

SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST

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"Try to understand Yourself, and Things in general."

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QUID DIVINUM — REVELATION.

BY EMMA A. WOOD.

THE object of Revelation, we have said, is to sanction the discoveries of the soul, and guide it in its new acquisitions. Revelation thus understood has a reason for being (*raison d'être*), it is necessary, indispensable. Some classes of Spiritualists will, perhaps, ask is it supernatural? If you call supernatural what God wills, it is supernatural; but is revelation solely a work of God? Does not the soul play its part therein? Is the soul not obliged to assimilate it? Is not this work of the soul also supernatural since it assimilates God's work? You see either the word supernatural must be renounced, or it must be admitted that everything is supernatural.

Is it not better to come to an understanding once for all, and admit that everything that exists is the work of God; that he created the worlds for a purpose; that the human soul is evolved from the created worlds asserts itself, is developed according to the laws He has given it; that He created it free in regard to these laws, and even in regard to himself, since it is ignorant of Him. It is because it is free and ignorant of Him, that God speaks to it constantly, and directs it while respecting its free will. Its free will does not break the ties that unite it to God first without its knowledge; this constitutes its responsibility, and finally its culpability. What words does he address to it? "My son, give me thy heart," says the Eternal. The culpability, then, must consist not in doing this or that in such or such a manner, but in refusing to give Him the heart.

God's solicitude is such that He is not content with sending Messiahs, revelations, which like beacons light up a vast horizon, in which all humankind may develop freely during a series of ages; He speaks to each soul by a familiar spirit, as we have seen with Socrates, and so many others whose names have been handed down by history. This is the work of the familiar spirit, the guardian angel, the spirit protector; what is more consoling, more comforting?

Jesus, the Revealer, confirms these facts: "Verily, verily I

say unto you, that hereafter you shall see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." (St. John, chap. 1, ver. 51.)

What you quote from St. John, you will tell me, is addressed to Jesus, but nothing proves that what is true for him is not true for men.

This leads to new questions: What is the son of man, and what is a son of God? What is understood by a revealer, a messiah?

At the time of the coming of Jesus, science had not made great progress. The earth was the only habitable and inhabited world. The sun and the stars were only luminaries to give light by day and night. The sky was a hard, solid vault in which the stars were set, and the whole vault turned around the earth, which thus became the principal point in creation, that for which all the rest was made.

Now that we know our earth is a planet, that, like the others, it revolves around the sun, and that, consequently, we form a part of the heavens; now that we know the others like ours receive the fecundating influence of the sun, that they have seasons, an atmosphere, water, snow, ice, are habitable; now that we know the stars are suns, around which more planets revolve as around ours; now that science shows us that there are many nebulae, one beyond the other; that the milk way is a nebula, that in it the suns are counted by millions, and that we occupy a very small corner of this nebula, with all our world, planetary and solar, we may be allowed to deduce from these facts, which widen our intellectual horizon, a new conception of the world, on the sole condition of respecting the most delicate sentiments of our love for God, and the laws he has established in the universe.

God existing from all eternity could not have created men merely on this earth, even although the science of to-day, which, by reading within its bowels the age of the earth and the history of its development, show its origin to be much earlier than the six thousand years of the sacred text; when you give the earth several hundreds of millions of years, it has then had a beginning, and God is from all eternity. The life of the earth, long as it may be, is but a point in eternity.

Further, according to this same science, the most probable appearance of man on the earth does not reckon more than 20,000 years, some count only 12,000 or 14,000. What would these twenty, or even one hundred thousand years be in respect to eternity?

God being immutable, the same reasons that decided Him to create men existed from all eternity; from all eternity he must have been creating men.

Admit to the letter what Jesus said: that he is the eldest son of God; may we not believe that he meant that he belonged to one of those humanities created very much earlier than those of the earth? And as at that epoch even the learned believed that the earth was the world, Jesus was right

in saying, "Before the world was, I was;" and again, "Before Abraham was, I am." He might also with reason say "I am the son of man," an expression also very familiar to him. Thus he must have passed through the same phases as ourselves, and in course of time have reached the degree of perfection he manifested while on our earth.

Does this explanation in aught detract from the merit of Jesus; does it lessen our feeling of love for God; is it not more touching to think the great merits of Jesus may become ours; does it not move the very inmost chords of our hearts to think that the human beings, without number, who have preceded us, who are our brothers, have their eye on us, and come through love for God to mingle in our terrestrial life, to instruct us, and show us the way; saying to us, (St. John iii, 11) "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

A revealer, a messiah, is thus a son of man, who has been a part of an earlier humanity, and who, from love of God and of his less advanced brothers, comes to teach them what he knows.

There remains for me to explain the term *son of God*. St. John, chap. 1, says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

Compare these words with the study we made of *Spiritualism*: see what light has enlightened the soul by only the play of life and the soul's faculties, and see how true this word is: that "the light shineth in darkness;" for the soul no longer knew its way, knew not what course to take, so much so that from it we have deducted the necessity for a revelation.

See what follows: "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came to be a witness; to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe."

The Evangelist says of him: (ver. 8.) "He was not that Light, but came to bear witness of the Light;" and at verse 9, "That was the true Light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world."

Jesus being not yet come, the light of John could be only the light that had guided men up to that time, and which was the result of the faculties of the soul called into play by life.

Thus John the Baptist came to bear witness of the light to the light, that is, to manifest the correspondence of the light acquired with the light to come. At verse 10, we read: "He came to his own, and his own received him not." He came to those who, like him, had only the light which every man has on entering the world, and his own received him not; all had not reached the desired point of progress. At that epoch, as later, many were called but few chosen.

(Verses 12, 13.) "But to as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God; unto them who believe in his name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of the will of God."

Now what did we say in our study of *Spiritualism*? We said that man first felt himself living with a life different from that of the sphere; for he had elevated in his heart a temple to the unknown force which he recognized as superior to all that exists, and that thus a new, moral, wholly interior life was germinated within him; that he had ended by comprehending that this power was as good as all-powerful, as merciful as just, and that he had comprehended that his soul was the seat of his sentiments of love and gratitude to God; that the body was only an instrument for labor and perfecting.

Is it not incontestable that all who believe this believe in God? That they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but that they are born of God, and to them it is given to be the children of God; because they alone comprehend what new destinies await them, and are disposed to recognize Jesus as being sent from God.

Whence it follows, that all men, like Jesus, are called to be children of God; to see the heavens opened, and the angels ascending and descending upon them, though they are yet only the sons of men. All are sons of man, but all are not the beloved sons of God; all have not attained that degree of advancement necessary to become messiahs.

To be a messiah or child of God is a simple question of

advancement. St. John the Baptist said of him, "He who comes after me is preferred before me;" and "whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

St. John the Evangelist (chap. 14, ver. 12) gives these words to Jesus: "You will do all that I do; and greater than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father." Thus Jesus, the messiah, the son of God, the son of man, is of the same nature as ourselves; he represents a degree of perfection that we have not, but which we may hope to attain if we imitate him.

John the Baptist renders yet another testimony of Jesus: "I saw," he says, the Spirit descend from Heaven like a dove and it rested upon him." And again he says: "I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

This proves the intuition of which Plato and so many others had already given proof. John the Baptist did not know Jesus, but before coming he had been told what would characterize him, and he remembered it.

This also proves that, on the other side, there are many mansions; that the inhabitants of one do not know the inhabitants of the others, and that when they come on the earth they come with a kind of predestination, that is to do such or such a thing.

Not understanding re-incarnation, what St. Paul said of predestination has not been understood, but has been made to stand for a fatality. It is not thus that I comprehend it. When St. Paul says, "What is animal comes first, afterwards the spiritual; transform your animal soul into a spiritual soul," he must surely have known that this transformation could not be made in one life of man. So he cries, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? oh, grave, where is thy victory?" Certainly he must have believed in re-incarnation. Thus, predestination signifies nothing but the part we come to fill on the earth, which we have known before coming, and of which we preserve the intuition. This part is the consequence of the law of evolution, the law of progress. We cannot return to do what we know, we return to learn what we do not know. What we have to know is our predestination, as the scholar of the fifth, fourth, third, is predestined to translate such and such Greek or Latin authors.

The part of Jesus was also predestined, for he had been announced by the prophets. Many acts of his life, his death and the kind of death, had been predicted. He, himself, had the intuition of what should happen to him. He read in the hearts of men; he could have avoided what menaced him, but he would not; he said: "Father, thy will, not mine be done." He knew how to endure what was to come to him from those who did not believe in him. DR. D. G.

