LETTERS

ON

SPIRITUALISM,

By SCHAMLYN,

Being the Appendix to "Spiritual Communications."

2 Chronicles chap. xxi. ver. 12.

"And there came a writing from Elijah the prophet to Jehoram, king of Judah"—*thirteen years* after the prophet's death.

Melbourne:

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1869.

Appendix.

SPIRITUALISM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ALBURY BANNER."]

SIR,—In your issue of December 5th you invite any votary of Spiritualism, to give you some explanation of its philosophy. It is not possible to do this satisfactorily within the limits of a newspaper paragraph, but I don't like to throw away the opportunity you have afforded, of saying something on the subject.

A mistake continually made by people unacquainted with the subject, is, that Spiritualism is a new religion, which has lately arisen, and which its disciples are endeavouring to foist upon the world, to the subversion of all established modes of faith. Spiritualism proper, is neither a new religion, nor an old one—it is simply an affirmation of the possibility, and actuality of intercourse, between this mundane world, and the unseen world of spirits; although it may afford—and I believe does afford—the *only basis* upon which all true religion rests, yet it is not—*per se*—a religion, more than telegraphy, or mesmerism, are religions. Just as telegraphy means the power and reality of telegraphic intercourse between distant places on this earth—say between the old and new worlds—so does Spiritualism mean a belief in the reality of intercourse between the seen and unseen worlds; the medium of communication in the one case is called electricity, the medium in the other case, is not yet exactly ascertained, but is supposed to be some imponderable fluid or force of the nature of electricity, but finer, and quite distinct. The latter is as completely under the control and operation of natural laws, as the former; and there is nothing supernatural in the one, more than in the other. In both cases, the intelligencies communicating with each other, on either side, need not necessarily be of any particular religion—as a telegraphist may be a Hindoo, or a fire-worshipper, or a Christian; so may Spiritualists be of very different religious beliefs. If Spiritualism or spirit intercourse be a fact, then it is the most important fact in the universe to mankind; for by *it*, and *it alone*, is demonstrated the truth of a future state of existence, after that change called death. It is very well for many people to say, we believe

thoroughly in immortality, and have no need of the phenomena of Spiritualism; but we see that many say this very confidently with the mouth, who belie it in their lives; and then there is the materialist, upon whom reasoning from analogy or probabilities has no effect. Facts are what he demands; he meets your probabilities, with his own equally forcible ones, and you are obliged to leave him more hopeless than when you began. When once a man is able to answer to himself affirmatively, the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"—which, I maintain, he can only do on the authority of actual experience of communication with those who *are* "alive again," or of the testimony of others who have had that experience—he becomes a new man—death has lost its terrors to him—he has exchanged gloom for cheerfulness—he can go to work with a will—certain that no labor shall be in vain—no effort lost—no aspiration, but will eventually be fulfilled—in short, that he *shall* reap the harvest of that which he has sown—he fears nothing in heaven or earth, except disobedience to moral, mental, intellectual, and physical law. Yours, &c.,

SCHAMLYN.

10th Dec., 1868.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ALBURY BANNER."]

SIR,—I desire to reply to "Alb. Vic.'s" letter in yours of the 26th instant. He says—"He most emphatically declares that my views of Spiritualism are utterly irreconcilable with Christianity." I have to complain that he does not show how they are so—nor does he point out the particular statement in my letters, which he opposes, and which warrants him in making this "emphatic declaration." It might be sufficient for me, under the circumstances, to oppose *my* positive denial, to *his* "most emphatic declaration," and simply to assert, in return, that the Spiritualism, of which I am an exponent, is quite otherwise than adverse to Christianity; but to save trouble in the future, and perhaps an unnecessary waste of emphasis to "Alb. Vic.," I support my position, "that a Spiritualist may be a Christian," by stating positively, that I profess to be a Christian; and am not acquainted personally with any Spiritualist, who is not also a Christian; and if this asseveration of mine be not considered of sufficient weight, I shall, by way of further and more satisfactory support, cite a few examples of men and women, "whose praise is in all the Christian churches," persons of note, too, in the literary and scientific world, and who, yet, are distinguished pillars and advocates of the Spiritualism of which I am, perhaps, an unworthy "exponent." They are William and Mary Howitt, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crossland, Professor De Morgan and Mrs. De Morgan. These persons have not fallen away by their acceptance and belief of

Spiritualism, but have advanced by its help, in their "reverence for God and Revelation," because they have been enabled to understand them better. These persons are Spiritualists of 15 years standing, and neither their Spiritualism nor their Christianity can be gainsaid—"Alb. Vic.'s" "declaration" notwithstanding. He says—"We need nothing beyond the Bible to assure us of immortality." This may be true as regards himself or myself; but there are many "Thomases" in Christendom; and the fact remains painfully prominent, that atheists and materialists, *do* require something more, and have failed to find in the Bible that satisfactory proof of a future state, which they earnestly desire; and which, I contend, is to be found, and found only, in the facts and phenomena of Spiritualism. That thousands of materialists have been brought to rejoice in immortality, through these means, is a matter of history; and I can give, if required, the names of many eminent living men, who testify to their conversion from a desolate materialism, by "spirit manifestations."

The above facts, I hope, will show "Alb. Vic." that he has read the parable of Dives and Lazarus erroneously. Testimony, and that 1800 years old, is of no account to the man that requires facts, the evidence of his senses, to rest his faith upon. "Alb. Vic." asks from me "something definite as to the objects and advantages of Spiritualism." I reply, that I deem the power of convincing a materialist of immortality a very *definite* advantage; and I would ask him to name anything more *definitely* advantageous, than that which affords, I again repeat, the only *demonstration* of a future state of existence. I mean by *demonstration*—not mere probabilities, nor possibilities—not history, nor ratiocination, nor analogy—but incontrovertible *proof*, such as would be called proof by men of all persuasions.

I see nothing else to notice in "Alb. Vic.'s" letter except that I defy him to point out any instance of plagiarism on the part of any of my friends—detected, or asserted to be detected—by "a Waller." I do not feel called on to enter into a defence of the Davenports when Spiritualism is attacked, any more than I would enter into a defence of "Alb. Vic." were Christianity attacked; nor am I here to account for the "feeble nature and unutterable balderdash" of all the spirit communications which "Alb. Vic." says he has seen; and would only remark, *en passant*, that my own experience has been more fortunate, having had no communion with spirits that has not been elevating, encouraging, and comforting; and as to such "unutterable balderdash" being "borrowed," as he insinuates; I would remind him that impostors and plagiarists are usually too "wise in their generation" to steal or *borrow* "feeble and unutterable balderdash," when they could with equal ease appropriate what would answer their purpose of imposition so much better. I hope "Alb. Vic." will write something

more tangible next time, and when he again assails me, to take care that it is *not* upon ground that I do *not* occupy. Yours, &c.,

SCHAMLYN.

Walwa, 31st Dec., 1868.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ALBURY BANNER."]

SIR,—From the paragraph on Spiritualism in yours of the 2nd instant, you seem to have paid no attention to my first letter on the subject. I thought that in it, I had sufficiently fortified my position against the mistaken impression, which you continue to entertain, that Spiritualism is a new religion, and its followers a new religious sect, and that I, as an upholder, am a religious propagandist. In the words of Alb. Vic., "I most emphatically declare" that in anything I have hitherto written on the subject, I have had no thoughts of being engaged in, or of entering upon, a religious discussion. What I have earnestly wished, has been to incite thinking men to a philosophical investigation of the alleged spiritual phenomena, upon a purely scientific basis. I am not engaged, as you seem to suppose, in an "intellectual contest," and hope I shall not be so until I have a better opinion of my intellectual powers. It is not a question of intellect, or one that can be decided by intellectual acumen alone; it is a question (at least in its present stage) of fact; of the evidence of the senses, as to the genuineness of certain alleged phenomena, which are a demonstration, if true, of intercourse between the two worlds; which phenomena *I* know to be *fact*, but which, by those who have not examined them, are denounced as humbug, imposture, &c. It is a question of pure experiment and investigation, which can be entered into as well by men of ordinary sanity, having the normal use of their bodily senses, as by the most learned or most intellectual; by the infidel as well as by the pious. You talk of the "doctrines I advocate." I am not aware of having published any doctrines peculiar to myself, or to Spiritualism, in your paper, or in any other; and, if I had done so, I cannot see what Spiritualism has to do with my private opinions, any more than the private religious opinions of an astronomer or electrician, have to do with the science of astronomy or that of electricity. Again, you assume that Spiritualism is antagonistic to orthodoxy. This assumption cannot have arisen from anything contained in my letter; yet you pit the one against the other, and call on me to support what you have assumed, without warrant, to be my unorthodox opinions, without stating what those opinions are. You and Alb. Vic. seem determined to turn what I wish to be a purely philosophical investigation, into a theological controversy. The religious and moral bearings of a subject, are, or ought to be, a subsequent consideration

to the question of fact. It will be time enough to discuss the *cui bono* of spirit intercourse, when the phenomena are ascertained and believed to be real; until then we may be wasting our time in *a priori* reasonings. My challenge of £500 was brought out by a very confident statement, several times repeated by the *Collingwood Advertiser*, that the whole thing was "barefaced juggling," and that "he would not withdraw from the arena of combat, until he had exposed and exploded the gigantic swindle." But I abide with alacrity to my challenge; and should thinking men of intellect not be able individually to muster up the £500, surely there are moneyed philanthropists enough to help them by subscription or otherwise, to explode a dangerous and fascinating delusion; particularly when they judge the explanation to be so very easy, they may reasonably hope that the £500 will never be demanded from *them*, but from the *duped victim* of imposture. Yours, &c.,

SCHAMLYN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "BANNER."]

SIR,—Passing by "Alb. Vic.'s" insinuations against the honesty of my profession of Christianity as quite irrelevant, I maintain that, until he can show that those *well-known* persons named by me in a former letter, and "whose praise is in all the churches," are not Christians as well as Spiritualists; my position—that a "Christian may be a Spiritualist"—remains unshaken. He says that I "do *not believe* that the Bible contains sufficient information to secure salvation." I have never said so, but, on the contrary, have always said quite otherwise, and do now believe quite otherwise, and that it *does* contain all that is needful to secure salvation. Does "Alb. Vic." really know, better than I do myself, what I believe—when I am sincere in my professions—and how far I come short of being a true Christian? Have I ever unbosomed myself to him in such a way as to lead him to lay such absurdities at my door, or to assert that my professions are not to be trusted? "Alb. Vic." has evidently in this instance, taken his own imaginings for truth, and has again attacked me on ground which I *never* occupied.

He asks, "How should we know whether one from the dead be a devil, or a messenger from God?" I answer, by many sufficient tests given us by Christ, the apostles, and the prophets. Take the following three:—"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree produce good fruit; *therefore by their fruits shall ye know them.*" St. John says—"*Try the spirits* whether they *are of God;* every spirit that *confesseth* that Jesus Christ came in the flesh *is of God*, and every spirit that *confesseth not* this *is not of God.*" Isaiah says—"To the word and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them."

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All the world knows that the Bible condemns sorcery and witchcraft, and seeking after evil spirits, and their companionship; but what 'Alb. Vic." fails to show is, that these things constitute Spiritualism; or that the ministry of angels, recommended, sought for, and trusted in throughout the Bible, is a different thing from Spiritualism; the communion of saints is an article of Christian faith, and the Bible encourages us to seek and rejoice in such intercourse, and pronounces the man blessed who enjoys such communion; it assures us that we are ever encompassed with "a great cloud of witnesses," testifying to that "life and immortality" brought to light by Christ—"spirits of just men made perfect, sent to minister to the heirs of salvation"—these had never departed from that faith in immortality, nor had given heed to seducing spirits, *teaching the doctrine that devils only* were allowed to hold communion with man. We are warned against seducing spirits teaching false doctrines, but not against the company of progressed spirits of just men, who teach the advantages of holy communion, and who confess and teach Christ and Him crucified. Because seducing spirits are allowed to visit man, does "Alb. Vic." contend that, *therefore*, there cannot be any righteous ones permitted to have intercourse with their fellows in the flesh? Does he not see that the very warning against seducing spirits, implies, and is equivalent to, an exhortation to us to seek diligently, and trust in the good offices and guidance of good spirits, as our best defence against the wiles and machinations of the evil ones? just as there are many seducing men and women whom we ought to avoid, and seek, by the companionship of the Christ-like, to save ourselves from their pernicious influences. Let "Alb. Vic." study the 12th ch. of 1 Cor. and then say in what the manifestations there recorded, differ in kind from modern spirit manifestations: the former may probably, from the greater faith of the disciples, have been more abundant, but generically they are the same. "Alb. Vic." names Tertullian and St. Cyril in this connection, and talks of a "host of Ancient Fathers" who endorsed their opinions, &c, &c. I have great pleasure in informing him that Tertullian was a firm believer and upholder of spirit intercourse, by his example, by his preaching, and by his writings; and most of those Ancient Fathers were equally zealous believers, and even "energumens"—(what we would now call mediums). I give the names of some of them, whom I have the authority of Eusebius and Mosheim, and their own writings, for pronouncing true Spiritualists—namely, Clement, Ignatius, Barnabas, Polycarp, Hermas, Lactantius, Origen, Eusebius, Cyprian, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Gregory, Montanus, Nicœus—fifteen, besides Tertullian, the pupil of Montanus. I may mention that Tertullian challenged all heathendom to a trial with Christians, before their own heathen tribunals, to produce the phenomena which Christians were able to perform under spirit influence; for Christ had said,

"the works that I do, shall ye do also," &c. Does "Alb. Vic." expect your readers to give up the distinct statement of the sacred record, because Bishop Patrick thinks that holy men would not *rise from* the earth, but would or ought to *descend to* it? I wonder what he or "Alb. Vic." would say about those *saints*, who *arose out* of the ground at the crucifixion, and walked about the streets of Jerusalem? Were they hallucinations or devils, because they did not *come down* from heaven? The Scripture words, when narrating such events, are invariably "raised" risen, arose—"*sown* a natural body, *raised* a spiritual." If I had space I could give a long list of divines of the Church of England, who believed and taught spiritual intercourse, and argued against those people who had such unworthy conceptions of God, as to believe He would permit evil spirits only, to harass the earth, and not good ones to comfort us. SCHAMLYN.

