

Harbinger of Light.

A 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."

No. 128.

MELBOURNE, APRIL 1st, 1881.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

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OUR remarks on Christ and Christianity in last month's issue have stimulated to enquiry a subscriber who, if not strictly orthodox, is at least a believer in the fundamental doctrine of the Christian Church, and whose letter signed F. B. appears in another column. The form and language of the letter would lead to the inference that the writer is a truthseeker; but starting on an unsound basis which he, like many others, has accepted by repute as sound, the arguments built upon it have no stability and when the basis is removed fall to the ground. F. B. like most Christians who argue on religious subjects, assumes the infallibility of the Bible—a position which cannot be granted by any rational thinker—for, whilst there is nothing in history to corroborate its details and very scant evidence of the existence of some of its leading characters, there is on the other hand the acknowledged fact, that none of the original manuscripts are in existence and much evidence to show that the present authorised version differs very materially from the earliest manuscripts which have been preserved, so that, were it assumed, for arguments sake, that the original manuscripts were the infallible word of God, and further, that the earliest codes were verbatim copies of the lost originals, it is manifest even from the admissions of such eminent Bible scholars as Albert Barnes, and Dr. Butler, that the present Bible is a very fallible book. This being the case, it is incumbent upon F. B. to prove to us the correctness of the texts he relies upon, or that the words there given were really spoken by Jesus. Let us assume again that F. B. has succeeded in accomplishing this very difficult task, he has yet to prove the Divinity of Christ, which the texts he quotes certainly fail to. Let any intelligent person scan over the New Testament and it will be readily apparent to them that, with the exception of the historical

portion, the language is essentially figurative; even in the present generation the sentence—"I and my Father are one," given expression to by a young man would not be taken literally as referring to individuals, but to purposes, ideas, or objects, and, there can be little doubt, if Christ uttered those words, as reported, that he did so in metaphor, which was then the most common mode of expression. Again the sentence—"Before Abraham was I was," which our correspondent gives as an evidence of the Divinity of Jesus, does not apply in the sense in which he adopts it. Not only have many Philosophers from Plato downwards, taught the essential pre-existence of the human soul, but thousands in the present day (given the admission as a basis that man is a spirit) will logically demonstrate that spirit has existed through all time. Let us, however, set aside these minor matters and look at the question of the Divinity of Christ from a higher platform: for the ancients who looked upon this world as the centre of the universe, and imagined the innumerable worlds which revolve in space around it were merely lamps hung in the heavens to light it, the idea of God's son, or a personification of the King of heaven descending and taking an active part in the affairs of his particular people was not outrageous, but in the enlightenment of the present times, when astronomy has demonstrated the existence around us of innumerable worlds far transcending in magnitude and brilliancy this insignificant globe, the idea of the ruler and sustainer of all these immense systems, descending in *propria persona* to this comparative sand grain, and submitting to the indignities heaped upon Christ, is to us—and we think to any mind which has not been distorted by early dogmatic teachings—simply revolting. No man ever loves the false direct, save where he believes it to be the truth, and it is only by the absorption in youth of these rationally manifest falsehoods that men can possibly have any attachment to such God dishonoring dogmas; not only are they dishonoring to God but to Jesus, who, even in the record put forward by the Christian world, invariably spoke with reverence and humility of the Father. As a good, noble, loving man, and inspired reformer, he is admirable, but as a bastard God he is contemptible.

We write plainly but influenced by a sense of duty,

let our correspondent ponder well over what we have said, and analyze the basis of his present belief, if reason is allowed to act we have little doubt but that ere long the scales will fall from his eyes, and he will see clearly the fallacy of the decaying dogmas which have so long checked the expansion of man's religious ideas.

TRANSITION OF EPES SARGENT.

THE *Banner of Light* for January contain full accounts of the demise and memorial service of the above prominent author and worker in the cause of Spiritualism, who passed to the higher life on the 25th of December last. Mr. Sargent's position in the literary world, his well-balanced mind and amiable disposition, gave him a status and influence that was widely felt not only in America but in many parts of Europe, and his contributions to the literature of Spiritualism are some of the most perfect material in the Spiritual temple which is now being erected by the philosophic investigators of the present century. Space will not permit of our printing the biographical sketch, but the following account of the "Memorial Service," by S. B. Nichols, not only serves to show the esteem in which he was held by some of his prominent coadjutors, but gives an interesting psychometric delineation of his character by one of the best psychometers of the day.

"A large and sympathetic meeting assembled in Fraternity Hall, last evening, to pay tribute to the memory of our risen brother, Epes Sargent. The exercises were opened by the singing of a beautiful hymn by Mr. and Mrs. Lillie, in which the audience joined. Bro. S. W. Russell read, with fine elocutionary effect, the poem "I Still Live," given through Miss Lizzie Doten, by the spirit of Acha W. Sprague; the reading of this fine poem made a marked effect upon the people.

After this reading Dr. Eugene Crowell took the platform, and said:—It is nineteen years since I have spoken in public, with exception of remarks made at one of the Fraternity meetings some two months ago; but the invitation of your President was so earnest, and my respect so great for the life and labours of our brother, that I could not otherwise than affirmatively respond. He is not dead, but lives, and is with us, and in this wider field can do more for our cause than when in the bodily form.

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me. Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Even so saith the spirit, for they rest from their labours and their works do follow them."

It is now nearly thirty-three years since the advent of Modern Spiritualism. As Jesus was born in a manger, so Modern Spiritualism was ushered into existence in an obscure, humble dwelling, and a child was its godfather. As Jesus surrounded himself with earnest, faithful men, whose mission it was to receive from his lips the truths and impart it to others, so Modern Spiritualism has attracted to its standard many noble and good men who have received its truths from the lips of angels, and, through persecution and obloquy, have proclaimed them to the world. Among these, Hare, Mapes, Tallmadge, Edmonds, Owen and Sargent stand forth as stars of the first magnitude—as men whose self-denying labours in diffusing the light of Spiritualism have rendered their names illustrious as benefactors of their race; and when the truths they have taught have become generally accepted, as in time they will be, their memory will be cherished and the history of their lives will be inscribed upon the hearts of all future generations.

"Upward, forever upward,
I see their march sublime,
And hear the glorious music
Of the conquerors of time."

But it is in memory of the last of this galaxy of noble souls that to-night we are gathered to pay a merited tribute of affection and gratitude. He was the last of those who were spared to walk with us in our early pilgrimage, to counsel, advise and strengthen us in our efforts to advance the interests of the cause we love—a cause which was so dear to his heart that neither time,

labour nor effort ever weighed against the full performance of his duty in its behalf.

Notwithstanding Mr. Sargent's life was an exceptionally busy one, and his literary labours incessantly pressing—he being one of the ablest and most voluminous of American writers—he yet managed to present rich stores of spiritual knowledge and experience in a number of volumes, which, in respect to ripeness of thought, clear, logical statement and transparent honesty of intention, are not excelled, if equalled, by any works which have been written and published in the interests of Spiritualism.

The first of these works, *Planchette*, published in 1869, has probably been instrumental in winning more believers to our faith than any other work. For a Spiritualist publication it has had an extensive circulation; and by ably presenting Spiritualism in its true light, as a philosophy, it attracted the attention of many cultured minds, among these Alfred R. Wallace, the eminent naturalist, who, through its perusal, was led to thoroughly investigate our phenomena and philosophy, and as a consequence of this to openly embrace Spiritualism, and to become one of its most illustrious defenders.

His second work, *The Proof Palpable of Immortality*, published in 1875, was mainly a presentation of the evidence of the verity of materialization; and this evidence was so interwoven with and strengthened by forcible, logical argument, that the question was placed beyond controversion.

But his last work, *The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism*, published only one month since, will probably prove to be his most successful and useful work, it being not only the ripest fruitage of his life thought and experience, but, appearing as it does at a time when Spiritualism has gained a recognised status in the eyes of intelligent people, which it has never before fully attained, it will be read with a degree of respectful attention which heretofore has not been accorded to similar publications. This improved condition of the public mind will gradually lead it to reconsider its hasty judgments regarding Spiritualism, and to more impartially and truthfully criticize books like this. For these reasons this last work of Mr. Sargent's has not met with that torrent of scorn and abuse or that contemptuous indifference which it has been the lot of previous Spiritualist publications to meet. And it is not only fortunate that Mr. Sargent's last work was published at this favourable period, but equally fortunate for Spiritualism that this, his last work, should be, if not his ablest, yet the most complete in the fullness of its truth and the presentation of the most advanced knowledge that at this day we possess.

And here the question may properly be asked, "Was it to accomplish this important work that his life was spared in his serious illness a year ago?" Such things do occur, and in our day; and I conceive it not only possible, but probable, that his earthly existence at that time was prolonged to enable him to complete this crowning work of his life.

"Tis beautiful to die, when life,
With all its duties done,
Drifts on as drifts a summer cloud
To greet the setting sun."

Of some who leave us for the other world too much is said in eulogy—of our departed brother too much in praise cannot be said. Indiscriminate praise of the departed is to be condemned; deserved praise of them is a duty to be discharged. As at times it is proper for the benefit of the living to defeat and condemn the vices of some of the so-called dead, so at others it is eminently appropriate to portray and commend the virtues and usefulness of those of another order: Those of the first class are warning examples; those of the second are models for imitation!

There are others present to-night who are better able than I to pay deserved tribute to the memory of our ascended brother, and to them I will leave the further duty of portraying his virtues and describing his self-denying labours in behalf of our holy and glorious cause. Men like him do not die. They are only transformed to another scene of activity, where their works do follow them; where their field of labour is extended, and their capacity for usefulness increased. We may be assured

that our brother will not idly rest in his new home. He will, as when here, unceasingly labour for humanity, and the fruits of his labours in the future will be largely reaped by those who yet remain in the flesh.

Dr. Crowell was welcomed with hearty applause on his taking the platform, and received a like signal of approval at the close of his address.

Prof. J. R. Buchanan was the next speaker. He said: I shall make no extended address to-night. I am here gladly to unite with you in your appreciation of the life and labours of Bro. Sargent; and we all know that those whose lives have been pure and good and devoted to the welfare and uplifting of the race, do not lose their interest in the world left behind, but still live and labour in the new home with greater zeal and effect for the up-building of the kingdom of heaven in the life here and now; and as we send out our highest and noblest aspirations so will we receive the influx of the light and love from the spiritual world.