IN A RECENT editorial reply to an article from Mrs. Denton, the Banner passed a criticism on the book, "The Soul of Things," which is the joint production of Prof. Denton and his wife above referred to. Prof. Denton replies in a letter, printed in the last issue; it is accompanied by an editorial apology, neat and ample. The letter tells a truth that is important, however, coming as it does from Prof. Denton. He says: "Are we then never to publish anything that draws largely on the credulity of readers? How long would the Banner be published, if you should adopt that principle?"

FRIENDS IN THE various parts of the country will oblige the editor by forwarding to him newspapers issued in their respective localities that may happen to contain any matter likely to prove interesting to Spiritualists, or in which statements may have appeared of an incorrect character—a very common occurrence—regarding Spiritualism. The paragraphs to which attention is called should be marked to save trouble.

Mr. Daniel F. Beatty, of Washington, N. J., is constantly in receipt of the most flattering testimony from all parts of the United States and Canada, as to the beauty and excellence of his pianos and organs. Send for catalogue and list of testimonials. Address Daniel F. Beatty, Washington Warren County, N. J. Adv.

From the Scientific American.

THE ORACLES OF ANCIENT GREECE.

As the classical authors inform us, there were in ancient Greece, in different localities, so called sibyls, a kind of fortune tellers, clairvoyants, or spiritual mediums, but of a social standing much higher than that of their successors at the present day, as they were not only recognized but maintained by a wealthy and influential priesthood, to whom the presents received from the faithful believers were a source of enormous revenue. In our present state of society, we can scarcely form an idea of the power and influence of the priests as a separate class of society, monopolizing as they did all the profits derived from the superstitious, who wished to atone for their sins, to obtain knowledge not only of secret events, but also of the future, and to get advice as to their action in cases of difficulty, even to be cured of various diseases; and thus the priests monopolized, for many centuries, the functions of many professions, even that of the physicians, which Hippocrates at last succeeded in rescuing from the power of the priesthood.

These sibyls, of which the two prominent ones were the Cumæan and the Delphian, resided in gorgeous temples erected over caves, from which vapors arose which had an exhilarating and anæsthetic influence, similar to that of nitrous oxide or laughing gas, on those inhaling them. The author of a well known book, entitled "Art Magic," who for some time lived at the locality where the Cumæan sibyl once resided, states that it is one of the wildest, grandest, and most awe-inspiring gorges of the mountains around Lake Avernus, which itself is the inundated crater of an extinct but once mighty volcano; while the whole region around, now fertilized by the waters of the lake, bears the marks of the ravages of fire, presenting a most gloomy appearance. The clefts in the savage rocks abound with caverns, exhaling mephitic vapors and bituminous odors. The scattered inhabitants of the surrounding district once believed that the largest grotto was the entrance to the lower world, and that the hammers of the Titans, working in the mighty laboratories of the Plutonic realms, might be heard reverberating through the sullen air. The dark waters of Lake Avernus were supposed to communicate directly with the silent flow of the river of death, the Lethæan stream, made dreadful by the apparitions of condemned spirits, who floated from the shores of the lake to the realms of eternal light.

In this grotto resided the famous Cumæan sibyl; and from the exhalations, which were more or less poisonous to birds and other small animals which came near, the weird woman appears to have derived that fierce ecstasy in which she wrote and raved about the destiny of nations, the fate of armies, the downfall of armies and the decay of dynasties. Even monarchs and statesmen often acted according to her pretended revelations, as it was supposed that the purposes of the pagan gods were made known to her as to a counsellor and a mouthpiece.

She sometimes wrote her soothsayings upon palm leaves which she laid at the entrance of the cave, suffering the winds to scatter them and bear them whither the gods directed. To the Cumæan sibyls is attributed the authorship of the famous sibylline books, of which many strange stories are told, but of which very little is left that can be regarded as genuine. It is said that she foretold the eruption of Vesuvius, in which Pliny perished and the cities of Herculæum and Pompei were destroyed. She declared of herself: "Why must I publish my song to every one? And when my spirit rests after the divine hymn, the gods command me to prophesy again, so that I am entirely on the stretch, and my body is so distressed that I do not know what I say: but the gods command me to speak." If we substitute in the latter expression the word spirits for gods, we have a declaration identical with those of the spirit mediums of the present day.

The abode of the Delphian sibyl or Pythia was in strong contrast with that of the Cumæan oracle. It was situated in the delightful region of Mount Parnassus, sparkling in sunlight and fragrant with bloom. The superb temple of Apollo was built over a similar chasm as that where the Cumæan sibyl held her seances, so that it was secured from the approach of the vulgar. On its former site certain clefts in the rock are still visible, one of which forms a deep cavern, into which travellers, by clinging to its rugged sides, may descend

as far as they dare. They then experience effects similar to those produced by nitrous oxide or laughing gas; and one writer, who has explored these caverns, asserts that it is this gas that produces the effects spoken of. This, however, is, according to geological principles, highly improbable; and we rather suppose it to be some bituminous vapor, which (according to our present knowledge concerning petroleum and its derivatives, such as naphtha, ether, rhigolene, chymogene, etc.) has an effect, exhilarating, hypnotic, and anæsthetic, similar to that of nitrous oxide. All the descriptions agree that bituminous odors are exhaled from these volcanic chasms. Plutarch informs us that the most celebrated Pythia who served the Delphian oracle in the temple of Apollo was a beautiful young country girl from Libya, named Sibylla. From this was the name sibyl derived, and it was afterwards given to all clairvoyants of her day. Plutarch further says, concerning the first sibyl:—

"Brought up by her parents in the country, she brought with her neither art nor experience, nor any talent whatever, when she arrived at Delphi to be the oracle of the gods."

And further he says:—

"The verification of her answers has filled the temple with gifts from all parts of Greece and foreign countries."

How very much like the innocent young mediums of today, who are often claimed to give the most astonishing revelations from the other world without ever having had the advantages of a scientific education! The sibyls of the ancients had, however, the advantage of the support, assistance, and promptings of a class of men highly interested in their reputation, the priesthood of the period; and this class not only consisted of the most educated individuals, but of men who had the greatest opportunity of obtaining information withheld from the vulgar.

When we compare with this state of things the position of our mediums now, who obtain little support from the intelligent, and none among the priesthood of the present day, we cannot help being surprised at their success and the number of their dupes; our surprise is chiefly at the ignorance and credulity of those who patronize such things in the nineteenth century.

A SCIENTIFIC STATEMENT.

On another page we print an article from the Scientific American entitled "The Oracles of Ancient Greece." The editor in conclusion says, "that mediums obtain little support from the intelligent and none among the priesthood of the present day." These few words show how deeply prejudiced a "scientific" man can be. The statement is untrue; anyone who is familiar with the subject can testify that hundreds of the very classes named are deeply interested in the phenomena. If mediums do exist without the support alluded to by the Scientific American, it should be a strong proof of their honesty. The "credulity" of Spiritualists who accept the phenomena as genuine, is not so conspicuous as the "credulity" of the editor of the Scientific American, who believes that the so-called manifestations of spirit power which have occurred in every age are simply tricks of shrewd imposters.

THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION.

DR. BRUCE, writing from Philadelphia, says that the Convention in that city was "happy in its harmony and glorious in its results." Arrangements were made for a Convention in 1877; a plan of organization presented, basis of principle adopted, etc.

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS.

THE REVUE SPIRITE of Paris is now in charge of M. Bourges, a retired captain in the army.

DR. GARDNER writes us that Prof. Denton will lecture at Highland Lake Grove, Sunday, July 23, and not July 19, as we have previously stated.

"EXISTENCE in the maze of Scientific Speculation," or Chapter II. of "Evolution Compassed," by George Stearns, Esq., will be published in our next issue.

ARRANGEMENTS HAVE been made by Spiritualists in Madrid for a visit to Spain by Dr. Monck, and his approaching advent there has been announced in all the Spanish journals.

SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST.

From a Paper read before the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, and published in the London Spiritualist.

DEVIL AND GHOST WORSHIP IN WESTERN INDIA.

BY M. J. WALHOUSE, F. R. A. S.

IN THREE PARTS—PART III.

