

THE 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."

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THE parable of "the ten talents," is the exposition of human duty everywhere, at all times, and under all circumstances.

Whether we receive one talent or one hundred, nature, life, God, and man, all alike require of us usury, in proportion to that we have received, and the abuse of our opportunities can scarcely incur more merited self reproach than their total neglect, or the selfish apathy which hides away the talent committed to us in idle obscurity. Assuming that we do not misinterpret our life duty in this analogy what vast amount of usury must the possession of the ten spiritualistic talents call for! and what splendid opportunities for self culture and world wide usefulness the gift of these glorious talents opens up to us! Looking back upon all we have gained in the past, achieved in the present, and count on for the future through the boon of Spiritual illumination, we know not how we can be grateful enough, or how put out the Spiritual talents confided to us to the best usury.

The certainty of immortality; the restoration of every friend cut off by the solemn mystery of death; a standard of right by which the worth of every act, word, or thought can be gauged; the exchange of eternal light and progress, for mystery, doubt, fear, and darkness; a world wide scheme of spiritual science for the shadowy and unreal myths of supernaturalism; reconciliation, with ourselves, our fate, our fellow man, and our God, for self contempt, despair, and unreasoning faith in the unknown and incomprehensible, these are but some of the jewels entrusted to the keeping of every human being who has had the good fortune to become a Spiritualist.

As I could write a volume on the worth of our possessions in spiritualism, so could I also fill a folio with

the various modes in which we, as Spiritualists, might put our splendid talents to splendid usury. As neither time nor space will permit me to enlarge on this theme, I must limit myself to a very few of the means by which, as I venture to suggest, we might improve upon the opportunities open to us, so few of which we seem to recognize as actually appealing to us for personal effort.

Addressing myself at this time, solely to my fellow labourers in these colonies, I would say, one of the principal demands of the hour upon every Australian Spiritualist is for co-operative effort in every direction. In the first place we need a central Bureau, where regular and continuous subscriptions can be received, for the purpose of accumulating a fund, to be devoted to missionary labours; a fund to which all could contribute, and from which missionary work could be organized and paid for, so that the remotest points from which contributions are received could from time to time be visited and supplied with such spiritual revivalism as opportunities afford. Speakers and mediums visiting these colonies, would undoubtedly be glad to perform missionary work in many directions which their lack of means will not allow them to reach, and where their individual efforts would not suffice to command attention, or secure interest. To travel, get up audiences, advertise, and organize effective methods of propagandism, means are wanted, and knowledge of the country and its resources is necessary. The "Victorian Association of Spiritualists" in Melbourne, do all that their power and means admit of, in their own city.

Splendid meetings have been held here and in Sydney, Warm friends, and cordial co-operation with all my own efforts have been rendered, and will, I am sure, be afforded to all capable persons who visit these great centres, but something more is needed than this.

The Melbourne and Sydney Lyceums are finely sustained, but the efforts of the officers are necessarily confined to the cities. The literature of the movement also is put forth by individuals whose time is too much taxed to do more than prepare Spiritual food for the benefit of others. If efforts to sustain and propagate the cause, in a word, to promote missionary work throughout the colonies, were carried forward with the same energy outside the two great capitals I have

named, as they have been at much sacrifice within these limits, I am sure the people generally, would adopt Spiritualism far more readily than they would any of the other floating ideas that the desperate revivalism of the clergy succeed in forcing down the popular throat. Out of the immense multitudes that crowd my meetings at the Opera House every Sunday night, a very small proportion comparatively speaking, are Spiritualists, but of those who do attend, aye! and come night after night, there are but few who are not prepared to become Spiritualists, and if these persons measurably represent the general status of the Colonial mind, we can but vaguely imagine the extent of the work that might be achieved, were there branch associations connected with the one in Melbourne, and a more active energetic and self-sacrificing devotion to the cause manifested everywhere throughout the scattered ranks of Colonial Spiritualism.

In this country, as elsewhere, there are whole souled persons, ready to aid the cause as far as personal effort is concerned by all the devotion of their noble natures, but if such brave workers as Mr. M. Landy, in Sale, Mr. Denovan, in Sandhurst, and a few more of the same true ring were strengthened in their individual exertions by associative action on the part of others, and a general bond of union with the Societies of large capitals, their own unequal share of the burden would be lifted from their shoulders, and the effect of their generous efforts to benefit their cause would be strengthened a thousand fold. Again; I would say, a more intelligent and zealous spirit is needed for the culture of mediumistic power in the home or family circle. I have endeavoured to provide for this requirement in the publication of my little brochure "On the Road," but I must be permitted to add, I can but point the way; to walk it, and attain the goal of mediumistic unfoldment is a work which must be performed individually, not vicariously, or through the mere perusal of spiritual literature.

The next great requirement of the time is, thorough unselfish unity of feeling in reference to every movement which can be made for the advancement of the cause. It seems strange to see merchants, traders, operatives, benefit and secret societies, all united upon the one focal point of advancing the interests of their particular cause, whilst Spiritualists, with the best cause in the world, can never agree upon any one point of action, or ever combine to carry out a single plan of propagandism, without shrinking back in mortal fear lest some one's opinion should be preferred to their own, or some one is going to exercise leadership over some other one. There is not a sect amongst the thousand and one subdivisions of christianity, but what has grown and flourished in the strength of an organization, and under the combined force of united action, and yet with better incentives to action, and higher, firmer, nobler grounds of faith, than any other sect in existence, Spiritualists cannot combine together to build a barn, determine upon any fixed plan of action, acknowledge one central point of common belief, or unite upon any definite idea of intellectual, social, or moral solidarity. I do not pretend to say why this is, I only know it is so; and the result is disastrous to every attempt which individuals may make to advance our cause, or place it before the world in such an organic shape as nature demands, and the world can rely on for strength and guidance.