Bro. Sargent has gone to this other world, and has learned some things that will help us in our work here. His intellect is as strong and clear as ever, his love for the cause as true, and it is the highest souls in the spirit-world who come closest to us. He has gone from us, leaving behind a luminous light whose effulgence will grow brighter and brighter.

We are taught by Psychometry how subtle are these influences and forces, and to test this power through one skilled in this science, I tested one of brother Sargent's letters by handing it to Mrs. C. H. Decker, whom many of you know. She knew not the contents of the envelope handed to her, nor who was the author. Mrs. Decker remarked in regard to it:

"This impresses me as a penetrating, inquiring mind, but very tolerant. He seems to have an inclination for studying deep subjects, which his mind reaches out to fathom. He has fine mental powers, and acquires information without great labour, and seems to have cultivated his fine memory.

I think he has literary taste. I perceive authorship. He has fine abilities, and is given to reflection. He has a very independent mind, and is rather cold in expression. When any subject is publicly agitated, if he approves, he boldly defends it. If a believer in the Spiritual Philosophy, he would not hide it, but would boldly defend it. It seems to me he was deeply interested in it, and was an experimental inquirer. He had great advantages in being so thoroughly penetrative and intellectual, and embraced every opportunity to obtain entire satisfaction. He did a great deal for the advancement of Spiritualism. He had a scientific mind, wrote a great deal and defended mediums.

But he wrote on other subjects, being a literary man, and obtained great popularity. His writings could be quoted and respected even by those not inclined to follow him in Spiritualism. He was esteemed as a literary and philosophic mind. He was a great logician, and reasoned most finely. He must have been a friend of yours, he knew you well.

There was great mental activity, but a spiritual light passes over me as from a spirit; I don't comprehend this unless he has passed away since this letter was written; I feel a tingling sensation, as if the spirit was kindled anew—as if he had not finished his labours, and was about resuming them in spirit-life. This is a mind that never retracts anything it has given, but builds up all structures that have been commenced in earth-life. They will be carried out in spirit-life, and he will attain an exalted position. He seems to have gone through a great many spiritual spheres, and realised their life, and is prepared to enter on exalted spheres on the other side.

What a towering mind this is; he seems to take hold of the very foundations of the Spiritual Philosophy; he takes hold and weaves together every shred and particle of evidence. He will help a new movement in spiritual philosophy to settle many questions. He takes cognizance of the differences of leaders in spiritual philosophy, and has power now to throw much light on those questions. He will co-operate with you in sentiment—with your teachings.

He has left the mortal form, but not long, and he has

much to learn before he will feel himself prepared to come back to earth as a teacher.

The impression comes to me now that this is a spirit, and was Epes Sargent. The brightness of his mind was obliterated only for a brief time. There was a preparation for the change, but his great desire to finish his labour here kept his spirit in the body longer than it would have been otherwise. He was reluctant to go—not that he had any aversion to death, or premonitions of failure in ability to continue his work in the future, but he would like to have remained in the body long enough to complete here certain work that he had planned.

I feel that he is not yet ready to give his teachings as a spirit, but the delay will be brief. He will soon be heard from through many channels. I think his first public announcement will be in the *Banner of Light* after a season of rest."

Dr. Buchanan explained briefly the subtle influence of this power, and that psychometry was to unfold a grand future in the cause of Spiritualism, and stated that Mrs. Decker could not have known in any way that the sealed letter was from Mr. Sargent. He closed with an earnest appeal for us to cultivate the gifts of the spirit and to emulate the virtues and powers of our risen brother.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Shepard-Lillie then sang a beautiful song: "Watching at the Golden Gate."

Mrs. J. Shepard Lillie gave the closing address, and took for her text "*In Memoriam*." What a wonderful change, she said, has Modern Spiritualism made in thirty-three years in the views and hopes of humanity in regard to an immortal life! Before the dawning light of this new dispensation all was darkness, and we buried our friends with no knowledge of their presence; and now all is changed! a continuity of life is a demonstrable reality.

Our brother whose ascension to the spiritual world we are met here to-night to commemorate had no uncertain faith, for to him Spiritualism was not only a true science but a true religion; and his last great work, "*The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism*," is the corner-stone in the up-building of the new spiritual church, whose dome is the blue arch of the eternal heavens, and whose walls enclose every son and daughter of humanity. Our faith and its phenomena are no longer the despair of science, but the true explainers of those silent and unseen forces that are working such marvels in human life. Our brother is not dead nor gone from us. He is still here in sympathy and hearty accord with all earnest, loving souls whose aspirations reach out to the infinite. We can take courage from his life and example to strive to nobly do our work.

The speaker defined mediumship at length, and the laws of control, and closed her eloquent address with the assurance that with him who had gone before there was no darkness, for he was basking in the full sunlight of God's love.

Her remarks terminated with a beautiful improvised poem. Before pronouncing the benediction, the speaker saw, clairvoyantly, many bands of spirits with flowers, which were brought and distributed among the Fraternity, with a blessing from our dear ones to strengthen and encourage us in our work; and we felt the very presence, not only of Bro. Sargent, but others who were life workers in our cause: The strong and faithful Dr. Gardner; the benign presence of Dr. Hallock; the saintly face of Achsa W. Sprague; the loving spirit of Fannie Conant; the wise and faithful defenders of our faith, Henry C. Wright, Robert Dale Owen, Judge Edmonds, Prof. Hare, Gov. Tallmadge, E. V. Wilson, Mrs. Jennie Dixon and Mrs. Jarvis—all seemed to be visibly present, and to rejoice with us that our brother has reached the evergreen shores of the Summer-Land.

The exercises did not close until 10.30 p.m., and the friends lingered in the hall until a late hour, as if loth to depart.

MRS. WEBER, whose advertisement has for some time appeared in our columns, has withdrawn it on account of her physical strength being inadequate to meet the calls upon it connected with her healing mediumship. We understand, however, that she will continue to practice to the extent of her ability.

COMMON LIFE.

(A COMMUNICATION.)

Whose simple lives, complete and without flaw,
Were part and parcel of great Nature's law;
Who said not to their Lord, as if afraid,
"Here is my talent in a napkin laid;"
But laboured in their sphere as men who live
In the delight that work alone can give.

I am persuaded that God's armour of light,
As it is loved and lived in, will preserve you.

But you may ask me: Wherein consists the ideal which, being aimed at, is to revolutionize society, and make of earth a paradise restored, so far as the social relationships of life are concerned? I do not think it will be very difficult to reply to this question. The remedy lies with man himself; *it is hidden in the folds of his own nature*, and time alone is required to develop the means whereby the present evils shall be removed, to give place to a higher phase of business and social life.

There are two faculties of man which operate in both these cases, the acquisitive and distributive. These are capable of an even balance when properly cultivated, and while the energy of human nature will always lead a man to seek to acquire results, his benevolence and sense of the god-like in him, will lead him to distribute in accordance with those rules of justice which are a prevailing feature of that higher phase of his nature. Under present circumstances, men are too much given to acquire; too little given to distribute; regardless of the old proverb that he who soweth with a liberal hand shall grow fat and flourishing. The resources of nature never can be expended; they work in a circle, and return with the need of him who deals with them in a proper manner; but riches hoarded up, or used in a selfish manner, deprave him who thus greedily acquires, but seldom or ever gives of his abundance. I am quite satisfied that as the years revolve in their courses, men will come to see things in this better light, and then, with the reformation of business and social relationships, you will have common life assuming an aspect on which even the angels may look with pleasure, while they see their brother man cultivating the higher faculties of his nature, a steward of God's riches, and a labourer in His vineyard, whereby are scattered the riches of His goodness broadcast over the community.

Now, to apply this question practically, let every man strive to unfold his nature by such an introspection as shall reveal the possibilities thereof; and as these possibilities come into view, cultivate the means with a purpose to the ends suggested; taking for his standard, not the material phantoms of power and riches, but that spiritual ideal of goodness, governed by wisdom; getting that he may give; enriching himself that he may thus have it in his power to enrich others; doing good thankfully, and receiving into his own breast the reward which practical goodness always bestows.

Now, common life, or a life which is common to man, conducted on such principles as these, must of necessity prove a paradise restored as far as it is possible to be so; realizing that which is expressed in poetic language so beautifully,—

That our sons may be like plants,
Growing up in their youth;
Our daughters like corner-pillars,
Our granaries filled,
Sending forth store after store;
Our flocks bringing forth thousands,
Ten thousand in our fields;
Our oxen bearing loads;
No breaking in, no giving out;
Nor any clamour in the streets.
Happy the people that is in such a state!

Psalms cxlv, 12-15.

And thus, entering into that life divine which breathes a universal benediction.

But we have to carry your thoughts a stage further. The life common to man is not all represented by the period of earthly sojourn. We have proved in our own experience, that life, which man experiences is continuous, running out of the past, the long past, and entering

into the future, the unending future. Therefore, we have to call your attention to an important fact in this respect; the influence of the past, and the present, on that future; and, also, the anticipations which may be reasonably indulged in as to that future and continuous phase of life which is common to man. We, of the inner life, can of necessity, enter more fully into this all important question than you can; but it is our privilege to enable you at any rate, to foresee some of the conclusions which hence arise, so that you may be spurred on to higher attainments now, and thus be better prepared for the future developments.