THE Dharmastal Temple, situated in a wild forest track in Canara, is one of the most famous in all that part of the peninsula, and is the abode of seven or eight very powerful Bhutas, who are so dreaded that none will assume their names. In civil suits, when the evidence is balanced or hopelessly contradictory, it is very usual for one of the parties to offer to decide it by taking an oath as to the justice of his contention before one of the Dharmastal deities; this, when accepted and done with certain formalities, is always held satisfactory and decisive; for the litigants know well that no one would dare risk abiding the vengeance of those terrible Bhutas by a false adjuration. With respect to assuming their names, it may be explained that it is very common to name children after any Bhuta who may be very popular at the time, probably with the idea that the compliment might induce him to regard the child and family with favor. I remember that a good many years ago a notorious and greatly dreaded dacoit was hung in Trichinopoly, who after death became so fashionable a Bhuta that for some time half the children born were named after him. I may perhaps mention two or three out of the instances of the belief in Bhutas that came before me officially as judge. In a trial for murder before the sessions Court, the prisoner was charged with having intentionally caused the death of his younger brother, whom he struck down as they were ploughing. In defence the prisoner stated, through his vakil, or pleader, that the deceased, whilst at work in the field, was struck by the eye of a Bhuta, of which he died; and his witnesses deposed that they had known similar instances. In another murder case the evidence of a material witness was objected to because he was well known to be under the curse of a Bhuta, and in consequence a desperate man, whose statements could not be believed. Again, a Potel, or village head-man, was charged with having entered the death of a boy in his register as natural when he had really committed suicide; in defence the Potel asserted that the boy had died from a blow by the village Bhuta, and named several instances. On being punished by the magistrate, he appealed to the Sessions Court, reasserting his plea, and desiring to call witnesses to prove it. These men were far from unintelligent, and the vakils, or native pleaders, acute and well able to conduct a legal argument. But we can hardly ridicule them much, when we reflect that within the last eighteen months a young farmer was sentenced to six months' imprisonment at Dorchester for savagely beating an old woman because she "hag-rode" him; another man in Somersetshire was charged for twice stabbing a woman who had "over-looked" him, that he might break the spell with her blood; and there were four other convictions in Somersetshire and Devonshire alone, for assaults committed, or payment taken, on account of, or to cure, having been bewitched; and all the persons connected may presumably have been at school, and attended some church or chapel.

Very often Bhutas become a sort of house-spirits, such as are heard of in many popular mythologies, more or less mischievous, and delighting in Robin Goodfellow's pranks. Howlings and unearthly shrieks and noises that cannot be traced are attributed to them. Household utensils are thrown about, and stones flung by invisible hands, and pots and cooking vessels found filled with dirt. Women put away their best clothes carefully, and in the morning find them unaccountably on fire and smouldering away. All these are ascribed to the Bhuta, as well as what would now be called a kind of levitation, which is declared to be very frequent. Infants are missed from their cradles, and presently heard crying in the loft of the house, or on stacks of straw outside. Once riding through a village I found the people in great excitement at a prank played by a Bhuta two days before. A woman lying apart in her room, expecting her confinement, was suddenly missed, and could nowhere be found, till some children heard her voice proceeding from a dry-well in a field hard by. She was drawn up with considerable trouble, quite

unhurt, and safely confined the same day. She said she found herself all at once at the bottom of the well, but could not in the least tell how she came there. The people insisted on showing me the well, which was about 100 yards from the house, large and square, one used for irrigation, but then dry, and from 20 to 25 feet deep. Roman Catholics are very numerous in Canara, but quite as subject to these demoniacal annoyances as the Hindus. One clerk of the civil Court, a grave, elderly man, affirmed to me that, when passing at evening along a lane near a Bhutastan, he encountered a dark, monstrous, shadowy shape, which grew larger and larger, on which he uttered some religious verses, when it gradually diminished and disappeared. Another story was the talk of the town, and the parties concerned assured me of its truth. Two high native officials, both Roman Catholics, were sitting at noonday in the verandah of the house of one of them, when ashes and earth came pouring in quantities from the roof. The master of the house exclaimed the Bhuta was repeating his tricks, and, bringing a gun, fired it in the air to frighten the goblin away, when instantly, as if in answer, a quantity of powder was exploded in the midst of the open yard before them, and immediately stones and pebbles were flung by invisible agency towards the house from without. These fell on the verandah, and then, my informant asseverated, went "leaping like frogs" into the house, to the great amusement of the children who had assembled, and who would cry out, "one more!" when another stone would instantly fall and go hopping in! This sort of Bhuta annoyance was declared to be not at all unfrequent. It is curious, anthropologically speaking, to observe how general this strange belief in a grotesque sort of goblin, rejoicing in a particular kind of odd, mischievous pranks, has been in widely separated countries and ages. In China such disturbances are common, and ascribed to "kitchen gods;" in Arabia and Egypt to the jinnee or genii, who, Mr. Lane says, are believed to throw stones and furniture about in houses. He also relates that pious and learned Muslims, on locking the doors of their houses, storerooms, and apartments when going out, habitually repeat, "In the name of God, the compassionate, the Merciful," to secure their property during their absence from the mischief and depredations of the Jinn. The Germans have a special name for such spirits, calling them *Pöter Geist*, or racketing-ghost, and the stories about them and their impish persecutions, all much alike, current in Germany, France and England, are endless. Amongst published accounts it is enough to mention the *Stockwell Ghost*, the *Demon of Tedworth*, and the extraordinary disturbances at Woodstock, commemorated in Scott's novel. Some years ago the London papers had accounts of similar occurrences in a house in Bayswater; and even as far back as A. D. 1188 the *Itinerary through Wales* of Giraldus Cambrensis, translated by Sir Richard Hoare, mentions like stories and manifestations.

Charms or amulets against the evil influence of Bhutas are—wearing the tooth or nail of a tiger on the neck or near the loins, or an iron ring set with pearls on the finger. In all ages and countries iron is sovereign against evil powers. A lime in the turban, or a figure of Hanuman, the monkey-god, engraved on any ornament, are also efficacious, especially on Sundays and Tuesdays. But the most powerful remedy must have been when, in the days of the Rajahs of Coorg, a principality bordering on Canara, it was customary for the Amildars, or native heads of divisions, to issue notices and orders to the Bhutas, in the name of the Rajah, not to molest any particular individual, to quit any tree they haunted which was required to be felled, and to desist from any particular act or annoyance. It is stated that these behests of the Government were never disobeyed, which, indeed, is not unlikely, as the last Coorg Rajah was not a man who understood being trifled with, either by man or demon. After his deposition, the native officials continued the same style of orders, in the name of the British Government, for some time before the authorities were aware of it!

To conclude this subject, the idea is quite familiar that Bhutas may be perturbed ghosts, "doomed for a certain term to walk the night," but longing to escape from their thralldom and be laid to rest. For the repose of any such unhappy spirit the following ceremony is prescribed:—An image of

Vishnu must be engraved on a gold plate, arrayed with a yellow cloth, and washed with water from a holy stream. Around this, placed in the center, similar images of the other principal gods must be arranged, arrayed, and washed in like manner. Then a sacrifice of all manner of perfumes, and quantities of ghee and milk, must be offered, and all the funeral ceremonies in honor of the deceased gone through, and the funeral cakes offered anew in the presence of the golden images of the gods. Next a banquet must be given to thirteen pure Brahmans, presenting each with a mattress, a horse, and a gold pot full of milk. Their united mantrams (*i. e.*, incantations) will then release the soul from its unclean Bhuta state and remit it to salvation. But all this seems a device of later times, invented by the Brahmans to increase their influence and the authority of their gods over the low-caste deities. It would also be a costly ceremony, and I never heard of its being actually performed.

