

# THE Harbinger of Light.

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MONTHLY JOURNAL.

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE: FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM  
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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THE question of "Christian Spiritualism" has of late occupied a prominent position in the various American papers devoted to Spiritualism and Freethought, and in a recent letter from a well-known representative man, we are informed that quite a number of the most eminent writers and speakers connected with the movement are known as "Christian Spiritualists." The term is a very indefinite one, but generally taken to apply to individuals who combine a belief in the fundamental doctrine of Christianity with the acceptance of Spiritual intercourse. From the published writings of Drs. Buchanan and Crowell and Rev. S. Watson, whose names figure in the list furnished by our correspondent, we feel assured that this definition does not apply to them, and that their qualification for the title consists in the acceptance of the simple teachings of Jesus as an adequate basis of religious morals, and his recognition as a divinely inspired man, bringing into prominence at every available opportunity the beauties of his character, and avoiding anything that would tend to mar its lustre. On the other hand, the Iconoclastic Spiritualist disparages his acts and teachings by pointing to Christna, Buddha and other religious reformers as his equal in virtue, and proving by history that the moral teachings of Christianity in their entirety were known and taught long before the advent of Christ. Doubtless the temperate discussion of the subject will tend to eliminate truth and enlarge the reader's knowledge of religious history. We fail, however, to see how it will advance the cause of Spiritualism, and most decidedly object to either Christianity or any other system of religion being presented as essential to that which is in itself both a science and a religion, unique and distinctive, and which whilst it appropriates the broad truths

manifest in all religious systems is not dependent upon any of such for support. What need have we as Spiritualists and Progressionists to waste our energies in discussing the relative merits of Christ and his predecessors, or determining whether he or they originated the great principles which he expounded? All truth that is in the world is God's truth, and every one of his children has a right to as much of it as he can appropriate. Those who exercise their reason and intuition can accumulate a larger modicum than those who are enclosed within sectarian barriers; and it is the manifest duty of such to acquire and diffuse all that circumstances admit of their doing. We may have the highest esteem for both Christ and his teachings, nevertheless it would be manifestly unwise and deterrent to the progress of both ourselves and others to decline the acceptance of self-evident truths because they conflict with the latter. Spiritualism is a higher and broader platform than Christianity, and those who bind themselves to the latter, limit their capacity for expansion and unnecessarily weight themselves on the journey up the hill of progress. We do not mean to assert that men cannot reach even a high standard of development under the Christian standard, but we say it is a side-path, and not the main road which all must eventually return to, and although it may lead in the same direction, time is lost by the deviation. It is evidently not the intention of the wise intelligences directing the Spiritual movement that it should fossilize into a creed, but there are certain central ideas around which Rational Spiritualists may rally without fear of such a consummation, and the most prominent of these is "Eclecticism." With a full realization of this, and its application in the collection of truth from the earth below and the heavens above, all religious systems as such will be found unnecessary to the progress of humanity.

DURING the past month Mrs. Bamford has been on a visit to the Western district, where, under the auspices Mr. W. Layley, of Sandford, she has given a number of semi-public sances, materially increasing the interest in Spiritualism already aroused there by the efforts of Mr. L. She speaks highly of the kindness and hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Layley and other Spiritualistic friends in the neighbourhood.

## WHAT OUR SPIRIT FRIENDS SAY TO US.

ONE of the objections to modern Spiritualism is that when the spirits come to the circles they never say anything worth listening to. However this impression may have got abroad, it is a very mistaken one; those who are in the habit of sitting regularly in a circle, always receive instruction of a valuable character; but occasionally, the tone and matter of the discourse is very much in advance of what one hears in the assembly-hall, or from the pulpit. We admit that this may be a matter of taste, but then, the great qualification for the reception of spiritual instruction such as our spirit friends impart, consists in a willingness to learn outside the rigid lines of a sectarian, or orthodox theology, with a view to make progress in that spiritual growth which will lead the soul of man higher and higher in the scale of being. We are quite willing to admit that at times, there are difficulties in the way of a thorough impartation of the thoughts of those higher controls who come to teach heavenly wisdom, since it is through Mediums we receive, who, being persons of like passions with ourselves, are sometimes not in so good a condition for the reception and communication of these higher sentiments; but taking it all in all, we are inclined to think that, those who are persistent in their endeavours to commune with these spirit friends, do receive much valued and soul-inspiring truth, whereby they are quickened to pursue a wiser and better life; illumined in mind, and quickened in purpose to be *spent* for the good of their fellow men.

We desire to present to our readers, in continuation somewhat of last month's account of "An evening with our spirit friends," a few utterances given to the same circle, which may be found useful for the edification of those who may read them. These utterances, are given without any reference to the accompanying circumstances of the several sittings, but will be found to embrace both different classes of minds, as well as experiences in the spirit world spheres.

My wealth was my great misfortune; who loved me save for my gold? Had I a single friend?—none; but my wealth had many. Oh, woe to those who make their gain from out another's loss. My will was not what I intended, but influenced by designing persons, and I, weakened in mind and body, was a fitting instrument in their hands. I know it is in vain for me to come back from the other life to speak of this, but out of the abundance of my soul I must speak. He sold himself to me for my wealth; and it was his ruin; had he wedded according to the dictates of his mind and his affections; had he had poverty to contend with; had he expanded his natural powers in gaining an honourable livelihood, he had then been a good and happy man. Friends, who are still upon the earth, lay this bitter lesson to heart, the bitter lesson of my life lost on earth, my hopes shattered, my affections repulsed, my mind tortured with vain regrets. Wealth was mine, but I did not give of it to the poor, to those who would have been helped by it. I was surrounded by those worshippers of mammon who only saw in me a golden road to their own pleasures. I have been a bad steward, and now I am reaping my reward; but now that I have spoken, my bitterness seems less, and my soul less weighted with trouble. In reply to your question, I have already told you, that I was weakened in mind and body. I was a fitting instrument in a stronger hand. Friends, think of yourselves on a bed of sickness. Forsaken as I was by him who should have cherished me, disappointed, and a prey to that bitter sorrow, which only a forsaken wife can know; can you wonder that I cared not what became of that remnant of my wretched life. Would you help me, help him, for indeed I loved him, but me he never cared for; speak to him as friend speaks to friend; tell him that as an honourable man, he must seek to pursue an honourable course, and not be a worthless drone in the great human hive. No longer must I stay; my father and my mother are here, and the little one.—Farewell.

Our friend says, he has been given to understand that

he may acquire much knowledge on spiritual matters, by attending this circle. These great powers, whose existence at present he can scarcely realise, he is told, impart much knowledge of a varied character to the members of this circle; that each member of it draws minds greater or less according to their degree of spiritual advancement, for the purpose of imparting knowledge. This he has been given to understand in his present life; and that intelligences of a very rare order, are attracted through the medium, independently of the members of the circle. Thus far, I have received full confirmation of what has been told me, but being a stranger to the peculiar conditions which unite the previous state of existence with the present, renders the aid, thus afforded, peculiarly acceptable to me. Alas, my good friends, with all our vaunted knowledge acquired whilst on earth, how little we know of the varied conditions which are comprised in a future existence. We know that every drop of water is a world as full of varied conditions, and varied phenomena, as that which constitutes the world around you; but how little do we know of the correlation of conditions which produces the minute drop of water, and yet are given to understand in this life that there is a similarity of conditions, or an analogy in this minute world, in this phenomenon, as in the world around you. Surely the more our experiences are multiplied, and the more absolutely our conditions are varied, the more does the beauty, order, and symmetry of the universe become manifested. I most sincerely regret that I did not fully give the phenomena of Spiritualism my careful attention previous to my leaving your earth; but regrets are useless now, we are fully aware of that, but none the less are we the subjects of them. It is only by great mental strain that we can subdue the conditions which influence our nature, and this strength cannot be acquired until we pass into the higher phase of our present life. I thank you all, my kind friends, for the kind reception you have given me; especially do I thank those of you with whom I was associated in my recent terrestrial engagements; and I thank the friend who gave me the information respecting the doctrines of that illustrious man Swedenborg. I will not detain you any longer, as I know that others are waiting to communicate with you.

My very dear friends, I purposed making a great many remarks relative to the proceedings of the circle during the past year, but owing to the length of control, which I did not anticipate, I shall be obliged to forego much of what I wished to say. Dear friends, another year has almost passed away; another grain from out the mighty and heap of time; a drop from a shoreless ocean; a breath of the life of ages! Looking back on that bygone time, how many of those whom you have known have passed the narrow portal which separates time from eternity; leaves dropping one by one from off the tree of human life; soul plants, transplanted to spiritual regions to grow, to develop according to the strength which they have derived from their life on earth; this strength could only be derived by resisting the temptations of earth, by making the spirit the master of the conditions of life, by rising above the sordid passions and petty cares which belong to the life of earth. During the past year, you have attracted to the circle, minds in harmony with your own; and finding suitable conditions in the medium these controls have performed their labor of love by transmitting knowledge, you having derived spiritual truth, and gained mental growth from the knowledge thus transmitted. When you think of those who have passed from your earth; when you think of the time that will come—and come soon to some it must—when you, too, shaking off the bonds of the flesh, shall pass on to the realms of spiritual life, doth not Spiritualism, for your encouragement echo the words of the apostle of Rome,—"Oh death! where is thy sting? Oh grave! where is thy victory?" Spiritualism is a grand improver; its teachings, my friends, as they have been given to you, are such as should purify your souls, strengthen your minds, and make the Spirit lord and master over the frailties of the flesh. Remember that every scene of your life on earth is fixed in that mental register, the mind, and tinctures your surroundings here, colours your views, and makes your spiritual life according to

your life on earth. Do not think that a mere blind belief, or unreasoning acceptance of statements constitute strength, or nobility of the spirit; apply the teachings which have been given you to your souls, and you will have no reason to repent. I should have liked to have spoken much longer, but time has passed, even the usual time for this, I must confess somewhat late sitting. I have spoken of the health of your souls; I will make a passing note upon the health of your bodies before closing. I look round on you all with the greatest pleasure, your health has certainly not by any means degenerated; on the contrary I can assure all, that your physical conditions may be considered an improvement on those of preceding years. And, now, to all the circle be every happiness and enjoyment during the approaching festive season. God bless and keep you all.