Walwa, Feb. 7th, 1869.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ALBURY BANNER."

SIR,—I have never said at any time that Spiritualism had no religious bearing—on the contrary, I said that I believed that all religions were based on Spiritualism. I certainly maintained that Spiritualism, *per se*, was not a religion; and I do not think that an enquiry into its truth, is necessarily a religious discussion.

There are few things with which we have to do, that may not have, and that have not, a religious bearing. The matter-of-fact art of printing, has had an incalculably important bearing on religion; and has been, perhaps, the chief means of emancipating the Christian religion, from the darkness and bondage of the middle ages; but it is not a religion. The press is no doubt a most beneficient institution, but it is not generically a religious one; and the upholders and advocates of its utility, are not necessarily a religious sect, nor religious propagandists. According to my definition of Spiritualism, as given in my first letter—a promulgator of the facts of Spiritualism, and one who invites inquiry and investigation into these facts, is no more a religious propagandist, than they, who propagate the advantages of Holloway's pills, the Wizard oil, Moncrief's new battery, Vester's "safety coffins," are religious propagandists; although I may acknowledge that Spiritism has an immeasurably more important bearing on religion than all the others.

Science is not a religion, nor is a scientific discussion a religious one; but science nevertheless has incontestibly, a very important bearing on religion—I repeat that the facts or phenomena of Spiritualism (Spiritism would be a better word) are to be dealt with as a question of external evidence—the final appeal, being to the senses; not to the intellect, or the heart. And in this enquiry,

the greatest intellectual acumen cannot supply the place of the senses of a sane man, be he ever so illiterate. I am of a different opinion with you, and feel sure that Christianity *does* sanction the belief in communication with the spirit-world; and when you state your exceptionable instance, I hope to cite several, or rather, many instances, of the belief being sanctioned by Christianity. When A. is informed that he can communicate with his defunct grandmother B., no doubt he is made acquainted, as you say, with the existence of a new law of nature—but a law of nature is a *fact*, not a doctrine; it is a thing, not an opinion of a thing—just as J. H. Mower's late discovery in telegraphy, is a fact, (being a discovery of a new law of nature) not a doctrine, or a mere opinion.

I cannot agree with you that the term "spiritual propagandist" has the same meaning as "religious propagandist." Is materialism a religion? and a materialist a religious propagandist? You have as much warrant for saying so in the one case, as in the other. Christ never condemned the Sadducees (materialists) for their irreligion, but He was continually condemning the Pharisees (Spiritualists) for their want of religion; in either case you may see that their religion did not depend necessarily upon their private and peculiar views of things. A materialist is not a Spiritualist; yet, both may be either religious or irreligious men. Yours, &c.,

SCHAMLYN.

Walwa 20th January, 1868.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "COLLINGWOOD ADVERTISER."]

SIR,—I observe, in your issue of the 21st November, you call Mr. Home, the well-known medium, "an *unscrupulous impostor*," and accuse him of turning, what you call his "*scientific jugglery*," to his own personal advantage. I should have liked if you had given your grounds for such a sweeping calumny, and would be glad if you would adduce one single *fact* in support of it. I don't like to be laboring under a mistake, which I certainly have been doing, if Mr. Home be, as you say, an "unscrpulous impostor." From the published reports of him in the English and foreign press for the last ten years, I had formed a highly favorable estimate of his character, as an honest, upright and amiable man, as well as a Christian of strong religious feelings; and, in the late trial, "Lyon v. Home"—a full description of which is to be found in the London daily papers of the time—I notice that not one iota of evidence appears against his moral character; and, in the course of the trial, quite a crowd of the most eminent men in England, of undeniable standing as to character, gave in their verbal testimony to Mr. Home's being a gentleman of irreproachable character. And the following *written affidavits* were handed in, in his favor:—Robert Chambers, D.C.L., author and publisher, of St. Andrew's,

Scotland, after testifying to the *bona fides* of the manifestations in Home's presence, ends his affidavit thus:—"I have known Mr. Home for many years, and believe him to be of irreproachable character, and I depose to the above facts from my personal knowledge," &c. Gerald Massey, of Wardhurst, Ringshall, County Herts, author, &c., concluded thus: "Since my first introduction to Mr. Home, in the house of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, I have seen a great deal of him, and have never had the slightest reason to look upon him other than as a man of the most honorable character, and kindliest disposition—in fact, a gentleman, whom I should judge incapable of any such baseness as has been laid to his charge." Mr. C. F. Varley, of Fleetwood House, Kent, telegraph engineer and consulting electrician of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, after a detailed account of his convictions of the truth and beneficial tendency of the spiritual phenomena, concludes with —"I willingly testify to my entire conviction of Mr. Home's truthfulness and honesty, after an acquaintance of eight years." Dr. J. M. Gully, of Malvern, Worcester, says, in his affidavit—"I have known Mr. Home for more than seven years as a personal friend, and as a visitor at my own house, and I have never had any reason to doubt his character, as a man of honor and proper moral feeling. I have *never* known Mr. Home *to receive any money* for what is termed a *seance*, but have known him *repeatedly to refuse* offers of as much as twenty guineas for a single seance." Mr. S. C. Hall, County Middlesex, author and barrister-at-law, F.S.A., says—"I have known Mr. Home for the last eight years—knowr him intimately, and hope to know him still. These last and infamous charges that have been brought against him, and the manner in which he has borne them, but tend to endear him to all his friends, and have made those his friends who would not otherwise have been so. In common with all of them, I respect Mr. Home as a truthful, upright, and honorable gentleman." Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, solicitor, Lincoln's Inn Fields, being Mr. Home's solicitor and adviser, testifies in his affidavit only to the genuineness of the manifestations occurring in the presence of mediums—no jugglery on their part, after his strictest scrutiny—for the last eighteen years." Mr. Hawkins Simpson, inventor of electrical apparatus, etc., testifies by letter, read in court, to the *bona fides* of the manifestations witnessed by him in Home's presence. Mrs. S. C. Hall, authoress, &c., made oath as follows:—"Having known Mr. Home for several years—known him intimately as you only know a person who has visited at your house—having had the greatest affection for his excellent wife, and seen how honestly and bravely he bore up against evil report—seeking various modes of livelihood which would not have been necessary if he had not always *refused* payment for his mediumship—alleging that he had *no right to sell God's gift*," &c.

In addition to these affidavits, a portion of the preface of Pro-

fessor De Morgan, the illustrious mathematician of London, to a work by Mrs. De Morgan—"From Matter to Spirit" was read by Home's counsel in court, and excited marked surprise and attention.

I perceive, Sir, that you often appeal to truth and honesty, and to lovers of justice; and it is as one of them that I have ventured to trespass upon your space, and to ask you, in their name, that in your condemnation of Spiritualism, or any other system that you may deem of hurtful tendency, you will refrain from assailing the character of an absent and perhaps innocent man. Yours, &c.,

A LOVER OF JUSTICE.

Walwa, Nov. 26, 1868.

SIR,—In your issue of December 5th, you talk of my carefully abstaining from mentioning that Mr. Home abstracted a sum of money from the pockets of an old lady. I deny the fact of the theft. This accusation cannot be made good, from anything that was brought out at the trial, nor from the verdict of the jury; that verdict, requiring Home to refund the money to the old lady, is not equivalent—far from it—to a conviction for theft or robbery; it does not even amount to an insinuation against his moral character. The verdict rested on a point of law, and, according to the judge's reading of the law, the jury were directed to return a verdict for the plaintiff. Are all those men who are, by a verdict of their countrymen, compelled to refund money, rogues and vagabonds? In that case few, if any, are not so; for we often find that, at the same sitting of the court, the same man who, as plaintiff, has money refunded to him, has, by a verdict of the same jury, been forced, as defendent in another case, to refund to the plaintiff. The moral character of a man does not necessarily depend upon the verdict of a jury—in civil cases at any rate; and, in Home's case, although he had possession of the old lady's money for twelve months, he did not make use of a penny of it, and was able to refund the whole of it *intact*. And this conduct in a poor man, as Home is known to be, presents no sign of the "unscrupulous impostor." The only character injured, if not destroyed, for ever by that trial, was that of the old lady, the plaintiff, whom the judge condemned to pay (in consequence of her repeated prevarications) her *own costs*, as against Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Home's solicitor. It was elicited, at the trial, that Mr. Home repeatedly offered to refund the money to the old lady, if she would only withdraw her calumnies. Mr. Home has appealed to a higher tribunal, and the whole case will have to be gone over again.

Yours, &c.

LOVER OF JUSTICE.

Walwa, 16th December, 1868.

My Dear F.,—To tell the truth, I rejoice greatly in these anti-spiritual articles, for they will have the effect of confirming Spiritualists in their belief, and in the strength of the facts upon which their belief is founded; and they will also draw the attention of Anti-Spiritualists, both the unthinking and the thinking, to the subject; and induce many of them to investigate and examine for themselves. And even unbelievers in spirit intercourse, and gainsayers, who have read those articles, will be able to see that denunciation is not argument; that *unsupported* positions, however popular, are really no better than bunkum; and that propositions, however dogmatically propounded, if left without demonstration, must go for nothing, except with the imbecile, or among those who have all their lives been accustomed to have their thinking done *for* them, and who have dwarfed their reason by ever prostituting it to authority. I earnestly court investigation, both as regards myself and my opinions; and the man that points out to *me my* errors, I hold to be my truest friend. And this being the case, I shall ever look upon the editor of the *Collingwood Advertiser* as *my* good friend, and likewise an eminent friend of humanity, if he carry out his promise of "*thoroughly exposing* the *delusion* or *trickery* of Spiritualism before he has done with it" —for what the world wants, and I want, is to be emancipated from ignorance, error, and delusion; and what can be a greater misfortune than to mistake error for truth, and delusion for fact? I am obliged to say, however, that as yet he has not shown to me, or to the world, the errors or perniciousness of Spiritualism—he has only told us what he has chosen to brand *as such;* and, with becoming orthodox indignation, has merely given us a prodigious jumble of adverse assertions, unphilosophical appellatives, and terms of reproach. Look, for example, at the following, scattered through three issues of the paper:—"Pernicious tenets of Spiritualists, frauds and impositions of Spiritualists, votaries of magic and witchcraft, ridiculous demonology, cruel spiritual bondage, neglect of religious duties, hopeless atheism, degrading superstition, subversion of all Christian and moral progress, godless religion, devout impiety; superstition, credulity, and scepticism are the *trinity* constituting Spiritualism; vagabondising the defunct is the occupation of Spiritualists, they are sickly sentimentalists, Spiritualism is a moral ailment, it is a rabid lunacy, at best it is but incipient insanity, it is demonology, Spiritualists and Spiritualism are polluting the moral atmosphere, its writings are subversive of all religious, social, and domestic virtue, they humbug people out of their money, it is a detestable swindle—demonological incantations, delusion, madness, prestidigitation, huge swindle, parlor magic, sublime rot, gigantic swindle," &c., &c. Now there are thirty-two separate assertions, and terms of disparagement; not one of which does our editor *show* to be correct or justifiable, by the citation of one single fact. These articles seem to me, to be an

insult to the understandings of his subscribers or readers, inasmuch as they imply that said readers do not require facts to fortify anything that comes to them from *him*, their orthodox editor; any bosh that *he* gives them will and shall be swallowed, should it even be a *camel;* but a *gnat*, if it be a spiritual one, and they have the editor's authority for it; they will strain at most marvellously. I don't like to conclude without adverting to that boast of the editor of the *Collingwood Advertiser*—"That, as he had initiated the controversy, he did not intend to *withdraw* from the arena until he had *thoroughly exposed* the delusion or trickery," and until he has *shown* that all spiritual publications are "*sublime rot*," I wish him to be informed that the moment he has accomplished the feat he has so magnanimously undertaken, he *can draw upon me for* (£500) *five hundred pounds sterling, which sum I have offered for twelve months past* (as our mutual friend Francis Waller can testify) *to any person in or out of the colony, who can do what he, the editor of the Collingwood Advertiser, in his issue of the 21st inst., has offered to do.* The money is in the Union Bank of Australia, Melbourne. The *savans* of the world will have nothing to say to it; they will not examine it; which is a strong sign that they don't believe it can be accounted for by any *known* laws of natural science; the clergy are frightened of it; it is apt to let *too much light* into the laity; and the commonality pitch into it venomously, because it pleases their pastors, and gives an occasion of displaying their orthodoxy. Yours ever truly,

Walwa, 25th November, 1868. SCHAMLYN.