Still another, and at present, one of the most important demands of the hour, is a fixed resolve on the part of every true Spiritualist, to "have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." I must again remind my readers, I am writing suggestions for my fellow labourers in the colonies, and not elsewhere. If they would avoid the many follies, fanaticisms, and deserved exposures, which in other countries are perpetually harassing the path of the truthful investigator, and affording a sneering age the opportunity of declaring that "Spiritualists are all deluders, or deluded," let them fear not to demand others, and act out for themselves the motto quoted above. It is under such conditions alone that faith becomes knowledge, and spiritual knowledge erects itself on a rock, against which the winds of public opinion, and the waves of human perversity and error, may dash for ever and in vain. An esteemed

correspondent writing to me quite recently says: "Your unparalleled successes here, will doubtless encourage a large flock of the brethren and sisters to follow your footsteps, in the hope of sharing your triumphs; and if this is the case, how in the name of all the angels are we to guard ourselves against the shameful pretences of spiritual mediumship, which so often end in exposure and disgrace, and that despite the equally shameful attempts of some of the spiritual leaders, to bolster the imposters up, and excuse their infamous deceptions on the senile plea of *charity*! Good heavens! have these imbeciles no charity for those who are deceived? for those who have borne scorn, contumely, loss of name, friends, and fortune, in the honest belief that Spiritualism was true, a belief which could only arise from true mediumistic power, a belief which is dashed into ceaseless ruin, if mediums are not true, and the phenomena they have exhibited prove to be imposture. For pity's sake devise some means of helping these most wicked harpies on our best affections out of these colonies, or aid us to contrive such crucial tests of truth as will justify us in rejecting the false, and denouncing its association with our cause as soon as it is detected." To this and several other appeals of a similar kind we could reply confidently; you have nothing to fear if you apply to your mediums as to your belief; the maxim: "Let us have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Crucial tests suitable to every occasion were not difficult to devise, and their application was never refused in the early days of Spiritual investigation. In the exercise of my own mediumship, the more stringent were the tests demanded, the more ingenious were the spirits' modes of satisfying enquiry. I have sat with the best physical mediums of the age, and until the last few years have never been warned that "the mediums would sink through the floor," melt out, collapse, or give up the ghost altogether, at the touch of an intrusive hand, the sudden turning on of a light, or the too near approach of a curious pair of eyes to the scene of operations. I was never told that I was no Spiritualist if I did not believe all the masks I looked upon to be spirits of those I had best loved on earth, and all the masqueraders to be angels from the seventh sphere. And yet in the presence of our earliest, best proven, and most thoroughly tried *media*, hands, feet, faces, lights, touches, movements, voices, music, levitation, fire tests, and every species of phenomena, the full sum of which may be termed materialization, have been produced, and that in light rooms and under crucial tests in connection with which the charge of collusion or deception would have been insanity, or pure malice. The *true* medium is as anxious to prove truth as the most cautious sceptic could be, and will never object to any reasonable tests, or respectful objections that may serve to eliminate doubtful points, and put deception out of the question. In a matter so unprecedented; in our modern experience at least; on a point so deeply momentous, in the greatest of all sciences and the truest of all religions, as Spiritualism is—if it be anything at all—we cannot do too much to prove its actuality, or demand too much to assure ourselves it is an undeniable fact. I know for I have proved it, that honest scepticism and civil demands for full proof have never injured medial powers, or marred demonstrations of Spiritual agency; on the contrary the Misses Fox, Messrs Redman, Conklin, Koons, Jennie Lord, D. D. Home, and hosts of others in the opening of the manifestations, not only submitted cheerfully to every test kindly proposed, but gladly aided in suggesting new modes of testing spirits, and often proposed experiments to prove the power, which the sitters would never have asked for. Kindness, sympathy, gentleness, and candour, are absolute elements of success, in operating upon sensitives and stimulating good conditions, whilst the reverse of all these emotions produces psychological effects, the results of which may mar, if not wholly neutralize the conditions through which spirits operate, but the use of the senses, the application of every conceivable test which kindness, gentleness, and politeness will allow, to prove the grandest and most stupendous facts in human history are not only allowable but are imperatively demanded,

and the circle that will not apply them deserve no credit from the public, no title to the name of investigators; whilst the medium who objects to them is open to grave suspicion of being no medium at all. The errors, the shortcomings, selfishness, and perversity of Spiritualists, do not make or mar the absolute facts of Spiritualism, but they retard instead of advancing the world's progress and the unfoldment of a divine and salvatory revelation, and completely illustrate the parable of the man who hid away the talent confided to him in the napkin of selfishness, apathy, and cupidity, instead of putting it out to noble interest. None of my true spiritualistic friends will deem I have written harshly in these comments, for none of the very true will find their application to themselves. Those that do realize them, must remember I write in no anxiety for our glorious cause. The power that inaugurated it is strong enough to bend, and shape it to all the divine uses for which it could be designed; but because I firmly believe every Spiritualist has received with his knowledge the ten talents of priceless value, I would stimulate them to a full realization of the responsibility which accompanies the trust, some items of which I think may be classified as—more energy in promoting missionary efforts and giving again the bread of life which has fed our own souls. Less selfish egotism in the assertion of our own views, and more unselfish unity of action for the common good of all; more earnest effort at individual unfoldment of medial powers, and a firm, honest, and manful resolution to have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, at any cost, with or without Spiritualism. There are many more demands which each day's experience of this noble cause opens up before us, but if we could commence with a supply in the above directions, I think we should do enough for one generation, and lay foundations for the next, in which the souls of humanity would be found to have grown at least a head and shoulders taller than the master passion of selfishness has permitted us to attain to in this age. What a blessing may Spiritualism then become to humanity, and what a blessing will be wafted to those realms of causation in which we shall be still reaping the fruits of that which we have sown on earth?

Heaven grant us such a fulfilment of the parable of the talents, both here and hereafter?

EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.

COMMUNICATIONS.

God has shown you through our ministry something higher, something more worth your striving for than the earthly glories of worldly ambition; and whilst, therefore, we wish to advance your worldly position at every opportunity, we should be sorry indeed to see you attach any importance to success in the sense in which the world uses the term. But increased means is increased means of doing good; and as the opportunities of helping your fellow creatures will never be wanting around you, you need never be afraid of any wealth you might obtain, for even the fabulous untold riches of Cræsus would melt away like snow before the endeavour to grapple with modern pauperism. Each individual can only do his share, and if each really did this, attended to those cases of real distress which came particularly under his notice, we should no longer see so much misery and crime, especially in the great centres of civilisation. It is not in the rural districts, where men have to earn their living by bodily toil, that you hear of want, begging, and starvation; though these rude cultivators of the soil earn but little in excess of their own immediate wants, they have always a little they will give to those worse off than themselves, and many a poor laborer has gone hungry to work that the greater part of his dinner might revive a famished tramp. But turn to the large cities and all is changed; beggary has become a profession, at least so those miserable creatures who rule your poor are always saying, and a terribly miserable profession it is. Do they never consider that where such is the case it is their own fault? Do they never reflect that, if those in power always found work for those who were willing to earn their

living, beggars would have no sympathy accorded to them, and, consisting as they would do, only of the idle and the vicious, would be unable to earn a subsistence by their mendicant trade. Then indeed beggary would cease to exist. But, if you deny to the idle and the vicious this means of obtaining a livelihood, you must provide them with some other, or you will drive them to the commission of crimes to keep themselves from starving.