You must know that, I neither laid up spiritual treasure for the life to come, nor did I develop my spiritual sight whilst on earth. Not until latterly have I realised the degradation of my spirit, or the blindness of my soul. I am afraid of consuming remorse; it never dies, this remorse never dies. Strange, is it not, that my coming here should have awakened in my dormant soul a better feeling towards those whom I despised for their adherence to a faith which I laughed at when in your world; for this I have to thank him who is now with me, how much we are dependent on one another I cannot tell you. When I think of the past, the sting is redoubled within me, for I have treated you with ingratitude. If those on earth would only be warned; be warned, not to neglect to lay up spiritual treasure, which is spiritual knowledge. I have neither; only misery, only remorse, only the unspeakable agony of looking back and thinking. Oh God! what might I not have been had I known this great truth, this ennobling science, and had I shaped my life accordingly. But, miserable as I am, I see a deeper torment, a more enduring agony in those who, having known of this great thing, Spiritualism, rejected it, and did not profit by their knowledge; and those, also, who, while they professed to believe it, were not influenced in their lives by it; that induces a lower condition than this to which I have sunk, for I neither knew it (Spiritualism) or, in any way had an opportunity of accepting its teachings.

Remember, dear friends, that blessedness cannot arise in the soul when there is not the desire to be holy; for, in accordance with Spiritual laws, the soul must be furnished with spiritual knowledge, and the light of God's universal truth, the soul purified by self sacrifice, and ennobled by lofty deeds, ere it can ascend to heavenly regions and dwell amid scenes of celestial glory and splendour in bliss ineffable, there to repose in regions of pure light, illumined and vitalised by the celestial sun whose rays give life, and health, and beauty to the soul; and from which flows that supremely divine essence which forms the universe of spirit. If a soul be morally blind whilst in the flesh, its vision must be clouded and imperfect through many ages in the great hereafter; for it is in accordance with spiritual laws that the state of the soul in the earth life should mould its pain and pleasures, and accordingly, the state which it must occupy in the spiritual world; for those who love not truth and holiness are in antagonism to the Divine Nature, which is perfect truth, purest light, and inconceivable holiness. While the spirit dwells in the body, it cannot realise those perfect conditions which belong only to the Infinite Eternal. Sorrow for evil thoughts, sorrow for permitting the soul to come under the influence of gross desires and earthly passions, is much to be commended and desired; it is the first indication of that wish in the soul to attain to purer, nobler things. But contrition alone, cannot destroy the seeds of evil sown in the soul during its earthly existence; there must, also, be the attempt to arise out of that condition by aspiring to better things, both in regard to yourselves, and to others. Whilst in the flesh, live in harmony with God's laws; obey that monitor of the soul which crieth aloud: beware! you cannot sin without infringing those divine laws which have been appointed for your good, and for the ennobling

of your soul. And, now, to Thee O Father, our Creator, who hast ordered Thy most holy laws that all things may progress to Thee, and through Thy mercy and loving-kindness the freedom of the soul may be secured; and that it may be guarded from the influence of evil, and from unholy desires; who in Thy mercy hast, in the natural laws of the earthly life, provided for all Thy creatures of the human race; teach them to know these laws, that they may comprehend Thy most perfect and holy will, and rise to the enjoyment of the blessedness which Thou dost give.—Amen.

Dr. E. says, the opposition to Mr. Stephen, in the papers will do good. It is only what may be expected, but all that can be said or done will not hide the truth which is pouring down around you all. Facts are stubborn things. I am not acquainted with the article in the *Age* you refer to, and to go back to all that is contained in the *Zoist* would exercise my powers to an unnecessary extent; you can find the article in question if you search for it. All this contention is needed to extract the fine grain from the tares, the true from the spurious, and to bring out the reasoning powers in man, and awaken the intuitional faculties, which, when combined with honourable feelings must overcome all obstructions. I have been present at some of the cases dealt with by Mr. Stephen; some of these he has great power over, and others, little or none. The power is within himself, but it is more of a psychological character, and not a fluid from his material nature. You might call it a fluid, but it is not a fluid in that sense, although in a general way, the term *fluid* may best express it, it is not like water, but more like ether. Some of the members of your circle, if they had confidence, could exercise the same power as Mr. Stephen; it is the force of the spirit, the will of the operator acting upon the patient; the spirit acting upon the body. In the medicine you give, there is a spiritual influence acting in much the same way. Every individual has within him, the power to heal, if he would exercise it. Very much of the success depends on the disposition of the operator; if he have benevolence largely developed, and sufficient will power, combined with a pure life, using plain food, and little or no stimulant, he may accomplish much. If the patient have faith in the operation this will render him more receptive, and greater results will arise. Any one might be used as mere instruments by the spirits to effect cures, but if such one have magnetic power he can draw spiritual aid in a large degree from the spiritual world, or even from nature around, which is full of potency; but none can say that the power is all their own. If you were to place magnetised water under the microscope, you would discover a difference in the color. Pine wood will keep the magnetic property from disseminating; blotting paper is also good to keep in the magnetism, if placed round the bottle containing the water which has been operated on. Blue is good as a colour. The influence of color is important. A great power lies in coloured light, when understood. The violet and the blue are very effectual, tranquilizing and generating power. The red ray is stimulating. Green, is also, a tranquilizer. Yellow is more for the purpose of producing an equilibrium in the system, this color however, must be combined, as a rule: so, indeed, of all the colors, but in this the judgment must be exercised to produce results according to circumstances. My badge is of a somewhat similar character, it is for the purpose of soul healing, as well as for other uses. This badge is a globe, like the crystal you have had at your circle, quite as large, but of different colours all around it. The colours go round and round it; when it is turned, that which appeared blue, becomes yellow, and so on. The property is in itself, as it is turned it sends down rays, and each ray is different. It also has the property of determining the spiritual condition of those to whom it is directed. In the same way as the sun draws the influences from the earth, so does this badge draw out the qualities of the individuals to whom it is directed.

H. J. B.

Melbourne, 1881.

## COMMON LIFE.

## (A COMMUNICATION.)

"In the elder days of Art  
Builders wrought with greatest care  
Each minute and unseem part;  
For the Gods see everywhere.  
Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen;  
Make the house where gods may dwell,  
Beautiful, entire, and clean."

Common life, or a life which is common to all men; the associated life; the life of relationships and active worldly duties; the life which from the cradle to the grave makes up the sum of man's little worldly history ere he goes on his way to reap as he has sown the fruits of his deeds. Now this is a subject which in the light of the after-life becomes of so much importance that it is one of the first lessons we have to learn when we come here to review its progress and reap its results.

How full is man's little life on earth of incidents which may make or mar his happiness; and how true it is in connection with his associations he finds the elements of discord or of harmony. I believe, however, that although those so-called mysteries of life are relegated to that category which is said to comprise the secret things which belong to God alone, that a time will come when man will find out the solution of the difficulty himself, and discovering the remedy will apply it, and then, having the means in his own hand to rectify the mistakes of earth-life, he will escape its many miseries which arise either from incompatible relationships or mistaken courses of action.

The plane of life on which man moves in the earthly stage of existence, comprises a vast amphitheatre; there is struggle, emulation, competition entering into all its details; a desire to possess, to rule, to attain selfish gratification; but how little of that benevolence and brotherly love which would lead each and all to extend a helping hand to the other, so that what good is to be got out of earthly existence may be shared and so enjoyed in its measure in a general way, and thus made a hundred-fold the greater good to man than it otherwise could be.

It is said in that old book which Christians worship that when God made all things he bestowed his blessing upon them; see Genesis, c. 1—man and things; evidently implying that the intention was to establish something like a reign of order, and so of happiness. I think, therefore, however much the strings which seem to move the earthly destiny of man may have got tangled, it is still left to man to right the wrong, and to bring order out of confusion; and while he uproots the tares, to sow the wheat, which shall minister in its abundant harvest to the old intention of universal blessing.

My previous thoughts respecting the constituents of a universal religion may have led the way to the realisation of such a consummation; and I desire now to add a fresh chapter to the attempt to solve the problem of human earthly well-being, entering into the actualities of the common life of man on the earth, his little pilgrimage through the phases of fleshly life upon your globe. And then I may add a third, which shall have a reference to the spiritual aspects and by which man is connected with the vast array of existences with which he has been, and must ever be connected, and which fill the vast universe of the Infinite Kingdom.