MY DEAR F.,—You say that I ought to assail seriatim the positions of the editor of the *Advertiser*. Well, to begin, his first position is that the science of mind, although destined to become fixed, as that of astronomy, is not likely to be aided in its advance to this position by the "*strange developments* of Spiritualism." I take it that he means, by said "strange developments," certain phenomena that are taking place in all parts of the world at the present day; and which, according to *his own acknowledgment*, are as old as history. Now, such phenomena being the admitted basis of the belief of mankind, during all past time, in the future existence of soul, after the change called death; I would ask him to point out from what other facts or phenomena than these, can we derive any positive knowledge of what is, beyond all comparison, the most important branch of metaphysics—the "science of the soul." Every religion under the sun is based upon these phenomena, or "strange developments," ancient or modern. What is a written or spoken revelation, but a message from God to man, by messengers from the spirit world? I maintain that it is this fact of spirit intercourse, which involves the fact of future existence, and this fact alone;

that is *essential* to the advance of the "science of mind," and which must ultimately establish that science upon a fixed basis.

You may reason till doomsday with a materialist, or atheist, on the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" but all you will be able to do, without the aid of what the editor calls "these strange developments," is to make a future state somewhat probable; and the materialist will, with equal ease, bring forward as forcible analogies, which render it quite as probable that he is in the right, and that "man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." There can be no true science of the soul attempted, except upon the *hypothesis* of a future existence; and this can only be changed into *knowledge* by the demonstration afforded by these same "strange developments," or "spiritual manifestations;" and there is no other demonstration possible to the unbeliever, the atheist, or the materialist: *this* is the strength and glory of (so-called) Spiritualism. Its other advantages, which I believe to be many, are merely incidental to this one point. The editor talks in this connection, of the "pernicious tenets of Spiritualism." I wish he had named some of them, or even *any* tenet *peculiar* to Spiritualism. I myself, know of no single tenet *peculiar* to Spiritualism. Men of all tenets, may be, and are Spiritualists; they may be Anglican, Confucian, Mohammedan, Bhuddist, Red Indian, Zoroastrian, Brahminical, or even Evangelical—for a *spiritualist proper* is *simply a believer in spirit intercourse and ministration.* Their philosophies may be widely different; but what have we to do with *tenets*, be they good or bad, when searching for a basis for "true science?" True science cannot be built upon mere tenets; *facts*, and they alone, form the only foundation of every science. He says—"Religion teaches that the things of the invisible world must ever remain a mystery." What religion teaches this, I ask? I know of none; but, on the contrary, I maintain that it is the chief characteristic of all religions, that they profess to make known, or reveal to the denizens of this visible world, the mysteries of the invisible world, "of the kingdom of heaven." This is religion's great province. Would the editor point out what he thinks religion does teach, if not "mysteries" of the invisible world? He says; "that man is always accompanied by spiritual attendants, is a fact." I ask, how does he *know* this to be a *fact?* He cannot *show* this to be a fact, if he eschew—as he does—both the probability and possibility of any manifestations of their presence, addressed to our senses by those same spiritual attendants. All that he can do under such circumstances, is to hope in his inmost heart that it is so; but let him not so glibly affirm as fact, what he can only at the best hope to be so. I remind him that we are only cognisant of facts, through the evidence of our senses, or by the testimony of others who have had that evidence. He says, "the good and evil in the world may be traced to natural causes, to the 'ignorance of the learned,' and to the 'follies of the wise.'" If he had stopped at "natural

causes" I would have agreed with his statement as a self-evident truth; but I demur to the idea of good being attributed to ignorance, even if it be "the ignorance of the learned," or "the folly of the wise." He says, "To the frauds and impositions of magic and witchcraft we are indebted for the greater part of the mental delusions with which humanity is afflicted." This may be true; but as he professes, in the present case, to be discussing the subject of Spiritualism, he ought to have shown how these frauds and impositions can be fastened on its shoulders. It is easy for editors to attack Spiritualism on ground that it does not occupy, but it is useless and injudicious warfare. He says, "It is one of the distinguishing marks of true science, that after a little opposition it is universally accepted;" and he adds, "apply this test to Spiritualism, and it will be found to be an utter failure." He does not attempt to explain how. His readers would have been the better for an illustration of this position. I, for one, cannot see, and I distinctly deny the appropriateness of his test to any true science; and I maintain, that it may be seen from all history of true science, that it has only been after much, and long-continued opposition, that every accredited science of the present day has established itself; and every step of progress has been toughly contested; but I am heartily willing—defective as I think it is—to apply his test to modern Spiritualism, if he is equally willing to apply it to any true science he wishes to name—say Christianity (which I suppose he, as well as myself, considers to be the truest religion in the world). If, when tried by this test, modern Spiritualism is proved an "utter failure," when it is in its *infancy*—being not yet more than *twenty years old*, and which yet can number 20,000,000 of believers in Europe and America alone—what must be the crushing effect of this test, when applied in the same way and direction to Christianity, which has had 1900 years to spread; and, instead of its being universally accepted, behold how small the number of its professed adherents, compared with that of the infidel world who still reject it; and of these professed adherents, what proportion would my friend the editor assign to belong to the true fold of Christ, the "new-birth men," or those "born from above?" Will he not have to lament, with me, that they are still a very "little flock?" At any rate, it seems evident that truth is not to be tested by the smallness of the opposition given to it before it is universally accepted; and that the spiritual philosophy which is a revival and enforcement of the religion of Christ, comes out well in comparison—not with the true religion of Christ, but with the myriad forms of sectarianism, which *some people call* Christianity. He never seems to think it at all requisite to give instances in support of his assertions. For example, he says, "The discoveries of Spiritualists are really so ridiculous." It is an easy thing for anyone to say that something he knows of is ridiculous; but as far as the good of the public is concerned, it must go for

nothing as a warning against *that* thing, if the knowledge of what it is, be sedulously concealed from them. Besides, "the ridiculous," is a matter of opinion for the time being; what one would call ridiculous, another very often thinks a very serious matter. Franklin's discovery of some of the laws of electricity, by flying a kite, was accounted at the time, and long afterwards, very ridiculous, by his more ignorant neighbors. What is ridiculous? The ridiculous to every one, is just what appears so to himself at the time. I have no doubt it would have been "sheer loss of time" to have attempted to reason Franklin, Morse, or Fulton out of their belief in what their more ignorant friends accounted ridiculous; yet they were the practical men of fact, and their neighbors the foolish "imaginatives," the editor talks of. The only discovery that I know of, claimed by both modern and ancient Spiritualists, is, that the doctrine of a future state of existence is capable of proof; and that what are called *spiritual phenomena – and they alone—afford that proof.* The editor does not give proper value to the faculty of imagination; or, when he talks of imaginative men, he must mean those who have had their imagination perverted—because the faculty, I maintain, is one of the noblest gifts of God (or nature, if you will) to man. It is evident nature knows better, and she never has raised up any great man who has left his impress upon the world, as a reformer, philosopher, philanthropist, or religious benefactor; without having bestowed upon him a vigorous imagination, with the intuitive consciousness of its importance, and of the necessity of its culture. Certainly a fool will "imagine vain things," and will continue to do so after being "brayed in a mortar;" and the "heathen *will* rage," but Spiritualists are not necessarily either fools or heathens. The most practically useful men have ever been the most imaginative. He says, "The absurdities of Spiritualism only require to be mentioned to ensure their rejection;" yet he hesitates to give the people of Victoria, whom he desires to reject Spiritualism, the means that he says will ensure its rejection; he carefully abstains from mentioning any of its absurdities. He says, "The advancing light of civilisation is fast dispelling the clouds of superstition," &c. This is quite true, and I am much pleased at his having unwittingly shown so clearly, that modern Spiritualism can have nought to do with either superstition or deceit; for he must acknowledge that this "delusion," in its modern phase, has sprung up and spread alarmingly fast, within that very period during which, he must likewise admit, that this light of civilisation has made the most enormous strides. Yes, Spiritualism—puerile as he says it is, compared with the mighty doings of the magi of old—has advanced, is advancing, and shall advance, in the ratio of the influx of light into the world; or, in other words, in proportion as superstition and deceit are dissipated. He recommends "Mammon" as a good titular—(I think he must have meant tutelar)—deity for Spiritualists. Now, if Spiritualism be the "huge swindle" he so freely asserts it to be,

and if Spiritualists are really the deceivers and dupes he so often says they are; seriously, do you not think "Gammon" would be a much more suitable titular, and also tutelar, deity for them? He says, "Just imagine the illustrious dead, departed philosophers, statesmen, and poets responding to the call of speculative mediums and spiritual *quid-nuncs*" Now, my friend has placed himself in the exact position of his supposed imaginative man; and doubtless it would be "sheer loss of time to attempt to reason him out of this ridiculous" imagination; but nevertheless, it must be seen that he is imagining a vain thing, inasmuch as he is imagining what we have no warrant for in all human experience; for that experience surely tells us that illustrious men, in or out of the body, have never yet responded to frivolous *quid-nuncs*, nor to any but earnest truth-seeking men of like kidney with themselves, and of similar aspirations; and idle gossips know better than to go to such beings for amusement. "Spiritualism," which, according to Mr. Editor, is nothing else than "demonology, or pantheism, or Fuerbachism, or Strausism, &c., inculcates a neglect of religious duties," and that he has ascertained that certain "Spiritualists have been insidiously polluting the moral atmosphere by the circulation of tenets subversive of social and religious virtue." Again, his readers have to complain that he has not published some few of these tenets, and exposed their insidious nature and polluting tendency, so that they might have an opportunity of knowing what these tenets really are; and instead of giving the public—whom he so ostentatiously assumes to instruct, and shelter from perverse influences—some tangible example or evidence of these abominations, against which he exhorts them to guard; he has hitherto been inconclusive enough to leave them in a general state of terror—the more paralysing, from their not knowing *what* to flee from; in *what* direction the supposed enemy will make his appearance; and in *what* direction, or where they are to flee to. To have named these tenets—to have pointed out their pernicious tendency, and refuted them—would have been the proper course for any one claiming to be a champion of "Victorian morals" and "social duties." His present course will be apt to make his readers suspect, that he either does not know what these tenets are that he has so freely abused; or is afraid to publish them, feeling incompetent to the task of refuting them; and lest his own tenets, when brought face to face, and within grappling distance of those denounced; might not only get the worst of the encounter, but even be swallowed up by their antagonists, as the serpents of those wicked gainsayers, Jannes and Jambres, were swallowed up by those of that *good medium and Spiritualist*, Moses. He ought to know that insinuations, opprobrious epithets, and haphazard invectives, against an opponent; are always taken by impartial spectators of the combat, as sure marks of want of power, and as a confession of conscious weakness in the party using them. No amount of nicknames can make an argu-

ment; and it is unmanly to bespatter a foe with mud or filth. I wish my friend the editor would have the goodness, or the courage, to name any of the "fictitious wonders" of the votaries of Spiritism, which he says he has been the means of bringing to light. Since his issue of the 17th October last, I have carefully read every number of the *Collingwood Advertiser*, up to the date 7th November, in which he makes this gratuitous boast; and I have not met with any exposure, fictitious or otherwise, excepting one, which politeness will not allow me to mention. Because the medium and her friends are not prepared to assert the originality of a poem which they never intended to claim as original—*as to authorship*—he says, "the public will be able to draw their own inference." Now, this insinuation, taken in connection with the context, if it mean anything, must mean, that, from the circumstance that the medium and her friends cannot be induced in any way to assert *as fact* what they don't know to be a fact, and what they never pretended to claim as a fact; the public must necessarily draw the inference that they are impostors; dishonest and untruthful. Because nothing will force them to lie, therefore, the public must conclude that they are liars. From this example of the editor's careless logic, or worse, I now leave the public to draw their own inferences. He asks "why mediums object to publish spirit communications, unless it be that they suspect their spirit-friends of plagiarism?" Why can he not, in common charity, suppose that their chief reason for not publishing is, as it is with many others, because they cannot afford the expense which publishing necessitates. Again, many Spiritualists, as well as many Christians, "have not faith," "are not heroes," and are too poor to run counter to the prejudices of the community from whom they derive their daily bread; they dare not thus risk their "bread and butter." Wizards and prestidigitators may be made to order, but faithful men or true mediums between the *seen* and *unseen* worlds cannot be manufactured as yet, that we know of. As to "silly saints believing themselves cured," I am sure that a "silly saint," who asserts a cure in himself of any known disease, is to be believed, and will be believed, more than, and in spite of, 1000 wise sinners who say they know he is deceived.

