed sown will by-and-by bear fruit. We are but a very small band who publicly avow ourselves Spiritualists; but many have witnessed the phenomena, and have expressed their belief in its genuineness. We have no medium in our circle, and bigotry has been rampant against us; we have, however, lived down a great deal of prejudice, and our spirit friends tell us we shall soon have improved conditions.—**COR.**

MARYLEBONE: 52, Bell Street.—Sunday, Jan. 27, after a hymn had been sung, Mr. Hooker opening the Bible at hazard, and lighted on John, ix., which afforded a most appropriate text for the subject of discussion as announced: "Spiritualism and Christianity," showing that then as now men would not believe facts as presented to them, if they happen to clash with preconceived ideas. Now as then we have miracles performed, though in a less degree, in our midst, but they are neither accepted by Christian nor materialist, these parties having made up their mind. The opener strongly urged that there could be no connection between Spiritualism and orthodox Christianity, since the united testimony of the spirit world ignores the fall of man, ignores salvation by faith, knows nothing of a three-in-one, or of a material hell, etc. On the other hand Christianity ignores miracles, since the time of the apostles, or their possibility, even then, as witness Stopford Brooke. In opposition, a Christian endeavoured to defend his creed, by the well-known modern process of explaining away objectionable characteristics to suit modern thought. We still hope to continue our meetings, which are freely open to all enquirers, but have reason to know that some so-called "Christian orthodox Spiritualists" are holding aloof, resentful or fearful of fair criticism on what should be the freest platform in the world.—**C. DELOLME.**

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.—Mr. Bielsfield sends us a letter cut from the "Penrith Observer," the writer of which deprecates the fact that, "Never, perhaps, were the Socinians, or, as they are modernly called, Unitarians, more sedulous in their attempt to stamp out the doctrine than at present, and it is my painful conviction that their deadly heresy is largely infecting every professedly Christian Church in the world; that it lurks in quarters that we least suspect, and is covertly preached from many pulpits of the Church of England. We seem blind to all this. We have been for so many years endeavouring to keep our citadel intact from popery, that we have paid but little attention to the sapping and mining process, slowly but surely progressing at our foundation." Notwithstanding that this creed was "unknown in the very early days of Christianity," yet it has done such good service in suppressing "latitudinarianism and heresy" that it is useful as a bond on the human mind, to cause it to succumb to ecclesiastical devices. Ultimately the "Church" will amalgamate with "popery"; that is its only protection. Creeds are of no use to men who have the liberty to use their soul's faculties.

EXETER.—The reopening of the Hall took place on Sunday last, and notice preceded the same in the paper. The hall was nicely arranged for the occasion. The rostrum was occupied by our trance speaker, and a most philosophical oration was given on "Divine Force." To those who heard the last Sunday's control, a most striking contrast appeared in the two controls. It would be impossible for me to give any idea of the sublime nature of the spiritual utterances. It needed a thoroughly scientific mind to comprehend its nature, yet it was characterised with a most explicit manner, and the control grasped the whole subject in a masterly style.—**R. SHEPHERD, Sec.**

MRS. GROOM AT OLDHAM.—On Sunday, the afternoon service was somewhat marred by the non-appearance of our friend, Mrs. Groom, at the time announced. Happily for us, several Manchester friends put in an appearance, and whilst the chair was occupied by Mr. Thompson, an address was ably given by Mr. Ross, another able and prominent member amongst our Manchester friends. Shortly after 3 o'clock Mrs. Groom arrived, and taking her position on the platform, was soon under control, and took precedence in the service. A question was asked for, when "Reason" was given; and a flow of beautiful diction then came from her lips, and she closed the question with a poem upon the subject chosen. This was followed by one on "The Kingdom of Heaven that is within you." Another poem followed on "Nature's Noblemen," after which twelve clairvoyant readings were given, eleven of which were recognised. At 6 o'clock the room was filled to overflowing, Mr. Kershaw, president, in the chair. Out of seven subjects sent up to the platform, the following was chosen for the guides to dilate on: "How does the control account for the tendency of orthodox churches towards spiritualistic ideas, relating to this life and the life to come, notably Canon Farrar and his 'Theory of progress after death'?" The subject was dealt with for an hour; after which poems on "George Dawson," "Milton," and "John Bright" were given, closing with twenty-three clairvoyant descriptions, seventeen of which were verified.—**J. W. BARKER, Secretary.**

WORK IN LEEDS.