THE LATEST HUMBUG.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Scientist*:

Under the auspices of several prominent clergymen and laymen in this city, a young man named Mr. Irving Bishop, of New York, has given two "entertainments," advertised as "the exposure of the characteristic phenomena of Spiritualism." We who believe that there are phenomena, are, of course, undisturbed by the ultimate result of any "exposure;" but, doubtless, others besides myself, who have with some warmth commented upon Mr. Bishop's performance, have been met with some such general remark as this: "Many of you Spiritualists profess to be glad to have trickery exposed, and yet I notice a disposition to condemn a man who seeks to expose the doings of mediums, as if you were afraid of the consequences." For myself, I have replied that my objections to this man were in his cunning pretenses. Upon his assumptions certain clergymen have eagerly grasped him by the hand, hoping for a powerful auxiliary in destroying that which has been a bugbear and embarrassment to many of them for a quarter of a century. Some of them with inborn hostility and prejudice against Spiritualism profess satisfaction with Mr. Bishop, while others maintain the same reticence as before. The published reports have been very unsatisfactory to a really inquiring reader. A friend of mine who is very fair-minded, but an unbeliever in Spiritualism, after visiting one of Mr. Bishop's exhibitions said to me, "As an exposé he is a humbug. After imitating, behind a screen, several of the tricks of the mediums, he only did one of them before the audience, remarking that the others were done in a precisely similar manner; viz., by a dexterous and very clever twisting and turning of his hands and wrists while they were tightly tied. This was not at all satisfactory. I think it was all trickery, but why did he not tell us how it was done?" From what my friend says, Mr. Bishop, while he omits any attempt to do what many mediums in public and private have done, really does some remarkable things. If it is done by legerdemain, as he alleges it is, why does he not at once accept the honors the clergy are ready to heap upon him, by doing them all in view of the audience? And if he is not a liar as to "the exposure of the characteristic phenomena of Spiritualism," why does he not exhibit five or six hands, large and small, as the Davenport's do; or even produce the simple raps with accompanying intelligence, as hundreds of mediums do? Mr. Bishop's claims may be honest as to his methods of doing what he does, but he makes false pretenses, at least; not only as to "exposing" even his own tricks, but in advertising that they are "the characteristic phenomena." The proceeds of his exhibitions are said to be given to deserving charities, he being represented as an amateur, and not at all ambitious to appear in public as an Anderson or Heller. I suppose I may be excused, being a Spiritualist, for the credulity of suggesting that, like the Fays, he may have mediumistic power supplemented with elasticity of limbs and conscience. It may please his fancy to begin gradually with the orthodox world, exciting alike their wonder and approbation, and finally taking liberal percentages or presents for his valuable services. There is precedent to excite a well-founded hope of success in his general idea (if he has it) in the career of Moody and Sankey. I find a letter in the *Eagle* of this city which presents so many sensible points upon the matter, that I beg leave to enclose it to you.

VERITAS.

Brooklyn, N. Y., July 2, 1876.

To the Editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*:

What is the signification of the great interest which Bishop, the latest exposé of Spiritualism, has recently awakened? It is said that many of our first citizens, including the clergy, the medical profession, and other scientific gentlemen, are deeply interested. Now, is it not a little remarkable that such a "stupid delusion, based on fraud and in general accepted only by" the superstitious and vulgar classes, should at this late day arouse such undue excitement? If there is

nothing but fraud and cheap magic to expose, wherefore all this patronage of the eminent clergy and doctors? Certainly the ordinary humbugs of the day would not arouse such a distinguished following. Spiritualism is surely being raised to a dignity it has never attained before. Somehow, these naughty ghosts will not down. The mass of the conservative people think they were laid long ago. But, to be serious, the only explanation that can be made is that there is more in the "delusion" than its opponents care to admit.

That it is insidiously stealing in modified forms into the churches and into the social circle, cannot be denied. It is not true that this occult phenomena is being investigated by the ignorant and credulous alone, and sensible people know too well amidst the denunciations of D.D.'s and M.D.'s that such minds as the late Vice-President Wilson, Judge Edmonds, Owen, Crookes, Wallace, Fichte, and hosts of other great names in the scientific world have not been duped by such cheap devices of jugglery. That Mr. Bishop or any other person who will take the trouble, can imitate many of the so called "Physical manifestations," is true. It has been done repeatedly during the last twenty-five years. That there has been a vast amount of trickery and fraud perpetrated in the name of Spiritualism, is too true. The frauds of the Eddys, Holmes and Fay have no more bearing upon the universally attested phenomena of Spiritualism than the false pretenses of Simon Magnus had upon the genuine miracles of the apostles.

The public professional medium who makes a living by his gifts, has never been indorsed by intelligent Spiritualists. The real strength of Spiritualism lies in the private circle, away from the disturbing conditions of the public gaze. Hundreds of circles are organized in this city, many of them composed of church members and the intelligent thinking classes, who are quietly and patiently investigating the mystery. The little Planchette, which Epes Sargent calls the "Despair of Science," is doing more than a hundred Bishops can undo in fifty years. In fact, Bishop does not undertake to imitate those phases of the phenomena which are the most convincing. To prove what has been said in regard to the real causes of the growth of Spiritualism, I recently discovered, to my astonishment, mediumistic powers in my own children, though I rarely permit them to engage in it—indeed they are quite averse to have anything to do with it, as it is thought to be against their religious teaching, as well as from the fear of ridicule. One writes involuntarily in scores of different hands, sometimes in a foreign language, of which he has no knowledge. They extemporize upon musical instruments in a manner far above their normal powers. The moving of tables and raps are produced by some face unknown to us. I know these to be facts, and this kind of conviction is what the exposers should turn their attention to. The unpopularity of the subject compels the masses to pursue the investigation in secret. And there is where this matter belongs, and this fact accounts for the wonderful vitality of a philosophy which has lived over twenty-seven years in the midst of the highest civilizations, in spite of the tremendous onslaughts of theology and science.

Spiritualism is not responsible for the fanaticism that has grown out of it, any more than the Bible is responsible for the vagaries of a hundred conflicting sects. What is really needed at present is the honest investigation of the scientific and religious world. This matter cannot be settled by the Owens or the Bishops. Its solution lies yet in the future. Although I know the phenomena is genuine, I am not certain of its super-mundane origin. I am not making a defence of Spiritualism, but I protest in the name of thousands of honest, earnest investigators, that we are not the dupes of delusion and fraud. There is a thousand times stronger testimony to these modern marvels than the ancient miracles can claim. Has human testimony ceased to have any value? What wonder that the church is losing its hold upon the world, when they ignore the same kind of testimony upon which they accept the teachings and miracles of eighteen hundred years ago.

There are a great many readers of the "Eagle" who are Spiritualists. Can we not have an occasional hearing, while the press in general has nothing but ridicule and odium to pour upon us. We have nothing to gain in accepting this strange philosophy but the truth. If that is at last attained, we can bear the present life of intolerance.—INQUIRER.

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THE POWER OF THOUGHT.

Here is a little gem from a lecture delivered by Cora V. Tappan in Chicago. The subject was "Spiritual Solvents" and the control "Phoenix," who says:—

Then said my teacher, "Every spirit possessing knowledge and power can at any time discover a planet, its condition, its destiny, the state of its inhabitants, and the various qualities pertaining to it, by such will power as you perceive there." I failed to know when I should possess even the shadow of such power, but my guide said, "Do not be discouraged; have you any one on earth whom you wish to benefit?" "Certainly," I said, and I straightway thought of some one dear to me, whose life I might make or wish to make more beautiful. He said, "Think intently of that person." I thought, and, as though a lens had been presented to my vision, I saw not only the spiritual state but the earthly habitation of that person—saw the condition of mind and body, and, by the effort of my will, I could read the thought passing in the mind, which was sorrowful and full of pain. He said, "Now will to change that sorrow to joy." And straightway I willed as though—if I had ever prayed—it was a prayer, and I could perceive the vibrations changing in the mind, that instead of pain and sorrow there seemed to be joy and peace, and the eyes were uplifted and the thought was turned toward me in my new habitation, and the person moved the lips as if in prayer, and there was another atmosphere of joy instead of sorrow. He said, "What you have done for that one spirit proves that you have the power—when it shall blossom out into full perfection—of doing perhaps for a whole world of souls." It then finally dawned upon my consciousness that this must be what Jesus meant when he described himself as the door and the true vine—that it was his great desire which made it possible for him to help the world. Then I said, "Are desire and will synonymous?" He said, "Desire, when chastened by unselfishness, becomes the will power of the spirit, and upon it the soul can arrive to any height. No insect upon earth and no luminary in the firmament above but the spirit can bless and possess in knowledge, if the desire be tempered by unselfishness and lofty aspiration." Then straightway I felt that my selfishness was leaving me, and that a desire to do good to others took possession of my intense thirst for knowledge. Then I said, "Is it not true that knowledge is the great key that opens the spiritual pathway, and must it not be by various avenues of science and learning that we enter the highest degrees of spiritual states?" He answered, "No; knowledge is one of the instruments, a weapon for the mind to use, a channel of communication between the inner and the outer world; but no knowledge ever admitted the spirit to such power as you have developed by the unselfish wish to benefit your friend."