Men will soon recognise the fact that every human being has an immortal soul; that that soul cannot be lost, nor indeed was ever in danger of being so, and that that soul is capable of improvement without limit. When they perceive these great truths, your prisons, your penitentiaries, your gaols will be doomed, and in their place will arise those great moral hospitals which will do so much to regenerate mankind. These men will be first taught to earn their living, and to pay by their labour for their own support, whilst they will be able to accumulate such excess as they may earn for their own use when they are fit to be trusted again amongst their fellow-men. Instead of by prison rules and harsh regulations, the prisoner will be won over to virtue by the actual love of those who endeavour to help him; he will have every incitement, every inducement to pursue a life of virtue, whilst preparing himself to renew the battle in the outside world. Men will then be sentenced, not to penal servitude or solitary confinement, but to be sent to a hospital-until reformed; and, when the aid of the immortals is called in to judge of the actuality of their moral state, you need no longer fear the professions of the hypocrite, or the pretended piety of the knave, for these are only too transparent to us, and cannot deceive us for a single instant.

June 8th, 1878.

Nothing is more deplorable than to see men of ability, intelligence, and education, totally given up to the pleasures of this world. They mostly find themselves unable to believe the tremendous religious system forced upon them in childhood, and therefore as they advance in years refuse to believe in anything; and frequently by the time they have reached the prime of life have lost the habit of thinking of anything beyond the life of the body. They are not necessarily afraid though of death, till it comes very close to them. They may acknowledge an omnipotent and all-loving first cause, and therefore are contented in the abstract to leave all religious problems to the solution of death or another life, if, as they say, there be any such.

To such minds the death of those nearest and dearest to them may teach the most valuable of lessons. They will find in the hour of real trial that their philosophical courage, their imperturbableness of logical position, are of no avail, and they break down like little children unable to understand, hardly to realise their loss. To such you may often bring consolation in its highest form, by teaching them not to hope, but to know, and in consequence of that knowledge, to act, you may lead them onward and upward, till they themselves, perhaps, may become the leaders of others, ever progressing higher and higher toward that one and only First Cause to whom all tend—the Great, the Unknown, the Unknowable, whom men call God.

July 5th, 1878.

SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

It is not only as the result of a sympathy, which can never die that our friends, who have departed this life, and have entered upon the higher spheres of life beyond, communicate with us, and impress their instructive thoughts upon our brain; it appears also to be as the result of an existing law that they should, under favourable circumstances, admit us to their counsels; so that from the ideas which they conceive, we may be assisted in framing ideas for ourselves. And what is this but the communion of "saints," or the "pure-minded," which the religion of the day embraces as part of its creed. In theory the religionists are right, but they fail to work out the theory, and give it practical effect, by opening

their minds for the reception of the loving communications thus predicated. It is that attention may be called to the possibility, as well as the importance of this practice, that we have been induced from time to time to present the interesting communications to the readers of this paper, and which have been received from the friend, whose name has appeared in connection therewith. We again ask the attention of those interested to what follows, and which resulted from an enquiry as to the influence which the life and work of Jesus had imparted to the past, had infused into the present, and would also communicate to the future of man's progressive experience. The answer is full of instruction, and to no one would it afford greater pleasure than to the writer of this, if as the result of the trouble we have taken, any should be led to seek that intercourse for themselves,* which, to him, has been so profitable and enlightening.

COMMUNICATION.

"In the well ordered economy of the universe, every particle thereof has its appropriate place, and its specific work. And this is the case with man, as well as with the works of nature around him. The Infinite mind in its operations, enters into all things which be, and thus controls them. This secret spring of operation is hidden from the observation of man; he only sees the results which arise; and because he accustoms himself to regard the issues as of paramount importance, fails to trace the operation of the cause in the effect. The cause is ever present in the effect; but, as we said, it is hidden, and needs to be sought for. The combined influence of the results of the operations of this invisible cause are cumulative, continuous, and not discrete; they run into one another, lead on to higher and more complete issues; and thus it is that the agency, or agent once operative, can never cease to affect the growth of the development of the future. This is a universal law of God's kingdom, and one which, did men but understand, would solve many of their otherwise insuperable difficulties. You will now see in what respect Jesus stands to the future as an historical personage; he has left a mark upon that element of growth which pervades all things relating to man's history and experience; and although he may be thought of, and spoken about under different names, the influence is one and the same, and of a positive and permanent character; but only as part of the great whole, just as every streamlet, be it large or small, flowing into the deeper channels, contributes to make up and swell the mighty river in its onward flow to the ocean.

We have thus far spoken in general terms. There is a more special aspect of the subject upon which it will be interesting to dwell—an aspect of the subject not only affecting earthly experience, but extending into the higher regions of spirit life; for in that department of conscious being this law prevails, as well as among men on the earth, or throughout the wide universe of material nature.

1. We will now refer to the relation in which Jesus stands to the past; that is, historically, and as affecting that past, so far as it is distinguished as a period of the whole of time.

The information which men on earth possess respecting this personage is exceedingly vague and contradictory. I am speaking now of the materials which men of the present day in the earth sphere possess, and whereby they are attempting to formulate their conclusions respecting the historic Jesus. The difficulty has been increased by overlaying ancient records with the many attempted theories, and expositions, which individual minds have conceived, and presented to the public as aids to a complete conception of who and what Jesus really was. You might as well try to form a conception of what gold in its primitive state is, from the ornament which is worn, as attempt to delineate the person and character of Jesus, from the modern modes of thought which prevail, all of which are tinged by the unnumbered processes which have been contributing to the

formation of the present from that more remote period when Jesus lived on the earth. As I remarked on a previous occasion, could you know exactly the circumstances attendant on the earthly life of Jesus, you would no more recognise him from the suppositions now prevalent concerning him, than you would be able to trace any comparison between what you conceived, some hitherto unseen spot of earth was like, and its actual appearance, when you came to behold it for the first time. There can be no conception formed of the historic Jesus, or of the influence exerted on the past as a period of time, from the suppositious statements now extant relative to him. To fully know this, you must be able to live in the past by a process which is not recognised, and very little understood by men on the earth, but which we, in this more developed sphere of existence, have an insight to, and which, when understood by us, becomes one of the means of acquiring a knowledge of those things which you call past, but which, with us, are ever present in their influence.