Earthly life progresses with the revolving of the globe on which you dwell around its central orb the sun, and thus in alternate experience of day and night, provides the plane on which are wrought out the circumstances of the earthly existence. Man goeth forth to his labour and toil until the evening; he fills up his little day with those employments which are needful for the maintenance of the physical frame. His varied engagements bring him into contact with his fellow man, and the influence which he exerts works good or evil, according to circumstances. In his social relationship, or those of a business character, or in the combination

which he forms for the accomplishment of wider aims and purposes; in all of these there is a motive which incites him to action, and an end which stimulates his powers of perseverance. The ways of human life are very intricate, and often present a most mysterious aspect as they work out their results; indeed, so little appears to be known or recognised by man of the principle of cause and effect in relation to these things, that no wonder there is confusion and often dismay as the result of the issues which arise. I think this is true of every aspect in which you view the life which is common to man. Take, for instance, the family relationship; in consequence of the mistakes which are made in laying the base of this important structure, all the stones of the building seem out of place, and in conflict one with the other; and if you do find an exception to this rule, it is indeed the exception in a marked degree. Is it at all likely that such a state of things was intended in the appointment of such relationships?

We have no hesitation in saying that one-half of the misery of human life arises from this cause, viz.—the inadequacy of present arrangements and modes of association in the family relationship to yield results which the human heart craves. And yet, strange to say, it does not seem to occur to man's mind that there must be a very necessary and vital connection between cause and effect, and that to produce favourable effects, the knowledge of how to regulate the cause is most essential. The old proverb of "look before you leap," is treated as a weakness only incident to feeble minds; and consequently, man finds himself in the ditch of trouble ere he has even tasted the first-fruits of his expected pleasure.

But let him, on the other hand, act wisely, taking into account the fact that only when care is exercised in the choice of a companion, and the proper conditions are regarded in the uniting of the sexual functions, that then he may hope for a good result; and I feel assured that then a new plane of existence would open up to man under these circumstances, and the family relationship and the social community appear in a fresh light altogether, yielding a result otherwise undreamed of by man.

And what is true in that respect will also be so in the business relationships which men of necessity form as a condition of their earthly existence. No longer would you find that grasping propensity rampant whereby the few are made rich at the expense of the many; but with the manifestation of a benevolence which recognises the shortness of earth-life, and the evanescence of worldly possessions, and the right of all well-disposed men to enjoy the bounties of a wise and loving Providence, you would have the attempt on the part of the stronger to aid the weaker, and of the more fortunate to open pathways of prosperity to those who, by a combination of circumstances, were equally as capable of working out results, when the means were afforded them, or of rightly using and improving the benefits of earth-life. One of the most positive causes of the present uneasy feeling among the masses of mankind arises from the inequality with which the gifts of God are shared by men; and although it is stated in that Book which even the oppressor is ready to admit as of Divine authority, that with God there is no respecting of persons (Acts i. v. 34, 35), but that all alike are worthy recipients of His bounty (Matt. V. v. 45) yet the rule to act accordingly is ignored. But men have been on their trial, and in the growing development of the ages, to use the words of that self-same Book, God hath hitherto winked at these things (Acts, c. xvii. v. 30), but now commandeth men everywhere to see to it, that with increased and growing powers and faculties of mind they act on a different principle; for thus, and thus alone, will good-will among men be secured.

The common life of man, the daily routine wherein he ought to reap the strength and purpose to rise to higher states of spiritual being, is rather the cause of human degradation, as a rule; and while, on the one hand, men grow selfish and unfeeling, on the other there is engendered a class-hatred, and a desire to make reprisals as often as the opportunity may arise. Thus men, instead of living as brothers, are regarding one another as either



the foes to progress, or else as the fit victims to be made the prey of rapacity and selfishness, the stepping-stones to personal aggrandisement and rule, the curse of any community where such things prevail.

Marnias Meti.

Melbourne, February, 1881.

(To be continued.)

## To Correspondents.

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

### NOT BAD AS COMING FROM THE OPPOSITION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Perhaps the following little items may be worth a place in your journal. All of them coming under my notice nearly about the same time tickled my fancy a little.

"We were all guilty of high treason to Christ," he said, "and we should all go to him with ropes around our necks, knowing that we were deserving of hell-fire."

Sir, the above are the remarks, as reported by one of the Sydney daily papers, of Mr. Thomas Spurgeon, in an address given by him in the Protestant Hall, under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. I only republish them for the purpose of saying that they served as a convenient target for Mr. Bright to fire at on the following Sunday evening in the Theatre Royal, and a butt for his audience to hang scores of jokes on, and thus bring into contempt the enlightening and elevating Protestant religion. If Mr. Spurgeon is unable to give us anything more solid than this, we cannot help thinking that the less he preaches the better.—Yours, &c.,

"E. J. GODFREY."

The above letter I take from the *Protestant Standard*. If it had not been for Mr. Bright's jokes I daresay the remarks of Mr. Spurgeon would have passed for "good sound orthodox."

The following is an extract from a speech recently delivered in Paisley, Scotland, by the Rev. David Watson, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, and which I copy from Mr. Tyerman's "Freethought Vindicated."

"The great, and the wise, and the mighty, are not with us. That I fear we must all own to, however much we may grieve to say so; and the more we read of the history, the poetry, the biography, and the literature of the age, the more we will think so. The best thought, the wisest knowledge, and the deepest philosophy have discarded our Church. Not that they have taken up a hostile attitude towards us—some have, but not all—but they have turned their backs upon us with a quiet dislike, an unspoken disapproval, and a practical renunciation, greatly more conclusive than a wordy man would be. I do not mention names, it would be unfair to do so, for there is still a social stigma thrown at the man who ventures to disconnect himself from the common creed. But that does not alter the case one whit—the great, the wise, and the mighty are not with us. . . .

They are not even nominally with us. They look not for our heaven; they fear not our hell. They detest what they call the inhumanities of our creed, and scorn the systematised Spiritualism we believe in. They step out into speculative Atheism, for they can breathe freer there. . . . But, mark you, they do not pass over into practical Atheism, for however they hate the name of orthodoxy and everything theological, their hearts are too large and their souls are too religious—institively religious—to forget that reverence that is due, that is meet and fit. Some become practical philanthropists and philosophic friends of man by helping industry, extending knowledge, advocating temperance, inaugurating institutions that incarnate Christianity, furthering society, in a thousand ways, reforming the manners, and making the men of time and clime. . . .

They are all big with a faith in the ultimate salvation of

man—a faith that inspires them to toil and shames our whining cant. And yet these men—the master minds and imperial leaders amongst men—the Comtes, the Carlyles, the Goethes, the Emersons, the Humboldts, the Tyndalls, and Huxleys if you will, are called by us Atheists; are outside our most Christian Church; pilloried in our Presbyterian orthodoxy as 'heretics' before God and man. Why are these and such like men without the pale of the Christian Church? Not that they are unfit—we own that; not that they are too great—we know that; but that we are unworthy of them, and by the mob force of our ignorant numbers, have driven them out. They shun us because of our ignorant misconceptions and persistent misrepresentations of heaven, man, and God. They feel our evil communications corrupting their good manners; they feel our limited vision narrowing the infinitude of the horizon, and, therefore, as an indispensable condition to the very existence of their souls, they separate themselves from us, and forsake—and greatly unwilling are many of them to do so—the worship with us of our common God."

Just contrast the above remarks of the Rev. Mr. Watson with those of his brother clergymen—the editors of the *Standard*—when treating of "The Infidels." The *Protestant Standard* has been vindicating the efforts of the "Sydney Sabbatarian party" to convert the "Sabbath Breakers," and laughing at their printed cards with three texts of Scripture on, "just as if (they say) the infidels do not know all about those texts. Now, if the *Protestant Standard* editors, instead of laughing at them would kindly suggest to the clergymen who got up the cards the advisability of adding the following texts to the three printed, they might help the others to convince the Sabbath Breakers of the error of their ways: "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day to the Lord, he doth not regard it." "Let us not judge one another any more."

"Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holiday or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." Now these texts are just the thing to print side by side with two or three others, that the Sabbatarians are continually harping on. And the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in his sermon on "Other Men's Consciences," in commenting on one of the above texts, says, "You may reason around that as much as you please, but it means Sunday. You cannot squeeze out of it. One man esteems Sunday, and another man esteems every day alike;" "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "Since I am God's no man owns me, or my reason, or my conscience."

If these quotations will not suit the "*Protestant Standard* Editors," I will give some others on the Sunday question from eminent men in orthodoxy:

These comical "*Standard* Editors" exultingly say, "Mr. Tyerman had five years in Sydney to kill the devil, yet he still exists." Now, some time ago, an eminent dissenting minister in this country told his congregation that there was "no personal devil," and that the term was only employed in the Bible as a figure." It is rather comical that while the above rev. editors are glorying in the present existence of his satanic majesty, their rev. brother asserts "there never was such a being."

A short time since, a gentleman—a prominent member of an Independent Church, was trying to persuade me to join the church, I told him I was not eligible, as I could not accept the church's idea of the Trinity. He replied "That need not prevent you joining us, for I believe the doctrine of the Trinity has done more harm than good, and been a stumbling-block to many." But when I told him I could not accept the church's definition of the Atonement, he thought I was "a gone case." I was rather surprised to find a person otherwise quite orthodox so willing to throw overboard the dogma of the Trinity.

T. O. BUTTON.

Leven, Tasmania,  
10th February, 1881.

## A LONDON LETTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—Twice I have endeavoured to say a word to the readers of the *Harbinger*: the first message sank to the bottom of the ocean, lost with sundry other printed words of mine that were intended for the same destination; the other, though I hope it has reached you, has not yet returned to me. The close of the year moves me once again, since you are kind enough to say that your columns are open to me, to shake hands with my distant friends, and wish them and you all the blessings that a new year can bring with it.

