

ernment a simultaneous action in the same views, and the occupation of Geneva and the canton of Vaud by the French troops. The government of Louis Napoleon declined to co-operate with Austria in invading the Swiss territory; and Austria was also persuaded to desist from this enterprise. The firm attitude of the cabinets of London and Berlin, backed perhaps by the counsels of Russia, is supposed to have procured this result. But no sooner was the project of the joint violation of the neutral territory baffled, than a new scheme was adopted by the two conspiring Powers, which threatens to be equally ruinous to Switzerland. The French and Austrian governments have entered into a convention for the commercial blockade of that country. In order to carry this into effect Piedmont must be forced to join the league and stop her frontier against Swiss commerce. In the way of such a result stand the government of Sardinia and British influence at the court of Turin. How much these will avail remains to be seen. Subsequent advices state that Switzerland had acceded to all the President's requisitions—they having been repeated in less offensive terms.

From GERMANY there is no news of interest. The Emperor of Austria left Vienna, February 25th, for Trieste and Venice, to meet the Grand Prince of Prussia. The Second Chamber of Wurtemberg, in its sitting of the 26th, adopted, by 54 votes to 32, resolutions, declaring that the fundamental rights proclaimed by the National Assembly of Frankfort continue to have legal force in the kingdom, and can only be abolished in the form presented by the Constitution. The Chamber rejected, by 66 votes to 20, a resolution protesting against certain measures of the Germanic Diet; and it rejected, by 48 votes to 38, a motion relative to the dissolution of the Chamber in 1850. M. de Plessen, after these votes, made a declaration, in the name of the Government, that the Chamber would probably be dissolved.

In SPAIN it is said that the Government is about to reinforce the garrisons of Cuba and Porto Rico by an addition of three or four thousand men. General Concha has been recalled from the Governorship of Cuba; his successor, Gen. Caredo, was to sail from Cadiz on the 20th of March. Extensive changes were taking place in all departments of the public service.

#### THE EAST.

From TURKEY we learn that Reschid Pasha, whose dismissal was noted in our last, has been received to favor again, and restored to office. The Sultan has lately shown his magnanimity to rebels against his authority, by bestowing upon Aziz Bey and his brother Ahmed Bey, rebel Kurdish chiefs, near Bagdad, conquered by the Sultan, and brought

to Constantinople six months ago, a pension of three thousand piastres a month. This clemency to political offenders is said to be common with the Turkish Sovereign. The Turkish Government has recently forbidden the loan of money to farmers at more than eight per cent. interest; it also forbids the payment of all engagements hitherto made at higher rates. A third bridge has just been finished across the Golden Horn. A splendid ball was given at the close of the Carnival by the British Ambassador, at which about eight hundred persons were present.

In PERSIA the recently dismissed Grand Vizier, Mirza-Taghi-Khan, has been put to death, by having his veins opened in a bath, and his treasures have been seized by the Shah.

From INDIA we have news of further difficulties between the English and the Burmese. Previous advices stated that Commodore Lambert had complained to the King of Ava of the conduct of the Governor of Rangoon in refusing compliance with certain demands of reparation for injuries sustained by the British. The King professed a ready submission to the Commodore's requisitions, but his sincerity was doubted, and Commodore Lambert consequently resolved to remain with his squadron, for some days longer, in order to test the truth of his suspicions. Scarcely had the new Governor or Viceroy been placed in authority, than he commenced a series of annoyances against all British subjects, which rendered it imperative on the part of Commodore Lambert to seek an interview with him, which was not only refused, but all communication between the shore and fleet strictly prohibited. In this warlike aspect of affairs many of the British took refuge on board the English vessels, while those who remained behind desirous of securing their property, were cast into prison. The fleet remained at anchor for twenty-four hours on the opposite side of the river, when intimation was received from the Viceroy that he would fire on the squadron should the Commodore attempt to move down the river. On the 10th of January the Fox was towed down, and anchored within a few hundred yards of the stockade erected by the Viceroy, when the steamer having returned to bring away with her a Burmese man-of-war, was fired on, which was immediately returned with great vigor. The enemy dispersed after some three of them were slain. The squadron then proceeded on its course, and the river ports of Burmah were proclaimed to be in a state of blockade. Commodore Lambert then proceeded to Calcutta for further instructions. Another campaign was therefore deemed unavoidable, which, it was supposed, could not be commenced before October.