2. The place which Jesus occupies in the present is not recognised; that is, so far as his professed followers are concerned. They altogether misunderstand the nature of his mission to the present generation, because it makes its way to man under a form which they cannot comprehend. It was equally so when he first appeared, and sought to free man from the yoke of Judaism. And, now, that the authority of ecclesiasticism, in the form of what is termed Christianity, has culminated in bondage even worse than that under which the Jews laboured, and the influence which comes forth from the Beyond seeks to open up before men a vista grander, more in accordance with human reason, and more certainly adapted to secure the happiness of the race; those who ought to be the first to hail the announcement of the new gospel of liberty, most strenuously oppose it, and cry it down. Do not infer from this, that I would have men accept every new feature of thought without careful examination; but the evil lies in rejecting all suggestions as utterly false, because they are apparently in opposition to a line of thought already accepted. God opens to man the windows of heaven in succession as he is able to receive the light which streams through; and, in accordance with his mental advancement. Man's duty is to examine his opinions in the light of the new illumination; and the standard which is to guide him in the rejection of the one, and the acceptance of another, is the degrees of benefit which he will derive from the adoption of a system more in harmony with his common sense, and better adapted to help him in his life. The presence and influence of Jesus in the present, is limited to principles of advancement. Every age must formulate its own system. In the *system* there is no permanence, while in the *principles*, there can be no deviation from the one great law of growth which ministers to progress. This, in fact, is the one aspect in which both reform and reformers are to be viewed; they formulate the principles into a system, but the system is laid down to meet the necessity of the hour, and cannot carry the underlying principles into another generation with the result which it produced on the previous one. Moreover, light grows as these windows of heaven are opened to man; and, consequently, with growing light, the mind of man will distinguish between what was elementary in the past, and what will be more suited to the present. It is because there are minds in every age which do this, that there arises conflicts of opinion, and questions throwing doubt on the utilities of the past, and suggesting better plans for the guidance of the present. It is, also, because there are other minds which will not readily fall into this course, that more than a conflict of opinion takes place in the fierce condemnation which the one side heaps on the other, because of a departure from already accepted formulas. I do not know that this is so disastrous to the growth of man onto higher planes of experience, as it would seem at first sight to be. Uniformity in growth is impossible. The thing to be deplored is, that men cannot see that, in their intercourse with one another, however much they may have reason to differ, it is their duty to respect and help each other in a faithful discharge of the duties of life, irrespective of the personal opinions they may severally entertain. It is only in the measure

* Our readers will do well to study *On the Road; or, The Spiritual Investigator*, by Mrs. E. H. Britten (to be had of the publisher of the *Harbinger*), for such information as may assist them in this respect.

of a man's personal experience and conviction, that he will attain any standpoint which it is worth while to contend for. And, therefore, it becomes the duty of every man to be satisfied in his own mind, and yield the right to his brother to do the same. We grow just in proportion as we adopt this rule; and the individual who will gain distinction either in the earth life, or in the hereafter, is the man or the woman, who, governing self wisely, seeks to influence others, not in accordance with his or her *ipse dixit*, but by the kindly influence which has a regard to the improvement of the character as a citizen of the world, and, by anticipation, as an expected denizen of the higher state of life beyond the present. Let men recognise this principle, and then it will be seen that the influence of Jesus in the present is, to lead men into a bond of brotherhood which, while it provides for individual liberty of thought, does not remove the mutual obligation to aid one another in every way which will lead to individual advancement.

3. With respect to the place of Jesus in the history of the future, we may further remark: Every dewdrop which falls upon the plant, contributes to the beauty of the flower. Every event which transpires in the history of man, contributes a thread in the fabric of the future. The life-work of the individual whom you call Jesus, has done its part in the formation of the present basis on which all religious thought rests; and the process is going on now, and will continue to do so into the unrealised beyond, which cannot be conceived of, because it is illimitable. The agents and instrumentalities of the Infinite Ruler of the Universe, work in harmony; they have each their appointed mission, and their set work; and just as you perceive in nature, that the sun in your system appears to rule and control the movements, and influence the destinies of the planets which surround him, so in the higher spiritual spheres, Jesus occupies an exalted position by virtue of his advanced growth, and governs spirits who are subordinate to him by reason of their more undeveloped condition. His influence on the progress of the human race on the earth, is not, however, distinctive; inasmuch as there are many other great leaders of thought, who, in their several places, contribute to advancement and progressive growth. The combined influence operates in producing those new phases of thought which makes the absolute and unalterable principles underlying all systems more effective. Under these circumstances, it is not possible in a special manner to indicate the position which Jesus will occupy in the future growth of the ages. It is contrary to the universal law which characterises progress, that he should again, in his distinctive personality, present himself to man. Like all other leaders of the people, he has passed on to take his stand on a higher plane, and the work he did has found its place in the fabric of human experience, as that has become historical and influential in forming the basis of continued progress. In view of all this, it then becomes the duty of man to review the position which he himself occupies; and ever remembering that in the progress of his life, even to the smallest particulars thereof, he also is contributing to the future; and to take care that he works into the present and provides for the future, such elements as shall produce harmony; and by the blending of the threads in the fabric, render the future so far as he shall realize it from his own standpoint, more beautiful; and that he may, as he passes on, have reason to rejoice that the part he has been permitted to take in the building up of the ages, is characterised by the honest attempt to improve every talent and every opportunity afforded in the circumstances in which he has been placed. Thus shall he feel, that in the past as in the present, and the future, he has his place, which, while distinctive, blends harmoniously with the experience of others, and speaks of the wisdom and love of the Infinite One, who works in all things.

JAS. MARTIN.

H. J. B.

July, 1878.

THE "Lyceum Miniature" for July is another good number. We are glad to hear that the "Sydney Lyceum" have ordered fifty copies, with the prospect of increasing to 100 next month.

To Correspondents.

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

["Vox Veritatis" and several other articles unavoidably held over for want of space.]