SCHAMLYN.

Walwa, 2nd December, 1868.

MY DEAR F.—I see in the *Collingwood Advertiser* of December 5th, that my two last letters have been refused insertion. This looks like showing the white feather. This will not, however, prevent me from reviewing his last article of November 28. In that article, he affirms with some show of pride, his "impenetrable obtuseness" to the explanations of a spiritual correspondent, W. H. T., respecting what he calls his "particular mania." I am

reminded of the old adage—"None are so blind as they who *will* not see;" and I also know how common it is to meet men who can be obtusely blind to everything that does not uphold their particular views, sect, or party; men who will declaim against subjects about which they know nothing; and who, while shunning investigation on these subjects, will insist on giving to the public as facts, the vague surmises and hearsay reports of prejudiced drivellers; men who never think of enquiring on which side *truth* really lies, but on which side stands the *majority*—who, if they are convinced, cannot afford to avow the fact. The following catechism would be an excellent guide for the daily life of such men:—

What is common sense? That sense, which will reject all facts of experience which do not chime in with our own interest.

What is a mania? Whatever militates against our peculiar views and designs.

What is "impenetrable obtuseness?" That which prevents us from perceiving, in the clearest explanations of an *opponent*, anything but "craft operating upon hallucination."

What is "craft?" When an opponent makes a plain, outspoken statement, which cannot be overthrown; and invites examination. This is *craft* of the worst description.

What is "hallucination?" The unmistakable evidence of *other men's* senses; or, in general, any conclusion we ourselves do not entertain.

What is an "unconscious trickster?" The answer to this question is not to be found in the catechism I am recommending, probably, because the compiler was foolish enough to suppose, that there was no such thing.

What is a simple "trickster?" See "craft" above.

Another question I can find no answer to in this catechism is, "What is a 'childish, yet dangerous delusion?'"

You will observe that the editor has made a mistake when he said, that "Scotch Jock's" message was copied by him from a spiritual paper. This is an oversight of his, which I allude to, that I may give him an opportunity of removing this erroneous impression from the minds of those who may have taken his word for it. I also wish to give it as my impression, that these *test* messages from departed friends, upon which he has endeavoured to heap ridicule, will not be put down by ridicule; but will continue to be given for the comfort of those who mourn, as long as mediums like Mrs. Conant can be found, who are benevolent enough to give

up their time and organisation without money and without price, for the relief of the afflicted; the works of that "charity that suffereth long and is kind" cannot be extinguished by ridicule in the shape of parody. He laments the havoc that Spiritualism is making among the folds of the church. I would say to him, "be comforted;" for if he can bring forward no other or more glaring instances of "havoc" than those three he has mentioned, he has great reason to be thankful; for let him only consider, that all three are at the present time, as he himself informs us, again safe in the fold, and are, no doubt, much the better of their experience; for now, they will know at a glance, what are "spiritual wolves," and will not again be so easily entangled in their wiles. Therefore, as a friend, I would not have him sorrow as one without hope, particularly as regards the ladies; for judging from their antecedents, as given by himself, before their escapade from the fold; and their subsequent experience; he may reasonably hope, that if they should again be enticed from their proper limits, they can at any time be easily retrieved by merely setting *that city missionary* on their track. I wish he had named that city missionary. The name of such a man ought not to be concealed, for it might stir up the more regular "shepherds" to greater vigilance. He named the locality of the saved one, why not the man who saved her; The man, according to his own showing, was a fool from the commencement; for how can a man be other than a fool, who can abandon himself blindly to the guidance of beings, be they spirits or men, whose truthfulness or wisdom he has no means of knowing? I have the authority of Solomon for pronouncing *that* man to be no wiser *now* than he was before; for a "fool's folly," he says, "will not depart from him." It is hard to tell, nowadays, how long the best of shepherds or "city missionaries" will remain good; for we hear occasionally, of one or more of them being "led captive by the devil at his will," and so "causing the enemies of the church to blaspheme;" and some of this sort, "it is written," "creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden and led away with divers sins and lusts, *ever learning*, and *never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" I now challenge the editor of the *Collingwood Advertiser* to bring forward this "retired conjuror," through whose aid he undertakes to produce all manner of spiritual manifestations. The sooner he commences action, the sooner will he be able to carry out his determination of withdrawing from the arena of combat, *only as a conqueror*, and at the same time, secure to himself the reward of £500 offered by me in former letter. He asserts that the aim of the upholders of Spiritualism, is to subvert all social institutions, and "rob Christ of his divinity." In my small way, I am an upholder of Spiritualism, inasmuch as with regard to it, "*I speak that I do know* and testify *that I have seen;*" but I do not desire to "rob Christ of his divinity," as claimed by Himself. Spiritualism, in this respect,

ought not, any more than Christianity, to be implicated with the erroneous dogmas, or inane drivellings of its followers. I remain, yours truly,

SCHAMLYN.

Walwa, 10th December, 1868.

MY DEAR R.—I know that to those who understand nothing of the realities of a future existence, your arguments against immortality may appear somewhat weighty; perhaps as much so, as the opposing arguments in its favor; the mere reasonings on both sides, may be very nearly balanced, only I must affirm that to my own individual mind—setting aside my actual experiences in the matter—I would give it in favor of the side of future existence. But to those who, like myself, claim to have had actual communication with the human beings who have long been, and are now enjoying, a future existence (so-called) the best arguments of all materialists (so-called) against such an existence, must be utterly futile—a mere waste of skill and energy, as when one beats the air—mere labour in vain, than which nothing can be a greater misery. I am quite glad to hear from you, that some of our acquaintances are showing an interest in Spiritualism, and are examining it. I have no interest in such an investigation on my own account, because I have arrived at fixed conclusions on the subject long ago; but I certainly think that any circles formed for the purpose of enquiring into its merits, or of exposing it as an imposture, by those who are visited—as you say you are—by the "spirits of enquiry and scepticism," ought to be attended *rigidly* and *regularly* as a *duty* by yourself; who are proud, and very properly too, of being influenced by those two noble spirits aforesaid, which alone open the gates of all knowledge. Of course I suppose that, by the spirits of inquiry and scepticism, you mean enquiry after truth for the love of it; not enquiry merely after something that will bolster up your own well-beloved theories; and by scepticism, I suppose you mean something very different from the incredulity of the bigot, whether he be a scientific or a superstitious one. I am myself also, I rejoice to say, continually visited by those two noble spirits, as well as by the spirits of my friends who have gone from my external sight, and also by many others known to me only through fame. I do not myself *see* these men and women, although others more fortunate *do*; but they write to me in their own handwriting, style, and sentiments, accompanied by their individual peculiarities of spelling and phraseology; and speak to me through the medium of another organization; and I am continually receiving fresh tests of their identity, and of the fact of their continued existence, although unseen by myself. I have lately received some quotations or sentences in Greek and Arabic characters, to which Washington Irving signs his name. I am amused, but of

course with a dash of pity, at your utter ignorance of spirit intercourse, shown by your rather sneeringly asking in your letter, "How are the spirits getting on? You have said nothing about them lately; surely they have not deserted you?" I answer this sneer, by telling you plainly that I would never have thought of writing *you* anything on this subject, if you had not yourself alluded to it in your last; for I have not forgotten your refusal to read a book on this subject, nor *the reason* you gave for such refusal. Please to mind what I have said, about its being your paramount duty, and ought to be your pleasure also, as a philosopher and scientist, a sincere searcher after truth—to ignore nothing that is presented to your consideration by the testimony of men of sanity—and never, upon any pretext, to denounce any opinion or belief on a subject of which you know nothing, without investigation; for if you do, you are no better than the superstitious man and the bigot, no matter what may be the extent of your knowledge in other directions. Yours truly,

S. G. W.

Walwa, Sept. 9, 1867.

My dear R.—I notice that you mention Buckle's death in your letter as an instance, among many others, against the existence of any law of progression, which I may indulge the belief in. All you can say of Buckle is, that his career on earth was suddenly terminated. You can only know that his body perished, or was dissolved into its elements; but as to Buckle himself—his *soul*, or *mind*, or *spirit*—you can tell nothing of *that*. *You* never saw the REAL man or woman yet—I mean *that intelligent*, *inward*, *real*, *being* or *power*, *without which the seen*, and *tangible*, and *ponderable matter* of the *man* or *woman could not stir*—that part of Buckle which has never been seen by any one in the *normal* state; but which every man, who saw the outward and visible part of him, may have been quite sure existed, though unseen; from its manifestations through the *seen part*. *His real self* may, for aught you or any man can tell, still exist unseen; and with all its energies, not only unimpaired, but strengthened and advanced. You say you have been reading Buckle's works; in other words, it may be said, you have been making yourself acquainted with some of the manifestations of the man, *made through* MATTER, of that grosser kind, appreciable to your external senses; and with the style of the man while in connection with a tolerably good organisation. You do, or *may actually know*, much more of the true, although *unseen* Buckle, than many who have merely seen his external form, know, or can know of him. Now, before I go on, be pleased to consider that I don't intend the above as argument in favor of a future state. I only

intend it as my reason for not seeing how you can come to the conclusion, that the law of progression is not universal and eternal, from such instances as Buckle's premature death. I believe in this law of progression, *because* I believe with my whole soul, in what you yourself call the absolute harmony of nature. *Whatever she does is right.* The ends towards which nature works, must be attained. All her laws are absolute—perfect. She can do nothing in vain; she can have no failures in any of her efforts towards accomplishing her ends; apparent failures are only failures to the short-sighted. You seem to think that nature *may* perhaps point to the eternal progress of the *race* of man as one of her ends; but you do not believe in the progression of the *individual*, as an end of hers. You go further; you say that it seems to you that the individual is sacrificed to the *race*, and that by the suppression of the individual is the *race* advanced. Now my ideas of the absolute power, justice, and harmony of nature and her laws, make me judge quite contrary to you in this matter. The *race* is made up of *individuals*; and if these individuals did not progress, the race would not; and if a relatively progressed individual, who has helped to advance the race, is cut off prematurely, from ignorance or disobedience of nature's laws in himself or others; I hold that the race is not benefited, but injured by the "*suppression*" prematurely, of that individual. Nature does not sacrifice that man to the race. On the contrary, that man, if he had lived according to the laws of his being, would have continued to benefit the race. There is no sacrifice in the matter; both the man and the race suffer, from ignorance of their great mother nature and her laws. You quote me as calling your views "wofully limited materialism, which limit a man's progress to *this life* alone, and of course, as far as this individual man is concerned, he might, in strict accordance with your views, as well have gone at his birth; *his* existence was a failure; nature, as to *him*, confessing her inability to accomplish her designs;" and on the above you remark —"Here you put the question on a footing of the relative importance or *worth* of the man as regards nature." I cannot see how by this sentence of mine quoted above, I put the question of individual progression on any such footing; on the contrary, I desired to view the individual, isolated for the time being from the race, and from all supposed effects on the *race*, of his individual existence; and so viewing him individually in connection with his own peculiar interests, aims, actions, and experience, all which are as much the works of nature in *him*, as in the *race*. I am obliged to say again, and without it being in the least a question of "the relative *worth* of the man as regards nature," that, as far as that individual is concerned personally, as regards the aim of all his actions, which are as necessary to him as "THE *leaves are to the tree*," made so, by nature working towards *his* true individual fruition as an end, as much in him as in the human race, or in the tree; his existence