Testimony of this nature from spiritual sources is so abundant that the teachings therein contained may be accepted as unadulterated truth. Again and again, repeatedly does the spirit world send its warning messages, instructing spiritualists how to live a spiritual life. How often comes back the cry of "opportunities wasted." "If I had only known," said one who in reality *did* know and therein was the cause for regret. Hundreds, yet in the physical form read the experiences of those gone before, and an inward voice tells them to take its warn-

ing before it is too late. How many opportunities are neglected day after day by those who if they would conscientiously examine their own actions would find the mainspring to be *selfishness*. This is applicable not only to spiritualists who are blessed with an abundance and capable of doing a great good therewith, but also to those who have barely enough of earthly wealth to meet their physical requirements; for the lesson teaches that it is the THOUGHT, the *desire to do good* which must be cultivated.

In these columns we have often made a distinction between a spiritualist and a phenomenalist, defining the latter to be one who believes in the phenomena simply without seeking or attempting to understand the beauties of the spiritual philosophy and the principles it inculcates. It seems to us an anomaly to call those spiritualists who have no higher motive than a curiosity to witness some wonderful manifestation of some unseen, and it may be some unknown occult force. As "a tree is known by its fruits," so can the spirituality of some phases of mediumship be determined by the character of influences that are engendered. It is useless to argue against the fact that materializations and the lower physical phenomena breed discord and inharmony, not only in the spiritual movements but in the minds of those who attend the seances that are held for this purpose. These phenomena are useful as stepping-stones to scientific discoveries, and should be relegated to this domain.

J. M. Peebles has said, that "to be a spiritualist is to hold conscious intercourse with the world of spirits and live a spiritual life." "Such," he says, "was Jesus Christ." This is a sound definition. When one commences to live a true spiritual life, then comes a power which many spiritualists are ignorant of; and it is teachings like the above from Mrs. Tappan's lecture which should receive more prominence than many phenomenalist's may be brought to live a spiritual life.

PHENOMENA UNDER TEST CONDITIONS.

The British National Association is holding seances under test conditions, and at the second, held recently, Miss Lottie Fowler was the medium.

The peculiar feature of this seance was that the most striking manifestations took place while the medium was under the most severe test. Miss Fowler's sleeves were securely sewn together at the wrist, behind her back; in addition to this, Miss Fowler was placed in a calico bag, the opening of which was sewn closely round her throat. No sooner was Miss Fowler placed partially behind the curtain of the cabinet, with her knees in full view of the circle, in a good light, than an object resembling a hand was thrust through the curtain, and the objects placed on a little table near her were moved and rattled. Great activity continued to be apparent behind the curtain by the ringing of bells, blowing of whistles, and violent movements of the small table, which was more than once thrown completely down, and the objects scattered all about the floor of the cabinet. Various members of the circle entered the cabinet to replace the objects on the table, and each testified to Miss Fowler being still in bonds, with the bag closely sewn round her neck. All could see that she had not moved from her seat. These manifestations being entirely satisfactory, so far as to prove that the medium could not possibly have had any part in producing them, it was unanimously agreed that Miss Fowler be released from the close custody of the bag, and allowed to sit with her arms still sewn together behind, and further secured by means of tape to the back of her chair. A few of the manifestations occurred as before, but were much weaker. A dark seance was then tried. A heavy table was partially raised at one end, and there were slight movements of bells and other objects which had been placed on the floor under the table, but nothing to compare in force with what took place while the medium was under strict test conditions in the light.

SELFISHNESS.

A message given through the mediumship of M. A. (Oxon) of London, relating to the death of a friend under melancholy circumstances, speaks of selfishness and says, —

It is the plague-spot of the spirit, that which wrecks more souls than you dream of. It is the very paralysis of the soul. And when to it is added this moreover, that the selfishness is passive, it becomes more fatal. There is a selfishness which is far less baleful in its poison, and which finds its counteracting power in activity, and which even becomes the spring of actions which have in them a form of good. There is a selfishness which causes a spirit to do well that it may have the good report of its fellows; and there is a selfishness which is content to do good so it be not vexed or troubled, which will yield to any influence, so it may escape anxiety. These are faults which hold the spirit back from progress; but they are not the baleful plague which ate into this spirit's life, and drove it to despair and death. That was the meaner selfishness which stirred him not to any deeds or to action of any kind. It was idle and useless, no less than self-pleasing; nay, it was not even self-pleasing, for the whole life was blurred and blotted with morbid scrutiny of self, till its very lineaments were eaten out. This selfishness was cruel alike to himself and to his friends. There are grades of sin, and his was deep.

A MISREPRESENTATION.

The Spiritual Scientist says that the spiritual movement is thoroughly disorganized by the exposures of mediums' trickery. — *N. Y. Sun.*

If the New York Sun can't itemize any better than that we wish it would let our name and columns alone. The above statement is a misrepresentation; unintentional without doubt but none the less damaging. The Spiritual Scientist has said that the spiritualist movement is thoroughly disorganized, and it has assigned a cause therefor, which we wish might have found a place in the columns of a newspaper having such a large circulation as the N. Y. Sun.

English Correspondence of the Spiritual Scientist.
THEORIES VS. FACTS.

To the Editor of the Spiritual Scientist:

SIR, I send you a copy of a letter I addressed to the Banner of Light, not because I think it is so applicable to you, (for I think you do search and try before accepting everything as Gospel;) but because I feel that the real progress of spiritual knowledge is being hindered by the blind teachings of many of its oracles; and that this opinion, in which I am joined by many independent minds, cannot be too seriously impressed on "Spiritualists."

I therefore place the letter at your disposal by the same mail that carries the original. W. H.
London, June 28, 1876.

SIR, I see your paper regularly, and am pleased to notice the impartial manner in which you allow subjects to be ventilated that do not altogether accord with your views, or entirely advocate the claims of the more enthusiastic teachers of Spiritualism. You, therefore, will perhaps allow me, (claiming to be as yet a mere investigator of these mysteries), to draw your attention to what I consider a grave mistake in the manner of putting forward the more advanced "truths" as they are called, and of tacitly admitting them to rank as truths, instead of mere theories as they are at present, which require to be proved before they can be held fast to, as unquestionable rays of the true light we are, I presume, all of us honestly seeking.

This tendency to jump conclusions, on the part of Spiritualists, has struck me very forcibly, and I think is detrimental to the best interests of this new science; perhaps I may be allowed, therefore, as a stranger brother, the privilege of expressing views on this point, that I know are held by many earnest enquirers, like myself, who have like me conquered the initial difficulties of testing these strange phenomena, and have made good our "first foot-steps of knowledge" in Spiritualism.

1st. It is undoubted that there are unseen intelligences who can and do flock around us and use means of communication which in spite of all so-called explanation as to the "modus operandi" must yet be considered occult or unknown.

2d. It is also true that through these same means private test messages are occasionally given that seem almost certainly to come from departed personal friends.

3d. Again, semblances are produced photographically on sensitized plates that can be occasionally identified as good

representations of departed relatives or friends, and also I am willing to admit (though I have never seen a properly tested case) that resemblances of departed friends may have been produced (materialized) and identified.

Still all these phenomena, or natural facts, whichever you may consider them to be, do not prove more than an after existence, even if we take the proof of personal identity as thoroughly established, which many who admit the phenomena, hesitate about; taking however, this point as admitted, all you can say is, "we have an existence beyond the grave."

There is no shadow of proof established by this that an existence, as an individuality, is ETERNAL, and yet as far as I have seen, the three grand truths said to have been established by what has thus far become known about Spiritualism are, —

1st. That we live on after death in our own individuality.
2d. That we continue to progress and improve according to our spiritual proclivities.
3d. That our individuality or spiritual personality is eternal and immortal, merely being refined in culture, not changed in being.

If I am not wrong in my summary of your teachings, I think you must be hasty and premature in your deductions from what has thus far been proved, as even if it is taken for granted that the first thesis is demonstrated to full satisfaction, there is nothing yet put forward with any shadow of evidence, to establish either the second or third propositions, and I think until some progress has been made in this direction, the oracles of Spiritualism should be careful in not putting forth as "demonstrated truths" what are at present only "crude theories."

The "new light" (at least of these days) is sufficiently startling and momentous to claim the closest and most careful study and investigation on the part of its converts, and nothing like fanaticism or zealotry should cloud the reason, or interfere with the calm consideration of its claims to our earnest study.

The system of requiring blind faith from enquirers is simply repeating the old error of the churches, and should certainly not accompany the teachings of the "new light" by which you hope to supplant the gloom of dogmatism; you will never successfully establish truth, except on a solid basis of truth, and this cannot be formed of mere faith, fancy, or imagination. There must be no jumping to conclusions and claiming that mere rudimentary facts are to be held as proving all the propositions you think fit to claim for Spiritualism. You start at the wrong end I think, in putting forward such grand and startling claims as I have mentioned, and holding them to be demonstrated by the phenomena that have thus far occurred, and as a calm but earnest enquirer, I cannot but regret that so little philosophical discernment is exercised by the public journals and writers, who are chiefly responsible for the manner in which Spiritualism is taught and discussed.