"THE SOUTHERN CROSS" AND SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR—The *Southern Cross*, an evangelical "weakly" contemporary published in Melbourne, in its issue of June 29th, contained a lengthy tirade, extending over two columns, on the subject of Spiritualism. The article in question was such a tissue of calumny and misstatement, that a correction was deemed not only advisable, but necessary. Accordingly I forwarded to the editor of that journal a letter, rendered as brief as the subject would allow, which examined in detail all the important points in the article. In the following issue of the *Cross* its editor thus acknowledged my note:—"We have received a long letter from Mr. E. Leonard, traversing our statements and remarks on Spiritism. We decline to publish it for two reasons. 1. We cannot enter on a controversy which would be interminable. 2. We cannot make the *Southern Cross* the organ of the Spiritists." Now, Sir, seeing that the *Cross* began the controversy by filling two columns with the most systematic abuse of Spiritism, and moreover challenged refutation of some of its statements, I think the refusal to publish a letter that confessedly "traversed" its assertions and accepted the gauntlet so boldly thrown down, places that journal in no very favourable light as regards fair play and honesty. The excuse, "We can't make the *Southern Cross* the organ of the Spiritists," is a very poor one, and, I fear, was made only to hide the pious editor's inability to grapple with facts. Sometime ago I recollect seeing in the *Harbinger of Light* a letter from the Rev. Thomas James (lately an editor of the *Southern Cross*) in reply to some statements that challenged his attention. Are we to conclude from this that the *Harbinger* was made the organ of the Wesleyans? We must look elsewhere for the true reason why my communication was refused insertion. Though, Sir, I have no intention of inflicting upon you a *résumé* of the *Cross's* "arguments" (?) and my replies, I may mention a few facts that will possibly throw some light upon the editor's reticence. 1. The *Cross* threw out the challenge "to say what distinguished scientist has been convinced by investigation that the claims of Spiritism are substantiated according to the strictest law of human evidence." About a dozen "distinguished scientists," as Crookes, Varley, Wallace, Mapes, Perty, &c., were enumerated. 2. The *Cross* affirmed that the *Buffalo Advertiser* for 1857 published an exposure of the Fox Girls, who were convicted of fraud. It was pointed out that the *Advertiser* for said year contained no such *exposé*! 3. "A lady friend of the Foxes," says the *Cross*, "volunteered the statement that Miss Catherine Fox had told her how she did it" (i.e., the rapping.) I informed your contemporary that the lady had since publicly retracted her statement as false. 4. A. J. Davis's doctrine that the soul is material, was ridiculed. I invited the editor to state what he personally knew of the soul, of spirit, and of matter. 5. Mrs. Woodhull was cited as teaching the "grossest immorality." The writer of the article was convicted of having omitted to quote a part of that lady's address which completely reversed the interpretation affixed to her words. 6. The Spiritist literature, said our censor, "stands unrivalled for blasphemy, obscenity," &c. In reply, I engaged that for every instance of obscenity or blasphemy the editor could find in the writings of any accredited Spiritualist, I would produce three times the number from the Bible, that holy, infallible, and perfect book!! And, Sir, the *Southern Cross* found it convenient (shall we say for the reasons specified?) to suppress my letter.

Yours, etc.,

Melbourne, 8th July.

E. LEONARD.

A LADY Spiritualist in straightened circumstances is desirous to dispose of a Brilliant Necklace, by lottery, to raise a sum for pressing emergency. Thirty members at 10s. About twenty friends have already given in their names. We shall be glad to dispose of the unfilled shares for her.

"WAS JESUS GOD?"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—Some time ago your correspondent "Layman," opened up this question, and as he expressed himself very kindly in reference to a letter of mine that appeared in your columns, criticizing one of his articles, I am encouraged to again practise a material he has supplied.

Was Jesus God? This question is answered in the affirmative by all the churches, and to entertain a doubt on the subject is considered a sign of confirmed heterodoxy; I having been brought up in orthodox principles, and always concluded that Christ was God upon earth. Since I have had the opportunity of perusing progressed literature, I must say my views have undergone a considerable change. We need not be surprised at the early Christians worshiping him as God, considering his moral character was so excellent and markedly superior to the diagnosis of the Godhead as drawn by Moses. It is no wonder they turned away with horror from the God of the old testament and took up so readily with one supplied by the new.

There seems to be a yearning in the heart, for a more kindly element in which the affections can bestow their adoration, than that which instigated the atrocities recorded by Moses and some of the Prophets. But here is a dilemma for the church. Supposing Christ to be really divine; how are the discordant elements of character to be reconciled?

Which is the genuine article, the New Testament, Jesus or the Deity of Moses? The one is supposed to approve of murder, revenge, vindictiveness, treachery, sexual immorality, and robbery, while the other repudiates all these things, and teaches humanity, purity, gentleness and forbearance. Then supposing them both to be real Gods, how can they occupy one circle and live in communion, much less form internal parts of one another as taught in the Trinitarian creed, while made up of such antagonistic ingredients? The truth is the people would have perceived the incongruity long ago, only like every other form of priestcraft, churchianity has so subjugated their reason, as to render them helpless under its paralyzing tyranny. That this difficulty is partly perceived is evident by the attempt at explanation that the first God has had his character softened by the Atonement and therefore his company can now be tolerated. This is the way the sects dogmatise on the personality of the great principle of life giving energy that permeates the whole universe and formulates all law. Do they think this wonderful power in whom all live and have their being, is to have His attributes measured off by their puny standard, and Himself compressed within the precincts of five feet eight? In dealing with Moses' God, I must say He is not my ideal of what the divine nature should be. If I worship a God it shall be one who is in every way superior to myself. Could any one having any sense of morality worship a Being who is represented as instigating the slaughter of thousands and thousands of people who had done Him no harm and nobody else? and if they had, this was not a very benevolent way of reforming them. Is he not represented as sanctioning indiscriminate intercourse between the sexes, that His pet servants were allowed as many women as they liked? In several instances His favourite people were commanded to kill all the males but to reserve the females for their own especial pleasure. Pretty justice was that wherein seventy thousand Israelites were slain for the sin of their king, if it were a sin to perpetrate the enormously heinous offence of numbering his subjects, a practice which is followed by all civilized nations of modern times.

Plundering was a favourite exercise of the "chosen people," proving that might not right prevailed under the theocracy of Moses. We read also that God tempted Abraham to murder Isaac; pretty morality this, in one who is supposed to say "thou shalt do no murder," thus stultifying himself by breaking his own maxims. But then the orthodox reply, God is above all law and therefore He can do as he likes. The real creation we know very little of, only through his works, and judging from

them I should imagine Him to be more amenable to His own laws than we are ourselves.

Do we ever find the laws of the universe subverted or set aside? Never? Then what folly to charge God with changing His mind. It must be observed that divine law is not made arbitrarily, but is the outcome of the nature of the Divine Being. God—as I conceive of Him—is in His essence loving and benevolent, and when he wishes to impress these qualities upon man so that they may be comprehended by so finite a creature, the utterance goes forth, "Thou shalt do no murder." This cannot be set aside under any circumstances whatever, or else God himself would be subject to change, which would soon precipitate annihilation. One argument used by those who maintain that God is above all law, is, that he can do as he likes with his own, therefore killing in this case is no murder. What would we say of a machinist, who after fabricating a curious machine, without any reason should wantonly destroy it? We should say that such a procedure would be quite incompatible with the genius required for its construction. With prudent men, the custom is to allow a watch or any other machine to work as long as it possesses the power to perform its functions, to arrest it in its career by an external force would indicate madness. Now, if this should apply to a thing having no consciousness, what shall be said of such treatment in regard to man, who is a sentient being. Therefore if God violently stops man's mortal career, in the full tide of life and health, he is a murderer. But for the human machine to stop going from sheer want of force through wear and tear is not murder, but a benevolent arrangement to withdraw man from a mortal existence, which if further protracted would only produce satiety.

I have come to the conclusion then, that the orthodox God is a myth, and therefore I do not worship him, I must worship someone better than myself, not worse. With regard to the claims set up for the Deity of Jesus, he never advanced them; but we find him continually reiterating this sentiment. "The Son can do nothing of himself," etc. There is no doubt that Christ was the best exponent of the Divine Principle recorded in history, and therefore he was the highest style of man. The assumption that he was God incarnated arose from his being called the Son of God. Now in one sense we are all sons of God, and some may have their alliance to the great Father made more palpable in proportion as they resemble him in character.