## Editor's Table.

CREDULITY and SKEPTICISM are often, in fact, but different aspects of one and the same state of mind. No man is more credulous than the infidel in respect to all that would make against the truth of Christianity. Hindoo legends, Chinese chronologies, unmeaning Egyptian hieroglyphics, are suffered at once to outweigh the clearest declarations of that volume which alone sheds light on history, and solves the otherwise inexplicable problem of our humanity.

Nowhere is this remark more strikingly exemplified than in the pretensions of what may be called

the pseudo-spiritualism of the day. Men whose credulity can not digest the supernatural of the Bible are most remarkably easy of belief in respect to spiritual rappings, and spiritual table-liftings, and spiritual communications in Hebrew translated into ungrammatical and false-spelled English. Prophecy and inspiration are irrational; the belief in a Divine regenerating influence on the human soul is superstitious and fanatical; but clairvoyance and *clairvoyant prevision*, and mental alchemy are embraced without difficulty, by the professors of this more transcendent faith. They see and feel nothing of that

grandeur of conception, that holy seriousness, that impressive truthfulness of style, that superhuman elevation above all that associates itself with the absurd, the grotesque, the low, and the malignant—in a word, those traits which every where characterize the miraculous of the Scriptures, and have ever awed the most thoughtful into a recognition of its reality. And yet some of these lecturers and professors have even the impudence to baptize their naturalistic jargon with the name of spiritualism, and while treating the human soul with less reverence than is justly due to the lowest form even of vegetable life, dare to talk of the *moral* uses of their pretended science, as though it had any more place for the word and the idea than might be found in the jerking automaton of the toy-shop.

Sometimes the pretense can be characterized by no milder term than mocking blasphemy. One of these impostors, who has made some noise lately, is said to have accurately foretold the words and ideas of a discourse which was to be delivered by another person on a subsequent day. It was no hypothetical prediction, grounded on a scientific calculation of assumed causes and effects, but, in fact, a *clairvoyant prevision*, not from any Divine impression (an idea which this blasphemous pretender is known wholly to deride), but from a transcendent subjective state of his natural intelligence. And yet some who are known to believe only in an ideal Christ, and an ideal resurrection, are not ashamed to signify a half assent to this monstrous assertion of one of the highest conceivable attributes of the Almighty. Every one who thinks at all must see that here there is no possible middle ground. It is this claim, awfully profane and daring as it is, or a downright imposture.

There is nothing derogatory to the human mind in the belief of the *marvelous*. In fact, such belief is an element of its higher life. The wonder is, that there is not more of it. But no degree of evidence can justify us in giving credence to the *absurd*. The ridiculous is ever proof of the presence of falsehood. The higher we rise in the scale of truth, the more do we find ourselves ascending into a region of seriousness. An impression of a sterner reality, of a deeper interest, of more dread importance, of a more solemn consistency, accompanies every genuine advance. Truth, as it grows purer and clearer, is ever found to be more and more a fearful thing—joyful, indeed, and soul-inspiring, yet finding the very fullness and solidity of its joy in that graver element which gives it its highest and most real interest for the human soul. A faith that has no awe proves itself a delusion. A religion that has no fear, or is not deeply solemn, is a contradiction in terms. For the absurd and the ridiculous even pure falsehood is too stern a thing. They have their existence only in that grotesque mixture of truth and error, in which the distortion of the one concealing the malignity of the other gives birth to all revolting and ludicrous monstrosities.