Now endeavour, by an effort of mind, to forge the connecting links which shall unite your present with the long past, and also, with the unending future; thus constituting that indivisible life which is the portion of all men. This being done, you at once become alive to the very great importance of life in itself, as the stream on which may float a vessel of beauty, the golden Argosy of a fair and beautiful existence; or the miserable and misshapen craft which affords neither satisfaction, nor elicits admiration, but which is tossed hither and thither as the sport of every disorderly passion. It is quite true that, with opened eyes, you may discover much in the past which yields only pain and regret, but even then, why not accept the fact, and learn the lesson which is taught, viz., to avoid in future the shoals and rocks on which you have suffered loss, and strive in the present to live more in harmony with those laws which being obeyed, will never lead you astray. That is a grand lesson all may learn as arising out of a realization of past mistakes; and in proportion as it is learned—and God knows we all have much to do in this respect—will the future open up with a brighter horizon ever stretching across our field of vision; for the universe in which man dwells and progresses, is full of harmony, and is only rendered inharmonious to him when he allows discord to breed in himself; otherwise, the outlook is always fair and promising, and calculated to cheer. Well, then, my fellow-man, I say to you: brighten the windows of your soul by a life conducted on the principle that, if you sow the seeds of just and benevolent actions now, you will reap as you sow in brightness and beauty; and the sights you see, and the sounds you hear, when you come here, will be those of joy and not of fear; for in this inner life, the Father hath laid up in store the imperishable riches of a truer happiness than could be possessed on earth; and whether it be as to capacity for acquirement, or the facility to use to greater advantage, the life common to man here, the fact is patent enough, that whereas he then stood in the valley, shut in by many barriers, now, he has risen to the mountain top, and amid the invigorating airs of this primeval existence, he may take in those fuller benedictions which his nature has become more capable of. Oh! if I could only make you understand to-day, how greatly I long to meet you here, and taking you by the hand, lead you forth to the possession of the untold riches of this higher stage of existence, I feel assured that you would receive the impulse to rise a step higher now, by virtue of casting off that weight of earthly love and materialistic care which makes so much of the present, and so little of the future, and thus impedes the progress onward to higher climes. Remember, once more, that we, having reached the inner life, stretch forth our hands to aid you; and amid the life struggles so common to all of your race, would help to turn your sorrows into joy, and in the removal of your doubts, impart to life present and to come, the sunshine of a joyous existence. Be faithful, therefore, brethren, for the judge standeth at the door; be hopeful, therefore, brethren, for in your Father's house above, there are the many mansions of a truly blessed life, which may be common to you all; *your life and mine*; the life of every son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty!

O Gentle God! let me strive always
Still to be true and good, and follow Thee.

Marnias Meti.

Melbourne, March, 1881.

THE DOOM OF SACERDOTALISM.

TEXT:—And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.

If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.—Malachi ii: 1, 2.

It is surpassing strange that a church whose original founder was the son of a humble carpenter, and whose earliest ministers were poor fishermen, should have grown out of such decidedly democratic, not to say communistic, elements into a church of episcopal and pontifical aristocracy. It is more than strange, it is almost incomprehensible, that the religion of one who so plainly said that his kingdom was not of this earth, should now be acquainted with no higher grounds of its existence than those summed up in the acquisition of temporal power. The temporal has so universally displaced the spiritual that all that we have now left of the pure groundwork of the original ideas of the religious reformer of Nazareth consists in the unfulfilled dead letter of the first and earliest records of the history of Christianity. How men could ever have deviated so much from so plain a basis of pure doctrine, how the followers of Jesus, who knew himself to be at one with God, should still claim to be his apostolic successors, when their words and deeds point so plainly to apostatic succession instead, is a great marvel, only to be explained by an unprejudiced study of ecclesiastical history, only to be understood by a due appreciation of the fact that, when the Church married the State, the spiritual became defiled by the temporal, until there was nothing left but a mockery of religion held captive in the bread baskets of corrupt and corrupting kings and emperors. Thus the original Kingdom of God was converted into an exclusive kingdom of this world alone. The spirit had to give way to the flesh, until at last nothing else was left but the dead carcass of what was once a glorious incarnation of the holy spirit of righteousness. This is what we have come to now, and that such a state of things cannot last much longer, has only to be mentioned to be understood. Manifest signs, both inside and outside, of what is still by way of compliment called a Christian Church, have appeared of late, indicating plainly that society at large have come to a common agreement to bury this carcass themselves, seeing that the dead are unable to bury their dead. In the very centres and strongholds of this dead Church have lately arisen undertakers willing to inter the corpse of a carnal Church, and to resurrect in its stead the spirit of a new Church entirely independent of the temporal interests of the State. These few clerical undertakers have found out at last that the food obtained by the Church from the State is rank poison, and has killed it. Not only have many leading clergymen lately seceded from their respective churches in despair, but many, instead of taking to flight, have manfully stuck to their posts with the intention of using their still remaining influence of position and inherited dignity in the Church to work a wholesome change, and to lay before the eyes of their congregations the appalling audit of their past business transactions, and to exhort them to make a new start in life with a new and far different set of books than those were which a genuine spirit of human charity and forgiveness bids us now to close, in order to avoid all unlovely excitement and exaggeration of human sentiment against so much conscious ignorance, cruelty and persecution; against what was truly holy by what was unmistakably most unholy. Yet, the times in which we are living are already sufficiently stirring and exciting to make us avoid, with all possible care and due consideration, any more dangerous and hazardous experiments of raising new red flags on the mastheads of modern human society. For, as we have seen unceasingly rioting at funerals, especially after a prolonged wake, so might now also too plain speaking on religious subjects call up a storm amongst the waking-up members of indignant human society, followed by thunder and lightning mainly directed against the spires of churches which no longer point to God and to heaven. If the rubbish of antiquity must be cleared away, and room made for laying the foundation of a new and better Church, let us at least attempt, if possible, to do it quietly, rationally, but nevertheless firmly and deter-

minedly. The world is almost unanimously agreed that the time has come when two new houses will have to be erected, one in which a true God may be worshipped, a house not built by hands, and another in which the rights of man, and especially his birth-right, equality, liberty and fraternity, may be loudly proclaimed, positively asserted, and definitely carried out. Leaving all consideration of merely political questions and issues on one side in this place, and turning our undivided attention principally to the absolute necessity there is for erecting a new spiritual church, with human hearts cemented by human love for a foundation, let us first of all insist that our present phantom of a God must be cleared out of the heads and hearts of the rising generation of citizens in God's commonwealth, in order that room may be made for the reception of sounder and truly eternal notions about Him whose real being neither theologians nor philosophers have as yet succeeded in defining, and whose best definition is summed up in the grand and simple words of—"Our Father." Yet, Our Father is knocking at our door, at the door of his sons, bidding us to remember that we are both brothers as to the flesh, and brothers as to the spirit which He has given us. Let us remove from our sight for ever and ever all images of angry and jealous Gods, all idols of crucified resurrected and ascended Gods, all spectres of trinitarian and infinitesimal Gods, and let us settle down in the ultimate conviction that there is somewhere in the unfathomable bosom of universal existence a magnetic centre of attraction, which, as it unites infinite worlds and solar systems in a symbolic dance of brotherhood, materially speaking, so also must a similar magnetic centre of universal love forces hold all humanity together, humanity terrestrial, humanity planetary, humanity solar, stellar and universal. Having arrived at this final conviction that there can be no personal God, one looking after the exclusive interests of Christians, another after those of Mahomedans, another after those of the Buddhists, let us in future give up all futile speculations respecting the essence of an infinite spirit, let us once for all recognise the self-evident fact that all spirit, human or divine, is and must of necessity be invisible, and that what is called God is only the outward manifestations of an inherent spiritual principle, which to us, in this our boasted sphere of terrestrial knowledge, will always remain a mystery only to be solved by gradual approximations of conceptions, which, in their turn again, must be eternally progressive in proportion as we rise ourselves in our individual, moral and intellectual development from planet to planet, from planet to sun, and from worlds finite to worlds infinite. Why, then, wrangle any longer over a God thus infinite, a God thus invisible, a God, moreover, whom to know it requires an eternity of time to find out, and an infinity of space to discover in? Having banished for ever this cramped sacerdotal conception of Deity, let us turn next to the demolition of that other sacerdotal fungus of a resurrection of dead men's bones at the call of the last trump, only let us substitute for it a spiritual resurrection which is already now beginning, and which is to be continued for ever in worlds without end. Let us do away also with such vicious dogmas of sacerdotal invention, as justification by mere faith without works, let us disown the stonement theory of salvation which forces a just God to crush the most lovely flower that ever bloomed in the garden of man in order to save a whole plantation of mushrooms and poisonous plants; let us finally inform this society of sacerdotal dictators and thunderers that, what they are pleased to term apostolic succession, is not a business entrusted by God to anointed priests alone, but is virtually every man's business and duty to acknowledge as his own special mission, with or without ordination and laying on of human hands, hands which, in the lapse of ages, have lost the original purity of the hands of Him who commanded His lowly followers of fishermen and inspired proletarians from the shores of the Lake of Galilee to go out into all the world and to preach God's latest good news to man all over the earth, the news of a fraternal unity in spirit, which will procure for us two heavens instead of one, a heaven here, to be followed by a heaven hereafter, admission to either

of which heavens has neither been granted to Peter nor to his imaginary successor in the See of pontifical Rome, neither to Calvin nor Luther, and above all not to sacerdotal caste whose preachings and actings have of late forced men to ask them the question "but who are ye?" Yes, who are ye that claim relationship with Jesus and Paul without manifesting the faintest signs of spiritual relation to either the love of the former or the zeal of the latter. That such a society of unspiritual monopolists, that such a corrupt sacerdotalism, keeping in its own extensive hands the dissemination of God's universal gifts and the distribution of tickets for seats in heaven, that such human pretensions to superhuman, nay, to divine powers, are now doomed to perpetual extinction, has at last become manifest not only to all enlightened spiritists outside all modern churches, but even to the millions of the wavering faithful inside the churches of wrong-headed and wrong-hearted orthodoxy. And to stay this final doom of priestly pretensions to arrest the hand that is going to strike down mitred hypocrisy and wickedness in high places, is in the power of no man who has his footing on this side of eternity, and my feeble hand and pen shall be the last to make the sacrilegious attempt to prop up this rotten house, a house built on sands, which the very next flood will sweep away into eternal invisibility.

C. W. ROHNER.

Chiltern, 16th March, 1881.