is a failure, whether he live what is called a long life or not. I do not say that his existence, whether of short or long duration, or if it be even such as is judged by the world a useless one or worse, is not, or has not been of any use to the *race*; or that, as far as the *human race* is concerned, this individual existence has been a failure. My perfect trust in the absolutely harmonious, well-balanced, just, powerful, and inevitable operations of nature, *preclude* the possibility, in my mind, of any *absolute* failure; and therefore, also, I cannot believe in any human existence being a failure, either as regards the progression of the individual, or the race. I must, according to my notions, believe the progression of the man to be as eternal as that of the race Let us return to Buckle. Admitting for the time, your supposition that he has ceased to exist, then all his life, his mental cultivation, and efforts towards the great aim of all men, *fruition*, have been utterly in vain, as far as HE is or was concerned. If you make the life of the *individual* a "schicer," so must you make the life of the *race*; only a *prolonged schicer* on an immeasurably larger scale; and so much the worse for the credit of nature, who, in your view, works so admirably and continuously, merely to produce abortions. I accept your analogy of "the leaves of a tree being all necessary, and not more necessary than the actions of a man to himself," as illustrating my meaning; for, to what end are the leaves of the tree necessary? Is it not that the tree may arrive normally at maturity, and produce its ultimate—fruit? And to what end are the actions of a man, but to enable him to produce his ultimate or *fruit*, (which is exactly what all are aiming at, though most are off the track of nature)—*happiness*. To progress in *this*, is the legitimate end of man; and if nature never acts in vain, has no *absolute* failures, then I say, every man will eventually attain the end of his existence, sooner or later. And I believe in a law of compensation; so that the man who has had the most wretched experiences during his whole life on earth, will come to rejoice that he went through them, and to see that otherwise HE *could* not have had, or been capable of arriving at, the happiness he feels, had he not passed through these very experiences of the past, as of a kind that were exactly suitable to *his* peculiar personality, and necessary for his true development. I wished to return to Buckle up above, but have digressed again. When reading your letter, it came into my mind that in alluding to Buckle, you may have meant, that it was thought he had become weak-minded before his death. If this could not be *clearly* shown, yet I would have no difficulty in believing that a mighty man like him, from inattention or disobedience to the laws of physiology, would very readily hurt his brain, and in consequence, could not produce through it the same splendid manifestations as usual. I read an account of his death once, but I saw nothing of his becoming weak-minded, (*so-called.*) I read that he became what is called a Spiritualist, while in Syria, shortly

before his death, which happened at Damascus. He became a believer in a future existence, and in intercourse with the departed, notwithstanding the materialistic (so-called) philosophy of his life and writings, which were a continual protest against the possibility of spiritual phenomena. He happened to witness some of the spiritual phenomena. "So completely was he taken aback" says the account, "by this discovery, the full force of which he recognised at once, as destroying the scope and bearing of the philosophy of his life, that he lay awake the two following nights, pondering the consequences. He and three friends determined, on his return to England, to investigate the subject fully, and this wise resolve was only prevented by his lamented departure." Perhaps this circumstance of his believing according to the evidences of his own senses, backed by the senses of others, whose sanity he was assured of, in a matter, which to some men of science (so-called) is so sublimely absurd; may be the reason why it has been thought he had become *weak-minded*. It is too late in the day for either *so-called* men of science, (non nescients!) or theologians, or any other wiseacres, to solace themselves with the notion that otherwise sensible people are either impostors or fools, who believe and avow their belief in that which these said "non nescients," &c., deny; and pronounce, *without examination*, to be absurd and impossible. Which of these two classes are the really weaker minded? Which show themselves to be the most prejudiced, and blindly wedded to opinion? There is a great deal of inane incredulity, which shelters itself from contempt, under the name of scepticism; but how different the one is from the other: the one is the harbinger of truth, the other a mere barrier to exclude it. I think it could be shown that incredulity is, under all circumstances, a greater sign of a small narrow mind, than credulity; for example, none are so incredulous of anything, however well recommended, that is *not* in *accordance* with *their first* received notions, as the ignorant and weak-minded. None so ignorant and small-minded as the superstitious, who cannot be said to have any opinions of *their own*; what they call their own opinions, are really the property of others, received blindly upon authority without examination. I agree with you that in approaching the examination of any subject, the *utility* of a belief in it ought not to be made a ground of argument; that part of the matter has nothing whatever to do, as affording a demonstration of its truth; and perhaps, in no case, is arguing upon such grounds more out of place, than that of immortality, or *post-mortem* existence; it will be time to examine that branch of the subject, after the fact of such existence is ascertained. But I think you often do what you have so well condemned in others. Take the following quotation from your letter; I shall merely put opposing words above your words (affirmative, negative, and utility)

(negative)
—"The only arguments adduced on the affirmative side are brought evidently and confessedly not only *with* and *from*
(negative) (affirmative)
a wish to prove the affirmative and a dislike of the negative, but also if not proposed, at least supported on the ground of fancied
(inutility)
utility." In a former letter of yours to me, as well as in this last one, you tell me plainly that you intend opposing C., and *proving* the *absurdity* and *pernicious* tendency of a belief in immortality. This is just the way that opposers like yourself deal with the subject of Spiritualism. Instead of keeping their attention and efforts fixed upon refuting the arguments in support of its being true, they run off into conjectures as to the consequences of a belief in it. I cannot understand what you mean, when you say—"I am not in a position to deal with your personal arguments from experience." I can imagine why you may not be in a position to *disprove* or *refute* my arguments; but that you, or any other man, should not be in a position to *deal* with them, I cannot understand. If my personal experience has been honestly laid before you, what is there to prevent your *dealing* with it, or with the arguments arising from it? And if you believe that it has been *so* laid before you, but that it is built upon a hoax or upon imposture, or that I have been deceived and imposed upon by my own senses, which have become abnormally affected by a *softening* of the *brain* or otherwise; still I do not see why you are not in a position to *deal* with such personal experience. If you had said that you did not like, under *certain* painful circumstances, to deal with the arguments arising from another man's personal experience, because that man was your friend, on account of its *inutility* and cruelty *under those circumstances*, I could understand. Don't suppose from the above that I have the slightest suspicion that you think me less sane than the generality. I merely wish to tell you that I don't understand the saying above quoted; and I think it is your bounden duty to yourself, and to the interests of the *race*, as a sincere enquirer after truth and light, to allow *always* the experience of an honest and sane man to have weight with you, so as to make you feel obliged to *deal* with such experience; particularly when it regards a matter of such great importance to man, as this of the *existence* in another condition, of men who have once lived on this earth, and their power to communicate with their fellow-men still living on the earth. It seems to me that you cannot, as an earnest man of unfettered thought, evade the responsibility of examining into these things, testified to, as they are, not only by myself, but by thousands, nay, millions of men now living in all parts of the world, many of them men of note, and whose works, literary and otherwise, are before the world,

and to be had readily; men who can be appealed to, as easily as any other men on any other subject; and *all*, men who were once unbelievers, and who went to the investigation of Spiritualism filled with the usual prejudices *against* the assumed humbug; and the philosophic, the truth-lovers amongst them, went with the expressed determination of detecting and exposing the humbug as a lie of the most pernicious tendencies. The believers in Spiritualism are to be found in all ranks of life; in all professions, from the monarch to the slave, from the members of the Eclectic Association to the Victorian Legislature; in the army, navy, law, theology, commerce, materialism, supernaturalism, &c., &c.; and among every nation under heaven; and one and all testifying to the truth of intercourse between the *human* beings in the future and unseen existence, and the *human* beings in this present and *seen* state; and yet all doing so unknown to each other, and acting independently of each other, without the possibility of collusion. In an English spiritual magazine of July last, it was stated by Judge Edmonds, that, from statistics gathered by sects and parties opposed to Spiritualism, there were between 10,000,000 and 11,000,000 of believers in this intercourse, in the United States alone, and it is not yet twenty years from the time of the Rochester knockings; from which dates the commencement of modern Spiritism. Then look at history; almost every page of it, in all times, has something about these spiritual phenomena. The subject cannot, or at least ought not, to be ignored any longer by sensible men; for if it be a lie, then, in view of its rapid progress hitherto, the sooner efforts are made to crush it out of the world, the better; and if it be a truth, then let all lend their efforts to give it "free course and be glorified" in blessing the race, as *truth always must do*. You, yourself, must admit that Spiritualists are on the right track. They have pursued, and are pursuing the course that has led to all progress in science. You may also observe that their chief opponents are the representatives of those who have ever striven against progress. Spiritualists have the glory of being prominently influenced by a spirit of universal examination; unchecked by any fears of ridicule, at being found engaged in the investigation of what the mass call *nonsense*. They collect facts, they appeal to evidence, and rely only on what they have seen and heard; and if they be in error after all, even this can only be ascertained by their continuing in the same track that they are now on; using the same method of ever searching for evidence; looking at it, and deciding upon its force. They court investigation, and rejoice at the discovery of any new or hitherto unknown, truth. Compare this method of acting with that of your friends, the sciolists—the nonnescients. There is another point in your letter which I wish to notice. You adduce some examples of what you consider the legitimate and certain results of a belief in immortality, and as subversive

of human progress. The world is full of erroneous notions as regards immortality, and no part of the world more so than self-lauded Christendom. Because the popular and many of the orthodox Christian notions of immortality are absurd, it does not follow that *immortality* itself is absurd, or the *belief* in it absurd or pernicious. If people are taught, or imagine, that by acting absurdly in this life, they will purchase thereby a splendid future; certainly their erroneous opinions, and folly consequent upon them, ought not to be charged upon the belief—the simple unsophisticated belief—in a future existence. I may have the most absurd conceptions of this life and the next, and their relations to each other; but neither this life nor the other is to blame for my follies. I may build, on the best foundation, a superstructure of hay and stubble; and if I do, *I* am to blame—not the solid foundation. You have no right to attribute to immortality itself, the miserable vagaries, and abortive conceptions of ignorant and superstitious men. The neglecting the present life for the future, is not a consequence of a belief in a future life; but is a consequence of having erroneous notions of the relations between cause and effect—between the present and the future. Many of these relations are ignored by Christians, and we see the result; but don't saddle the absurdities of fools, upon all belief in immortality. Such an immortality as is taught by many Christians, I don't believe in one iota, and would be very sorry indeed if IT were true; and to such teachings of sectarian ignorance, is to be attributed much of the misery of the world, and *perhaps* the chief obstacles (I myself blame dogmadoxy for the whole of it) to human progress; and amongst the rest, their being made to cry like a hurricane in this world, in order that they may laugh in the next. In short, all the evils that you suppose due to a belief in immortality, must be laid at the door of ignorant and foolish believers. If I saw anything supernatural in the phenomena of Spiritualism, I *could* not believe in them as facts. I worship nature, and believe in her reign, in *all* existences. There *can* be nothing *true*, that is not *natural*; yet you still keep harping on that word *supernatural*, when you touch upon so-called Spiritualism, which is really true materialism—not so limited as yours, though. I don't think that the gradually growing dislike to capital punishment, should be attributed—as you say—to the belief in immortality, nor even to the erroneous notions that are commonly held relative to that belief; for I observe, that this dislike has kept pace with the growing *disbelief* in the *orthodox* doctrines surrounding immortality, and which have ever filled it, for the most part, with fire and brimstone, and the equally miserable monotony of endless hallelujahs for the remainder; and we see that the abolition of capital punishment is chiefly advocated by men of all phases of *free* thought, whether they be Spiritualists, or materialists, so called. I fancy that this dislike may be more reasonably attributed to the growing impression, that capital punishment is useless, both as a preventive of crime and an

incentive to virtue. When you say that "the advance of a man to maturity is by regular gradations, more or less rapid," I say, *quite true;* but when you say that "that maturity is as certainly followed by as regular a decadence, sooner or later," I *demur*, and say that you are judging from external appearances, which are often deceitful. I do not believe (and I have not been shown by you as yet, any positive signs thereof) in any decadence of mental power in a man, because his manifestations are inferior to what they may have been formerly, any more than I believe in a diminution of steam power in a steam-engine that does not work so well as it once did, because of its having fallen into decay, or got out of order. You have nothing positive to show that the mental force has decayed, when the physique through which it manifested, has decayed or become shattered. You have nothing to show that the unseen intellectual power has deteriorated. When a man drivels (which is often the case, but is by no means universal), it is *not a sign* that his mental power has deteriorated, any more than a piano giving forth bad music is a sign of a decayed musical power in the pianist. I have heard disagreeable sounds from musical instruments used by musicians, when the instruments were out of order, yet the musical powers of the operators upon them have certainly increased. In short, I ascribe to evident causes, and not to conjectural ones, all such variations in outward manifestations. You say, "I am not the same man I was ten years ago." *I* say, *I am* the same identical S. G. W. that I was fifty years ago; and should it even be shown to me that the matter composing my carcase has been changed a million times, *I* am still the *same* being, only with the immense advantage of having fifty years' experience added to me, and which has become an invaluable part of my individuality—not a single word, not one single thought, of that experience really lost. Ever yours, &c.,