We need no better test. Apply it to the supernatural of the Scriptures, and it furnishes one of the strongest evidences of their truth. So serious a book can not be a lie. Bring to this criterion the modern charlatany, which so wantonly assumes the name of faith, "obtruding itself with its fleshly mind" into the domain of the true supernatural, and yet denying the supernatural—bring it to this criterion, we say, and it is at once shown to be "earthly, sensual, devilish"—a grotesque reflection of some of the worst things of this world thrown back in lurid distortion from the darkness visible of the Satanic realms. But even this may be assigning to it too

high a rank. The position can not be charged with irrationality which assumes that the "mocking fiend" may sometimes be permitted to practice his jugglings on those rash fools, who would venture too near to his domain of falsehood. But in most of the modern cases of this kind, we are beginning to have little doubt that sheer imposture is the predominant if not the only element.

On the outward evidence, however, we can not at present dwell, since it is with the reasoning of these charlatans we design that our brief strictures shall be mainly occupied. In this, too, we find the proof of falsehood. For we return again to our text—the marvelous may be believed, the absurd no amount of evidence can prove. And here some thoughts suggest themselves to which we must give expression. What amount of solid thinking, what discrimination of ideas, what right knowledge of words, what degree of logical training, which, although not the discoverer of truth, is the surest guard against error—in a word, what amount of general, solid, mental culture must there be in an age distinguished for the extensive circulation and approbation of such works as Davis's Revelations of Nature, and Davis's Great Harmonia, and Dodd's Psychology, &c., &c.? Could it have been so when Butler wrote his immortal Analogy; or, farther back, when Howe preached his Living Temple as evening lectures to a country congregation, and Baxter's tracts were found in every hamlet in England? Could it have been so in our own land, when Edwards preached his deep theology to plain men in plain New England villages? The marvelous, we may well suppose, would have had no lack of believers in those days. But would such absurdities in reasoning have ever gained currency in those thinking though little scientific periods? With all our talk of science, and progress, and universities, and common schools, and the schoolmaster being abroad in the land, there must be, somewhere, something wrong in our most modern ideas and modern modes of education. Is not the physical element too predominant, and is it not to the common smatterings in this department that such a pretended spiritualism, yet real materialism, is directly to be traced? A superficial scolism, extensive enough in its facts, but utterly hollow in its philosophy, is the food with which the common mind is every where crammed even to satiety, while there is such a serious lack of the logical, the theological, the Biblical, the classical, the historical—in short, of those elements which must furnish the foundation of all right thinking, and without which other knowledge is more likely to lead to error than to truth.

But we can at present only hint at this. In respect to the reasonings of these scientific discoverers (as they claim to be), we may say that their fallacies get currency from this very cause, namely, the general want of discrimination in respect to the true bounds of fundamental ideas, and that abuse of language which is the necessary result. If the consequences were not so serious, nothing could be more amusing than their pretensions, or their method. They would have us believe that they are the martyrs—Galileos—Bacon—Harveys, all of them. Each one is a suffering Servetus, while all the bigotry of the theological world, with all its inquisitorial priests and furious Calvins, is ever ready to crush their new science, and give the crown of martyrdom to its devoted teachers.

They have, too, the sagacity to perceive that audiences, in general, love to be addressed in the technics of a scientific style, whether rightly used or not. The vender of quack medicines has discovered

the same secret; and hence he, too, has his array of causes and effects, and fluids, and mediums, and counteracting forces, and grand systems of circulation, and positive and negative states. To be thus addressed raises the hearer or reader at once in his own estimation, and thus prepares him, sometimes, for the reception of almost any kind of nonsense. He acquires, too, an interest in these high matters; and if not himself an actual martyr to science, becomes at least a sympathizer with those who are doomed to all this infamous persecution.

The usual course has now become so stereotyped, that one who has attended a number of lectures of this kind, will be able to predict the general method of remark quite as well as Davis is said to have foretold that of Dr. Bushnell. He will be certain of the very places where the peculiar and most original cant of the school will be sure to come in. He will know just when and where to look out for Galileo and the priests, and the Puritans and the Quakers, and Fulton and the steam-engine. He anticipates precisely the spot where the lecturer will tell us how Bacon "used up" the Stagyrte, and how wonderfully knowledge has grown since that remarkable event, and how all previous progress was preparatory to this new science, which it has been reserved for our bold martyr not only to discover in its elements, but to present full formed and full grown to his astonished hearers, —and which, moreover, he generously offers to teach to private classes (the ladies to be by themselves) at the exceedingly reasonable rate of ten dollars per course.