I long for light as sincerely as any one, but I cannot see plainly with the light thus far held out for my guidance, except that we have some bright object in the distance whose form and quality is worthy of closer examination, when we can get near enough by better light or better understanding to know its meaning.

W. H.

HIGHLAND LAKE CAMP MEETING.

Daily trains connecting directly with Highland Lake Grove will be run during camp meeting from Willimantic and Putnam, Conn., and way stations; from Worcester and Providence and way stations over the Providence & Worcester Railroad; from New Bedford, Mansfield, Taunton, Lowell, Fitchburg and way stations over the Boston, Clinton & Fitchburg and New Bedford Railroads. Take the morning trains from all the above to the Grove.

Excursion tickets at reduced rates of fare may be obtained at the several stations on each of the above railroads. See posters in each station for full particulars of Sunday and other special trains, rates of fare, etc.

Dr. Richardson is now at Highland Lake Grove, Norfolk, Mass.

LEYMARIE, the editor of the Revue Spirite in Paris prefers solitary confinement in a cell to living in common with other prisoners, and by a rule of the prison where he is confined (La Sante) his term of imprisonment is abridged one-fourth.

THE FUTURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

IN ANSWER to a letter from James E. Bruce, William Fishbough says in the Banner of Light:—

But you ask me, "What signs encourage you to hope that Spiritualism now, or in any very near future, is about to take the proud stand which will bring the educated and refined of the community to our ranks in great numbers, or which will do what is of infinitely vaster importance, lead us out of our political and social evils, and inaugurate the era of universal righteousness prophesied of old?"

Before answering directly, let me call your attention to the *a priori* view of the case. Admitting the reality of modern spiritual intercourse, as you and I both do, it is but reasonable that we should attach to it a meaning of great importance. Not certainly since the *gloria in excelsis* was sung by angels to the shepherds on the plains of Judea has anything of like nature occurred, equaling in importance this great descent of spiritual forces and intelligences into the sphere of mundane cognition. Reverently, rationally and philosophically viewed, it seems like the removal of the veil of the covering cast over all nations, and the swallowing up of death in victory, and the opening of the high road for the King of Glory to come. Can you, can I, can any rational mind for a moment believe that the great God who permitted and ordained this tremendous modern unfolding, intended it to be used only for the delectation of wonder-mongers, for the exchange of a few words of personal recognition with departed friends, or to be used by pugnacious minds as an arsenal from which weapons may be drawn to battle old Orthodoxy? If thus far, and in what I have already called its "chaotic" stage of development, it has been used mainly for these purposes, I think the time has come when you will agree with me in asking and expecting the great Power which is above it all, and controls it all, to bring it up to a higher stand, by which its capabilities as a saving influence will be developed and its dignity will be vindicated.

In answer to your question as to what more positive reason I have to believe that Spiritualism is to take that higher stand which is now the subject of contemplation, I can only state a few things which have been told and interiorly shown to me from the upper spheres, and which I have more reasons to believe than I can set forth in this article.

In the month of June, (it may have been 1869), at a time when, discouraged and disheartened, I had hidden myself away from the ranks of the Spiritualists to await some future developments that might again call my humble gifts into useful activity, I was blessed with a beautiful and significant night vision, in which the advent of a future higher and purer development of Spiritualism was clearly foreshadowed to me. My blessed guide, a female spirit who lived on the earth some three hundred years ago, appeared to me, and told me, in general terms, of the part I was expected to take in this new development. I afterward related this vision, with its prophetic interpretation, to several of my friends, some of whom would doubtless remember it if I had room to repeat its particulars. In June, 1875—one year ago—I met what proved to be that same female spirit through a medium, apparently by accident, but I was afterwards told it was by express design. When the unexpected interview commenced, I was comparatively indifferent, not expecting to get anything more important than I had received through mediums up to the time I had left off consulting them many years before; but I soon found that I was in the presence of an intelligence who knew my inner history, my mental states, my wants, my trials, my aspirations, better than any human being on earth. To bring a long story into the smallest possible compass, I conversed with her again and again through the same medium, many times. By unmistakable indications, I identified her as the spirit I had met and conversed with in the vision to which I had referred; and she had come to inform me that the time for the commencement of the fulfillment of the prophetic parts of the vision had arrived. Her name, conspicuous in history, I omit here, but you have guessed it in another way, as others will learn it. Her basic statement to me, which I condense as much as possible, was as follows:

"New developments from the spiritual world," said she,

"are about to take place. Representative spirits from all the nations of the earth have organized in the form of a star. They have a central city called 'Spring Garden City,' and a Congress which holds its regular and special sessions for de-liberation upon mundane and spiritual affairs which come under its supervision. This star organization, 'Star Circle,' began to be formed about the time Spiritualism began to appear upon the earth, and has since been perfecting. It is the star that is to rule the development and destiny of the world from this time onward, throughout the New Dispensation. It has been gaining more and more power continually, until the time now approaches when it will be able to assert its sway. It is proposed, by the union of spiritual and mundane forces, to develop a strong battery of power in England, and then, by the aid of the same, to develop similar centers of power in America, whereby the Anglo Saxon race, the most advanced of all the races, may be made the messenger of a new and higher order of things throughout the earth."

Accordingly, late in the autumn of last year, my guide, who is the general messenger of the "Star Circle," induced her special medium to sail for England, where I learn from public and private accounts, a very satisfactory work has since been going on for the elevation of Spiritualism.

One of the most striking points in this account, to me, was the mention of the form of a "Star" as the model of this universally representative organization of spirits. Now the philosophy correspondentially set forth in the form of a six-pointed star, which is a perfectly universal philosophy, was the subject of a remarkable revelation to me as long ago as July, 1848. Of this I made a diagram, with radial lines, circles and spirals, showing courses, cycles, series and discrete degrees of development in the different fields of nature, mentality, human society, &c., and on its basis I wrote my book, "*The Macrocosm, or the Universe Without.*" At one of the seances, having my star diagram present, I was about to show it to the spirit, when she stopped me by saying, "You need not show me your diagram; I was with you and helped you make it." Of course this was a new point of interest to me, and on further inquiry I learned from her that she was at the head of a band of spirits who approached the earth at three different times, and threw their impressions broadcast upon the minds of mankind, to be taken up as they could receive it. I have met three or four persons who seem to have received some idea of the principle about the same time, but have not been able to apprehend or formulate it in its universal bearings.

In this way we are furnished with the outlines of the philosophy, or the intellectual form, of the promised new order of things, which I am compelled for the present to leave in obscurity, as a full exposition would require many volumes. But all this, of course, would be perfectly dead and useless without an interior heart or love sphere, constituting its life. Of the latter, I am thankful to be able to testify as follows: Before the medium, through whom I received communications concerning these matters, sailed for Europe, I was told that I would have interior experiences that would be further instructive. These came without delay. For several nights and days I was almost constantly, more or less, in the spirit, during which time I witnessed scenes not dissimilar, in some respects, to those witnessed by St. John while on the Isle of Patmos. Many of these passed from my mind on resuming my normal state. Others, vividly remembered, I have written out for a pamphlet or small volume, which I intend to finish and publish so soon as the powers who lead me shall be pleased to give me the matter for the concluding three chapters. But this I can now say: that being taken up, in my trance, into the new spiritual Star, I saw a significant representation of the conjugation or conjugality of Divine Love and Wisdom; and especially among the dwellers in the central circle, where the garden city or Paradise is situated, I was made sensible of a love so intense, so beautiful, pure and sweet, as to utterly transcend all conceptions of mortal man on earth. With respect to the inhabitants of the earth, this love will be as the love of a divine Mother for her children. Descending like gentle dew, it will penetrate thousands of hearts, and will give birth to all kinds of generous, kindly, loving and fraternal sentiments. The masses of course, will not receive it at first; but those who are open to it, together

with its corresponding inspirations of wisdom, will be drawn together in harmony and unity, and under the direct influence of the Spirit will be the seminary of the doctrines and life of the New Dispensation.