S. G. W.

My Dear R.,—I never said you knew nothing of Buckle, but quite the contrary, as you may see by looking again at my letter; and far from calling him "poor fellow" I always have admired him as far above the average. You say "Buckle *has* immortality although not *conscious* of it, and in this he has his reward." Good God! to be talked of after one's annihilation, is what *you* call immortality! At that rate, had his been a career of successful crime, he would have had an equal, if not fuller, share of the immortality you would accord him; whereas according to my notion of immortality and my belief, I feel and know that he has an ample reward, and that (having worked his powers to their utmost while in the flesh—*trammelled* as he was by earthly surroundings, which, let them be ever so favorable, still control us through the thraldom of the body, compulsively drawing off the attention

requisite for the concentration of the mind to its *natural* avocation—science) he (Buckle) *can* (as soon as he will have got rid of the effects of those impressions of the senses, which acted at first as preventatives, and which, from being neglected, cut short his useful career) spring forward, and with rapid strides will grapple with realities, no longer bewildered by doubt and chimera; but which have become solid and simple; and then, having by dint of perseverance arrived at higher elevations of knowledge, will be able to impart to some congenial spirit, still in the fleshy body the power to continue his labors. Nor is there the slightest doubt in the minds of believers like myself, that *such* will be to *him* the *result* of those *labours*; not a particle of which will be wasted, either as regards *himself*, or the *race* of man. You say—"if Buckle is still in existence, and it is so easy as you say it is—Why does he not carry on his work through me his devoted admirer? and who would hold it a sacred duty, and leave the task as a direct legacy to my children and grand children," &c. Firstly, I never said it was easy for any one as Buckle now is, to communicate direct with you or with most. I have never yet, with all my intense desires on the subject, got any direct communications from my own friends; and therefore, I feel it is anything but easy, &c., &c. What I say is—we may wish for, but cannot command *influence*; they must find in us the *congenial germ* of the so-called *genius* to work on, to carry their subject *further* and *higher* than they had been enabled to do when on earth. Every effort for the good of others rebounds on ourselves—labor and activity are necessary to our work; but, that they should be carried so far against nature's laws, as to cause us to pay the penalty, she is sure to demand by ill-health, or the destruction of a valuable existence, is unwarrantable. Far from thinking (as you say of me) this life to be only a vestibule of even little importance, you would have seen, if you had read my letter attentively, that I thought quite otherwise; and that I no more separate this life from the future one, than I separate the life of to-day from that of to-morrow, which is future to to-day; and I think this life is evidently as necessary for the growth of the soul, as boyhood is to that of the man; if the childhood is neglected or vitiated, it never loses its effects on the man; and so with the soul's passage through this preparatory state of existence. How do you prove that Buckle did not act when alive as if he believed in a future existence? Did you want him to act as a schoolboy, and say, "Oh, I can learn that to-morrow; sufficient to the day is the evil thereof, or *the good thereof*" (as you add very inconsiderately, as I think), forgetting that to-morrow he might have taken a step further in knowledge, consequent upon having mastered his task of to-day; instead of, by procrastination, being obliged to linger all the longer before attaining his end. You have thrice in your letters quoted this saying, "Sufficient to-day," &c., &c., with the addition, "and the good thereof." I have

never taken notice of this before, because I never till now considered that *you* could take such an absurd meaning out of it. I thought Christians—so-called—were the only people who gave it that meaning, and pretended to act upon it. In its true, or rational meaning I think it a good saying (all except your addition)—about as good as "Put not off till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day." Then, you have thrice taunted me with Æsop's fable of the dog crossing the water, although by attention to my letters, you would have seen, that my philosophy is the very reverse of grasping at a shadow, instead of sticking to the substance. This fable you always mention in connection with the saying above, "Sufficient unto the day," &c. I suppose you mean the fable to be explanatory of the meaning of the saying, as you take it. I never met with any who would agree with you, except the "unco' gude" Christian; and neither he nor the dog, ever does, act up to this meaning. The question after all, resolves itself into the meaning we put on the word "shadow." You call that shadow, which I also at one time, thought shadow, but have since ascertained to be more substantial than what I formerly thought to be the only substance. I never let go either; for one is an outgrowth of the other, and I would no more think of neglecting the matters I am now engaged with, and surrounded by, than I would think of throwing away seed wheat, and yet expect to reap a harvest. I wish to sow to-day, that I may reap in the future, as any rational man would do; but if I thought the harvest of to-morrow was a *shadow*, I would certainly think it wise to sow as sparingly as possible, to-day. I would eat up my seed-wheat decidedly, and let things slide, and say with you, "Sufficient to the day the good thereof." *My* energies would be cramped, by the daily fear, that annihilation might come as a thief in the night, and that I should have to leave my work, not even perhaps well commenced. The very consciousness that *I alone* enjoyed such views, and the power of communicating them; so far from being a reward—in such a case as Buckle's—would only serve as an aggravation of my fears; and I would then, indeed, be very much inclined to act as Æsop's dog; and, seizing on the shadows as they passed, leave my useless soul to shift for itself. For where would be the reward for trying to improve man, even on your hypothesis of cattle breeding? Your tastes and fancies in this and such-like matters, is no process of nature; and is only carried on by man, who can control measurably, and controvert nature, for his own self-gratification. He improves cattle to please his own senses and tastes; and even so does he with horses, plants, trees, and flowers, and in the fruition of his labors he *has his reward*. And supposing, I have *now* fine cattle produced from that "cow" you talk of, as being in my possession ten years ago; where would have been my reward *now*, if I had acted on *your* meaning, of "Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil and *good thereof?*" Again I say, where the reward for improving man—"the most useless being in creation, and yet the

tyrant of nature," if his existence is to end with time? No, no; let us grasp and grapple with every chance of improvement, for your own conditions and for the good of others, with the stimulating certainty, that not even your feeblest efforts will be lost; for they will not only, like the leaves of the tree, serve their *visible* ends; but when passed, go likewise to fertilise the soul, and aid it in producing more and more vigorous effects. This is nature's true analogy, for it is not the tree itself that is required to nourish the rest of its species; nor in any wise, do I see nature so careful of the type, if there is another and a better to be expanded by its disappearance. The weaker, even if the purer, falls before the stronger; and this is a law which you will find universal in nature among all types, be they animal, vegetable, or mineral; and, I am obliged to repeat for the third time, that if there be no future existence for man—if he be not allowed to finish his work commenced on earth, and consciously to enjoy the fruition of his labors—then that man's existence is, and must be, a failure, as far as he *individually* is concerned. Let the effects on the race be what they will—be he a philosopher, a statesman, or artisan of the highest grade—*his life* is a failure; to say nothing of the idle, degraded wretch, or the very felon, whose life serves as often, if not oftener, to vitiate the race, than to act as a "*warning*" to it. You ask, "How such would be provided for in the future?" I believe (as most progressionists do) that *none* are too far gone to be unable to take their part in universal progression. For the great Father and Mother of the universe—or nature, if you will—has made nothing to be lost; which would obviously be the case with those careers, were the present existence alone concerned. But I learn from nature that "There is good in *all*—none are all bad." The leaves of the tree, as was said before, verily serve their end, by manuring the soil to give fresh vigor to the parent stem, and therefore are no failure; but were the tree itself to decay before it bore its fruit, its existence would certes be a failure, say what you will. So I reject your analogy, of their destruction perpetuating the type. I cannot deny that the human spirit may be attenuated matter; but if I cannot give a sufficient definition of it, it would by no means follow that it has no existence. It is better to *know* a thing exists, than to be able to give a good definition of it; and in case of your supposing that I shirk giving my individual notion on the subject, I say it is a being—or entity—so etherialised, that when (like the liberated oxygen you talked so much about) IT becomes liberated, it does not find its specific gravity within any stratum of our earth's atmosphere. You don't seem to be aware, that what is *called* the law of attraction of gravitation, is a *mere hypothesis*, and is denied in toto by some of the ablest modern men of science. One thing is evident—that, in nothing that men undertake, do they ever depend on, or apply, the so-called law of attraction. If men want two things to approach, they *propel* them by forces outside of each, in the direction of each other.

Do you call the aspirations of the soul after immortality "a dream?" Yet, is it not quite evident that the earliest impressions of the human mind, urging it to investigate, must be to IT the most important truth, and that such aspirations have no affinity to dreams. Is not all civilisation the result of human aspirations? and ever since the dawn of philosophy, has not its primal aim been to demonstrate, that this terrestrial pilgrimage is but an episode in human life. One of the best demonstrations is, as I have read somewhere lately, given by Plato in his Phædo, under a close and stringent form of logic, of the great fact of immortality; every objection anticipated and refuted, so as to leave us nothing new to be learned on the subject. Have you read it? I will conclude this letter by quoting for your consideration a sentence of Bishop Beveridge:—"Opposite arguments, and downright answers, advantage a cause; but when a disputant leaves many things *untouched*, as if they were *too hot for his fingers*; and *declines* the weight of other things, and *alters the true state of the question*, it is a shrewd sign, either that he has not weighed things maturely, or else that he maintains a desperate cause." Yours truly,

S. G. W.

Walwa, 18th December, 1867.

MY DEAREST A.,—Yours of the 2nd December last, I received about a fortnight ago. I do not wonder at your writing about Spiritualism as you do, for I would have said similar things as you do now, before I knew anything about it. I am confirmed instead of shaken in my faith by reading 1st Timothy, iv. 1, which you recommend me to read; for the "seducing spirits" predicted by Paul are such as teach "*doctrines* of devils" and "speak lies in hypocrisy." All the spirit teachings that have come to me—and I have now volumes of them—invariably *enforce* the teachings of Jesus. The basis of all they teach being—"*Trust in God* and *love to all*." That "*evil spirits*" are allowed by God to communicate with men is true, I believe; but even if I knew nothing from actual experience, of good spirits having likewise power to communicate with their fellow-beings on earth, I should have been compelled, by my notions of the infinite justice and love of the Great Father of all, to believe, that if *evil spirits* are permitted to come, *much more* would He permit and commission *good spirits* to do so. Besides, I have in theory, always been taught, and accustomed to believe, in the "communion of saints," and that all good spirits are "ministering spirits" sent to minister to them who are "heirs of salvation." How are we to judge of men or spirits? Christ's test is the best, viz.:—"By their fruits ye shall know them." If all the beautiful, elevating instructions which my children and myself have received, be from devils; then there is no telling devils from holy angels; or there must have been a wonder-

ful "revival of religion" in pandemonium. It is said to us—"Why do ye not of your own selves judge what is right." "Try the spirits whether they are of God." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh IS of God." You may be sure that I *tried* them in all ways before I allowed myself (naturally very sceptical) to yield up views and opinions indulged during my life, and which had been daily strengthening. I now have no fear of death. I shall welcome it, for its sting has been taken away; and I now KNOW (not merely believe) that it is a mere doorway or passage to a superior life; and of itself a painless one, according to the testimony of all those who have passed through it. We are more earnest than ever in our endeavors after a purer and better life on earth, and in trying more to redeem lost time, than ever before; for we have been made to see more clearly than ever, that our future happiness depends altogether upon our conduct here; and that the way to ensure a happy future, is "to walk as Christ walked," ever doing good in all ways that are in our power. And as to the uses of Spiritualism—several friends of mine who were formerly hard materialists, whom nothing had been able to convince of immortality, are now rejoicing in the sure belief in a future existence; convinced of its being a great and immovable *fact*, from the very same phenomena that have convinced me, of the fact of intercourse between departed spirits, and men on earth. Phenomena that there was no gainsaying—no getting over upon any other hypothesis, but actual spirit existence and intercourse. Christ's mission was to "bring life and immortality to light;" the mission of these spiritual followers of Christ, is to carry on His work as His ministers. If we believe in the holy Scriptures, which I firmly do, as containing the words of eternal life, we must see, that they are based on the *fact* of a world of spirits; and that in all times, and among all people, spirits have appeared, sent by God to convey his instructions to prophets and holy men—made holy, by means of this very communion with the other world. I do not see any prohibition by Christ, of holding intercourse with spirits, but on the contrary much to encourage it; and Paul merely warns against "*seducing lying spirits*" in like manner as he warns against seducing and lying *men*, who are ever seeking their own selfish ends. Paul says—"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares;" and this exhortation is intended for us, and for men in all times, as well as to the Jews. And I thank God from the bottom of my heart, that I did entertain these strangers, for they have filled our life with the sunshine of God's love and truth, which before used to be comparatively uncertain, and which, with some of us, was certainly much and perpetually darkened by clouds, which have now disappeared for ever. I remember that at first, I used to say—"Have we not all we want for life and salvation in