Sometimes the whole of this scientific claptrap will consist of the dextrous use of some one long new-coined term, very much like those that are invented for the venders of soaps and perfumes to express the psychology of their most ingenious and philosophical compounds. The lecturer has discovered a new word, and it stands to him in place of a mine of thought. In *Martinus Scriblerus* we read of a project to banish metaphysics out of Spain. It was to be done by forbidding the use of the compounds and decompounds of the substantive verb. "Take away from the scholastic metaphysician," says this ingenious reformer, "his *ens*, his *entitas*, his *essentia*, &c., and there is an end of him." So also we have known lectures, and even books, on some of these new psychologies from which the abstraction of a single term would cause the whole to collapse. And yet to the quackish lecturer it is the key to unlock all his scientific treasures. He has somehow picked up a word, and he is deluding himself, and trying to delude others, into the notion that he has really caught an *idea*. The connection of soul and body is no longer a mystery. Science has at length dragged it out of its dark retreat. Nothing can be simpler than the explanation at length afforded of the fact which had so long baffled all inquiry. It is wholly owing to the *nervo-vital* fluid. But how is this? Is this connecting medium mind, or matter, or a compound of both, or a tertium quid? If it is either the first or the second, the mystery is just where it was before. If it be said that it is the last (the only answer which does not at once annihilate itself), the further query arises—How is that to be a medium which needs itself a medium, or rather two other distinct media, to serve as connecting links between it and the two worlds it would unite? Or is it a bridge without an abutment on either shore?

But what are all such difficulties to our modern Galileo, or to his scientific audience? It is the *nervo-vital* fluid, whether or no. There is a charming philosophy in the very sound, and it is impossible that so good a term should not mean something. It is an admirable word—a most euphonic word—and since the

parts are certainly significant, there can be no reason why the whole compound should not be so likewise.

Another of these magic words is *electricity*. It is getting to be the *universal solvent* for all scientific difficulties. It is life, it is gravitation, it is attraction, it is generation, it is creation, it is development, it is law, it is sensation, it is thought, it is every thing. "Give me a place to put my lever," said Archimedes, "and I will move the world!" Give us electricity and *nervo-vital* fluids, say our biologists, and we will explain the mystery of all organizations, from the animalcule to the universe!

We repeat it, The downright impositions in respect to facts, are not so insulting to an audience, as the quackish reasoning which is often presented by way of explanation. To state an example: One of the most common performances of these mountebanks consists in the pretended control of one mind or one person over the senses, the actions, the volitions, and even the moral states of another. The performance is generally contemptible enough in itself, but it is rendered still more so when our man of science undertakes, as he generally does, to explain to his audience the profound rationale of his proceedings. The lecturer most modestly and reverently disclaims for himself the possession of supernatural powers. It is all science—all strictly in accordance with "*natural laws*," and performed on the most rational and scientific principles. He had broken no law of mind or matter, as he would make perfectly level to the understandings of his most respectable auditory. The grand agent in the whole process was electricity, or the *nervo-vital* fluid. By means of this, the mind of the operator was transferred to the soul of the subject, and hence it is perfectly plain that the emotions and mental exercises of the one become the emotions and mental exercises of the other. A terrific scene was fancied (in the case which we have now in mind it was a picture of serpents), and the patient was thrown into a state of most agitating fright. Now that an impostor, or a juggler, might deceive the senses of an audience, is nothing incredible, and implies nothing derogatory to their intelligence. That some physical effect may have been produced on the nervous system of some peculiarly sensitive subject, is by no means beyond belief; or that in some way, explicable or inexplicable, the agitation and convulsion may have had a real existence. So far it may have been wholly false, or partly false and partly real. Again, whether there may or may not be unknown fluids through which one mind or one body affects another, is not the question. If it were so, it would only be analogous to the ordinary modes of mediate communication by air, and light, and sound, and would be liable in kind, if not in degree, to the same imperfections. Still would it be true, whatever the media, ordinary or extraordinary, that only as mind is communicated to mind *as it really is*, can one affect the emotions, and exercises, and states of the other. There may be less, there never can be more, in the effect than in the cause.