Divine Love and Wisdom, as it exists in the upper spheres, thus taking up its abode in the recipient hearts of men and women, will cry out, "No more taxation to punish crime, but care and labor and all necessary expenditures to prevent crime; no more prisons and gibbets and guillotines, but in their stead give us hospitals for the treatment of the morally diseased and insane. No more pot-house caucuses and chaotic and heterogenous primary meetings and conventions, gathered from the slums and gutters, and which give origin to all political frauds and corruptions and venal legislation, but instead give us an anatomy of each of the great central interests of the body politic, and equal representations from each as the nominators of officers for the general government of the whole." Spiritualists whose hearts are touched with the divine fire, and whose brains are illuminated with the new light, will cease to aim destructive blows at the existing churches as a most unjust and unprofitable business, but instead will labor to capture them and bring them up to the right standard; assured that, in time, this can be done, for the power at work will be the mighty power of God, penetrating every chink in the walls of their bigotry and burning into their very hearts, forcing them to acknowledge the presence of the angel world, and setting them on fire with universal love. The question of all this is only a question of time. Let us, therefore, watch and labor, and wait in patience and faith. Commotions and disruptions, I think, may be expected, and I am not sure that the old order of things will not "pass away with a great noise, and its elements melt with fervent heat," as some of my visions seem to portend. With the limited space allowed me, I am aware of my inability to make myself quite clear on any of these points, and my highest aim and expectation, therefore, must be to stir up thought in the minds of yourself and others. In this spirit, and with this intent, the foregoing is earnestly and affectionately submitted.

Such a Convention as you propose might be well, but would it not be better to postpone it a little while longer, and until the light shall become a little more clear? I am averse to instituting any isolated movement in this matter, or indeed any movement in which the angels shall not take the lead. That you and I and all earnest minds may be rightly guided, is the sincere prayer of your friend and brother,

WILLIAM FISHBOUGH.

Brooklyn, E. D., N. Y., June 7, 1876.

THE NEW EASTERN RELIGION.

FROM an article headed "Babism," in the *Revue Anglo-Francaise*, the following short extract is made. It appears that a new religious sect has since 1843 been organizing itself in Central Asia, and has now become a powerful opponent to Mohammed's adherents. Fortunately for the progress of the world, the founder of this new creed, Mirza Ali-Mohammed, seems to be greatly in advance of both Judaism and Islamism, having neither imitated the intolerance and self-righteousness of the former, nor the fatalistic creed of the latter, which has fostered so much hatred and conceit in its believers. This, of course, must be attributed to the character of its founder, who, when only eighteen years of age, began his missionary work; for which he was not only qualified by his natural genius, but also by his earnest inquiry into the Holy Scriptures, the Koran, and by discussions with the Jews of his country.

He is described as a young man of imposing aspect and charming features, gaining the admiration of his hearers as well by his personal attractions as the charm of his eloquence. His life is in strict accordance with his doctrines, which are remarkable for their tenderness, humanity, and sympathy with earthly needs.

After having paid a visit to Mecca, he published on his return a commentary on a part of the Koran, which audacity of course was a total breach of ancient customs, the much more so because he therein introduced some novel doctrines. From that time he began to preach in public, and with enormous success, and adopting his first religious title, he declared himself to be the "Bab," i. e. the "Door," through which one arriveth at the knowledge of God. The Islam priests could

now no longer ignore the agitation caused by this young preacher, so after having been ignominiously defeated by him at a public conference, arranged by themselves, they did, as all priests have done in similar cases, — appealed to the Civil power. Bab and his followers now suffered persecution, and this proved the beginning of the spread of Babism. Missionaries were sent to Ispahan, to Teheran, to the north and west districts, and everywhere they met with grand success, though constantly persecuted by the clergy and the king's agents, until at last (1847) they decided to take up arms. The war now raged almost everywhere in Persia with alternate successes and defeats of the reformers. Finally Bab was captured and put to death as he was trying to make his escape.

The Government now considered the unpleasant question settled for ever, thus resembling all other governments on whom the eloquent lessons of history and experience invariably seem to be wasted. The new religion, however, did not depend on the presence of Bab, three quarters of his adherents never having seen him, and another Bab was nominated, to whom the believers declared the crown of Persia legitimately to belong (1852). The persecutions continued, and the punishment of the captives was beyond measure cruel. Women and children fearlessly marched to their execution, and seemed to rival each other in hopeful and courageous resignation, singing this verse: —

"Yes truly we have come from God, and now return to him."

These spectacles far from ruining the prospects of the new sect, gained them many secret partisans, and the Bab, who now resides in Bagdad, is only waiting for an opportunity to conquer by arms the Persia whose faith he has already subdued. Perhaps we shall witness one day the ruin of the Persian Dynasty, and see Mohammed's religion defeated in the countries of Central Asia.

Babism is a return to the ancient Pantheism, presented in a novel and attractive form, and when Bab said, "God is the absolute Being, beside whom nothing exists, all beings are but feeble emanations, but emanations from His omnipotence: on the day of judgement you shall be united with Him," he only re-awakened and restored the old sentiment that has been dormant for centuries. Its adherents include the foremost of Persian clergy and dignitaries, as well as philosophers and poets. Even the obstinate Jew has been converted. Babism has much of the Oriental form of worship, but it teaches charity, peace, and monogamy, in so far at least [that it does not approve of bigamy or polygamy. It has a tendency to lay a foundation for family life, so little known in the East, and gives to a woman a higher and nobler sphere of action.

A sect which in ten years caused such a 'revolution' in a country where neither railways, letter post, or newspapers existed, and that has taken such a great step in advance of other orientals, must needs impress us with a hope of a better and greater future for the eastern countries, and we have merely to add — better late than never.

IGNORANCE OR MALEVOLENCE—WHICH?

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Scientist*:

In your issue for June 20th, there is an article entitled "A Plea for Organization," by J. Edwards, copied without comment from *The Religio-Philosophical Journal*. The appearance of the article in the *Journal* did not astonish me; but that it could find its way into the *Spiritual Scientist*, and be approved by its Editor, I confess did astonish me,—not more on account of the illiterate character of the article, than on account of the false representations which it contained. One paragraph of the article contains five assertions about Mrs. Woodhull, neither one of which is true. Falshood No. 1 is, that "The last attempt at organization was undertaken by Victoria C. Woodhull, who convened a convention at Chicago in 1872 for that purpose." Now that convention was the regular yearly convention of the American Association of Spiritualists, and was convened through the regular call of the Board of Trustees of that Association, and not by Mrs. Woodhull, nor for the purpose asserted.

Falshood No. 2.—"At that time, she (Mrs. W.) pretended to publish a Spiritualist paper, and to prepare the way to carry out her designs, invited and kept up a standing list of all those who favored free platforms." At that time, Mrs. Woodhull did not pretend to publish a Spiritualist paper, but she did publish such a paper, and she kept a list of applicants standing in it; and would not put on the sectarian jacket that some societies were foolish enough to insist upon, for how

could mediums under the control of spirits tell in advance what they might be made to say.

Falsehood No. 3.—"It was evident to all reflecting observers that Mrs. Woodhull was to be the grand mogul, not only to place herself in commanding position, but to fasten upon Spiritualism her pet scheme of free love theory, which was not germane to Spiritualism at all." Now, at that time, Mrs. Woodhull was already President of the National Association, and, before the report of the Committee on Organization was made, had been elected for the ensuing year. There was no position superior to the one she occupied provided for in the plan that was adopted, so how could Mrs. W. have had any ambitious schemes to further by the new organization; and how could she, by such an organization, fasten her free-love theories upon Spiritualism, when for two years they had adopted resolutions covering them fully.

Falsehood No. 4.—"The organization soon collapsed when the great mogul abdicated her throne." The organization never collapsed, for it was never carried into an organization save in a provisional form; and Mrs. Woodhull resigned on account of the division in the ranks of Spiritualist, which she hoped might be healed by this action.

Falsehood No. 5.—"Since then Mrs. Woodhull publishes a very sickly Spiritual paper, and her Spiritualism has about oozed out at the ends of her fingers, and her seven by nine paper is conducted in self-adulation of herself." Whatever else may be said about Mrs. Woodhull's paper, it can never be called sickly. It always was pointed and positive. There was never any possibility of mistaking her meaning; and, above all things, on Spiritualism it had no sickly sounds. As for the self-adulation, if to publish the remarks made by other papers to represent the progress of the cause which she advocated before the public may be called by that name, then every other paper in the land is "self-adulatory."