Unless this coming year has been sadly slandered, it will not prove a year of uninterrupted peace and goodwill. And there is enough in the general outlook to warrant some belief in the various sinister prophecies that have been made regarding it. It opens in the midst of convulsion, perplexity, and general distress. On every hand these signs of the times are manifest, and not less conspicuously in the movement which we call Spiritualism than elsewhere.

It seems plain, though I for one have been slow to recognise an unwelcome fact, that this is no time for cohesion. The disruptive forces are too active: the mutual bond too slight. Spiritualists are occupied too much with the new light that has dawned upon them, its beauty its brilliancy, and the new world of interest that it reveals, to care to analyse its composition, or deal scientifically or philosophically with its nature. They do not even care greatly to bring it under the notice of others. So they can bask in it, they ask no more. They care still less for an organised defence against those who would rob them of it. They have got it, that is enough.

There is another point of view. Very many Spiritualists have come into their present state of liberty from an intellectual bondage which they associated with organised churches and dogmatic creeds. They have groaned under the terrorism of those organisations; and they are slow to separate what is good from what is mischievous. It is enough that they have got out of them; they will not help to build up any fresh ones, and rather prefer chaos to order, lest perchance order should mean dogma, and dogma should involve ritual, and ritual a priest, and a priest a priestly system. They shy at this, and to most Spiritualists there is nothing more terrible.

Once more. It is almost inconceivable what a number of heterogeneous subjects have got mixed up with Spiritualism in the popular conception. Spiritualism itself, if Spiritualists could be polled, would receive as many definitions as there are minds to attempt the task. To the Spiritualist of a scientific turn of mind to whom the phenomenal aspect is the most enticing, it would be narrowed down to the action of an intelligent force. To the emotional nature it would mean association and intercourse with loved and lost ones now restored to his heart and affections. To the religious mind it will be correlated with the great spiritual movements of the past, and have its truest and highest significance in the attempts of progressed intelligence to bring home to mankind a more advanced conception of Divine Truth. The philosopher will find in it ample scope for his speculations; the philanthropist for his dreams of a blessed future for humanity, when the rich store of blessing that it enfolds shall have been seen and appreciated. Every mind can find in Spiritualism what it searches for. To each special type spirits of a like nature gravitate, and consequently we have the pre-conceived notions and hobbies of the world sanctioned and confirmed by spiritual messages. All this tends, as I have said, to mix up with Spiritualism proper all sorts of heterogeneous notions.

It is needless to point out how all these causes combine to make cohesion and organisation a matter of extreme difficulty. We are coming, I think, to the conclusion that the cause is advanced more by individual means, by spasmodic effort, than by any organised work that we are able to compass.

I regret that it should be so: for the teachings of history and experience is embodied in the old fable of the bundle of sticks. You cannot break the faggot, but it is easy to take the sticks one by one. However, it

will require some bitter teachings in the only school in which men ever learn much—the school of experience, before that lesson of worldly wisdom is taken in.

From all this you will gather that the cause in the old country, however it may flourish, does not prosper as an united organisation. It does not: tho' I am far from saying that it will not. Any day may come the need when Spiritualists will be glad to stand shoulder to shoulder in the face of common danger: as animals that have little common affection will huddle together on some eminence as the flood rises around them, and forget their enmities in the bond of common terror.

What is done, and that is no little, is done privately and by esoteric rather than exoteric effort. Truth to tell, public Spiritualism has been terribly defiled by sundry exposures, trials at law, and the like. Into the merits of these it is not necessary to enter. Men who know little or nothing about Spiritualism do not stop to enquire whether such a medium is rightly accused or not. They say, with an impatient shrug,—"Another scandal: more dirt!" and so, whether true or false, Spiritualism gets the blame. This is inseparable from the state thro' which we are working. Let us hope that 1881 will see us nearer to the light.

This year has given us a few good books; notably Mr. C. C. Massey's translation of Zöllner's *Transcendental Physics*: published in England at a prohibitory price, though admirably got up, and reprinted at a moderate price by Colby and Rich, and inferior to none in value. Epes Sargent's *Scientific Basis of Spiritualism*: the last and maturest thoughts of one whose pen has done so much for the cause.

Before another year has closed I hope to have a volume of *Spirit Teachings* in the publisher's hands; though I find it impossible to pledge myself to anything just now.

With every kind and good wish,

Believe me to be,

Yours for the truth,

M. A. OXON.

Christmas, 1880.

## DR. MUELLER'S LECTURES ON SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—I promised you some time ago that when the lecture by Dr. Mueller of Yackandandah, on Spiritualism was delivered in the above place, that I would try and be present and send you a few notes on it. I was, however, unable to take notes, and consequently can only give you a little general information on it. It was delivered before a Mutual Improvement Society which was formed here nearly three years ago. The success of this society has been quite unique. It was intended by its founder to be for real improvement, not in any speciality, but with a view of making the members better men and better women in the future. The aim was to teach them to know themselves, and now the seed that has been sown in the past is beginning to show itself gradually. Monthly meetings have been held; at these meetings much useful and general knowledge has been imparted, the young of both sexes having gladly availed themselves of the opportunity for improvement. A great many lectures have been delivered by gentlemen of all shades of opinions, on History, Poetry, and Science. The last one, was that by Dr. Mueller, referred to above, on Spiritualism. This lecture was a calm exposition of what the religion of Spiritualism is, and he, the lecturer shewed a very different picture to that usually presented in the newspapers of the day. The lecturer led his auditory gently and yet logically from the physical basis of nature through the various transitions up to the Spiritual. He showed that the position of the materialist was untenable in the light of modern Spiritualism, that he had gone into its investigation as a confirmed materialist, with the determination of exposing its frauds, but that the evidence presented to him were so conclusive, that he could not but accept it as irrefutable. I must not anticipate the lecturer as it is to be redelivered at Yackandandah soon. But I may say that he quietly put "Old Clotie" and the "Region of Brimstone" quite outside of the universe. In fact he showed that there was no room for either. The statement that he had met

and felt the grasp of the spirit was received with a certain amount of incredulity by some. On the whole, the lecture cannot but do much good from the calm dignified tone which prevailed throughout. The chairman remarked at the conclusion, if that was Spiritualism, in contradiction to the caricatures of it that have appeared in the press of the day, he had been a Spiritualist all his life. Usual votes closed the meeting.

Yours,

MAJOR.

Levens, 23/2/81.

## THE MONOPOLY OF DIVINE PROTECTION.

NOTHING discloses the human origin of the Jewish religion more plainly than the ignorant—I do not know whether time-honoured or time-disgraced—boast of that handful of peculiar people, that they are the chosen race of God, and that the rest of the nations of the world are nowhere in the eyes of the Father of all, even of Jehovah, *id est*, of the only One who always was, is, and shall be. It would be only one degree more ridiculous if a certain boastful and conceited man were so much taken up with himself as to look down upon all his fellow-creatures as mere monkeys. Closely looked into, this chosen-race-of-God-business is a sorry, very sorry job, and if it were true, or even could be true, it would be equally discreditable both to God and man. It is the highest exposition of a selfish conservatism—and to this day all Jews are rank conservatives, both theologically and politically—only equalled by the eternal boasts of the Celestials, to assume that all the best gifts of God—power, happiness, wisdom, understanding, and all internal and external wealth—were, at some remote period in the history of creation, bestowed upon the seed of Abraham or the house of Israel. A greater insult, a more blasphemous insult, was never offered to God by man since the creation of Adam, and never did a man show himself less worthy of being called into existence than when he made it a wanton boast of pride, jealousy, envy, and egotistical exclusiveness, that he was the only chosen of God, divinely elected and appointed to make a footstool of the backs of the rest of God's children. Would we now-a-days consider it a sign of divine election in a man, or rather a sign of consummate ignorance and arrogance, if we saw him strutting like a peacock, and if we heard him boasting that he was the most handsome, the most talented, the most pious, and the most everything of all God's creatures on earth. Such a man, theologically speaking, is the Jew in the eyes of both Jews and Christians; such a man has the Jew been allowed to be for the last three thousand years, more or less. Who would not prefer standing in a pillory with a fool's cap on his head, and being the sport and derision of men, women, and children, to the proud position of being able to pose before the world as the chosen race of God? Was the law "Thou shalt not steal," given by God to the Jews alone? Was the injunction "Thou shalt not kill," only intended to be observed by Hebrews? Was the commandment "Thou shalt not commit adultery," thundered down from the top of Mount Sinai only to be obeyed by the seed of Abraham? If this was the divine intention of the Supreme Legislator, no intention of either divine or human legislator, was ever more foiled or disregarded. For who despoiled and killed more Egyptians and Philistines than the Jews? Who was fonder of other men's wives than David, and who had a better opportunity than his son, Solomon the Wise, to practice adultery in the undisputed possession of 300 wives and 600 concubines?

The origin of this boast is attributed to Moses, who by all manner of means tried to coax and flatter the ignorant and slavish crowd which he brought out of Egypt into obedience to the most ordinary laws and rules of propriety by tickling that softest of all spots in the composition of humanity—vanity. Moses thought that if he could persuade the recently redeemed slaves to believe that they were in every respect superior to their masters, the Egyptians, and to the rest of their neighbours, who were already sufficiently civilised to

have gods and priests of their own, he would have gained the first step in the high ladder of Hebrew education. This lesson of Moses seems to have been learnt only too readily by his pupils, for instead of acting as a step in the ladder of rational advancement, it actually proved the greatest obstacle in the progress of the children of Israel. All they gained by this lesson of Moses was the hatred and detestation of all the races of mankind, from Babylon down to Berlin.