Here, then, is the palpable absurdity, which should bring a blush of shame upon every audience, and every individual calling himself rational, who is for a moment affected by it. The mind of the operator, it is maintained, is, for the time being, the mind of the patient. It has taken possession of his thinking and feeling province. This is the philosophy that Aristotle never knew, and of which even Bacon hardly had a glimpse. Let us test it. As the lecturer is a very frank and fearless man, he invites the fullest examination, not only of his facts, but of his reasoning. Some one may, therefore, be sup-

posed to present the following or similar questions: You *willed*, did you, the scene and the state of mind which produced these alarming results? Exactly so. Was it, then, a simple volition of the *effect*, as an effect (if such a thing were possible), or accompanied in your own mind, by a conception of the scene presented? Certainly, replies the triumphant lecturer, the whole rationale, as you have been told, consisted in throwing my mind into that of the subject. He thought what I thought—he felt what I felt. Very well. But were you frightened at the snakes? Did terror constitute any part of the exercises of your own mind? This is a puzzler, but there is an apparent way of surmounting the difficulty. The patient, it may be said, *believes* in the reality of the scene presented, while the operator does not. But this only suggests a still greater absurdity. This belief, or non-belief, is certainly a very important part of the mental and emotional state. How comes one of the most essential ingredients to be left behind in the psychological transfer? Does the operator *will* it thus to be? We have never heard any such thing alleged; but if it were so, it would only be the crowning folly of this superlatively foolish process—this very lunacy of nonsense. Such volition itself would then become a part of the mental state, and must pass over to the patient along with the other thoughts and emotions, and with all the absurdity involved in it, or require another volition to keep it back, and still another volition for this, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Have any of our readers ever seen a foolish dog running round and round after his own tail, and ever jerking it away just when he seemed to himself to be on the point of catching it? Nothing can furnish a better illustration of the exceeding folly that has often in this way been presented as profound and scientific reasoning to what have been styled enlightened and respectable audiences.

There is another fallacy running through all these pretended sciences—from phrenology and phrenomerism to the most stupid exhibitions that have been ever given, under the names of “electrical psychology” and “mental alchemy.” It is that view which, in effect, wholly denies any thing like a spiritual unity to the human soul, making it a series of separate impulses, or, like the keys of a piano, each when struck from without giving an isolated sound. Let one be touched, the machine lifts up its hand, and is supposed to pray. Strike another, and it blasphemes. And so, by turns, it hates and loves, and fears and trusts—not different objects, which would be perfectly consistent with a spiritual unity, in which the whole moral and intellectual state is represented in every exercise, but the same objects, and with transitions so sudden as to be almost simultaneous. We might, in a similar way, expose the absurd reasoning contained in all this, but we would rather dwell at present on the moral aspect of the case—the shocking irreverence it manifests toward the human soul, making its faith, its reason, its love, its conscience, as worthless as the lowest bodily appetites—sinking it, indeed, below the dignity of respectable organic or inorganic matter, with which such tricks can not be played, and reducing all that have heretofore been regarded as the highest moral truths to the rank of physical phenomena.

In some former remarks of our Editorial Table, there was an allusion to the revolting claim clairvoyance makes to meddle with the soul's sacred individuality. The thought is applicable to all those kindred pretensions which are now so rife. Their tendency is to destroy all reverence for our own spirituality, and with it all reverence for the truly spiritual every-