the Bible, then what's the use of Spiritualism?" but I now see that, in the same way that we consider preachers and ministers, and commentators, and churches, necessary for the reminding and strengthening the members of Christ's body, so Spiritualism is necessary; and even much more so than our long-established modes of administering the gospel. Spiritualism affords a perfect demonstration of the truth of what the gospel ministers have preached for 1900 as true, for they are obliged to depend on history, which they are unable to prove the truth of to unbelievers; but the facts of Spiritualism are a present and tangible appeal to the common sense of sceptics, and to the *senses* of materialists, whom nothing but the evidences of their senses can in the least move. To say "we want nothing but the Bible," is saying exactly what the Jews and ancient world said on the introduction of Christianity. They said—"We have Moses and the prophets." In the time of Luther, all Christendom said—"We have the Bible and the holy church with its traditions, what want we with the sayings of a mad monk?" and this has been the way *all* new truth, or old truth in a new and unaccustomed dress, has been received. Jesus! was not even *He* called a blasphemer, and his miracles said to be the work of the devil? I can see nothing either evil or useless in spirit intercourse, but only a confirmation of eternal truths, now being permitted to penetrate through the veil of sense. The words of Gamaliel applied to Spiritualism are very suitable, viz.:—"If this thing be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." Let it and me alone then, and at least, do not denounce without knowledge or without examination. All the teachings we have received through it, are demonstrative of the existence of men after death; and that they whom we have known and loved on earth, and who on earth were Christlike in benevolence and beneficence, *continue* to love and minister to us, and that by our purity of life we shall *certainly* be reunited to them; and that we are by death only changed to spirit-beings, retaining all the faculties we possessed on earth, and our identity in every respect; that we enter at once into a state of happiness or misery, according to our life on earth; that our most secret thoughts are known to the intelligences surrounding us, and communing with us. We are shown also, to a great extent, what that state of existence really is, into which man is ushered; and thus, by divine permission, it is being revealed to us in what that life consists, and how, either by disregarding the divine laws concerning the regeneration of our life on earth, or endeavouring to make these laws the guide of our conduct; it will become indescribably sorrowful, or inexpressibly happy. And what, after all, dear A., would you, a sincere follower of the Lord as you are, do, were you placed involuntarily in the same circumstances as I have been, and seen for yourself, and undergone the same experiences in your own house and family as I have? I am quite sure that you

would do just as I do—keep close to our Great Father by prayer and faith, in full trust and obedience. In view of the above blessed effects, how can I help ardently desiring the spread of that which would ensure such results, or that earnest, habitual, wrestling prayer, may be made for the spread of Spiritualism with sevenfold energy, as streams flowing from an infinite well, to illuminate, comfort, and make glad the heart of man for ever and ever. I shall end this letter with a quotation from an eminent divine of the Church of England, who wrote before modern Spiritualism was heard of:—"It is not possible to rise from a perusal of the Old and New Testaments, without feeling, that the facts and truths of spiritual intercourse, or of communication (communion of saints) existing between the visible and invisible worlds, are the groundwork of all we have read. This is not a matter of my fancy, or a matter to be merely inferred. It is the fundamental question of the Scriptures, essential and inherent to them throughout; which commentators or even opposers of Scripture cannot explain away. It is undeniably evident to all readers of the Bible, unbelievers as well as believers, that the firm faith of the people of old—those to whom the prophets wrote, as well as the prophets themselves—was in the *reality* and in the *direct* influence of the world of spirits. If you undermine that faith, you sap the foundations of the whole superstructure on which our blessed religion and belief is built." I see in your letter, that after telling me to "*try the spirits*" and ask them about Jesus, you say—"It is very strange the spirits never say anything that there is any sense in." This surely is not fair—*denouncing without enquiry*. Some months before your letter arrived, some friends of ours had written to us almost in the same words as yourself, and referring us to the same chapter and verse that you do. Before this letter of our friends came to hand, the lady through whose hand our spirit-friends usually communicate, wrote the following in an unconscious state, and in the dark, and when written and read, we had not the most remote idea of what or to whom the writing referred, or was intended for, until the letter of our friends arrived *some days after*. The following was written; and although I see you say in your letter—"Do not send me any more of their messages, I will have none of them," yet, notwithstanding this forbidal, I will venture to send you the following, as it was not written as a message to you, but yet is so *apropos* to your question of 'asking them about Christ, and 1st Timothy, iv.' that I must send it:—"Your friends wish to know if we spirits ever acknowledge that Christ came in the flesh, and we undoubtedly answer—yes; the man Christ Jesus did come in the flesh, and thank God for the light he brought with him, and the unwearying efforts he made to impart it to all who would receive it. His was no time-serving career, but one unceasing combat against the popularly received traditions of men, which he so openly withstood, aye, in the very face of the rulers of the day

—priests, Sadducees, Pharisees, &c.—that they were lashed into the fury that made them combine for His destruction. He set no example of truckling to authority, in matters of truth or doctrine. He denounced hypocrisy in the most influential sect—the Pharisees. He chose His disciples from the despised Gallileans. He shunned not the company of the detested publicans and sinners. His was the gospel of glad tidings, which was to save *all men*. His mottoes were—'Love God,' 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you, loving your neighbor as yourself,' 'on these hang all the law and the prophets,' 'Love your enemies,' 'Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye mete, it shall be meted to you again,' 'To do good and show mercy is better than sacrifices or burnt offerings.' How much of all this do you hear preached from rostrum or pulpit? Where find you those who call themselves *His* ministers, feeding His lambs? Do they not rather feed and fatten themselves on their flocks, by raising fears and despairing wretchedness in their hearts, from which they alone are supposed to be able to deliver them? Such is our acknowledgement of Jesus Christ, whose bright example we earnestly exhort you all to follow, even to the death, if the support of truth demand it; and to you too shall it be given to be called the sons of God. Never cease then to strive and labor to become worthy of your high calling, receiving and uttering unflinchingly the words of truth and knowledge, which shall be ever on the increase, if such be your sincere desire." I should like you to send this letter to J. in case she also should have doubts of my being led away by "seducing spirits." "Seeing is believing;" "The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it." While I retain my senses, and my powers of judging all things by God's greatest gift to man—reason—I must believe that I am, and that all may be, in communication with the spirits of just men in the "better land," to our great advantage morally, mentally, and intellectually, and to our ever-growing happiness. I am not to believe that a spirit-friend, who has for years or months proved his friendship and sincere desire to do me good; I am not, I say, to believe that he is an evil spirit or devil, on the mere diction of some third party who is in utter ignorance of the subject, and who merely talks and thinks the thoughts of others regarding these things, who are equally ignorant with himself; and this after the most rigid examination and trial, on my part, of that spirit-friend's truth, and love, and sincerity. My best love to all, my dearest sister, whom *I am sure* I shall meet again in that "better land." Your affectionate brother,

S. G. W.

Walwa, April, 1868.

To E. M. L.—If we believe in the Holy Scriptures, we must believe also in a world of spirits; and that from all time, spirits have been seen and heard by many persons at different periods; and I cannot understand wherein lies the difference between the supposed angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Are not all ministering angels? Nor can I see the force of your arguments about the bodies of Moses and Elias, nor the dead bodies of the saints which arose at the time of the crucifixion, for were not their spirits in them? Surely it is not with the 'bodies' of our friends we converse. Do not we Christians hold that the coming of Christ was the beginning of a new dispensation; and so far from prohibiting His disciples from holding converse with departed spirits, He set us the example of doing so, during His life; and the moment He expired—having become a spirit of the dead, the head and prince of all spirits, the first-fruit of them that slept—he encourages us to seek His Spirit, by declaring that He stands for ever at the door, and knocks, and if we open, He will come in, make himself known, and bring the Father with Him. That this intercourse with spirits was not to be confined solely to Him, was proved by the rising of those said saints immediately after His death, who went into the city, and appeared unto many. Was not this a direct, nay, incontrovertible demonstration that the Mosaic prohibition—even had it extended to all spirit intercourse—had lapsed, so far as it regarded Christians, nor have we the slightest sign of its being continued under the present dispensation, from the first act of which to the last, the spirits of the dead are great and divinely-commissioned agents. When St. John (who himself relates in the nineteenth of Revelations having an interview with a departed fellow-servant), speaks in his first epistle, of spirits, he says nothing about their being forbidden, but only warns us to try whether they be of God. "By their fruits ye shall know them." I quite agree with you that many have been misled by giving heed to seducing spirits; but by keeping close by prayer and faith to God, He will not allow us to be tempted more than we are able to bear, and I will accept of no teaching that my reason and trust in God, does not agree with. You ask, have we not all we need to know for our salvation in the Bible? and I answer, yes. In advocating Spiritualism I am not raising any question as to that point; far from it. Yet tell me why the preaching of the Bible for 1800 years has produced so little effect among its hearers? Why so much crime, misery, ignorance, daily increasing in the very country in which it is supposed to be best known? Does it not show that there is something wanting? And why not welcome any means permitted by God to give vitality to its teachings, although 1800 years may have passed over since we have received the gospel of Christ. Might we not ask, why were the Jews, God's chosen people, left in want of this gospel of love and peace, which, you must acknowledge, forms the vital portion of our faith; for 4000 years? Why should God not have given them the

same guidance to peace and joy that we possess; for if it were not necessary for them, why do we require it? It may be said they had Christ's coming to look forward to. But that His coming and the very nature of His mission, was kept as completely shut up from them, as the secrets of futurity have been from us, is easily seen, for was it not with the same terms he was received by them, as are now used towards the advocates of modern Spiritualism? Was He not called a blasphemer, and His miracles said to be the works of the devil. "He casts out devils by the prince of the devils." But we do not regard Spiritualism as any new revelation. It is rather—but let me quote from a spiritual communication:—"Spiritualism is no new religion; it is but the angel sent to trouble the waters into which you must plunge the spirit of division prevalent among all sects and parties, ere you expect to see any cordial unity. Then, loving each other more, all will turn their attention to those fundamental points on which they agree; and, instead of trying to discover and overcome the defects of others, everyone will earnestly desire to have his own vanquished by the truth, which would ere long illumine their paths, and insensibly draw them to their companions by the ties of mutual attachment. Then, instead of guarding against each other's apparently hostile doctrines, will be heard the cry of, 'why cannot we be one?' 'what obstructs our union!' until mutual respect and heartfelt love, will break down the barrier which separated them. Oh then, let there be habitual earnest wrestling prayer for its spread with sevenfold energy, as streams flowing from our infinite well to illuminate, comfort, and make you glad for ever and ever.—J. A. J." Thus, I can see neither uselessness nor evil in it, but only a confirmation of eternal truths now being permitted to penetrate through the veil of sense; all the teachings we have received through it, are demonstrations of the existence of man after death. That those we have known and loved on earth, continue to love and minister to us after they have left the body; and that by our purity of life we may be re-united to them. That we are by death only changed to spirit-beings, and retain all the faculties we possessed on earth, without waiting in a state of inanition for the resurrection of the material body. That we enter at once into a state of happiness or misery, according to our life on earth. I would like to ask you, my dear E., what would you do if you were made involuntarily, and even unconsciously, to write in the different handwritings of departed spirits—whose writings you had never even seen, but which were at once recognised by those who received the communications? Would you not do just as I do—keep close to your God by prayer and faith, and in full trust in his promises of protection.—Yours affectionately, E. A.

December, 1867.

Extract from a letter to J. A.—"God, I firmly believe, ever works by means of his ministering spirits. You say the Bible takes no cog-

nizance of any spirit save the one we call 'the Holy Spirit.' Now in studying the Holy Scriptures, I find that it is based on the belief in a world of spirits; and that from all time spirits or angels have appeared, and been sent by God to convey His instructions to prophets and holy men. The parable of Abraham and Dives proves nothing to me, for, if Moses and the prophets were all-sufficient for our instruction and guidance, where the necessity for the teaching of Christ and His disciples; by accepting which as a new dispensation, are we not equally impugning God, for having for 4000 years left His chosen people in darkness on such a vital subject. And if it were not necessary for *them*, why should *we* require it? It has been said to me, 'Oh, they had Christ's coming to look forward to.' But in the reception he received, we have ample proof that His coming, and the very nature of His mission, was kept as completely shut up from them as the secrets of futurity have hitherto been from us; for was it not in the self-same terms which you hear daily applied to the advocates of Spiritualism? Was He not called a blasphemer, and His miracles said to be the works of the devil? And I now say, in the words of Christ, 'If Satan cast out Satan, he cannot stand, but hath an end.' If I take the standard He has given us to test the good and bad, I cannot but accept thankfully any instructions given us. In them I find no puerility. Nothing, that does not tend to elevate and purify the soul of man, and lead him on to progress in the knowledge of light and truth; therefore, 'as by their fruits ye shall know them,' I firmly trust in them as the true ministers of God's will, for a 'bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit,' nor from what I have seen, heard, and read, can I find your guarantee, dear J., for pronouncing such a severe judgment on Spiritualists. If we require no other teachings than the Bible, why not do away at once with churches, chapels, meeting-houses, and their ministers? What want we with them, putting their interpretations on *the Word?* The very style of which, in general, you might well call puerile—leaving so many starving souls trying to grasp a few crumbs of truth, to allay their craving for light. As for L.'s question, I shall enclose a copy of a communication given in answer to it we suppose, some time since. To us, Christ has ever been held up as our guide, example, and Saviour. Judge for yourself. God has given you reason.—What for? You are to use all His gifts, and not abuse any of them; which you are most certainly doing if you attempt to crush or leave them lying idle, folded up in the napkin of prejudice or superstition. Let me conclude with the warning of Gamaliel, Acts v. 38, 39."—E. A.