Such is the baneful influence of all selfishness, pride, exclusiveness, ultra-conservatism; such the curse of the boast of being the elect of God; for God is no respecter of persons, nor of self-chosen races either. Hence it is easily explained why the Persians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, not to mention the numerous Syrian and Arab tribes in their own immediate vicinity, were constantly at war with them, destroying their country and cities, until in utter despair they were forced to become the exiles of humanity, and live in small knots distributed amongst all the nations of the earth, in order to be finally civilised out of their pride of election, and become ultimately absorbed as members of that large family of God's children known as the universal human race.

If the truth were known, I have no doubt that the cause of the recent persecution of the Jews in Berlin would be found partly in their national exclusiveness and separation from the rest of the Germans, and partly in the high position which the Jews have attained there in consequence of their immense hoarded wealth, which they may perhaps have used somewhat too boastfully, and too ostentatiously, since all the restrictions and disabilities were removed from their shoulders, nearly forty years ago. Far be it from me, however, to pat either the Germans or the Berlin Christians on their backs for their insolent persecution of a race of people which, next to the Celtic race, has shown more elasticity of endurance and vigour of vitality than all the Persians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans put together. And this is no mean compliment; this very possibility of living through ages of the bloodiest and most ruthless persecutions, both by pagan and by Christian nations, is, in a manner, a divine certificate to the claim that the Jews were a race of men really chosen by God to illustrate and enforce the eternal truth that unity is strength, even unity in perversity. Let us hope that Germany will soon come to see that it is not only a blot on their vaunted culture and intellect, as one of the leading nations of the earth, but also that it is a direct violation of their own doctrines as Christians, which teach them to love God by first loving man. Let us not go back to the darkness of the middle ages, and imitate the bloody examples of avaricious Spanish, English, and German despots, who, under the false pretext of making Christians of the Jews, only wanted to get at their cash and their pockets.

Above all let us remember in gratitude that it was a Jew, although one rejected by the Jews, rejected by them principally on account of their intense worldly-mindedness, who from the high cross of his sufferings taught mankind—Germans included—that there is one God, and one immortal race of men, and that our highest duty on this earth is to love our neighbour, no matter whether he be a Jew or a Chinaman, a Hottentot or a Hindoo; for, as our Christian infidel of a poet has truly said, "A man's a man for all that."

Thus it will be seen that the boast of the Hebrew race of being the only chosen people of God is nothing else but the loud-mouthed expression of national pride and vanity, of intense selfishness and lust of power, which whenever obtained was invariably exercised by this chosen handful of Syro-Phoenicians against Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines generally by the use of fire, sword, gag, and, iron hand. No wonder, then, that this stiff-necked, chosen race of God, which had given so much trouble and so many sleepless nights to all its reforming heroes, from Moses and Jesus down to Spinoza, appears to us now as having been chosen by God for no other purpose than that of teaching mankind at large that the exclusive worship of a selfish golden calf of Mammon and Mammon power, can only lead to self-destruction and annihilation. And this

gradual process of national extinction by a compulsory dispersion, leading to final absorption in the universal ocean of a more enlightened humanity, has been going on amongst the Jews ever since the time of the last destruction of Jerusalem, the real death-blow to an effete hierarchy of a sacerdotal materialism and to a would-be theocratic monarchy and monopoly of all the best gifts so obviously bestowed by one God upon all men alike.

C. W. ROHNER.

Chiltern, Feb. 2nd, 1881.

## PRACTICAL SPIRITUALISM,

(BY J. R.)

THAT practical Spiritualism is in our midst there can be no doubt. Many evidences can be given of its sustaining operations. It has come to the relief of distressed strugglers and by its kindly influence they have been raised up from wretchedness and restred again to prosperity and happiness. Instances are numerous to show that those hard pressed and in despair have felt benefited from this subtle element, of what must be regarded as one of nature's chief laws. It comes to a destitute and hopeless man in a large city, and gives him the idea of an invention in telegraphy which has speedily brought him wealth and fame. It comes to a desperate being, suffering from lost position and adverse circumstances, and giving him substantial comfort and renewed hope, raises him up again to energy and usefulness. The spirits by whom these benefits are imparted are men and women, who coming as strangers, soon give from their indomitable will the strength and confidence that the distressed require. They seem as angels, specially sent to assist, and the wearied recipients promptly seize, the helping hand, and with renewed confidence in humanity push fearlessly onwards in their course of life. The question here arises, if such spirits came to everyone in trouble, what a much happier world this would be? This can only be answered by presenting the idea that time and circumstances may not have arrived for the development of such mediums. Strugglers have suffered for months and sometimes years, before this spiritual influence has reached them. Undoubtedly their minds or habits were not fitted to receive them and they rejected the promptings which a despairing heart, when neglected by those around it usually feels for some higher power, to come to its relief. In the instances known of people benefiting by these spirits their minds must have been refined by thought or anguish to the requisite sympathy to attract such a visitation. If a telegraph wire be uncharged with electricity, it is dead to the lightning message, and a mind devoid of spiritual sympathy must be similarly affected when the influence tries to reach it. That this influence is always active and constantly around us, there is abundant evidence to prove and we only require to be conductors to get the benefit of it.

These instances of practical Spiritualism are presented in answer to those who deride other phases of Spiritualism; that although, perhaps more marvellous, may be equally practical. To understand and be affected by those, requires the interest of devotees who study them as a science and whose faith in them is unbounded. The manifestations here treated of may be jeered at by the thoughtless, but they are too open and spontaneous and too markedly beneficial in their influence to be affected by ridicule. That they may continue to aid and elevate humanity is the heart-felt prayer of the writer, who has himself been wonderfully benefited by them, and who, though not deeply versed in the other phases of Spiritualism, is proud to acknowledge this one, as practical and true.

## RULES FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUALISM.

At the request of several of our readers we re-publish the following brief instructions to facilitate investigation.

A higher object than mere curiosity, is necessary to ensure Demonstration; and the investigation should be entered into in a truly scientific spirit. It is possible in some instances for persons to investigate successfully *alone*; but it is rare that all the qualifications necessary, are to be met with in one individual. It is better entered upon by an association of six, or more individuals, with as great a diversity of temperament as possible. If able to get together the requisite number, it is advisable to form a circle in this wise: viz., let the company sit down around a moderate sized low table, or light square one, with the dark and fair, or positive and negative temperaments alternate; sit in an easy position, with the palms of the hands on the table and the right hand touching the neighbour's left, so as to make a complete chain (have at hand a planchette and some large white paper.) The first indication of an Influence is a slight vibration or wavy sensation under the hand, although the table may not perceptibly move, if this is distinctly felt, a move of the table is sure to follow. The most common movement is the elevation of one side of the table, but a rotary or lateral movement will often occur. Should a distinct movement occur, one of the circle should ask the invisible influence to move the table towards the person whom they can best influence as a medium; when this is accomplished all questions should be put by the person so selected, who acts as chairman of the meeting. The ordinary and perhaps most appropriate questions to begin with are, "Is there a spirit present, if so will it move the table a certain number of times?" This being answered satisfactorily, make an arrangement with the unseen influence, that three movements shall signify an affirmative; one, a negative; and two, *doubtful*. If the questions are answered fluently, suggest the use of the alphabet. The medium slowly repeating the letters, the table being raised at the right one, until a word is spelt out. In this way where the control of the table is good, messages of a considerable length may be received. Do not ask questions on purely material subjects, nor presume that spirits know everything, or you will meet with disappointments.

If after half an hour's sitting you should not succeed in obtaining a movement, bring forward the planchette, lay a large sheet of paper on the table, and place the planchette upon it, between two of the sitters, the apex—containing the pencil—from them. The person to the left of it should place the right hand, and the one to the right, the left hand upon it; at first the arm may rest upon the table, but after a little while raise it, and let the pressure on the planchette be as light as possible. If a movement is obtained, it only requires application to lead to the reception of intelligible writing, which may come on the first occasion or take several sittings to develop. Should the first two not succeed, let two others try, try also different combinations until you have exhausted the material of your circle, this will seldom happen; but if it should be so, it will be necessary to add to its numbers. To ensure success and progress, the circle should meet regularly, and when the best arrangement of the individuals composing it has been ascertained, they should be careful to occupy the same positions at the table on every occasion. If strangers are allowed to join the circle after it has commenced the reception of communications, it has a disturbing effect, and is likely to lead to unsatisfactory results.

Most persons have some mediumistic power, and it rarely happens that where there are three or four persons in a family, they cannot get the planchette to operate, even without forming a circle, but the evidences so obtained are not always so satisfactory as those obtained by systematic application. If the investigation is earnestly pursued, higher forms of mediumship grow out of it, in accordance with the developing capacities of the individuals composing it.

We are in receipt of Nos. 3 to 6 of "Miller's Psychometric Circular," and are pleased to observe that this interesting periodical is to be considerably enlarged, which indicates an increasing circulation and appreciation of its contents.



## REVIEW.

## THEOSOPHY AND THE HIGHER LIFE.\*

THE book before us consists principally of papers read by Dr. G. Wyld, of Edinburgh, before several learned Societies in England during the years 1879 and 1880, embodying his thoughts on Theosophy, the nature of the Soul and Spirit, and Spiritual Dynamics, containing much that is beautiful and elevating, combined with logical and metaphysical argument, tinged however with a bias of the writer's mind towards the Christian religion, which causes him to present Christ as an essential to the attainment of the highest spiritual condition—a position which even his own writings would show to be untenable. The personality of Jesus, however, is kept in the background, and the beauty of his spiritual character and teachings brought so prominently forward that the reader, if of a spiritual tendency, is apt to lose sight of the claim to special divinity which is made for him by the author.