KILLING THE DEVIL.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I gather from one of your Tasmanian correspondents in the last *Harbinger*, that the ever-glowing editors of the *Protestant Standard*, say "Mr. Tyerman had five years in Sydney to kill the devil, yet he still exists." Oh, what a pity! how exceedingly strange that the eloquent lecturer could not destroy this great enemy of God and man in the space of five long years. But, what, let me ask, are the editors of the *Protestant Standard* doing towards cutting the throat of this great personal devil, they so much believe in; and what have their forefathers, Protestant and Catholic, been doing these many centuries past, that he is still allowed to prowl at large without let or hindrance, that should cause them to exert over the ill success of our lamented friend. The editors of this wonderful *Standard* believe and teach that part of Scripture that "Christ came to destroy this devil and his works, eighteen centuries ago; but still they say he is alive." Do those gentlemen suppose Mr. Tyerman could do in five years, what their God, with millions of creature assistants have totally failed to do, according to their belief, in eighteen hundred years, the devil being still alive. I will venture to say that Mr. Tyerman has dosed this great enemy (of very doubtful existence) with enough poison to kill him in the eyes of some thousands in Australia, while the opposition are trying to administer an antidote for his recovery. Let us see what has been, and is still being done in the old country for his destruction, and the result up till now. Here is an extract from Dean Ramsay's amusing volume, entitled "Pulpit Table Talk":—"He states that there are 37,520 churches in Great Britain, in many of which three sermons are preached every Sunday, and in most of them two. Taking the latter as the average, he observes, this would make 75,040 sermons delivered every Sabbath day in the churches of Great Britain alone, or the enormous number of 3,902,080, i.e., nearly four millions of sermons during the year," by an army of gentlemen somewhere about 40,000 strong, all of whom are supposed to have received at their ordination by the laying on of hands, the great stimulating agency of God's spirit, for the combat on which they enter, with more or less energy, according to the smiles or otherwise of mammon. Now I wish to ask, what are those Soldiers of the Cross doing all this long time, as it appears they cannot, although claiming to be workers with God, get so much as a short time from the enemy, to replenish wasted strength for a renewal of the fight, much more kill him; and poor Mr. Tyerman, single-handed, could not destroy him in five

years; this is very sad. Dr. Parker, of the city pulpit, London, is reported to have said in a recent sermon, "That the immorality of England was never greater than at present;" this is also very sad. 3,902,080 sermons are delivered in that land of churches, while millions of millions of prayers and upturned eyes are directed toward heaven, by both lay and clergy, for the destruction of Satan every year, and yet he still lives, as our orthodox friends affirm, which is to say he defies every effort put forth, not only by our lamented friend and advocate of truth, but also by the editors of the *Protestant Standard*, and their God.

A. W. E.

MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

The materialization seances with Mr. George Spriggs have been continued with fair success during the past month, but the results not being progressive it was decided by the committee of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists to reorganize the circle, Mr. Terry and Mr. John Carson being intrusted with the task. At the first seance in the month the atmospheric conditions were unfavourable and the forms were unable to come far into the room. Four forms varying in height from 3 to 6 feet were, however, distinctly seen by all present. On the 4th inst., conditions were more favourable, five forms manifesting, and the spirit "Peter" sustained a conversation with the circle for twenty minutes.

On the 8th, six forms appeared one being the little Black girl before mentioned. The spirit of John Wright distributed flowers, and "Peter" talked but was unable to appear.

The controlling spirit said, there were two spirits present who had lived in this city, one named Hannah Flanner who had kept an Hotel at the top of Bourke Street, and another Ambrose Kyte who spoke of his relatives.

Next a spirit named "Rudd" who said he knew a Mr. W—who was present, that gentleman failed to remember him till the place Yackandandah was mentioned where he said he had lived, when it immediately called him to his remembrance. On the 11th., the medium stated that a veiled form who was known to a lady present, would allow a piece of hair to be cut from the long black curls which distinguished her, and Mr. Carson was deputed to cut it, after two or three attempts the form leant forward her head while Mr. Carson cut a piece about 3 inches long, and subsequently a second piece thicker but shorter, which may be seen at the office of this paper. Another form that appeared on this night faintly spoke the name of a lady present.

On the 15th., five forms appeared, and a voice recognised as that of "Ski-waukie," an Indian control of Mrs. Hollis Billings, conversed with the circle for some time, this voice was a pleasant and musical one.

On the 18th., five forms appeared including an Indian who had not appeared before. The next sitting held on the 22nd., was a failure, atmospheric and other conditions being unfavourable. Between this and the next sittings the circle was reorganised and commenced in rather incomplete form, on the 25th. good results were, however, obtained, seven forms showing themselves, "Peter" talking face to face with the circle and visitors, and Ski-waukie speaking from within the curtain.

When the new circle is completed still better results are anticipated.

THE good people of Caversham are greatly exercised just now over a supposed ghost that has taken up its quarters in the neighbourhood of that suburb. It has shown its partiality for haunting the fields, across which it is said to flit with amazing rapidity. It is the terror of the small children of the place, but the braver spirits among the male portion of the residents have taken up their guns, and are determined to do some rifle practice at the expense of the nocturnal visitor.—*Dunedin Star*.

THE WAY-MARKS OF A PILGRIM.

Is view of Dr. J. M. Peebles' contemplated visit here during the present year, the following brief review of his literary works, from the pen of a fellow worker in the same field—Mr. A. E. Newton—will be read with interest, it is from the *Banner of Light* of February 5th., and will be continued in future numbers.

The literature of Spiritualism is of rapid growth, and the value of its products increases as greater maturity is attained. One of the most prolific contributors to this literature is Dr. James M. Peebles, otherwise known as "The Spiritual Pilgrim," whose writings, as well as his voice and personal presence, have become familiar in almost every quarter of the globe. Formerly a zealous clergyman of the Universalist persuasion, he became convinced of the reality of angelic ministrations in 1856, by demonstrations not less overwhelming in their force than those encountered by Saul of Tarsus when on his way to Damascus; and, like that apostle, he received a startling commission from a supernal Voice. "You are appointed for a great work: gird up your loins, buckle on your sandals, . . . Go forth and teach the Ministry of Angels!" So ran the commission. Like his apostolic prototype he "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Being of an ardent temperament, thoroughly earnest in his convictions on whatever subject, restlessly active in both body and mind, he accepted the role of "Pilgrim," and went forth, becoming an effective and almost ubiquitous evangel of the new gospel, by both voice and pen. We hear of him, by rapid turns, in the interior and at the furthest extremes of our own land, and anon in Europe, Asia, and Africa, Australia, the isles of the Pacific, among the ruins of Central America, and the Indians of the Rocky Mountains, everywhere acquainting himself with the physical and social status, the religious notions and traditions of that many-phased creature called Man, and everywhere that a hearing can be obtained, dispensing that gospel with which he is commissioned.

Twice circumnavigating the globe, by different routes, within the last ten years, and meeting with the most advanced and emancipated minds of many lands, this "Pilgrim" has certainly enjoyed advantages for acquaintance with the world's condition and its best thought, which fall to the lot of few in a life-time. A traveller, explorer and antiquarian by natural bent, he is, besides, a most insatiable reader of books, both old and new, and has gathered a library of rich and rare extent. Added to all this, he is himself possessed of an inspirational or mediumistic temperament, which renders his mind open to suggestions from the angelic spheres; and has also in his travels usually been privileged with the companionship of some easily-controlled psychic subject, through whom spirits of a high order of intelligence, often claiming to be of ancient birth, have communicated their thoughts or their knowledge on many topics of the highest interest.

That, amid these travels and nearly continuous platform labours, with almost numberless contributions to the periodical press, our Pilgrim should find time for the preparation of a series of elaborate volumes, is a marvel; and it will not be strange if the careful reviewer shall detect in these "Way-marks" some evidences of haste and want of due deliberation in their production. The wonder is that such tokens are not more numerous and glaring.

I have before me a series of volumes and pamphlets which have been issued within the last twelve years, by Mr. Peebles. I propose to pass them in brief review, in the order of their production, for the purpose of making some estimate of their value to the grand spiritualistic movement of the age, in which their author has borne so conspicuous a part. First on the list is:

The Spiritual Harp, a collection of Vocal Music for the Choir, Congregation and Social Circle." This is an elegant volume of about 300 pages, large octavo, published in 1868. In its preparation Mr. Peebles had the able assistance of his friend and former co-laborer in the ministry, Rev. J. O. Barrett, while the musical department was carefully edited by Pro. E. H. Bailey. Of this joint production it is not too much to say that, with its choice, varied and tasteful poetical selections, its sentences, chants and responses, its cheerful and sprightly

music, mostly new, and, withal, its faultless typography and mechanical execution, it is the most attractive work of the kind ever published. It is a treasury of gems, the value of which cannot fail to be appreciated by cultivated, emancipated, and artistic minds for generations to come. Yet, if I mistake not, it has but partially met the want for which it was designed; and this, no doubt, in part, by reason of its highly artistic and predominantly intellectual character, [the main use of song, in a religious or spiritual gathering, being really to express emotion, rather than theory or philosophy,] and the newness of its music, as well as in part, also, because of being too large and costly a work for general use in Spiritualistic assemblies.

If I mistake not, Mr. Peebles has endeavoured to supply the want, in some degree, by other publications, as we shall hereafter see; nevertheless the Harp has a value of its own which will probably be more widely appreciated in the future than at present, when perhaps it may be supplemented by additional selections of a somewhat different class, and more of the old familiar music.

The Pilgrim's next work was given to the world in 1869, and is entitled—

Seers of the Ages: embracing Spiritualism, Past and Present. This is a volume of 376 octavo pages. It shows the result of extensive reading, much thought, and laborious industry. In it the author has, with great research, grouped together in chronological order the chief historical evidences on record, that spiritual and inspirational phenomena, essentially identical with those of our own time, have existed from the remotest periods; with biographical sketches of the noted seers and wonder-workers of ancient times and countries. The subject is treated under these general divisions: Spirit of the Present Age, Ancient Historic Spiritualism, Christian Spiritualism, Medieval Spiritualism, Modern Spiritualism, Exegetical Spiritualism.

Under the head of "Christian Spiritualism," the author takes the ground that Jesus of Nazareth was an actual person, "the natural offspring of human parents," but begotten and reared under circumstances favorable to the development of a high spirituality, and hence became a spiritual teacher, wonder-worker and reformer of the noblest type; but that the New Testament histories, written years after his death, have gathered up and attributed to him many incidents and sayings that had become traditionally prevalent as relating to other noted spiritual teachers and wonder-workers of long previous times—particularly Krishna of India, and Pythagoras of Samos. From these records, part fact, part legendary myth, was evolved in later years the conception of the *theologic Christ*:—"a strange Hebraic hybrid; half God, half man—a church monster, shapen by the old ecclesiastic fathers." Mr. Peebles attempts to discriminate between this monstrous conception, which has been widely adopted by the Christian world, and the *real Jesus*, whom he regards, to use Peter's words, as "a man approved of God," liberally endowed with the "Christ spirit" of universal good-will, empowered to work wonders of healing and kindness among the people—a spiritually illumined teacher of Truth and righteousness, not original in all his teachings, but mediumistically uttering the highest and best thoughts of sages who had preceded him, "reiterating them with *apathos* peculiarly his own" clairvoyant and prophetic—"a balanced, summer-sunned man—a tropical heart, sweet, full of love flowers, and tempered to an intellectuality that weaves its silvery philosophic filling through the magnetic vesture that clothes our freezing humanity," etc., etc.