The Special Spiritual Mission which has been inaugurated in this town, promises to be of a highly successful character. Already such results have been realized as we could not have so soon anticipated; it is, indeed, in the best sense a great spiritual revival that is taking place, both here and in many other places. Mrs. Britten made use of that term respecting her work at Newcastle, where such crowds have thronged to the meetings, that the doors have had to be locked to prevent crushing.

The chief feature of the "Revival" here consists in the awakening and liberation of souls disembodied. This work began in the second meeting on Sunday week, when some half-dozen or more mediums united their power in the blessed work of redeeming from darkness and thralldom their unhappy earth-bound kindred. It was a remarkable and touching scene, to listen to the earnest prayers and pleadings of the "controls;" in both the English and various foreign languages. To the uninitiated, it would have seemed like a strange and weird pantomime; but to us it was a glorious work of emancipation. It was beautiful also to see these numerous mediums, all acting in unison—the unseen workers being evidently bent upon a common object. We had evidence on that Sunday evening of the blessed work having been done through our united sympathies, prayers, and efforts.

All the meetings held during the week were largely attended; and with increasing spiritual and mediumistic power, the same kind of work was pursued. All present felt and spoke of the wonderful good that was being done; the influence being most heavenly. We have held deeply interesting colloquies with these "spirits in prison," as they have controlled the mediums and described their bewildering experiences. At intervals, the more advanced intelligences have controlled and expressed earnest sentiments of praise and thanks-giving for the good that was being done. Clairvoyants, again, have had their spiritual vision opened to see the spiritual realities surrounding us.

This awakening has begun at the centre, stirring the stagnant elements to their very depths; and the agitation thus created in the spiritual spheres will, under an elevated and constantly augmenting spiritual influence, produce a commotion and a revolution over a wide and unlimited circumference.

On Wednesday evening, January 23, we were favoured with the presence of the illustrious lady, and inspired speaker and author, Mrs. Britten. She gave an oration at the meeting room on "Spiritualism; the Reform, Science, and Religion of the Age," after which she replied to various questions. The room was quite full, the audience was thoroughly appreciative, and, best of all, a profound hallowing influence seemed to rest upon all. It has been to myself an extreme gratification to have once heard this celebrated speaker, though I have long been an ardent admirer of her printed works. The newly published work of this inspired teacher, "Nineteenth Century Miracles," has come into the hands of several friends here, myself having the great boon of a copy presented, with earnest expressions of appreciation of my work, by the author's own hand. This work is truly a modern Bible, which should have a world-wide circulation. Chapters therefrom will no doubt be read from many of our public platforms.

The services on Sunday were well attended, notwithstanding the snow and stormy weather. The speaker for the day was Mrs. Oraven, a local medium. Her controls spoke in the afternoon upon the desirability, in connection with the present special movement at Leeds, of taking steps for the systematic instruction of the young in the truths of Spiritualism. Many cogent reasons were suggested in support of the importance of this work. The evening service, being the last to be held in this room, the controls gave an address appropriate to the occasion—reviewing the work of the past; referring to the great significance and import of the present special work, and earnestly exhorting the congregation to the prayerful consideration of the important new step they were about to take.

At both services the writer of this presided, and read chapters from both the ancient Scriptures and Mrs. Britten's modern bible, "Nineteenth century miracles"; and also from the London daily papers concerning the appearance of the "white lady" at the Berlin Palace, and the supernatural occurrences at Vienna.

At the second meeting two other female mediums were controlled to address the congregation.

A dedication service is to be held next Sunday morning at the New Room; in which it is expected that several mediums will take part. Public services will also be held in the afternoon and evening of that day.

OMEGA.

[It seems rather careless on the part of the Leeds friends to institute a new room for their meetings, and not have the facts stated correctly in the List of Meetings. Just before going to press we have read "Omega's" letter, as the last article set in type. We have no time to obtain information to correct our List, and must go to press with a false statement. We give free advertisement, and our requirements for accuracy ought to be respected.—Ed. M.]

SPIRIT-COMMUNION.

To the Editor.—Sir,—Perhaps some of your intelligent readers, well up in the Science of Spirituality, will kindly reply to the following.