Soul, Dr. Wyld defines as an "aggregation of mental forces, including will." Spirit, he says is an atom or spark of the spirit of God: the soul rules the body, the spirit rules the soul. When man becomes a spirit his five senses blend into one all-seeing, all-knowing sense. In this definition we agree, with the exception of the classification of "will," which we affirm to be an attribute of the spirit. How otherwise could it survive the dissolution of the physical and soul bodies, the latter of which is implied in the assertion relative to the senses. After a brief reference to the philosophical character of Theosophy, Dr. Wyld enters into a comparison of oriental adeptship and spirit mediumship to the serious disparagement of the latter, and in the main we are constrained to admit the truth of his position. There are, however, one or two serious exceptions to be taken to his assertions in regard to mediumship and its dangers; one of which is that spirits "assuming the form of angels of light" might seduce them to evil. We are surprised that one who has studied Psychological science so far as the author appears to have done, presenting such an irrational and erroneous idea, for it does not require an adept in that science to know that no undeveloped or mischievous spirit can penetrate into or represent the conditions of the higher spheres. The spirit of a sensitive (which is essentially pure) can by the action of a more positive will be separated from its grosser surroundings and projected into spheres of light and beauty, whence it can send rays of heavenly wisdom to those on the earth plane; but if the desires of either operator or subject are other than pure or truthful, all the will-power in the world would not raise them above the darkness of their moral condition, or enable them to bring the faintest scintillation of light from the regions where it abounds.

On page 12 is given a concise definition of the forms of mesmeric healing, which will commend itself to the rational Spiritualist as philosophical, and to the Spiritual magnetist as fact. It is as follows:—

1st. As mere animal magnetism the diseased or negative subject by receiving this positive magnetism is strengthened.

2nd. The magnetiser by using will force, can so act on the brain and mind of the sensitive as to alter molecular action, and thus heal disease.

3rd. The wholesome, pure, and benevolent man or woman, by simply placing the hands on the patient, and calmly desiring the blessing of God, would seem to become sometimes as a medium for the transmission of spiritual benevolence.

In harmony with this last form, Christ and the saints performed the apparently miraculous cures imputed to them.

A diagram, illustrative of the transition by gradations from soul to spirit conditions, is interesting and instructive.

Under the heading of "Spiritual Dynamics," Dr. Wyld introduces his experiences with D. D. Home, Serjt. Cox, and Henry Slade, which were absolutely

conclusive to him of the action of spiritual power; but the Dr.'s theory as to their being performed unconsciously by the *spirit of the medium* is unsupported by any tangible evidence, and at variance with the experiences of Psychologists and Clairvoyants.

The assertion that not one in a hundred of the materialised forms which appear at circles is the individual it pretends to be, is a sweeping one, and we think gratuitous, for while we are inclined to believe from experience and the evidence of other investigators, that absolute proof of identity is rare, the proof of non-identity is still rarer, and the assumption that many of these forms are the temporally materialised individuals they profess to be, a fair one.

A summary of Spiritual Phenomena and their Philosophy, which conclude this chapter, is comprehensive and instructive, being exempt from weak theories which mar the preceding portion of it.

In the following chapter our author treats on "Man as a Spirit," and "Spiritual Phenomena as produced by spirits of the living." He commences with the affirmation that Man is a Spirit, and argues that if the phenomena we call Spiritual are produced by spirits, there is no reason why they should not be produced by the spirits of the living (or embodied) spirit. Although the Dr. wishes it to be distinctly understood that he does not assert that all the phenomena are so produced, but that they might be, we take exception to his proposition that "there is no reason why they should not be produced by the embodied," and assert that the intimate connexion with, and ties to that physical body, are at least one good reason why the spirit inhabiting it should be at a disadvantage compared with the spirit freed from that incumbrance.

His second proposition is equally faulty; he says, "Inasmuch as we as *spirits know* we are present, but have no absolute proof that the spirits of the departed are present, the presumption is that our spirits known to be present are the operators." How, we would ask, do we *know* our spirits are present? can we demonstrate it to the materialist? It is merely a matter of belief, or faith, and more difficult to demonstrate scientifically than that of the disembodied, who may exhibit power and intelligence apart from any material form; hence the presumption that the spirit of the medium is the chief operator, is not a legitimate one.

Having started this chapter on an unsound basis, we are not surprised to find the author building with similar material, and theorising in support of his premises; his theories with regard to Home, Slade, and Monck's phenomena, being untenable even on the basis of his own relation of the cases.

Christ is to Dr. Wyld the central figure, the connecting link between God and man, and the symbol of his crucifixion "A sublime philosophy;" but however great our admiration of his character and appreciation of him as an exemplar, we cannot conceive or acknowledge the necessity of either a knowledge of, or faith in him as essential to the attainment of the superior condition, which is as much within the reach of the Hindoo as the Christian, and the aspiration of the former for the attainment of "nirvana" is as pure and noble as that of the latter to reach the arms of Jesus.

The concluding portion of this chapter is an advocacy of the previously advanced theory of the unconscious action of the medium's spirit in producing physical phenomena; but no evidence is given in support of it further than the statement that the magical adept can, by the power of his will, produce similar phenomena. Admitting this, we fail to see the analogy; for whilst in the one instance we have the power of will brought to bear to produce a definite effect; on the other, we have no evidence of will or intention, but on the contrary, a suggestion of one part of the individual operating to deceive not only its fellows, but its counterpart. To our mind the suggestion is unphilosophical, having neither reason nor evidence to sustain it. It is, however, a question solvable by the aid of clairvoyance, and in reference to this and the higher forms of trance mediumship it would appear to us that the author has not had so wide an experience as from his knowledge of kindred subjects we might infer, for he asserts that "When the

\* Theosophy and the Higher Life, or Spiritual Dynamics and the Divine or Miraculous Man. By G. W.—, M.D. London: Trubner and Co. 1880.

soul returns to its normal condition from entrancement it passes through the point of oblivion in total ignorance of the wisdom of its entranced condition. Now, in our experience we have met media who have retained a more or less vivid impression of their experiences whilst absent from the body, and one in particular, who could recall, on the following day, all the incidents that she had described in the previous day's trance.

Some illustrations of Biology and experience with a clairvoyant, introduced in aid of the "medium spirit" theory, are capable of easy explanation, but the needs of the case do not seem to require their solution.

The general tone of the work is pleasing, and its morality of the purest; it is, therefore, to be regretted that the harmony of it is so sadly marred by the introduction of pet theories and laboured efforts to sustain them without the essential material to do so. The sections of the book were written at different times, and indicate widely different moods and states of spiritual elevation; to this may be attributed some of its incongruities. Still with all these there is so much of good in it, and of information on the interesting subject of Theosophy, that the gold exceeds the dross, and therefore it will be a valuable book to all intelligent students of Spiritualism, Occultism, or Theosophy.

#### JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

HENRY WARD BEECHER and Ingersoll, "the American Demosthenes," have, it appears, been fraternising in a manner calculated to shock many religious souls and to astound others. Says the *New York Herald*, "The sensation created by the speech of the Rev. H. W. Beecher at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, when he uttered a brilliant eulogy on Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll and publicly shook hands with him, has not yet subsided." Subsequently, both gentlemen were independently interviewed by a *Herald* reporter anxious to elicit the opinion entertained by each of the other. "I regard Mr. Beecher," the Colonel is described as saying, "as the greatest man in any pulpit in the world. . . I told him that night that I congratulated the world it had a minister with an intellectual horizon broad enough, and a mental sky studded with stars of genius enough, to hold all creeds in scorn that shocked the heart of man. . . Mr. Beecher holds to many things that I most passionately deny, but in common we believe in the liberty of thought. My principal objections to orthodox religion are two—slavery here and hell hereafter. I do not believe that Mr. Beecher on these points can disagree with me. The real difference between us is—he says *God*, I say *Nature*. The real agreement between us is—we both say *Liberty*. . . He is a great thinker, a marvellous orator, and, in my judgment, greater and grander than any creed of any Church. Manhood is his greatest forte, and I expect to live and die his friend."

Mr. Beecher's estimate of Ingersoll may be gathered from the following remarks:—"I regard him as one of the greatest men of this age. I am an ordained clergyman and believe in revealed religion. I am therefore bound to regard all persons who do not believe in revealed religion as in error. But on the broad platform of human liberty and progress I was bound to give him the right hand of fellowship. I would do it a thousand times over. I do not know Col. Ingersoll's religious views precisely, but I have a general knowledge of them. He has the same right to free thought and free speech that I have. . . I admire Ingersoll because he is not afraid to speak what he honestly thinks, and I am only sorry that he does not think as I do. I never heard so much brilliancy and pith put into a two hours' speech as I did on that night. I wish my whole congregation had been there to hear it."

Some of the country journals set an example of liberality in ventilating religious and psychic subjects, that might well be copied by their metropolitan contemporaries.

For some weeks past, a correspondence has been going on in the columns of the *Ballarat Courier* relating to Spiritualism. The disputants are several. Mr. J. E. Morris writes in opposition, while "Astral," lengthily,

and with much ability, defends the subject and at the same time meets his opponent's positions one by one, refuting him from his own book—the Scriptures.

Great service is rendered to the cause by writers who thus use their pens intelligently and with moderation.