In "Exegetical Spiritualism," Dr. Peebles treats of the existence of God, the Divine Image, the Moral Status of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Baptism, Inspiration, the Beauty of faith, Repentance, Law of Judgment, Evil Spirits, Hell, Heaven, Historic Immortality, Resurrection Prayer, Freedom and Function of Love, and the Genius of Spiritualism. This exposition presents quite a comprehensive and generally satisfactory statement of the religious and philosophic bearings of Spiritualism, concluding with the following general definition, than which nothing finer or truer has been written:

"Its fundamental idea, is, God, the infinite spirit-presence, immanent in all things.

Its fundamental thought is, joyous communion with spirits and angels, and the practical demonstrations of the same through the instrumentality of the media.

Its fundamental purpose is, to rightly generate educate and spiritualize all the races and nations of the earth.

Its worship is aspiration; its symbols, circles; its prayers, good deeds; its incense, gentle words; its sacrament, the wine of holy affections; its baptisms, the fervent pressure of warm hands, and the sweet breathings of guardian angels; its mission, human redemption, and its temple, the universe.

It underlies all genuine reform movements, physiological, temperamental, educational, parental, social, philanthropic and religious; and spurning all human interests with holy aim, its seeks to re-construct society upon the principles of a universal brotherhood—the strict equality of the sexes."

The work under review is not free from faults as a literary production, showing as might be expected, occasional traces of haste in composition; and the Pilgrim's impetuous temperament sometimes leads him into an indulgence in flights of rhetoric and effusions of sentiment which almost take the breath out of a plodding reader. His intensity of convictions, too, now and then, impel to statements of a positive and seemingly dogmatic tone where a modest suggestiveness would be more in keeping. Yet as a whole the "Seers of the Ages" must be regarded as constituting one of the most—if not the most—valuable and unexceptionable presentations of Spiritualism in its historic and religious aspects that has yet been given to the public.

It, however, has not met the full endorsement of all classes of Spiritualists. Dr. Peebles' frankly expressed views of Jesus of Nazareth drew forth sharp protests, on the one hand, from certain "anti-Christian" Spiritualists, who deny *in toto* the existence of Jesus as a historic personage, and on the other from certain extreme "Christian" Spiritualists who cling to the medieval doctrine of his special divinity. To critics of both these classes our Pilgrim, on his return to London from a tour to the East 1870, replied in a small work of one hundred and eight pages, octavo, entitled:

Jesus: Myth, Man, or God? or the Popular Theology and the Positive Religion Contrasted. In the first chapter of this treatise are collated and forcibly presented such evidences as our Pilgrim had been able to glean from all sources, outside of Bible and church histories, of the personal existence of the Nazarene. Some of the evidences are unfamiliar, at least to ordinary readers, and taken together with the New Testament writings and the undeniable existence of Christianity under many phases, as a powerful force in the world for centuries, certainly furnish strong probable grounds for the belief that a great spiritual teacher and worker of marvels, called Jesus, the Christ, did actually appear at the time alleged, in the land of Judea.

The proofs, however, I am free to say, like those of many other events of the long past, can scarcely be called demonstrative. They are of such a character as to be differently estimated by different minds, according to educational or organizational bias. Fortunately, while the question of the personal existence of Jesus is one of much interest to the earnest Spiritualist and to the student of the religious history of man, yet to the *spiritually* minded it is not of essential moment. The cardinal truths of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man—the duty of love and service to all, including enemies—the future life—the ministry and communion of spirits—the consequences of virtue and of vice—the beauty of humility, mercy, forgiveness, purity of heart, a peace-making disposition, and of hunger and thirst after righteousness, with repentance for all wrong doing and faith in the Eternal Goodness—all these, which constitute the essence of the so-called Christian-teachings, have their ground and validity in the spiritual nature of man, and in no way depend upon the authority or the personality of any annunciator.

In subsequent chapters of this work, Dr. Peebles discusses "The Origin and Mission of Jesus" "The Moral

Teachings of Jesus Compared with the Old Philosophers," the "Influence of Christianity," and "Jesus and the Positive Religion." Space fails us to analyze the contents of these chapters further than briefly to say that the author vigorously combats the popular Church theory of the supernatural origin of Jesus—denies the originality or superiority of many of his doctrines, quoting from other ancient teachings in proof—pungently charges upon (sectarian) "Christianity" the responsibility of the errors, crimes and the untold horrors that have been perpetrated in its name or by its professors—in fact makes "Christianity" synonymous with these errors and crimes—and protests most vehemently against having the term "Christian" dragged in and imposed upon Spiritualism!"

In writing these chapters, it would appear that our impetuous Pilgrim was incited by the ultra religious conservatism of certain English Spiritualists to express opinions and take a position which maturer reflection in latter years has modified, as we shall hereafter see.

It is evident that the terms "Christian" and "Christianity" are used by different writers with widely different meanings. To one class they seem to be synonymous with error, bigotry, hypocrisy, persecution, cruelty, and almost everything that is false and foul: to another class they are the synonyms of truth, charity, sincerity, justice, purity, spirituality, and all that is beautiful and noble in human character. While this is so, the present writer has never deemed it desirable to attach the term "Christian" to Spiritualism, at least without an explicit definition of the sense in which it is used—although at times such a designation would be very convenient if rightly understood, as discriminating against a very un-Christian phase of Spiritualism sometimes exhibited. But at the same time he had no repugnance to the term when used in its better significance. And he fails to see the fairness or reasonableness of those who insist that the term can mean only what is bad, and refuse to give those who choose to employ it credence for its better meaning. On some the use of the word, however innocently, seems to have much the same effect as waving a red flag in the face of an irate bovine. It would seem far more creditable to endeavour to rescue the term from its perversions, and to illustrate its better significance by fairness, courtesy and kindness to all. To this, no doubt, the Pilgrim will now agree.

In treating of "Jesus and the Positive Religion," Dr. Peebles has no special reference to the so-called "Positivism" of the disciples of Comte, but thus defines his meaning:

"The leading thoughts ever burning in his (Jesus's) being for acceptance and actualisation, were the divine Fatherhood of God, the universal brotherhood of man the perpetual ministry of angels and spirits, and the absolute necessity of toleration, charity, forgiveness, love—in a word, *good works*. These crystallising into action as a reform-force for human education and redemption, I denominate the *positive religion*, and consider it perfectly synonymous with Spiritualism—Spiritualism as a definition and practice in its best estate. This pure religion and undefiled, established in men's hearts and lives, and not on 'sacred parchments, would soon be felt in states and kingdoms, promoting peace, justice and charity; rendering legal enactments wise and humanitarian, and causing the sweet waters of concord and good-will to flow over all the earth for the spiritual healing of the nations."

May such a religion, whatever it be called soon prevail!

The Telephone, a neat little Spiritualistic paper published at Brisbane, has a now and appropriate pictorial heading, illustrating some of the methods of communication between spirits and mortals. The paper is a weekly one, the publishing price one penny, and it may be obtained here for three halfpence, or 1/6 per quarter.

ERRATA.—The signature to Spirit Communication, page 1951, should be K., not X. Line 22, for "since" read "hence." Line 34, for "not" read "out."

To Correspondents.

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

CHRIST: GOD OR MAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Knowing that your paper is free from all impartiality and narrow-mindedness which so conspicuously characterises the other Melbourne religious contemporaries, and, also, that you not only opened your columns to those who were of your opinion but *vice versa*, I take the liberty of addressing you these few lines.

Now, Sir, I have for some time been a subscriber to your paper—and other freethought papers, and have noticed that you always speak of Christ as being "a good and great man," and that "while you admire the teachings of Plato you love Christ." Now, sir, that seems to me to be illogical, for has not Christ most plainly and undeniably represented himself to be God, has he not plainly said,—"I and the Father are one," and did he not on one occasion, when speaking to the Pharisees, say,—"Before Abraham was I *was*." And in the face of these statements how can you say that Christ was a good and holy man? Are not the words—"I and the Father are one," sufficient to show that Christ places himself on the same level as God? What was Christ crucified for? Did the Jews crucify him, because he taught a new doctrine, or because he worshipped differently to them? No! the Jews crucified Jesus because he represented himself as being *Jehovah*—God. Then, if Christ is not what he represents himself to be, how can he be "a good and holy man?" For it is inconsistency to deny, in one breath, Christ's words, to disbelieve what he has said, and in the next, to call him a good and holy man. To my mind Christ must either be what he represents himself to be—God, the Supreme Being, the Maker of all things—or he must be an impostor—a liar.

The above are my own ideas, and questions which I have often tried to solve, but never could to my own satisfaction; perhaps you may be able to do so, if so I would be very much obliged.

I am, yours faithfully,

F. B.

Melbourne, March, 19th., 1880.

IMPRESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Kindly allow me space for the following extract from one of Mrs. Cora Tappan's lectures. It throws much light on the subject of impressional mediumship, and may assist those of your readers who are beginning to cultivate this phase of communication:—

"The spirit *sees* the vibrations of your thought, and when in sympathy, does not require you to speak as you do to one another; but upon that vibration of thought alone traces what you would say, and the developed mind can receive a response from the spirit in turn. It is a system of mental telegraphy—a spiritual telegraphy—whereby on chains, or individual vibrations of thought, the spirit is brought into sympathy with your own mind. There is more than sympathy connected with the wish of your spirit-friends when they desire you to think of them often. By thinking of them you make a vibration towards them by which they can reach your mind. By refusing or refraining to think of them your mind vibrates in other directions, and the spirit can not approach."

Yours &c.,

A BEGINNER.

THE FIRST LECTURE ON SPIRITUALISM IN BATHURST.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—It is my pleasing duty to inform the readers of the *Harbinger*, that Mr. Charles Bright delivered a lecture in the local Town Hall, on Wednesday evening 9th. March, to a fair and appreciative audience; Mr. Rao, editor of the *Independent* presiding.—Subject:—"Spiritualism, what it is, and what it implies."

The lecturer was frequently applauded; and many are anxious to hear him again. I am certain that much good has been done by it, for a number are about to investigate Spiritualism now; and they have learnt that it is not so black as it is painted. Mr. Bright's visit was opportune, for we had so-called expositors, Rice and Lewis performing here recently; the latter gentleman and myself, are engaged in a literary conflict through the columns of the *Sentinel* at present; and in this my motto is "no surrender."

It is highly necessary that we should have a lecturers' travelling fund. I do not think we can over estimate the amount of good which would accrue therefrom. Let us try it. I send enclosed extract from *Independent*, containing best report of Mr. Bright's lecture; extending over two columns and a half.*

Yours fraternally,

F. E. S. HEWISON.

Bathurst, March, 17th. 1881.