If we acknowledge we have souls, and that they are part of the Divine essence, then we must admit them to be emanations, and not separate creations as is generally supposed. This emanation is nothing more or less than a sonship, something similar to that relationship in physical life, the element in one case being soul, and the other matter. As all men possess the divine essence, which lies at the bottom of human immortality, how much soever they may contract impurities in this life, yet because of this Deific principle within them, they will be capable eventually of being reclaimed from all their evils. Let us help this by an illustration.

The stream that issues from the fountain is precisely of the same nature as its source. If the fountain is pure the stream will be the same, though while tracing for itself a separate existence, it may contract impurities connected with the country through which it has to flow. But yet as it has all the elements of pure water in itself it is capable of being restored to its pristine purity, by agencies well known to scientific men. Some streams having conditions exceedingly unfavourable will take up much foreign matter, though by varying the process of refinement all may be reclaimed. Observe, though the stream is of the same nature as the fountain, it has no projecting force, but has to receive its impetus and sustentation from the source from which it sprang. To effect progression it must be in constant communication with the fountain, or otherwise it would become stagnant, though not annihilated. This I take to be a very fair figure of the human soul in its relation to and dependence upon the Divine Being, and though we may all contract defilements from our connection with the evil forces of the present life, yet as we all possess the Divine essence which cannot be contaminated or des-

troyed, so shall every one of us eventually be reclaimed from our earthly follies.

Hoping I have not trespassed Mr. Editor on your patience too much nor on that of your readers,

I remain,
Yours truly,
INVESTIGATOR.

THE BIBLE IN INDIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I notice in the "Spectator and Methodist Chronicle" of 5th inst., an article initiated "A. R." The writer tells us he had strolled into a public library, and, attracted by a work entitled "Analysis of Religious Beliefs," he secured a loan of it, hoping to become a wiser man by its perusal. It seems, however, a sadness came over his spirit whilst reading it, which he hopes none of his readers may experience. At the conclusion he addresses his young friends thus:—"Let me beseech you, as you love your peace of mind and the favour of God, let such books as the one named above alone, and read them not. It is for your sakes, and not for my own pleasure that I have read through this book."

Three weeks ago I took the liberty of sending a tract—"An Old Man's Difficulties with his Bible"—to a Wesleyan local preacher, who replied that he would read it carefully, and who was then reading a book which, if I have not read, he would wish me to read, as it would place the Bible before me in a new light. It is entitled, "The British Nation the last Ten Tribes of Israel." I thanked him for his kind advice, promising that I would read the book he had so kindly recommended, first opportunity, as I was at the time reading the "Bible in India," a work which had greatly astonished me. Should the statements in this book be considered untrue, I should be glad to see "A. R." or any one else (who rest satisfied with the doctrines of Christianity), contradict them.

Three gentlemen of learning and ability appear to have resided in India over thirty years translating the Sanscrit, that sacred language which God is said to have spoken when he revealed himself to men. They find that India was in possession of nearly all the doctrines contained in our version of the Bible three thousand years before the Christian era. In this book, "The Bible in India," we see whence Moses exhumed his Pentateuch, that is the first five books of the Bible, of which he is considered the author.

Egypt, from its geographical position, would necessarily be one of the first countries colonised by Indian emigration, one of the first to receive the influence of that antique civilization which has radiated even to us. We know that Moses was initiated by the priests at the court of Pharaoh. Is it not then reasonable to conclude that he utilised the knowledge he had acquired when constructing institutions for the Hebrews? If I chance to be born in Scotland or elsewhere, and brought up in the creed of my fathers, is chance then to decide the truth or falsehood of my beliefs? Modern people who have become colonists bring with them whatever they may have been taught in their youth, although no man now-a-days starts up to say, I am a messenger of God, I come to bring you the word revealed to me.

In comparing the work of the Hebrew with that of the Hindoo legislator, we may without fear consider the world's beginning, according to the Vedas, and the written traditions of the Hindoos, which the Bible has but reproduced with very slight modifications. For my own part, I can see no difference between Brahminism and Levitism, and everything seems to proclaim the one descended from the other. There are so many cruel truths in this book, the Bible, before which the masses bend the knee without examination or comprehension, which is to many the supreme law, the work of supreme wisdom, but which appears to me a code of truculent superstitions.

It needs but attentive perusal to demonstrate that the Bible is not an original book; none of the customs which it enjoins are its own—they are all found in the more ancient civilization of Egypt and the east.

I have vainly examined from every point of view this book of Moses, whose sublimity is so lauded, without

discovering a thought, or a word containing the faintest, most distant, most obscure allusion to the immortality of the soul. And as to the morality of the Bible, one simple quotation will be enough, see Numbers, 31st chapter, verses 15 to 18.

The great orientalist, Sir William Jones, gives the first trace of the sacrifice of the son of Abraham by his father, which God arrested, after having himself commanded it. He had recovered from the inextricable pages of Hindoo religious books the original record of this event, which would have been to him impossible but for the complaisance of a Brahmin, with whom he was studying Sanscrit, and who produced to him from the library of his pagoda, the work of the theologian Ramatsariar, which was a great support to him in the preparation of his volume.

The Rev. Father Dubois, missionary, has also said: "Justice, humanity, good faith, compassion, disinterestedness, in fact, all the virtues were familiar to the ancient Brahmins." If this is true, to maintain with him that the Hindoos profess the same moral principles as we do, we have the key to our complete missionary failure in India—failure, moreover, avowed by a great number amongst them who either cannot or dare not explain the reason.

Does it not appear strange to any thinking mind that Moses, when he ascended the mountain to converse with Jehovah, forbade any one in Israel to follow him on pain of death? Zoroaster wrote his Nosks alone with Ormuzd, Buddha when he wished to converse with Brahma, sent away his followers! Christna and Christ transfigured themselves only before their apostles, when in public it would have sufficed to preclude incredulity. And, on the model of all those people who feared the light, Mahomet, the last comer, withdraws into a corner when he wishes to receive orders from God.

It is to be hoped, however, that all this is over, and that we are relieved, once for all, of all those miracle workers who hide themselves behind screens to fabricate their prodigies.

I can no more believe in Christna, God and worker of miracles, than I believe in other messengers of the Supreme Being who call themselves by the above names, but I can believe in Christna, philosopher and moralist. I admire his lessons, so sublime and so pure, that, later, the founder of Christianity in Europe perceived that he could not do better than imitate them. Two Hindoo women drew near to Christna, and poured upon his head perfumes or ointment (as we read in our New Testament Mary Magdalene did to Jesus), and they worshipped him.