Current files of the *National Reformer* contain the *verbatim* report of a most interesting and, perhaps, unique debate, between the Rev. A. Hatchard, Curate of St. Saviour's, Shadwell, and Mrs. Annie Besant, the brave and accomplished co-adjutrix of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh in his work of religious and political reform.

The discussion occupied two nights, the propositions being:—"That the Jesus of the Gospels is a historical character,"—affirmed by Mr. Hatchard, denied by Mrs. Besant; and "That the influence of Christianity on the world has been injurious,"—affirmed by Mrs. Besant, and denied by the clergyman. Both subjects were chosen by Mr. Hatchard, who, according to his own statement, presented himself with the sanction of the heads of the Church in London.

Whatever we may think of the position assailed, and that maintained, by Mrs. Besant, there can be very little doubt that in logical acumen, ability, and eloquence, she was pre-eminently the clergyman's superior. The loud and protracted applause which was accorded all her addresses indicated the effect produced upon the large audience assembled.

The *Echo* is a weekly journal published in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z., "devoted to liberty of thought on political, religious, scientific, and all questions affecting the social welfare." It is very ably edited, and whilst its principles are thoroughly liberal and advanced, it is conducted with strict impartiality, all sides, and shades of opinion being allowed a hearing. Amongst contributions on the orthodox side is one from our worthy friend, Mr. M. W. Green, who sends an article on the "Fourth Gospel." The Editor, evidently a man of culture, replies, and, if that be possible, gives the rev. gentleman his *coup de grace*.

Mr. Bradlaugh has challenged to a public debate, the Rev. Joseph Cook, who is at present on a visit to England. Report has it that the rev. gentleman contemplates a tour to the colonies.

Those interested in discussing the analogies between Buddhism and Christianity, will turn with pleasure to an article contributed by Professor J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A. to the *Nineteenth Century*. As a fuller review will probably be given in these pages on a future occasion, it must now suffice to merely direct attention to Mr. Carpenter's very able and most scholarly "Buddhism and the New Testament."

#### SPIRIT ALCHEMY.

Each kindly action is a fadeless flower

That beautifies our home in realms above;  
And through the dimness when the death clouds  
lower

Will rise a guiding star each word of love.

The tender tone and sympathetic sigh,

Whose sweetness penetrates the heavy heart,  
Live in ethereal strains which cannot die—  
Return in richer music whence they start.

The word of Truth which lights the path of gloom,

Remains the centre of a thousands rays,  
That will for aye the speaker's soul illumine,  
In spirit splendor on its upward gaze.

By spirit alchemy will sorrow's tears,

Be formed in pearls for the immortal crown;  
Each struggle for the right will gems appear,  
More bright and beauteous through the world's  
cold frown.

J. K. LEWIS, in *R. P. Journal*.

## A PHILOSOPHER'S RELIGION.

A LETTER FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO  
GEORGE WHITEFIELD.(From the *New York Sun*.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I send you for publication the following letter of Dr. Franklin, addressed to the great and eloquent Methodist and revival preacher of the last century, George Whitefield, who addressed and electrified audiences of from 10,000 to 60,000 people. This letter seems to be applicable at the present time of revival preaching and praying.

The kindness alluded to in the letter as done by Franklin to Whitefield, referred to the fact that Franklin had relieved Whitefield in a paralytic case by the application of electricity.

The prayer of Franklin, which I send, I find is hardly known at all and I think a re-publication of it might be welcome to many.

## FRANKLIN'S LETTER.

Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.

SIR,—I received your kind letter of the second inst. and am glad to hear that you increase in strength. I hope you will continue mending till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has. As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of greater service to you. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round, for mankind are all of a family. For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favors, but as paying debts.

In my travels and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return, and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men I can therefore only return on their fellow men, and I can only show my gratitude for those mercies from God, by a readiness to help his other children and my brethren. For I don't think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligation to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness infinite in degree, and eternal in duration; I can do nothing to merit such rewards. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world are rather from God's goodness than our merit; how much more such happiness of heaven! for my part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it, but content myself in submitting to the will and disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable, and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall tend to my benefit.

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world. I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it. I mean real good works, works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; no holy-day keeping, sermon hunting or hearing, performing Church ceremonies, making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty. The hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produces fruit. Your great Master thought much less of those outward appearances

and professions than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the doers of the word to the mere hearers; the son that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan to the uncharitable though orthodox priest and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted, when those who cry Lord, Lord, who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles but have neglected good works, shall be rejected.

He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, which implied his modest opinion that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good that they did not hear him even for improvement; but now a days we have scarce a little person but thinks it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations, and whoever omits them offends God! I wish to such more humility and to you health and happiness, being your friend and servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

## PRAYER OF DR. FRANKLIN,

Merciful God! Wonderful Power! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest; strengthen my resolution to perform what that wisdom dictates, and accept my kind offices to Thy creatures, as the only return in my power for Thy infinite goodness to me!

## "LIGHT."

WE are in receipt of the first two numbers of the above periodical, a prospectus of which appeared in our last, and their perusal satisfies us that so far the promises held out in that document have been fulfilled. An article by John Page Hopps, entitled the "Safe Path," is timely and full of matter for reflection. "Proofs of Immortality," by Dr. Nicholls, we have reprinted in another column. "Mistakes of Spiritualists and Investigators," by M. Theobald, is instructive; "Questions and Answers" throws some light on the abstruse subject of a Fourth dimension in Space; and "Six Months with the Spirits," being the experiences of a Swedenborgian, incidentally refutes some prominent theories put forward by sceptics to account for the mental phenomena of Spiritualism. A leading article on "Signs of the Times and their probable effect upon Spiritualism," leaves us on the *qui vive* for the answer which is promised in a future number.

THE Social Evening advertised in our last, for the benefit of the "Tyerman Fund," was held at the Temperance Hall, on Friday, Feb. 18th, the Victorian Association of Spiritualists providing the vocal and instrumental music. The Melbourne Spiritualistic and Free Discussion Societies combined in the movement, and were largely represented in the company. The concert was good, and the fine music of Prof. Kilian's Band much appreciated by the dancers. A member of the V. A. S. committee having paid the rent of the Hall a considerable sum will result towards the charitable object in view.

THE *Theosophist* for January contains a continuation of N. C. Paul's treatise on the Yoga Philosophy, with formula for the development of the various grades of Yogaism. Some of the processes for the attainment of the most advanced states would, from their tediousness, appal a European, and prevent 999,999 out of a million from contemplating the attempt. In the same number is a review of the Progress of the Theosophical Society during 1880; in the course of which some popular errors as to the nature of Theosophy are corrected. Both the Society and its journal are rapidly extending their influence, not alone in India, but in at least three of the four quarters of the globe.

## RESUMPTION OF THE MATERIALISATION SEANCES.

Mr. Spriggs having fully recovered from his recent severe illness, the seances under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, were resumed on Feb. 11th, with very fair results, five different forms materialising.

On the 15th, Zion; the Veiled Lady; John Wright; a small female form (not recognised), and "Charity" appeared; John Wright shaking hands with some of the company. A spirit calling himself J. C. King, spoke through the medium, and was identified by a gentleman present.

On the 22nd, Zion appeared, and after saluting the company, pushed back the curtain to show the medium, and at the request of one of the circle, lifted a chair; he presently gave place to the little negress, "Baba," who appeared three or four times at the opening of the curtains. Next the Veiled Lady appeared outside the curtains and bowed; this was repeated several times, and her graceful form much admired. "Charity" came next, and prostrating herself towards the east, kissed the ground; rising from the floor she took a bunch of flowers held towards her by a lady, and retired with them behind the curtain; emerging again, she carried them to the window-sill and left them. John Wright, who followed, took up the flowers, and separating them handed a few to several of the sitters; he then walked up to a writing stand and wrote with a pencil, "We are fighting against difficulties to-night. J. Wright." Subsequently, after shaking hands with two of the visitors he wrote, "I hope to be with you again on Friday. J. W.," and with a silent benediction withdrew. The peculiar squeaky voice of "Peter" was heard behind the curtain, but the power seemed inadequate for him to emerge. He requested a message to be sent to Mr. Stow, whom he had met in London, saying he had expected to meet him, but sent him his kind love: that "Abdullah," whom he had seen in London, was as good as ever; reminding him that the spirit referred to had appeared with a sword. "Joey," another spirit, wished also to remind Mr. Stow of the watch. The controlling spirit said that John Brown, formerly of Como, came to see Mr. C., who was present; he was accompanied by Stewart, his earthly partner; said that he had come over from Tasmania in the early days, and taken an allotment in Melbourne with two big gum trees on it. Remarkd that in the spirit country there were hills as fine as those of Montrose.

On the 26th the manifestations increased in strength, Zion appeared in good form and was quickly followed by the veiled lady who lifted her veil and disclosed a face of dark complexion, her black hair hanging loosely over her shoulders, she was recognised by a lady present as a friend who had taken the veil. Next a similar and more lively female spirit appeared, but was not known to any present. Zion again came out and removed a chair from one side of the room to the other, after him came John Wright who divided a bunch of flowers and distributed them among the company. Charity was the next to appear and immediately after her disappearance the voice of Peter was heard, and a lively conversation kept up by him with the company for about 20 minutes, this finished a very interesting seance.