THE CASE OF THE REV. CHARLES STRONG.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—The old school Presbyterians are in a ferment at the preaching, teaching and writings of the Rev. Charles Strong, who evidently thinks more of the ideal preached and practised by the gentle Nazarene, than the carnal view of him so rigidly clung to by his accusers. As an onlooker, and an admirer of Mr. Strong, I cannot help thinking—viewing the matter in a liberal spirit—that he is eminently the true representative of his divine master, and his accusers the true descendants of the ancient Pharisees; and in this position Mr. Strong may well hold to the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free irrespective of what may be said or done by his enemies.

It is a pitiable sight to see a body of clergymen trying to persecute a liberal-minded man like Mr. Strong for clothing modern Christianity in a decent garb—that he may the more readily "win souls to Christ,"—and it serves to show how blind they can remain to the signs of the times, and the spread of a more rational view of divine things, when they persist in such a suicidal course; for as sure as they proceed further in their insane folly and bigotry, so sure will they be serving Mr. Strong and the cause all liberal and progressive Christians have so much at heart. In addition, Mr. Strong has a powerful and wealthy congregation at his back, with several clergymen as supporters, and thousands within and without the pale of the Presbyterian Church, as ardent sympathisers. If, therefore, his enemies are determined to force him out of his church, they will only rend their own body to pieces, and give an impetus to free thought throughout Victoria. It is plain—whether the Murdock MacDonalds of the kirk understand it or not—that the old cardinal doctrines will no longer go down with intelligent minds. Thousands have already withdrawn from all the churches because they could not listen to the preaching of them with any profit, and thousands more, if opportunity should offer, are prepared to follow their example. Mr. Strong's sin is a small one, namely, attempting to put a decent dress over a skeleton—the past. Ah, would that he could see his way to burying it, and to raise on its ruins all that is good, and true and beautiful. I recently visited his church, and was much pleased both with him as a speaker—impressive and earnest—and the

*The lecture is a well arranged one, adapted to enquirers and as such contains nothing new or of special interest to our readers.—Ed. H. of L.

whole service, which is an immense improvement on the old Presbyterian ritual. The church itself, too, is a very fine one, and, from its beautiful interior, has a tendency to raise the thoughts of the worshippers up from nature to nature's God. I felt refreshed, as an avowed Spiritualist, by worshipping with such a minister and congregation, and fervently wished that our own too unspiritual assemblies were as truly reverent and spiritual in their public devotions as were Mr. Strong and his fashionable congregation. I was privileged to hear an accomplished lady sing an anthem, "God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," so impressively, that a hush and stillness came over the large assembly, which made one feel as though he were brought nearer to the spirit-world, and were *en rapport* with its denizens. I pray God that such a Spiritual congregation may soon be established in every city and town in Victoria. I feel certain that Christianity, in spirit and in truth, has nothing to fear from such an exponent of it as the justly popular minister of the Scots' Church, Melbourne.

Yours truly,
SANDHURST.

7th March, 1881.

A LECTURE ON GHOSTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

MR. EDITOR.—It is said that a "straw will show the direction of the wind sometimes." *Apròpos* of this, I was at a meeting last Sunday week, when the conductor asked one of the audience—who had been requested to choose a subject for the following Sunday evening—to give a lecture on "Ghosts." As you may be sure the conductor, as well as the members of the society, enjoyed a bit of fun—Sunday though it was—over the ghostly subject. However, the conductor agreed, and last Sunday, "you bet," I was there to see something of the "Ghosts," but didn't see any. A good deal was said about the belief in a future state. He referred to the Bible too—where Samuel's Spirit was made to appear, and quoted a great many other instances, both ancient and modern, to show that ghosts are seen, and said if we were to take the word of so many respectable witnesses we must admit the fact. Some one suggested that they may be facts, but were the works of the "old gentleman," who has been credited with so much evil in the world.

In reply, the conductor warmed to the subject somewhat, and spoke to the matter, assuming it to be a fact that spirits can, and do come back, which he neither affirmed nor denied; he said that the orthodox idea was that the spirit left the body and the earth at the same moment for some unknown locality, never to return; but if what was said by modern Spiritualists was true, namely, "that it is possible for the spirit to return," there was nothing in nature, so far as his opinion went, that would be more likely to occur than for a parent to return to view the dear ones left behind, and, if possible, make his presence known, and he felt certain, assuming it to be true, that if ever spirits did return, they came for a good purpose, and there was no need of being afraid to meet them. There was a large attendance at the meeting, and every one present seemed thoroughly interested in the lecture, which was extemporaneous, and took over an hour and a quarter in its delivery.

Yours truly,
MAJOR.

TO SPIRITUALISTS.—Do not be afraid to record yourselves as such on the CENSUS PAPER; your children will be proud of the name. Readers urge your friends who are not likely to see this notice to do as you do.

We have received the late Epes Sargent's last great work, "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism;" it will be reviewed in our next.

EPES SARGENT.

THE late Epes Sargent was one of the most kindly of men and of authors, and his excellent literary service extended over many years. There were few kinds of literary work that he had not done well. As editor of the Boston *Transcript* and author of the *Life of Henry Clay*, and the drama of *Velasco*, and of the familiar and popular song, "A Life on the Ocean Wave," he was very successful. He published novels also, and volumes of verse, and his skill as a compiler of school books was conceded. In later years he was the most eminent professional man of letters who was deeply interested in the phenomena called "Spiritualism," and he published several works upon the subject, and was a very active proselyte.

Mr. Sargent was a man of singular sweetness of nature and amiability of manner. He differed without acrimony, and he maintained his own convictions with a gentle firmness which, without yielding the point in dispute, did not alienate the disputant. His literary tastes were refined and sound, and he was remarkably familiar with the whole range of the poetry of the English tongue. Not long before his death he had completed a cyclopaedia of English and American poetry which the "Harper's" will publish. It is a library of the most famous and excellent literature of that kind, and it will be undoubtedly the editor's chief literary title to remembrance.

For many years Mr. Sargent has lived in Boston, quietly engaged in his work, and his name was so seldom mentioned that he was thought by many to have died long ago. But the sad news which announces the end of his blameless and busy life has been received on all sides with a very sincere and tender expression of sorrow and kind remembrance.

A STRANGE STORY.

MY friends were engaged at whist, whilst I myself was seated in the armchair ruminating. One of the gentlemen asked me if I was comfortable, and if so, would I sit still till the game was finished. As I felt comfortable I sat still, as requested. Then he told me that he saw the spirit form of a young man standing beside me. Perhaps one of my sons, I thought. He took out of his pocket a large glass crystal, and looked into it to see if there was any message. "I see writing," he said, "and it is very clearly written. Thus it is written:—'I fear that I shall not be recognised. My name is Tom Henry Cook. My father is A. Cook, of Ballarat, public inspector. I departed when 23 years old.' As I could not remember anyone called Cook at Ballarat I was obliged to say so; and thus, as the spirit was not recognised, there was no further communication. The young Englishman, the medium, Mr. George Spriggs, was rather disappointed. He came to this colony about three months ago, and has not been at Ballarat, and knows no one from that locality. We all retired to bed, and before I fell asleep I became convinced that I remembered Sergeant Cook, of Ballarat, who was Inspector of Nuisances; and so next morning I did inform the medium that I remembered Mr. Cook well, a most active energetic officer in the police force, and who was now in Melbourne. I mention these details to show that I was quite unaware of the existence of the real Mr. Cook. By-and-bye I remembered that the active energetic officer was not called Cook, but Lerner; and so I was thrown off the trail. Still, I had a vivid picture in my mind of the appearance of Sergeant Cook, a short, stout, active man, and I concluded that he must have been the predecessor of the well-known Sergeant Lerner. So I called in the advice and assistance of my old friend, Mr. Rodier, who had been a magistrate and town clerk of Ballarat East for many years, and came into frequent contact with the members of the police force. To my surprise, he could not remember Sergeant Cook, but he kindly undertook to make inquiries for me. It was at last brought to my mind that this Sergeant Cook, of whose figure and appearance I had such a distinct recollection, had not been a member of the police force in Ballarat, but had been a member of

the police force in Kilmarnock, where I resided for many years. So I had to wait the result of Mr. Rodier's inquiries. At last he informed me that Mr. Abel Cook, Government Inspector of Works, lived in Ballarat. This was so far satisfactory; but I received no information of his family. I then applied to Mr. Rennie, of Ballarat, for information as to Mr. Cook's son, if he ever had one. In the course of a week I received an answer. "I have seen Mr. Abel Cook. Yes, he had a son of that name, who died in Ballarat in November, 1878, 24 years of age. Mr. Cook is curious to know why the question is asked." Thus the writing on the crystal was completely verified after some weeks of investigation. No doubt the young man had a message to communicate if he had been recognised at the time; and I trust that at some future time he may have an opportunity of sending his message.

THOMAS LANG.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

WILL-POWER.

FROM small beginning oft do great events arise. From the tiny germ enveloped in an acorn, springs forth the majestic oak, that spreads its stalwart arms as if to embrace the four winds of heaven. Even thus embryo man springs forth. At first, on entering the world, a puny infant, then growing and developing to the full stature of a man; with power, it may be, to stir the nations of the earth; from east to west, from north to south. Now, from whence think you comes this controlling power? It is born of the *Will* which, like a huge magnet, sways the multitude according to its position.

Will-power, in fact, means *individuality*. Without this, men are unstable as the wind; driven hither and thither by every gust of opinion. Such men are not fit to be leaders; they themselves are never out of leading-strings. In fact, but for the outward appearance, they never get beyond the infantile stage and, like children, always strive to have their own way, generally a very *bad* way; although, in their own estimation, supremely good—those who differ from them always being in the wrong. Such men (query, do they deserve the name?) on entering spirit-life are amazed at their pigmy appearance, dwarfed in spirit as in understanding.

On the other hand he who has individualised himself by using his reason, enters spirit-life fully developed, symmetrical and beautiful. From this you will see how it behoves all to think for themselves in *all* things, in order that they may "make their calling and election sure" and be ready to receive that crown of glory which is bestowed upon those only of whom it can be said they have been good and faithful servants, using their talents as those who have to give an account of their stewardship.

Castlemaine.

SECRET FAULTS.