I may say, in conclusion, that I respect all sincere beliefs which my reason may nevertheless refuse to adopt. Why should Christ delay until thirty years of age to begin his work? Why, if he was God, remain inactive during the fifteen or twenty years of his manhood? Wherefore not preach even from infancy? It would without doubt have been a most palpable mode of proving his dignity. We are, it is true, told that at twelve years of age he sustained an argument in the temple that astonished the Jewish doctors; but what argument? Is not this fact more likely to be, with a crowd of others, the product of their imagination?

Then, lastly, what did he do from twelve to thirty years of age? I ask the question, of which I shall be very glad to receive an explanation. It was only by study that he could have raised himself above his compatriots as to play the important part of which we know. Yes, Christ went to Egypt and studied in the east, with his disciples. Such is the only logical explanation of the moral revolution they accomplished. But proofs will not fail; wait for them before pronouncing judgment on this opinion, which is not with me a simple hypothesis, but even historic truth.—Yours, &c.,

Vaughan, July 9, 1878.

LAYMAN.

The *Shaker Manifesto* for June comes to us full of good things, live ideas and spiritualizing thoughts. How little the world knows of the principles of these good people. We should like to get subscribers for their representative paper, and will send for some specimen copies, to distribute gratis to those who want to know what the Shakers are.

A CONVERT TO SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—In announcing my conversion to the Spiritualistic School of Freethought, I humbly beg permission to relate briefly my adventures into the glorious phenomena, and the causes which induced me to investigate it. My attention was drawn to it during a recent visit to Sydney. I joined the Freethought Progressive Society of that place, and was at that time simply a Deist, but nevertheless resolved upon attending a seance, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the alleged phenomena were real or otherwise. After having attended two sittings, I rejoice at being in a position to say that I am satisfied there is a line of communication opened up with our friends in the spirit land.

Spiritualism is indeed metaphysically grand, and nobly elevating. Would to God that our Christian friends might be induced to weigh the movement in the true balance, instead of merely crying it down from "Coward's Castle" (the pulpit), as Mr. Tyerman calls it, where no one dare reply to them. Oh! priests, parsons, and gospel grinders, try our new faith, and I am sure you will generously convert your surplices into hospital gowns!

I think Mr. Tyerman's "Guide to Spiritualism" a capital little work; indeed, every intending investigator should be in possession of a copy. Whilst in Sydney I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Tyerman, whose style I much admire. I have also listened attentively to Mr. Bright, a magnificent speaker, and to Mr. Walker, whose trance lectures are truly wonderful. But I have not room to comment on the above speakers; all I can say is, that it was with deep regret I heard of Mr. Tyerman's departure from Sydney. Won't those clerical hypocrites in the black cloth rant, now he's gone? I hate their impositions. They are busy distributing their trash in the shape of tracts every week in that city. If they spoke truth one would not complain, for then there would be no cause; but when they vilify the names of the illustrious martyrs and heroes of Freethought, their acts become more contemptible. I noticed in a Baptist tract, whose mendacious writer was the Rev. Mr. H—, a clause expressive of the "horrible death of Voltaire," which I know to be blasphemously false; and they place a note at the foot of this rubbish requesting that this tract be kept clean. Pity it was not cleaned of its pollutions in the fire-place (little hell!) in conjunction with the Christian bible. It is with pleasure that I notice in your journal that the "Christian World" has opened its columns to the investigation of Spiritualism; and I trust that the eyes of its author may be opened to appreciate "truth."

F. E. S. HEWISON.

Cooma, 24th June, 1878.

WONDERFUL MANIFESTATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—Knowing that you are ever ready through the columns of your journal to disseminate facts in connection with Spiritism, permit me to add my small quota of testimony to the already innumerable cases of physical phenomena which have taken place in this and the sister colonies.

During the past few months, my wife (whom I shall in future, for the sake of brevity, designate "F."), has developed into a medium of somewhat extraordinary capacities, her mediumistic powers having a wide range. Trance speaking, automatic and direct slate writing, seeming to be no less her *forte* than her medial powers in the production of physical phenomena; and, although of a less satisfactory nature, I may mention that the "direct voice" is becoming quite a common occurrence with us. But in order to lay the particulars of some of the more remarkable manifestations before your readers, you will perhaps kindly afford me space to insert a few extracts from my diary.

I should have stated that all our best manifestations occur in broad daylight.

EXTRACTS FROM MY DIARY.

Monday, 3rd June. —Knocks at 9.15 a.m. Two glass

portraits taken from nails in sitting room and placed under our pillow in the bedroom. Flowers thrown upon sitting-room table and floor.

June 18.—Wedding ring taken off F.'s finger and placed in the harmonium, the word harmonium being subsequently spelt out. F.'s wrists tied together behind her back, the string being passed round the back of a chair. Under these conditions a ring was taken off her finger and threaded on to the string which connected her wrists, no knots being undone, nor the string in any way tampered with. Under the same conditions, but wrists tied closely together, her ring was again removed and placed in her mouth.

June 30.—Notes struck upon harmonium, which was at the time closed and covered over. Raps in several places simultaneously. Ear-rings taken from and replaced in F.'s ears, her hands at the time being securely tied behind her back.

July 9.—4 p.m. Glass of brandy placed upon sitting-room table. 5.30 p.m., decanter half filled with brandy brought in, our attention being drawn to the fact by the word brandy being rapped out. This we consider our best manifestation, inasmuch as the possibility of its having come there without spirit aid is beyond a doubt. Notes struck upon harmonium. F.'s dress taken off and carried outside. Heavy footsteps distinctly audible in sitting room."

I think, Sir, I have now encroached far enough upon your space, or I could give further accounts as to how F.'s slippers and boots are constantly being removed from her feet. How, with hands tied behind, she is lifted upon a tank six feet from the ground. How a bad influence a few nights since deprived our table of a leg. How sundry heavy articles are frequently making an unsolicited incursion into our sitting-room, and so on almost *ad infinitum*, but that I fear I have already exhausted your readers' patience and your valuable time.

In conclusion, however, I would remark that I have recorded the foregoing circumstances in the hope that they may prove of interest to Spiritualists, and in no way to convince sceptics, who, I am aware, would require far more proof than space has enabled me to render. I should willingly have submitted my name and address, but owing to my dependent position and the narrow-mindedness of sceptics, I must perforce withhold it for the present, but in the meantime enclose my card as a guarantee for my *bona fides*. ALPHA.

P.S.—All the forementioned facts can be certified to by two gentlemen of integrity occupying good positions in society.

HOW TO BECOME A MEDIUM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—As a writing medium who has but lately passed through a similar phase of development to that mentioned by your correspondents "Alpha" and "Omega," my advice may perhaps be of some value to them. It is this: Persevere for the present, notwithstanding any doubts you may have. Sit alone every morning before breakfast, before eating or drinking anything, and do not sit at any other time. Approach the subject with the reverence it deserves, and you will be amply rewarded for your perseverance. Any further directions for your development will in all probability be given you by your spirit guides through your own hand.