February, 1868.

To E. M. L.,—You should have had an answer to your last welcome letter sooner, but M. when sending it to me, also sent me a message saying that "You seemed all so happy in your present belief, that she thought I had better not write to you any more

about Spiritualism, unless I felt compelled to do so," and I have since then been (I now feel foolishly) inclined to comply with her advice. The receipt of the pamphlet you so kindly sent me by the last mail, has confirmed me in my wish to continue the subject. Very many thanks for the pamphlet, for I sincerely wish to read and study all that can be written or said on both sides of every question; but such are really the best works I know of, to convince unbelievers of the truth of what is called, the *phenomena* of spirit intercourse; and when once convinced of that, then let them "try the spirits whether they be of God." One person, who was a most determined unbeliever, on reading one much more strongly expressed than Mr. Nangle's, exclaimed—"Why, this is in favor of spirit intercourse, only it foists it all on the devil. I deny the thing altogether, it is an imposture;" but this latter is an assertion that can only be made nowadays, by persons who have never had the chance of seeing and testing the facts. Facts which, no matter how taken, prove the correctness of the belief of all Spiritualists, that, man has still an individualised, conscious existence, beyond the grave; and that these individualised spirits can, and, under proper conditions, do, communicate with the friends they have left on earth. The first, you agree with me in believing, and let me again try to show you that the latter, is not antagonistic to the teachings of the Bible, by demonstrating the striking analogy their exists between the facts of the Bible, and the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, upon which, in a great measure, depends the above belief. First, let me premise, that Spiritualists declare that a miracle in the theological interpretation, (a deviation from the course of nature) is scientifically, philosophically, and morally impossible; for, were such to be possible, it must upset not only the divinity of the Bible, but our very conceptions of the Divine. Believing God to be infinite in his attributes, and that natural law is the effect of the perfection of those attributes; we must believe consequently, that all things have been arranged upon the wisest and best plan, for the wisest and best purposes. Any deviation from this plan must be a detraction, for no change from what is perfect, *can* be, except for the worse. To base a system of religion, therefore, upon the performance of miracles, in the orthodox sense of the term, is basing it on a system of inharmony of the divine attributes, and necessarily depriving the Deity of that which alone makes Him infinite; so that Spiritualists declare such miracles to be impossible, and that all the phenomena of the past, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, together with the analogous manifestations of the present day, were and are in accordance with the harmonious action of natural laws; and that none of the powers that were exercised in the past through any of the prophets, patriarchs, or seers, through Jesus or the apostles, were drawn from without the domain of natural law. With these preliminary

remarks, let us examine the analogy I speak of; but first, I see you begin your letter by saying—"You see a vast difference between angels and spirits of men;" but did Christ warrant us in so doing, when he spoke as in Matthew xviii. 10—I believe angels to be disembodied spirits of men. As for Hebrews ii. 10, take the verse as it stands. How else could Christ have lived on earth, but as the seed of Abraham. We cannot become angels until we leave our earthly bodies in the dust, from whence they sprung. If we are to believe the Bible, Moses was disembodied, as you will find stated in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 5, 6. So that when you condemn Spiritualists for necromancy, (*i.e.* learning from the dead) remember, they have the distinct example of Jesus for so doing. No matter what texts Christians may find in the Old Testament as promising the coming of Christ, it still remains a fact, that they were worse than useless to the Jews; for if they really referred to Christ, yet we find that the Jews were led to hope against hope for a Messiah, who was to restore their temporal kingdom, and for whom they are still looking; their sacrifices were but atonements for their individual sins; and the Passover, so far from typifying Christ, was celebrated by them, as the Bible states, in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. What signs have we of Abraham's knowledge of Jesus as a mediator, when pleading with God for the "cities of the plain." God promised if He found ten righteous men therein, to save the cities for *their* sakes. The whole of the prophecies are full of promises of peace, and the angels who announced the birth of Christ sang the advent of "Peace on earth and goodwill to men." To answer the rest of your letter, I can only refer you to my last on the subject of Spiritualism, which, the more I search the Scriptures, the firmer I believe in. Will you now have the patience to turn with me to the very first book of the Bible, and let us go through to the dispensation of the New Testament, asking the question with the poet—"Is God asleep, that he should cease to be all that he was to the prophets of the past?" In Genesis xviii.—"Three angels in the *form of men* appeared to Abraham, on the plain of Mamre," and were fed by him with material food; and does not the validity of the Christian plan of salvation, rest on the fulfilment of the promises made to Abraham by those angels in the form of men (not in the appearance only, or they could not have partaken of material food), so that the Christian plan of salvation, and all the good claimed from it, depend entirely upon the manifestation of these angel-men—just as the mediums of the present day claim to receive them. In Genesis xix. the spirits who came to Lot were two angels in the *form of men*.—Genesis xxii., the arm of Abraham is arrested when about to murder his son Isaac, having been tempted to do so by (what to-day would be called) an undeveloped spirit, under the supposition that *God* had so ordered him, by way of temptation. —Jacob's vision, in Genesis xxv., of the ladder extending from

earth to heaven, on which angels ascended and descended, is but a true demonstration of what modern Spiritualism is daily proving, that there exists in reality such an intellectual spiritual ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, "bright with beckoning angels." You believe in the dream of Jacob, but reject the declarations of to-day. Can you really believe that it was the Holy Ghost! the third person in the Deity! who inspired Jacob with the advice which resulted in the (to say the least) curious proceedings, by means of which he got his uncle's property transferred to himself. In Genesis xxxii. there is the account of a spirit-man wrestling with Jacob, until the breaking of the day. This to many appeared extremely absurd, before the modern manifestations which are constantly occurring, of actual physical force manifested, in contests with media by spirits. One of the allegations brought against modern Spiritualism, is, that many of the inculcations which come from the spirit-world are calculated to demoralize society; were this true, it would only still follow out the analogy as we again have it in Exodus iii.; where the angel, while appointing Moses to the captaincy of the Israelitish host, advises the Israelitish women to fraudulently possess themselves of the jewels and the raiment of the Egyptian women—in fact, to steal them. Prove any more immoral advice to have been given by the controlling spirits of to-day. Why could not God have inspired Moses, Balaam, and Gideon by His Holy Spirit, to act (as it is claimed he did the later prophets to write) without the intervention of angels, as we find he did in Exodus xiv., Numbers xxii., and Judges vi., leaving the latter so doubtful of the angel being a true messenger, that, too like many Spiritualists of the present day, he demanded manifestation after manifestion, test upon test, which were granted to him in vain, until, as we find in chapter vii., a cake of barley-bread was thrown into the Midianitish camp. If an angel were permitted, as in 1st Kings xix., to supply Elijah with material food, why must it be the devil who produces material objects at circles now? or, why should he be the author of any mistaken statements or falsehoods, if such *are* now given through mediums; when it is expressly stated in Kings xxii. that God himself put a lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets of Ahab, to deceive him. We have another material manifestation in 2nd Kings vi., where the great medium Elisha caused a solid iron axe to swim upon the surface of the river Jordan. Are the manifestations of to-day more material than that? Read Chronicles xxi., and think of the conduct of David, (the man after God's own heart,) and mark that his communications were carried on through the agency of "Gad the seer," and then compare the manifestations of "Gad the seer" with those of the seers of modern times, and answer to yourself, is there not as much rationality and beauty in the manifestations of the latter as in any of those presented in the past. In 2nd Chronicles xxi. you will find it stated that a handwriting came from Elijah, to Jehoram, king of Judah;

whilst the Bible chronology shows that Elijah had gone to heaven in a chariot of fire some thirteen years prior to the date of the writing. Why should he be the only privileged one? Read Chronicles ii. 34, and you will will find, that had it not been for the seeress, or medium, Huldah, it is more than probable that the law of Moses (which of course you believe most valuable and important), would not have been handed down to present generations. The seeresses of to-day are denounced, let them be ever so good or so true; and yet the law of Moses is accepted, though given through Huldah. This reminds me to speak of another medium—"The woman of Endor," as she is called in the Bible. She is not called a "witch" except in the headings of the chapter and pages which have been furnished by the translators. The chapter itself does not once contain the word "witch." She is called "The woman of Endor"—a good hospitable woman to strangers. She gave them a sitting (as it would be now called) with a striking manifestation. She proved herself a good woman—a noble, true-hearted, God-gifted medium; and there are many such to be seen to-day. In the first, second, and third chapters of Ezekiel, you have an account of visions presented to Ezekiel, and of his interviews with the spirits; and in the course of these interviews he says distinctly, "A spirit entered into me, and enabled me to hear the voices from the sky"—precisely what is claimed by the majority of the trance mediums of modern times. What more wonderful in the preservation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fire, than what you will find told and certified, even by their enemies, of the prophets of the Cevennes, and other mediums, when subjected to the trial by fire; and if the former were preserved by the presence of an angel, why should it be the devil who saved the latter? The spirit-hands and writings of to-day have their analogy in the fifth of Daniel. In the sixth chapter you have a splendid manifestation of that wonderful magnetic power, which we are daily learning can be brought to bear through the human organism; indicative of the fact, that when we shall properly understand the laws of our nature, and more fully comprehend the occult forces of nature, we will find that man stands on the apex of creation, and must of necessity control all things below him. In the tenth chapter, after Daniel had fasted—as is the custom with modern mediums on all proper occasions, he was entranced, and a vision presented to him; and during that trance the spirit approached him in the form of a man, spoke to him, and touched him—precisely what is now occurring daily. You believe in the former; wherefore reject the latter? In the ninth of Nehemiah it is said "All the people praised God." Because of what? "He had sent a good *spirit* to speak to them." Many more instances you will find through the Old Testament, but they would take up too much space. Before leaving it, however, let me ask you to turn to Job xxxii. 8, and say do you believe, with Elihu, that "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty

giveth him understanding." Or, as you will find in the thirty-third chapter—"God speaketh once, yea twice, yet men perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumbering upon the bed, then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." For we Spiritualists believe every word of it. It was in a dream the angel appeared to Joseph in Matthew i., and in the twenty-eighth an angel appears to the two Marys at the sepulchre; but the physical manifestation of removing the stone from the door of the sepulchre, had been performed in the *dark*, just before the dawn of day. People are now so ready to denounce, and reject the physical manifestations which take place in dark circles—requisite often to obtain the condition necessary for certain manifestations. Again, it was in the night, while the keepers slept, that the angel delivered Peter—Acts xii. And when Peter went to his friend's house, his *rapping* at the door was received as being done by his "angel;" and if the apostles had thought it impossible for the angel of Peter to appear, would they have made such a declaration? Why might we not as well question the propriety of this night manifestation, as it ended in the condemnation to death of the poor innocent keepers? These are but a few of the analogous manifestations you will find; but they suffice to show the absurdity of objecting, on biblical grounds, to the phenomena; and I firmly believe that the same laws, by which Moses and Elias conversed with Jesus, and by which the angels in the forms of men, could converse with Abraham, or appear amid any of the conditions which I have enumerated; must still be in existence, if God be eternal, and His laws unalterable, and that we can therefore still commune with our departed friends in their angel forms; and may they so impress our minds, that we may be enabled to realise that they are perpetually aiming to guide us to "that land of beauty—home of joy—where mingles nought of earth's alloy." Not, dearest E., the awfully selfish orthodox heaven, where we are taught to believe our very happiness will be enhanced by viewing the torments of the damned in hell—a state of inanition, in which there is not an inch of room for the noble soul to expand. I do not believe God has given men true, noble, loving souls, to become thus cramped. Give me, rather, the true heaven of love and usefulness, with the saintly privilege of joining God's host of ministering spirits, to minister and help to elevate those I love, and shall have left on earth. This is *my* definition of "God's heaven."—Yours affectionately,

E. A.

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