Well spake the Shepherd King of old, "Oh! cleanse Thou me from my secret faults"—my hidden faults; that are unknown to myself. Now, it may seem strange to say that a man should pray to be cleansed from faults of which he is *unconscious*. Nevertheless, a blemish is not the less a blemish because the owner thereof is blind. Now it so happens that comparatively few have their *spiritual* eyes fully opened; and yet it is with these eyes, viz., the spiritual, that our faults we scan. Hidden faults are often great obstacles to a man's spiritual progress. The fact of their being *hidden* makes them the more dangerous. An open enemy is better to deal with than one lying in ambush: So that you see the Psalmist was a wise man when he prayed to be delivered from his secret faults or enemies.

Imitate his example, and the cloud shall be withdrawn, and the stumbling-blocks revealed to you; and with the revelation shall come strength to remove the *impediments*, or to surmount them. Now, I call this a glorious work, this preparing the way, this smoothing of the road that leads to the Temple of Progress. At her shrine be ye hearty worshippers. Spare not your offerings, but lay down on her altar your best gifts—those of the mind the intellect—and she, in return, will lead

you with *Spiritual* gifts. Gifts that will open up a wider arena for usefulness on both sides the grave. For it is well that your Spiritual gifts should be exercised before you cross over to us. Then, on entering your new home, you may be compared to a skilled artisan entering the Master's workshop, of whom it may be said—"Well done good and faithful servant; because thou hast been careful over a few things, I will bestow on you many things. May this Crown of rejoicing be yours, and that of each one whom my words may reach."

Castlemaine.

I CANNOT TELL.

(By A. W. EUSTACE.)

Now sixty years I've seen the sun,
His annual course unaltered run;
How many more I'll live see,
How many more with you I'll be,

I cannot tell.

All flesh must die, as time does tell,
The old and young, the beau and belle,
And soon the hand that holds this pen
Will cease to move, and ask, what then?

I cannot tell.

'Twas but just now, to me it seems,
I passed the threshold of my teens,
A checker'd life it's been with me,
And what the remnant yet shall be,

I cannot tell.

I've climbed the mount of three score years,
Oft swimming in a flood of tears;
Now, what, alas, will me betide,
As I descend the other side?

I cannot tell.

It's not far down the present side
Into the valley where reside
The sleeping dead, where none molest
The weary in their peaceful rest:

I cannot tell.

It may be rough this short incline
That leads to where no sun does shine;
And I may shortly reach the goal
Where man gives up his spirit, soul:

I cannot tell.

Is there a life beyond the grave,
Without distinction, prince or slave?
Or, like as here, where fools are great,
And wise men held in low estate?

I cannot tell.

Will all be joyous in the spheres,
A happy land through endless years?
Will Divs there with Lazarus meet
Lend him his hand with hearty greet?

I cannot tell.

Or, like the brute creation be,
No future spirit-life for me
When I yield up this fickle breath,
Sink in the gloom,—eternal death?

I cannot tell.

Must I accept the evidence
Of Crookes and Wallace, men of sense?
And countless others, equally great,
Who say there is a future state?

I cannot tell.

But what can mean these gentle sprites
Who speak to me of grander sights,
Who whisper in some kindly ears
There's life for you in higher spheres?

I cannot tell.

If this be so, spirits above,
Convey to me this sense of love,
Which th' immortal Gods proclaim
To be all man-kind's final aim.

Chiltern, March, 16th, 1880.

THE TYERMAN FUND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR.—In case you can find room for the following account of my receipts and disbursements in connection with the above, I shall feel much obliged by its insertion in your valuable paper.

We thought it kindest to dispense with all unnecessary ceremony in the presentation to Mrs. Tyerman, and accordingly Messrs. Bullock, Westman, and myself attended at her house on the 24th instant. With few words a cheque was handed to the widow of our deceased friend, whose hearty thanks we had to promise should be conveyed to the generous subscribers. Let me thank them therefore most cordially on Mrs. Tyerman's behalf, and on my own account, those friends in particular who have helped in the work of collection as well as with their purses.—In haste believe me

Yours very truly,

HENRY GALE,

Treasurer Tyerman Family Fund.

Sydney, 26th Feb., 1881.

H. GALE IN ACCOUNT WITH THE TYERMAN FAMILY FUND DR.

To Receipts per—	£.	s.	d.
Mr. Miller (List)	11	4	0
Mr. Cavenagh	22	1	6
Mr. Fischer	4	14	0
Miss Tyler	1	15	0
Mr. Green (Newcastle)	2	5	0
Mr. Corner	8	7	6
Captain Edwards	3	3	0
Mr. Wallwork (Newcastle)	2	16	0
Mr. Hocombe	3	3	6
Mr. Haviland	1	10	0
Mrs. Cockerton	6	4	6
Mr. Garton	2	1	0
Mr. Westman	5	15	6
Mr. Gale	31	8	6
Mr. Cavenagh (2nd List)	2	15	0
Mr. Fischer	1	1	0
To Receipts from—			
Mr. G. Milner Stephen	5	0	0
Mr. Oberlin	5	0	0
Mr. Corner—Proceeds of Liberal Picnic	20	16	6
Mr. Gale—Proceeds of Lecture on Voltaire, by Mr. C. Bright	9	14	6
Mr. Booth—Proceeds of Lyceum Amateur D. & M. Society's Entertainment	11	0	0
Cr.	£161	16	0
By Payments Funeral Expense, &c. 11 16 0			
" 3 Advances, Mrs. T. 25 0 0			
" Balance do 125 0 0			
	£161	16	0

COLLECTIONS PER "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

	£.	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged } (less error in addition Feb. 10.) }	60	6	0
Mr. W. Matthews	3	12	0
W. H. T.	1	0	0
Receipts Entertainment ...	£31	10	0
Contribution to Expenses:			
Mr. J. Carson	5	5	0
V. A., Spiritualists	3	0	0
	39	15	0
Less Expenses	12	13	6
	£27	1	6—27 1 6
	£91	19	6

This amount has been duly remitted to Mrs. Tyerman: her acknowledgment of the same will be published in due course.

MEMORIAL STONES FOR THE PIONEER SPIRITUALISTIC SPEAKERS OF AUSTRALIA.

ABOUT two months since a friend and admirer of the late Mr. Tyerman suggested to us the propriety of agitating for the erection of a suitably inscribed memorial stone to that indefatigable worker in the cause of Spiritualism and freethought. We heartily approved of the idea, but suggested at the same time the propriety of including in the scheme another memorial to an equally worthy and outspoken worker who had preceded him in the same field, Mr. B. S. Naylor, who becoming convinced by careful investigation in 1869, of the truth of Spiritualism, devoted his talents and energies to its public advocacy, lecturing at the Mechanics' Institute, Collins-street, sustaining controversies in the public press and editing the first Spiritualistic paper published in Melbourne, *The Glow-worm*. For about three years previous to his decease, he lectured on Spiritualistic and Free-thought subjects at Stawell, and passed from Melbourne to the spirit world in June, 1875, whilst his co-worker Mr. Tyerman was lecturing at Sydney.

As earnest, intelligent, and energetic apostles of Spiritualism and free religious thought, the progressionists of Victoria and New South Wales owe them a debt of gratitude, their names should not be allowed to sink into oblivion, we therefore ask those who think with us in this matter to forward subscriptions for the purpose of erecting a suitably inscribed memorial stone to John Tyerman and B. S. Naylor.

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

MORE tinkering! More bowing of the scientific knee to the Baal of traditional theology! *The Illustrated London News* informs us that "Dr. Samuel Kinns, F.R.A.S., read a paper at the Victoria Institute to show that the advancement of scientific knowledge confirms the cosmogony of Moses, the days being taken as enormous periods of time, and he gave improved translations of several verses removing special difficulties which have hitherto existed."

Improved translations! Well may Huxley aim his sarcasm against the wonderful flexibility of Hebrew! Well may Dr. Bresslau Jacobs, himself for over twenty years a teacher of that tongue, confess that "to be dogmatic on the subject of Hebrew interpretation is to be foolish!" But it is to be hoped that Dr. Kinns has acquainted the Bible Revision Committee with his "improvements."

It would be interesting to know what light the learned Doctor's discoveries in Biblical exegesis will throw upon that little story about the serpent tempting Eve, which under the heading of "The snake in the grass." Judge Strange* has so admirably paraphrased as follows:—"We once knew of a lovely woman, combining in her person youthfulness and maturity in a degree never attained before or afterwards; not indebted to the arts of millinery for her attractions—without temptation, in fact, to show herself otherwise than she was, being already happily disposed of in matrimony to one on whom she had never set eyes before, but who yet was the only man she could have accepted. Yes, married was she at the early age of one second of time, without consent of parents, for she had none. Strolling, a day or two afterwards, in her husband's park, in a locality so secluded that none have known where to find it, though its boundaries are carefully laid down in the family archives; thinking of nothing—How could she think? She was but an infant of hours, so unripe in mental power as not to know good from evil, without even a chance of cultivating such knowledge, there being then no evil; all had been carefully examined by the author of all things, and all had been found *very good*—suddenly she perceives, gliding in the grass, a beauteous form. Limbless, wingless, and yet not touching the ground with its body, it moved with unimaginable ease, destitute of support. Seeing the lovely female, this creature turned his piercing glance upon her and arrested her attention. 'Fair one,'

*The Speaker's Commentary Reviewed," by T. L. Strange.

he said, 'are you fond of fruit?' 'Surely,' she replied, 'I am fond of everything, for all is good. But what fruit is it that you speak of?' 'That,' he said, describing it by name. 'That fruit,' she replied, 'I am told I must not eat of, lest I die.' 'Of course you understand what is meant by dying?' 'I know nothing,' she answered, 'but that all is very good.' 'Then,' said the creature, 'take this fruit and eat it, for surely this also is very good.' She little knew, poor thing, that in the midst of this beneficent *very good* creation, here was one addressing her full of subtlety, and that his speech teemed with lies, designed to effect her ruin. In her infantine simplicity she took the good fruit and ate of it, and gave thereof to her husband, equally simple with herself. On this, unutterable wrath fell upon them. They were put under an everlasting ban, and driven from their inheritance. An ox-headed monster was placed to guard its portals, and they and their unborn progeny, for perpetual generations, were turned into the outer world, consigned to sufferings and the cold oblivion of death. A dim, shadowy, unpronounced, undiscernable, and very distant hope of deliverance, is thought by some to have been conveyed to them in the form of a curse upon the tempter; and thus justice and mercy met together."