Having had several enquiries from the provinces and neighbouring colonies, as to when Mr. Spriggs is likely to visit the localities they come from, we beg to call the attention of our readers to the fact (mentioned in several previous issues) that Mr. Spriggs is not a professional medium. He developed in a private circle at Cardiff, in Wales, and at the instigation of friends in Melbourne and with the consent of his controls, removed with his friend and companion Mr. Smart, to Melbourne, where a supporting circle, composed of the friends who invited him here and a few others has been formed. The special expenses connected with their transition to this country was covered by the issue of subscribers' tickets, and as but few of the holders can be admitted at a time, it is expected some six months or more will elapse before these are all in. At present Mr. Spriggs has no intention of leaving Melbourne, but when the subscribers'

tickets are used up, visitors from the country or neighboring colonies who are known to be sincere investigators will be afforded opportunities to be present at his seances.

## PROOFS OF IMMORTALITY.

By T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

WHILE meetings are held and lectures given weekly in many towns, and books and periodicals are written to teach men that when they die that is the end of them, we are having an accumulation of facts which prove that the spirit of man survives the death of the body. One fact is of more value than all the arguments of all the materialists in the world. The book entitled "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," by Epes Sargent Esq., is full of such facts with clearly drawn deductions.

I agree with Mr. Sargent that there are no better proofs of spirit existence than direct writings by our spirit friends. A sceptic may contend that a spirit form or a spirit voice may be an illusion of the senses, but the handwriting of a departed friend, which we know as well as we know our own, is no illusion. The written word remains. I have a message written with a bit of slate pencil, between two slates firmly fastened together, and held by my hand so that I heard and felt the writing as it was done, which I know to be the peculiar and characteristic handwriting of my friend, as well as I know this I am now writing to be mine. Can I doubt that he is alive? There is the writing—it was not done by anyone living our present life. Why should I doubt the words and signature of my friend?

I have a considerable collection of writings and drawings done in my presence under absolute test conditions. Some were done on marked paper in perfect darkness. I heard the sound of the writing and drawing, and know that the work of an hour or more, of living writer or artist, was done within two minutes. In one instance I enclosed a blank card and bit of lead broken from a pencil between two slates, which I then held in the light at arm's length, possibly half a minute. I would not undertake to copy the drawing and writing done under these conditions in half an hour.

The latest experiments in direct spirit writing I have witnessed were done under what seems to us more difficult conditions than writing in darkness or between two slates. Let me state the facts as clearly as I can. I examined a blank card about 3 by 4 inches in size, and put a torn off corner in my pocket, for identification. It was laid in the centre of a thick octavo volume, and with it a very minute bit of lead pencil, a broken off point. The book was shut, and my hands and the hands of two other persons were strongly pressed upon the book as it lay in the full light upon the table for a half minute. The pressure on the card in the volume was probably 10 or 12 pounds. On opening the book we found 18 closely written lines in a very neat handwriting, with regular margin, and the message not completed. We laid a fresh card into the book, closed, and pressed down as before. In about the same time a full page of the card was written over, but the last words and signature very faintly. As no atom of the bit of lead could be found in the book we could not doubt that it had been entirely expended.

In a subsequent seance at which a Swedish lady was present, she got a message written under the same conditions—but it was not written in Swedish, as she expected, nor in French or English, which she could have read, but in a very beautiful German manuscript, which no one (visibly) present could either write or read, so that she was obliged to take it to a friend to be translated.

The medium in these experiments was Mr. W. Eglinton, in whose presence I have seen direct writings in seven different languages, and under test conditions as perfect as human ingenuity could contrive. With such facts as we have on record, observed by men of science like Prof. Hare, Prof. Mapes, Mr. Epes Sargent and others, in America; and by Mr. Crookes, Mr. Wallace, Prof. Zollner, &c., in Europe, is it not time that mere theorising materialists should stop talking and writing and begin to observe?



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|--------------------------|----|----|----|
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| Mrs. Boxall ...          | 1  | 0  | 0  |
| Mr. James Ramsay ...     | 0  | 3  | 0  |
| Humanity ...             | 0  | 4  | 0  |
| A Friend ...             | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. L. Rodgers ...       | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. Louis Hume ...       | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. Thomas Leslie ...    | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. Julius Seehof ...    | 0  | 2  | 0  |
| Mr. Knowsley ...         | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. Robert Millar ...    | 0  | 7  | 6  |
| Mr. John Miffen ...      | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. H. V. Haddock ...    | 1  | 10 | 6  |
| N. P. ...                | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. W. Mosely ...        | 0  | 5  | 3  |
| Mr. J. Forbes ...        | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. S. Searle ...        | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. S. Jackson ...       | 0  | 10 | 6  |
| Mr. N. Johnson ...       | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. L. Longuet ...       | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. W. B. Scandrett ...  | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| A Friend ...             | 0  | 2  | 0  |
| Mr. J. T. Martin ...     | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. R. Mills ...         | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. A. M'Ewan ...        | 0  | 2  | 6  |
| Mr. James Hanan ...      | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. James Kelly ...      | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Miss Campbell ...        | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. Colin M'Kay ...      | 0  | 2  | 6  |
| A Friend ...             | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. Newcham ...          | 0  | 1  | 0  |
| Mr. H. R. Glegg ...      | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. J. T. Thomson ...    | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| O. P. ...                | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| A Friend ...             | 0  | 2  | 6  |
| C. B. ...                | 0  | 2  | 0  |
| Mr. John Thomson ...     | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. T. J. Warren ...     | 0  | 10 | 0  |
| Mr. H. H. Hare ...       | 0  | 4  | 0  |
| Mr. J. H. Smith ...      | 0  | 5  | 0  |
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| Mr. Wm. Birse ...        | 0  | 2  | 6  |
| Mr. H. Wragge ...        | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. D. Kingsland ...     | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| Mr. W. Lawton ...        | 0  | 5  | 0  |
| A Friend ...             | 0  | 5  | 6  |
| R. C. ...                | 0  | 2  | 6  |
| Mr. J. Hated ...         | 0  | 5  | 0  |
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| Mr. W. H. Hall ...       | 0  | 5  | 0  |
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\* \* \* As the Subscription List will be closed on the 26th of this month, friends and sympathisers who have not yet sent in their Subscriptions are requested to do so early.

## SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

GRADUALLY, and by small beginnings, have the foundations of all things originated; no hurrying to perfection, but a gradual unfolding. Now this term "unfolding," denotes that within there is something to be disclosed, just as petal by petal the queen of flowers discloses to the eye of the observer her inward charms. Even thus it is with man himself; the glory that is to be revealed is hidden for a time by the outward covering. Enshrined within dwells a portion of the Divine effulgence, whose glory shall be made manifest, if not here, at least in time to come, however distant that period may be. Having come from the Great Spirit of the universe, it has never ceased to be a part of the Godhead. It was this knowledge that caused the Great Teacher to utter those words—"I and the Father are one," little thinking how they would be misconstrued. Having come from Him, to Him we must ultimately return; not, however, until all the possibilities of a union with matter, however refined, has been fulfilled. It is this contact with matter that gives individuality to the spirit, that causes us to suffer and enjoy. Spirit *per se* is incapable of suffering either, what man calls, pleasure or pain. Since the absurdity of imagining that man by his actions can in any way affect the passions of the Soul of the Universe, called God; spirit being without parts or passions.

There are those who say that such teachings as these tend to demoralise man. I say from my stand-point—not so. Instead of frightening men with an angry God, and a place of everlasting punishment for wrong-doers, teach them that there is a Divinity within. Lead them to hold communion with those who have gone before: and from this source they will learn that the deeds of the flesh affect their surroundings in spirit-life. That if the monitions of the Godhead within are slighted, retribution follows; consequently, the way to be happy hereafter is to cultivate the higher nature, which makes man Christ-like; in other words, good, not to himself only, but to others also. Such teachings, if universal, would do more to revolutionise the world than all the terrors of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched."

That this work is begun there are evident proofs, which only the wilfully blind can fail to see. Let us all work together, hand in hand; then, ere long, shall "swords be beaten into ploughshares, and the lion lie down with the lamb."

I wish to offer our congratulations both to you (the lady who takes down these utterances), and the medium for being our willing assistants in spreading abroad the good tidings. Though but a small beginning the end is a long way off; and along that line, which leads from the beginning to the end we project our vision, and the sight inspires us with joy. Being not of the flesh we can, so to speak, see farther ahead than those who are tied to earth.

X.  
Castlemaine.

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December, 1880.

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The Sunday evening meetings of the above Association are continued at the Temperance Hall. The speakers during the past month were Messrs. Watson, Cunningham and Terry. From a letter received from Prof. W. Denton it is probable his arrival here will be somewhat delayed, the Association have therefore telegraphed to Dr. J. M. Peebles to come on at once and if that gentleman's engagements permit we may expect him here at an early date.

MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

The Nomination of Officers for the ensuing Session took place on Sunday, Feb. 20th, when the following were elected:—

CONDUCTOR: Mr. E. Joske.

VICE CONDUCTOR: Mr. Lumley.

GUARDIANS: Messrs. Moore, Johnston, and Veevers.

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LEADERS:

Messrs. Smart, Weichard, C. Bamford, Veevers.  
Mesdames Moore, Serle, Wilson, Johnston;  
Misses Brotherton, Bowley, and Dickson.

The Richmond Lyceum has been well attended during the past month, both by members and visitors. It is expected that the new *manual* will be ready early this month which will materially help the vocal exercises.

The *Reformer* for February is one of the best yet published.

Advertisements.

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The Medium, London (Weekly), 12/6, per annum.

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Shaker Manifesto, monthly, 6d., 5s. per annum.

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The Spirit World: its Inhabitants, Nature, and Philosophy; Eugene Crowell, M.D., 7/6.

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Jesus; Myth, Man, or God; J. M. Peebles, 1/6.  
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