where. If this be true of what is called biology and mental alchemy, in a still more impressive sense may it be charged upon that other compound of blasphemy and Satanic mummery, which has grown directly out of them. We allude to the pretense of holding intercourse with departed spirits through mesmerized mediums, or what are usually called *spiritual rappings*. The first class of performances are an insult to the human intelligence; this is a moral outrage upon the most tender, the most solemn, the most religious feelings of our nature. The one is a profane trifling with all that is most sacred in life—the other is a violation of the grave, and of all beyond, of which it is the appointed vail. It is hard to write or speak with calmness here. The mischief done and doing in this direction, defies all proper estimate. These proceedings are sending lunatics to our asylums, but this is by no means the sorest evil that may be laid to their charge. It is the soul-hardening familiarity they are every where producing with the most awful subjects that can be offered for human contemplation. Such an effect, too, in relation to the spirit of man must soon be followed by a similar one in respect to the still more tremendous idea of Deity. To use a strange but most expressive term, first employed by De Quincey (although applied to a different subject) we know of nothing in human experience that threatens to be so utterly *de-religionizing*—in other words, so fatally destructive of all that reverence for the spiritual, that awe of the unseen, that tender emotion, as well as solemn interest, which connect themselves with the idea of the other life, and without which religion itself, in any form, can have no deep or permanent hold upon the mind. We find it difficult to conceive how any man possessed of the smallest share of these holy sympathies, can bring himself to give any countenance whatever to such practices. We appeal to those who have lost the nearest relatives—a parent, a brother, a sister, a dear departed child—how should every right feeling of the soul revolt against the thought of holding intercourse with them, even though it were possible, through such means? Who that has a Christian heart would not prefer the silence of the grave to the thought of the dear departed one in the midst of such imaginings, and such scenic associations as are connected with the usual performances of this kind? Through that silence of the grave the voice of faith may be heard speaking to us in the language of revelation—*He is not dead but sleepeth*. Blessed word,—so utterly unknown to all previous philosophy—never heard in any other revelation than that of the gospel! They are not dead but *sleep*. “They enter into *peace*,” says the prophet. And then the precious and consoling addition—*They sleep in Jesus*. Surely the term thus employed can imply no cessation of consciousness, no torpor of the higher and better faculties of the soul; but it does denote, beyond all doubt, a state of rest, of calmness, of security, of undisturbed and beatific vision—a state far removed from all resemblance to this bustling life—a state in all respects the opposite of that which fancy pictures as belonging to the scenes presented in the manifestations of spiritual rappings, and spiritual table-liftings, and, in a word, those spiritual pantomimes, which seem to be becoming more and more extravagant and grotesque in proportion to the infidel credulity with which they are received.

Such are every where the scriptural ideas in respect to the condition of the pious dead, and from the other class we seek not to draw that vail which it has thrown over them. Nothing shows more strikingly the extreme secularity of the age in which we



live than the disposition, even among many who are professedly religious, to look upon the other world as only a continuation of the activities of the present; but we affirm with all boldness, that such a view receives no support from the Bible. Rest, security, calmness, peace, removal from all agitation, from all excitement, from all commingling in the scenes of this busy, restless, probationary life—these are the thoughts which are suggested by its parables, its metaphors, its visions, its direct and positive assertions. Especially clear and prominent is the idea of entire separation from the present world. They have "entered into rest"—they are in "Abraham's bosom"—they are "with Christ in Paradise." To the same effect would the spiritually-minded reader interpret certain phrases employed in the Older Scriptures. They are in "the secret of his pavilion," in the "hiding-place of his tabernacle"—they abide "under the shadow of the Almighty." Such expressions may have a meaning in connection with this life; but their fullest import is only brought out when their consoling assurances are referred to the state of the departed in the spirit-world.

And here the thought most naturally suggests itself—How striking the difference between the sensual obtrusiveness, the impious pretensions, the profane curiosity exhibited in connection with this modern charlatanry, and what may be called the *solemn reserve* of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible never condescends to gratify our curiosity respecting what may be called the physiology, or *physical* theory of the other life. On the other hand, the *moral* effect is ever kept in view, and to this, in all its communications, it ever aims at giving the deepest intensity. In the light of this thought let any one contrast the sublime vision of Eliphaz (Job iv.) with any of these modern spiritual manifestations. The veil is for a moment withdrawn. A light just gleams upon us from the spirit-world, not to show us things within, but to cast its moral irradiation upon things without. The formless form, the silence, and the voice leave all things physical, or psychological as much unknown as before; but how deep the moral impression! There are no disclosures of the scenery or topography of the unseen state; no announcement of "great truths about to break forth;" nothing said of "throwing down barriers between the two worlds." But instead of this, a most solemn declaration of a Divine moral government, and a moral retribution, to which all that is physical, or physiological, or psychological even, is intended ever to be kept subservient.