It was stated in the daily papers lately that Messrs. Trubner and Co., the well-known London publishers, had donated their valuable exhibit of books in the Melbourne Exhibition to the Public Library. When it is remembered that comprised in the collection are such standards of Free Thought as Theodore Parker's works, Lewis's "Problems of Life and Mind," W. R. Greg's works, Dr. Giles's "Hebrew and Christian Records," Winwood Reade's "Martyrdom of Man," Fichte's works, Comte's "Positive Philosophy," the careful compilations of Judge Strange, Fiele's "Outlines of the History of Ancient Religions," Johnson's, and other works on "Oriental Religions," Lange's "History of Materialism," Lord Amberley's "Analysis of Religious Belief," Moncreu D. Conway's "Sacred Anthology," Renan's "Apostles," &c., the spiritual works of R. Dale Owen, Allan Kardec, and many others; Messrs. Trubner's generous gift will be duly appreciated. And we cherish the hope that the writers in our Colonial religious and secular press who make it their aim to belittle and misrepresent the position of Rationalism, will avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded to become somewhat better acquainted with subjects of which at present they appear not to know even the A. B. C.

The following is from a late number of the London *National Reformer* :—

"The Rev. Joseph Cook of Boston, U. S. A., has come over to England to help the distressed and overmatched clergy against the Free thinkers. Several newspapers have been sent to me with a report of what is very properly called the delivery of his discourse on "Does Death end all?" for, judging by the reports, the Rev. gentleman has only one lecture which he has learned carefully and delivers over and over again. This explains his refusal to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in debate, for if he has only got up a single lecture, the poor man would be sadly at a loss in oral controversy; surface knowledge can easily be acquired by rote, just as deal may be painted to resemble mahogany; on scratching either, the real material shows through. Bitter complaints are made by Christians as to Mr. Cook, similar to the wails over Dr. Talmage. Militant Christians defending their creeds are not content to take as payment the proceeds of the lecture, i.e., the value of the lecture as estimated by those who listen to it, but demand a large fee, which has to be drawn from the Christians of the district in subscriptions. Mr. Cook will not save souls under £20. . . . America often sends over men who are a credit to herself and a benefit to us, but she might as well keep for home consumption her Cooks, Talmages, Moodys and Sankseys. We have plenty of religious vulgarity here, and have no need of the imported article."

THE LATE JOHN TYERMAN.

We had hoped the religious papers had done with their defamation of our late co-worker in the fields of Free Thought and Spiritualism, but the following cutting from a New Zealand paper, forwarded to us by a correspondent who was staggered at the circumstantiality of the statements contained therein, shows that the *modern* Christians are still busy and that their falsehoods are disseminated over a wide area :—

WARNING TO INFIDELS AND FREETHINKERS.—The Sydney *Witness*, of the 18th ultimo, in a paragraph headed, "In what state did John Tyerman die!" says :— "As the secular papers which noticed the death of John Tyerman—the boldest propagator of infidelity, and the loudest declaimer against the God of the Bible, that ever dwelt in Sydney—did not state the cause of his death, we made it our business to call at the Receiving-house, at Darling-ton, a few days ago, and had an interview with the doctor and the attendant that waited on him. The doctor explicitly told us John Tyerman died of *delirium tremens*, commonly called 'the horrors'; that his case was one of the worst that he had had to deal with, having been for sixty hours without sleep,* and every effort to produce sleep proved unavailing; that he must have been drinking very heavily, and that it was not the first attack of the same malady; and that he died imagining he was contending with enemies. We have heard that the last words he uttered was that the devil had hold of him. . . . Such is the end of one who led so many astray from the house of God and the Word of God. Surely such an end should be a warning to his infidel followers." The last moments of Voltaire and Tom Paine were analogous to those of Tyerman. They all seemed to have obtained something of a foretaste of the place of woe to which their rapidly-ebbing ill-spent life was hastening them. Verily, the wicked are driven away out of the world in their wickedness." They would fain live, but die they must.

On receipt of the above we wrote to a friend in Sydney requesting him to wait upon the two gentlemen referred to, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the allegation made and report upon it. Accompanied by the secretary of the Sydney Lyceum, our friend waited upon the doctor and superintendent of the Receiving-house, and ascertained from the former that two clerical-looking gentlemen had accosted him at the gate and asked whether Mr. Tyerman died of *delirium tremens*, that he had answered in the affirmative! he asked if they were friends of Mr. Tyerman, and one of them answered in the affirmative. Dr. O'Connor distinctly denied the climax of assertions attributed to him in the paragraph which are evidently the invention of the Christian friend referred to, as the superintendent disclaims having done anything further in the matter than refer the enquirers to the doctor, the only basis of fact is that the nervous derangement which resulted in Mr. Tyerman's decease was "*delirium tremens*." The preponderating cause of this disease being alcohol, the public naturally associate the idea of drunkenness with it, and assume that those who suffer from it are victims of their own folly. The following quotation from an eminent authority, which may be supplemented by others, will serve to correct the erroneous impression. We have italicised those portions which bear upon the true causes of our friend's malady :—

"It (*delirium tremens*) arises in a large proportion of cases from the excessive use of ardent spirits; but a few instances have been traced to other sources, such as the poison of lead, the habitual use of opium, and strong mental emotion. It appears to have for its proximate cause a peculiarly excited state of the nervous system; but the occurrence of such symptoms in cases of extreme inanition would lead to the belief that *exhaustion of nervous power* consequent upon long-continued excitement, expresses, perhaps, more accurately its intimate nature."—[Dr. Geo. Gregory, in "Elements of the Theory and Practice of Medicine."]

*Mr. Tyerman was not forty-eight hours in the asylum.—Ed. H.L.

The following letter sent to a friend in a neighbouring colony by one who resided in proximity to Mr. Tyerman's former residence, and knew him and his habits is *so appropos* to the matter before us, that we take the liberty to print it, and with it we thus close the painful subject.

PADDINGTON, 14th December, 1880.

DEAR SIR,—

It is but too likely that the sectarian papers you name would place the worst construction upon the unfortunate circumstances attending the passing away of so fearless and uncompromising an antagonist of their system of faith and dogma. I have not seen their statements, but gather them from yours.

It is quite true that my poor friend, having again lost his faculties and gradually become uncontrollably restless and unsafe to himself, it was apparently necessary and for the best that he should have the restraint of the Reception-house at Darlinghurst. His medical adviser saw no better course than this to be adopted, and it was hoped that a few days, or a week or two at most, would restore him to himself. In the absence of restraint, for which private influence and assistance were unavailing, the end might have come in a more aggravated form. On the other hand, no one thought of the possibility of his doing other than recover.

But in any event there was no reasonable alternative for that which was done. As it was, in his disordered and weakened condition, he succumbed in his sleep, after experiencing two attacks of violent spasms of the stomach, both within twelve or thirteen hours of his last breath, near two p.m., on 27th ultimo, when he had been in the Reception-house forty-eight hours. He seems to have died of nervous exhaustion, and if the doctors are right in coupling *delirium tremens* with the case, it had been induced not in the vulgar manner, but in connection with the collapse of cerebral and nervous power generally. For about eight years he had ceased to be a total abstainer, but I feel assured that his break-down was caused, not by an occasional use of colonial wine or ale,—he took them in moderation, and very rarely touched anything stronger—but as the culmination of a natural susceptibility to brain disease, which I have ascertained disclosed itself on two occasions whilst a teetotaler for six years prior to 1872.

Poor Tyerman, like other exceptional men, had to his full burden of trials, and withal a brain of wonderful power, capable for the work we know he has done, but not calculated to stand the strain which evermore seemed to have been gaining power over him, notwithstanding intervals of more or less length, during which favorable conditions, comparatively, enabled him to fulfil his life-work as the boldest rational reformer—the only one worthy of the name—Australia has known, and not surpassed in spirit, courage, and singleminded honesty, by any of the times about which we know most. I need not ask, is such a one to be disparaged because he was the victim of a mysterious infirmity which beloued certain crises of his life, and the last hours of his presence with it? Let us rather admire and be thankful, for so much able and faithful service performed by a brother, in spite of the grievous affliction which alone disabled him from doing more. And remembering how promiscuously disease and suffering, misfortune and calamities of all kinds are distributed throughout the world, even in civilised society, and even in the so-called religious world itself, affecting more or less the most excellent of the earth; is it not childishness unworthy of the days of Job to attempt to represent any such mournful feature in Mr. Tyerman's history as a shocking example of the results of Free thought and Spiritualism?

Believe me, with kind regards to yourself and friends,

Yours truly,

HY. GALE

THE SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

A break having occurred in the Sunday evening services through a difficulty in obtaining the Temperance Hall, about a month since the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, have determined to discontinue their Sunday meetings pending definite advice as to the time of arrival of Dr. Peebles and Prof. Denton.

The Melbourne Spiritualistic Society have made arrangements for a course of Sunday lectures in Collingwood. Free thought services are held in the Apollo Hall, Melbourne, by Dr. Hughes and at the Masonic Hall, by the Free Discussion Society, on Sunday evenings.

MESSAGE DEPARTMENT.

A message department in connexion with this paper will be commenced next month, Mr. John Carson having kindly undertaken to furnish us with copies of messages as received through the mediumship of Mr. George Spriggs from spirits who are desirous to open up communication with friends and relatives still in the body. The authenticity of some of these messages has already been proved.

DEATH has been busy amongst the mediums and prominent Spiritualistic writers in America. In addition to Epes Sargent we have to record the departure of Mrs. J. S. Rudd, for some time medium for the *Banner of Light* circle, and Mr. D. C. Densmore, the mundane editor of the *Voice of Angels*. Mr. Densmore was a healing medium of good powers who, some five years since, was so persistently urged by his spirit friends to start a paper as a vehicle for their messages to the world, that his natural diffidence was overcome, and in conjunction with a band of spirits he has conducted and established on a firm footing the excellent little paper we refer to. While health remained he was an indefatigable worker in the cause, and we have assurance from his coadjutors that he will be equally active in his new sphere of action in promoting the success of the paper he has so well conducted here before.

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Subscribers to the *Medium* newspaper are informed that from some, as yet unexplained, cause, no copies have reached me for the past two months, the latest date received being December 10th. 1880. In consequence of this and previous disappointments in the receipt of English periodicals, I have made arrangements with a business house—Messrs. N. Trübner and Co., of London—to collect all my English journals and forward a mail parcel every four weeks. The first parcel under this arrangement is expected by the in-coming mail, and subscribers may depend upon regular delivery in future.

W. H. TERRY.

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