From personal observation and the testimony of intelligent Spiritualists, it appears that the spirit-beings which accompany us, all act under law,—in fact are simply messengers, doing the will of a higher power. Now, instead of speaking to them and invoking their aid as cultivating their acquaintance, sometimes at a considerable amount of inconvenience and risk, is it not much more logical for Spiritualists in particular, and all men in general, to cultivate the acquaintance of THE MESSAGE SENDER rather than that of the MESSAGE BRINGER,—of the friend who SENDS the message, rather than that of the postman who BRINGS it? Again, are we warranted in detaining these spiritual postmen of the Supreme Ruler of spirits, when without the least risk or inconvenience we can at any moment have an audience with the King himself?

Fancy one inviting the postman to come in for an hour or two, when he has a bundle of letters to deliver! Yet what are we doing in seances, but something analogous?

I therefore respectfully ask a reply to the question: Would it not be much better for Spiritualists to cultivate the acquaintance of the MESSAGE SENDER rather than the MESSAGE BRINGER?—Your respectfully,

J. MITCHELL.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, Jan. 26, 1884.

LINES ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF DR. JENNER.

Fire trieth the works of every man,
And time discovers flaws
In ev'ry human work and plan,
In politics and laws.
Even Science taught in Jenner's day
Discarded is to-day,
But Jenner's vaccine notions stay
In minds yet—strange to say.
'Tis thought cow-pox small-pox can withstand!
Disease cast out disease!
A house divided 'gainst self can stand!
But, hear me, if you please.
The CAUSE of small-pox is impurity
In food, or air, or dress.
Obey Health Laws—there's our security
'Gainst bodily distress.

J. A. T.

MEETINGS, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 1884

LONDON.

EDGWARE ROAD.—52, Bell Street, at 7, Miss Dale Owen: "How to Cure Drunkenness."

MARYLEBONE ROAD.—Spiritual Mission Room, 167, Seymour Place, at 11, Mr. Hopcroft. At 7, Seance; Tuesday, 7.45, Mr. J. M. Dale; Wednesday, at 7.45, Seance; Thursday, 7.45, Mr. J. M. Dale; Friday, at 7.45, Mr. Towns; Saturday, at 7.30, Mr. Savage. J. M. Dale, Sec., 50, Crawford Street, Bryanston Sq. The Room is strictly reserved for circles. It may be engaged for private sittings.

CAYENDISH ROOMS, Mortimer Street, W., at 7: Mr. Colville.

WEEK NIGHTS.

SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION.—Tuesday, Mr. Colville, at 8.
BROMPTON.—Mr. Pound's 108, Infield Road, Wednesday, at 8, Mr. Towns.
HARROW ROAD.—At Mr. Wright's 17, Amberley Road, on Sunday and Thursday at 7.30. Private Circle, admission only by previous application.