But these direct falsehoods are not the more dishonest part of the article; for if this writer knows anything about Mrs. Woodhull's theories, then he knows that they relate specially to the improvement of the physical habitation for the spirit, inasmuch as almost their whole burden is upon the proper generation and rearing of children. But he says these theories are not germane to Spiritualism at all; and yet in his own propositions for a platform, he lays down substantially the same things under the head of "Rewards and Punishments." Why does he thus stultify himself; or doesn't he know that he has done so? Not germane to Spiritualism! And how is "The Fatherhood of God" germane to Spiritualism, and how "The brotherhood of man." Verily this man must be a little beside himself to talk to others about things germane to Spiritualism, when he makes these propositions a "pure and simple Spiritualism and nothing else."

But perhaps this man does not know that Mrs. Woodhull had the very best reasons for claiming that her theories were germane to Spiritualism. Mrs. Woodhull never attended a Spiritual Convention until the one at Troy in 1871, at which she was made president of the association by reason of a speech that she delivered there on this very question of a proper system of reproduction and care of children, for which speech she was not only made president, but the Convention unanimously passed a resolution of thanks for the speech itself. She said in that speech just what she says now when she treats of the same subject; and when Spiritualists who are opposed to Mrs. Woodhull can prove that proper conditions for the spirit while in the body, as a means for developing a proper spirit to carry to spirit life, is not germane to Spiritualism, then they will be able to prove that Mrs. Woodhull's theories are not germane to Spiritualism; but not before, though they may shout it till they are hoarse, and write it till they are blind.

But it should scarcely be expected that one who cannot write so that those who read his articles can understand him, should be able to understand what another says or writes who uses decent English. Out of the forty-one sentences of which his article is composed, twenty-one of them are so faulty that they may be read to mean anything or nothing. For instance, what may this mean: "Seven-eighths of all persons who have been converted to Spiritualism has been through the evidences of their senses bearing upon the different phases of spirit phenomena." And then he talks about "advancing forward," just as if anybody ever advanced backward; and of "The rock of immortal ages," whatever that may be. He says, "In the spiritual rank is to be found a large number (*i. e.* a great variety) of reformers;" and that "there is a religious, intellectual and social aspect of the case." Ah! then Spiritualism has a social aspect. Indeed, consistency is a jewel of rare wearing among the simon-pure spiritualists, if this be a sample of the real stock.

Finally, Mr. J. Edwards, there are two points of advice to which it would be well for you to give attention before you engage again in a "self-constituted" attempt to run the whole body of Spiritualists even in so small a matter as "a plea for organization." First, make yourself better acquainted with the facts about which you propose to write, so as not to be caught playing the role of a falsifier. Second, after you

have thus mastered the facts, study Murray until you can present them so that people may gather what you mean by reading what you write. OMEGA.

Many of the objections raised by "Owega" may be matters of opinion rather than questions of fact. The article referred to contained many ideas on organization worthy of attention and therefore found a place in the *Spiritual Scientist*. The art of composing correctly can be obtained by study and observation. Correct writers are more numerous than those who are original in their ideas.—Ed.]

A TERRIBLE CHINESE GHOST.

HAD Mr. Tony Weller lived in these days, and had he, moreover, been a regular subscriber to the *Shanghai Courier*, he would have been supplied with an additional and cognant reason for not marrying widows. It appears that a Mahometan Chinaman, who had lately been united to a lady to whom he was fondly attached, fell sick, and lay at the point of death. In taking farewell of her husband thus unhappily departing, the lady clasped her hands and swore never to wed any one else when he was gone. For a while she kept her vow: suitors came and went, but, unlike the widow in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, she was constant, and it is probable would have remained a model widow, if a gentleman named Wang, also a Mahometan, had not appeared on the scene as a lover. What blandishments this swain used are not recorded, nor are we told whether he was of prepossessing appearance. All that is certain may be summed up in a few words. He came, saw, and conquered. Possibly neither he nor Mrs. Wang had read of the fate which attended the fair Imogene when she was faithless to the memory of Alonzo the Brave. Perchance they were ignorant of the very existence of vengeful goblins. They were quickly to learn by unhappy experience. "One day," says the chronicler, "the husband, on entering his wife's room, saw with perfect distinctness the figure of a man sitting down, gazing fixedly upon the woman." This apparition seems to have been somewhat objectionable to Wang, for we are told that he "stared violently, and asked his wife whom she was keeping company with?" To which the lady replied, "Nobody," and just then the spirit vanished. Sorely perplexed, Mr. Wang left the room, and threw himself on a couch in an adjoining chamber to sleep. But in the middle of the night he was aroused by "a tremendous bump in his wife's apartment, succeeded by piercing screams, and, hastening to the door, he found that the lady had fallen out of bed, and that blood was flowing from her nose and mouth." Nor was this all; for the unfortunate Wang perceived that his wife's reason had departed, and that, apparently possessed by some strange spirit, she was "addressing herself in the character of her husband, and pouring out the most bitter denunciations of her own conduct in having broken the vow she had made." In vain a Taoist priest was sent for to exorcise the ghost; futile were his charms, useless his sorceries. Mrs. Wang had gone stark staring mad, and so she still remains—a sad example to all faithless widows.—*London Daily Telegraph*.

I AM MUCH mistaken if the rising generation ten years hence will not feel very keenly and bitterly the lost time which has thoughtlessly been loitered away in materialistic and other spiritualistic phenomenal pursuits, during the last twenty years, by those who should have been steadily marching up, in works of real use, towards the stature of angels in this world of preparation for the rewards and uses of angels proper, in the realms of the divine kingdom of angelic uses above. T. ROBINSON.

BLIND TOM plays by memory 7000 pieces. This prodigy, says the *Virginia Chronicle*, possesses such an astonishing memory that it is sufficient to play any piece once to him for him to be able to repeat it. If you read to him in a foreign language, he will imitate the sounds of your voice perfectly without understanding a word. One time he slept on a bed that Rubenstein occupied when in this country, and the next day he played the whole of one of Rubenstein's concertos.

AT A RECENT seance with Mrs. Kate Fox Jencken in London, a hand appeared close to the floor, carrying a large phosphorescent-looking light, about four inches square emitting no smoke or smell. It occasionally struck the floor with the hard luminous substance it carried, and rising touched the face of one of the observers who testifies that it was cold and covered with delicate gauze-like spirit-drapery.

How To Form A Spirit Circle.

It is calculated that one person in every seven might become a medium by observing the proper conditions. The thousands of Spiritualists have, in most cases, arrived at their conclusions by agencies established by themselves and independently of each other and of the services of professional mediums. Every spiritualist is indeed an "investigator,"—it may be at an advanced stage; and that all may become so, the following conditions are presented as those under which the phenomena may at all times be evolved.

Inquirers into Spiritualism should begin by forming spirit circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of from three or five to ten individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands on its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm; but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, very considerably delays the manifestations.

3. Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communication that may be obtained.

4. People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums: it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is a weakening influence.

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

7. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion, let one person only speak, and talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

8. Afterwards the question should be put, "Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?" Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will be afterwards strengthened. Next ask, "Who is the medium?" When spirits come asserting themselves to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as spirits out of the body have all the virtues and all the failings of spirits in the body.

9. A powerful physical medium is usually a person of an impulsive, affectionate, and genial nature, and very sensitive to mesmeric influences. The majority of media are ladies.

The best manifestations are obtained when the medium and all the members of the circle are strongly bound together by the affections, and are thoroughly comfortable and happy; the manifestations are born of the spirit, and shrink somewhat from the lower mental influences of earth. Family circles, with no strangers present, are usually the best.

If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary.

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance.

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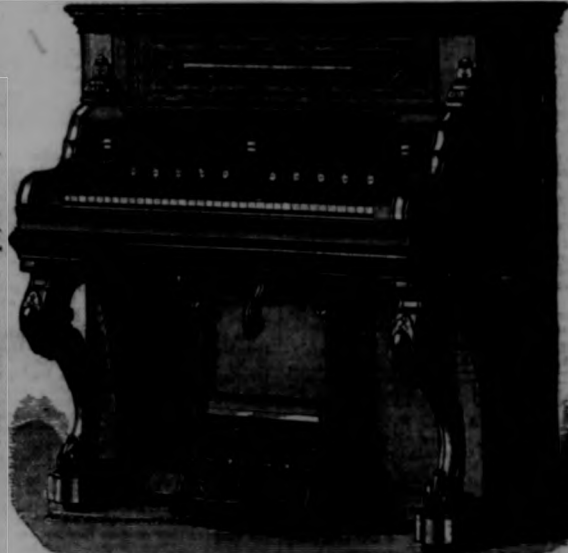
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