Thus it is throughout the Bible. Paul had visions of the third Heavens. Christ descended into Hades, and rose again; but he has told us nothing of the state or doings of departed spirits. Where the sacred penmen draw back, and scarce afford a hint, except as to the certainty of retribution in another world, modern mystics, modern impostors have given us volumes.

Fools rashly venture in  
Where angels dare not tread.

And so, too, in respect to death itself. The impostor Davis profanely assumes to describe the process of the elimination of the spirit from the struggling body, and some have pronounced the unfeeling caricature worthy of the genius of Dante or of Milton. But with what solemn reserve does the Scripture cast a veil over this dread event, and reveal to us only its moral consequences. It is a going down into a "Valley of Shadows," and all that the believer is allowed to know of it is, that in that Valley there is one to take him by the hand, one who will walk with him through its darkness, and "whose rod

and staff shall comfort him" through all that dreary way. To this correspond the terms expressive of the idea in primitive languages. It is a going into *Hades*, the *Invisible*, the *Unknown*, not in the sense of any doubt, implied as to the real existence of a spirit world (for men have never been without a distinct belief in this, as matter of fact), but unknown as to its physical states and modes of being. In the Hebrew it is *Beth Olam*, the *Hidden House* (imperfectly rendered *the long home*, Eccles. xii.), where the souls of the dead take no part in things that are done beneath the sun." The living go to them, but they come not back any more to us. And what right-feeling heart would have it otherwise. They are

Not dead, but parted from their house of clay.

They still dwell, too, in our memories; they are enshrined in our hearts. Who would not trust them to the Scripture promises of rest and peace, rather than imagine them as subject to the unrest, and sharing in the agitating and tumultuous scenes of this pseudo-spiritualism. The believer in rappings charges his opponent with a Sadducean lack of faith. But we would take issue with him on the term. The naturalistic spirit-hunter is a stranger to the idea. With him it is only the sensualism and sensual scenes of this earth carried into a supposed spiritual world. It is a faith which has no trust, no patient waiting. It is not "the evidence of things unseen." It is not "the substance of things hoped for." It is rank materialism, after all. It is, moreover, *essentially* irreligious. As far as it extends, it threatens, to an awful degree, to de-religionize the human soul—not only to take away all true spirituality of view, but to render men incapable of those ideas, on which alone a right religious belief can be founded.

We hope our readers will not think that we have indulged in a train of thought too serious or sombre for the pages of a literary Monthly Magazine. It is directly forced upon us by our subject, if we would treat it as it deserves to be treated; and our only apology for choosing such a theme, is found in the fact that it is connected with one of the most widespread and mischievous delusions of the day. We should indeed think that we had discharged a most important editorial duty, could we only convey to the many thousands of our readers our deep impression, not only of the falsehood and wickedness of these "*lying wonders*," but also of the immense moral evil of which they threaten to be the cause.

### Editor's Easy Chair.

THE Spring hangs fire, like a rusty match-lock; and even as we write—though the almanac tells stories of "pleasant showers about this time"—the snow-flakes are dappling the distant roofs, and shivering under a northern wind. The early-trout fishers upon the south-shore of the Island, are bandaged in pea-coats, and the song-making blue-birds twitter most scattered and sorry orisons.

It is a singular circumstance—and one of which the meteorologic men must give us the resolution—that the seasons of the Eastern and Western Continents balance themselves so accurately as they do. Thus, the severe winter which, leaning from the Arctic Circle, has touched our Continent with an icy right hand, has kindled with a warm left, the north of Europe into a premature Spring. The journalists tell us of flowers blooming in Norway, through all the latter half of February: and the winter in Paris has proved as sham a winter, as their Republic is sham republic