PROVINCES.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—75, Buccleuch Street, at 6.30.
BATLEY CARR.—Town Street, 6.30 p.m.: Mrs. Butterfield.
BEDFORD.—King Street, at 6 p.m. Wednesday, at 7 p.m.
BELPER.—Lecture Room, Brookside, at 10.30 and 6.30.
BINGLEY.—Intelligence Hall, 2.30 and 6 p.m.: Miss Musgrave.
BIRMINGHAM.—Oozell Street Board School, 6.30: Mr. E. W. Wallis.
BISHOP AUCLAND.—Temperance Hall, Gurney Villa, 2.30 and 6 p.m.:
BLACKBURN.—Academy of Arts and Sciences, Paradise Lane: at 3 and 6.30.
BOLTON.—H. A. Tovey, 16, Halton St., The Hough.
BRADFORD.—Spiritualist Church, Walton Street, Hall Lane, Wakefield Road, 2.30 and 6 p.m.: Mrs. Gregg.
Wade's Meeting Room, Harker Street, Bowling, at 2.30 and 6 p.m.: Mrs. Ingham and Mr. T. Holdsworth.
Spiritual Lyceum, Oddfellows' Rooms, Otley Road, at 2.30 and 6 p.m.: Mr. Collins Briggs.
EXETER.—Oddfellows' Hall Bampfylde Street, at 6.30.
GATESHEAD.—Central Buildings, High Street, 6.30: Mr. C. G. Oyston.
GLASGOW.—2, Carlton Place, South Side, at 11.30 and 6.30: Mr. J. J. Morse. Lyceum at 6.
HALIFAX.—Peacock Yard, Union Street, 2.30 and 6 p.m. Local.
HETTON.—Miners' Old Hall, at 5.30.
KNIGHTLEY.—Spiritualist Lyceum, East Parade, 2.30, and 6.30: Mr. Armitage.
LEEDS.—Tower Buildings, Woodhouse Lane, 2.30, and 6.30: Mr. C. Ware.
LISCHSTER.—Silver Street Lecture Hall, at 11 and 6.30.
LIVERPOOL.—Rodney Hall, Rodney Street, Mount Pleasant, at 11 a.m., and 6.30 p.m. Mrs. E. H. Britten.
MACLESFIELD.—Spiritualists' Free Church, Paradise Street, at 6.30, Rev. A. Rushon.
MANCHESTER.—Gospel Temperance Hall, Tipping Street, Ardwick, 10.30 and 6.30: Miss Allen, Birmingham.
MOLEY.—Spiritual Mission Room, Church Street, at 2.30 and 6: Mr. Hepworth.
MIDDLESBOROUGH.—Granville Lecture Rooms, Newport Road, at 10.30, and 6.30.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Weir's Court, at 6.30.
NORTHAMPTON.—Cowper Cottage, Cowper Street, 2.30 and 6.30.
NORTH SHIELDS.—Bolton's Yard, Tyne Street, at 6.
NOTTINGHAM.—Morley Club Lecture Room, Shakespeare Street, 10.45 and 6.30.
OLDHAM.—176, Union Street, at 2.30 and 6.
PENDLETON.—48, Albion Street, Windsor Bridge, at 2.30 and 6.30.
PLYMOUTH.—Richmond Hall, Richmond Street, at 11, Mr. Bart, Trance Address; at 2.45, circle; at 6.30, Mr. R. S. Clarke: Answers to Questions.
SHEFFIELD.—Psychological Institution, Cocoa House, Pond Street, at 2.30 and 6.30: SOWERBY BRIDGE.—Progressive Lyceum, Hollins Lane, at 2.30 and 6, Messrs. Scott and Morrell.
SUNDERLAND.—Albert Rooms, 7, Coronation Street, at 6.30, Mr. W. H. Robinson.
TUNSTALL.—Rathbone Street, Mr. W. Hudson, Medium.
WALSALL.—Exchange Rooms, High Street, at 6.30.
WEST PHULTON.—At Mr. W. Tinkler's, Eden Terrace, at 6 p.m.

NOW READY.

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MR. W. J. COLVILLE'S APPOINTMENTS.—LONDON.—103, Great Portland Street, Feb. 1, 8, p.m. Neumeyer Hall, Sunday, Feb. 3, 3 p.m. Cavendish Rooms, 7 p.m. Other meetings in prospect. See special notices.

BRIGHTON.—Feb.
BELPER.—Feb. 10, 11, 13,
BRADFORD.—Feb. 17.
HALIFAX.—Feb. 18. KEIGHLEY.—Feb. 19.

W. J. Colville is open to engagements in or near London between Sundays Feb. 3 and 10. Address 15, Southampton Row.

MR. E. W. WALLIS'S APPOINTMENTS.—
For dates, address E. W. Wallis, 4, Lower Roshall Street, Walsall.

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S APPOINTMENTS.—Mrs. Hardinge-Britten will lecture in Manchester, Sunday, Jan. 6, 1884; in Newcastle, Sunday, Jan. 13 and 20; and Manchester, the 27th; also in Liverpool and Manchester, on the alternate Sunday of February.—Address The Limes, Humphrey Street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—GLASGOW.—2, Carlton Place, South Side, Sunday, Feb. 3, morning at 11, subject—"Spiritualism as an interpreter of Religion." Evening at 8.30 "Earth versus Heaven."

Mr. Morse accepts engagements for Sunday Lectures in London, or the provinces For terms and dates, direct to him at 103, Great Portland St., Oxford St., London, W.

MR. R. S. CLARKE'S APPOINTMENTS.—PLYMOUTH: Richmond Hall, Sunday, Feb. 3rd at 6.30, subject: Answers to Questions from the audience. SALTASH.—Feb. 6th.
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