I may mention, for the encouragement of your correspondents, that I was sitting for nearly five months myself before I obtained a communication of any length or importance.—I am, &c.,

WRITING MEDIUM.

THE *Medium* of May 17th contains an account of a seance with Mr. W. Eglinton, at which a series of most remarkable manifestations, direct writing, materializations, luminous appearances and tests of various kinds were clearly demonstrated. As Mr. Eglinton is about to visit South Africa, it is not improbable that an invitation from Melbourne Spiritualists might induce him to extend his journey to the Australian colonies.

SUMMARY OF SOCRATES' AND PLATO'S
PSYCHOLOGY.

TRANSLATED FROM "L'EVANGILE SELON LE SPIRITISM,"

BY C. W. ROHNER, M.D., HAMILTON.

It is known to all well-informed Spiritualists that Socrates and Plato are not only the most prominent precursors of the fundamental idea upon which the doctrines of true (not orthodox) Christianity are based, but represent also the best and most profound conceptions on the psychological data of modern spiritualism. To bring these facts more distinctly before the minds of the readers of the *Harbinger of Light*, I have resolved to furnish them with the following translation from Allan Kardec's magnificent little work, "The Gospel according to Spiritualism," which work I hope the celebrated authoress, Anna Blackwell, will shortly place before the English-reading public in its entirety, especially as its pages breathe the purest and most elevated sentiments the human heart is capable of.

"To those who are inclined," says Kardec, "to look upon our parallel (Socrates and Christ) as a profanation, and to those who would pretend that there can be no similarity between the doctrines of a Pagan and those of Christ, we reply that the doctrines and teachings of Socrates were not Pagan, because their notorious object was to combat Paganism; that the doctrine of Jesus, although more complete and purified, has nothing to lose by this comparison; that the grandeur of the divine mission of Christ could not be diminished; and that, moreover, the parallel is based upon historical data, and history cannot be suppressed. Man in our days has arrived at a point where the light issues forth spontaneously from under the bushel; he is ripe to face the light, and it is so much worse for those who dare not open their eyes. The time has arrived when it becomes us to take an elevated and comprehensive view of things, and to surrender the mean and narrow-minded view represented by the egotism of sects and castes."

The quotations which we shall give below will prove, moreover, that if Socrates and Plato have had a presentiment of the Christ idea, it was based upon similar inspiration from higher sources in both instances, and that the truth of our parallel is sustained and satisfactorily explained by our modern phenomena of spiritualism.

(I.) "Man is an incarnated soul. Before its incarnation it was united with the primordial types, with the ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful; from these it is separated by the act of incarnation only: remembering its past career, it is more or less troubled by a desire to return to its original state."

It is impossible to enunciate more clearly the distinction and independency of the intelligent and material principles of man; in this, moreover, is incorporated the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul. It represents with great distinctness the vague intuition of another world to which it aspires; it knows that it will survive its body, and will return again to that world of spirits from which it was originally taken. The above quotation, in fact, contains the germ of the doctrine of the fallen angels.

(II.) "The soul goes astray and becomes troubled when it makes use of its body to view a subject; it becomes giddy, as if drunk, because it attaches itself to things which, in their essential nature, are subject to change, instead of, when contemplating its proper essence, turning itself to what is pure, eternal and immortal, it dwells upon what is purely material and unessential, hence its aberrations and endless errors, which can only be avoided by that true wisdom, of the soul which keeps its eye fixed on what is immutable."

Thus the man who looks at things from below, from an earthly and material point of view, will be constantly subject to illusions. In order to obtain a just view of things we must look upon them from above, that is, from a spiritual point of view. The truly wise man must therefore, in a certain manner, isolate the soul from the body, in order to see with the eyes of the spirit. These are the teachings of spiritualism.

(III.) "So long as we shall so closely adhere to the

body and its corruption and corruptibility, so long shall we not obtain full possession of the object of our desires—truth. The body, indeed, throws many obstacles in our road to progress, because we are obliged to nurse it and take care of it; and what is more, our body fills us with desires, appetites, fears, a thousand chimeras and stupidities, so that whilst allied to it we are almost disabled to grow wise. But, if it is impossible to know anything in its purity during our corporeal imprisonment, one of two things must happen—either that truth can never be known; or can only be learned after death. Liberated from the folly of the body, we may hope to converse with men equally free as ourselves, and we shall then know things in their essential constitution. This is the reason why the true philosophers familiarize themselves with death, and the contemplation of death has no terrors whatever for them."

In this passage we have the faculties of the soul obscured by the intermediary action of the bodily organs; and here we see the principles laid down in plain terms, that an expansion of our mental faculties takes place after death. But this is only true of the souls of the divine *élite*. The pure souls who, whilst living in their terrestrial bodies, practised the highest ideals of their minds, whilst the impure souls, who have never allowed themselves to be lifted out of the material sphere of life, have a long road to travel before they arrive at the same blissful goal of their ultimate destiny.

(IV.) "The soul, when in a state of impurity, is weighted down, and again becomes attracted to the material world on account of the horror it has of the invisible and immaterial world. It then roams about erratically, haunts monuments and tombs, near which cloudy, dark phantoms have often been seen, the true images of those souls who have left their bodies in an unprogressed state. These kinds of spirits may be seen as material forms, because of their individual moral grossness. They are the souls of the wicked, and they are compelled to haunt those places, and to carry there with them the sufferings of their first life, continuing in their erratic career until the appetites inherent to the material form which they have adopted invest them again with a new body, after which they resume doubtlessly the same manners and habits of life which they cherished so much in their anterior existence."

Here we see expressed not only the important principles of re-incarnation, but also the state of the souls which are still under the dominion of matter. Spiritual science gives an exactly similar description. It affirms even more than this, for the above passage makes it clear that the re-incarnation in a material body is a consequence of the soul's impurity, whilst it proves that the purified souls are not under the necessity of passing through the ordeal. Spiritualism says exactly the same thing, only it adds that the soul, which during its errancy has made good resolutions and acquired knowledge, brings with it in its next birth less faults and more virtues and intuitive ideas than it possessed in the preceding life, and that thus each succeeding existence indicates for it a certain degree of intellectual and moral progress.

(V.) "After death, the genius or dæmon which was assigned to us during life leads us into a place in which all those are assembled which will be conveyed to Hades for sentence. The souls, after having sojourned in Hades for a certain length of time, are brought back again into this life at different periods, and have to stay in it for various terms, according to their anterior perfection."

Here we meet with the doctrine of guardian angels, or protecting spirits (controls), and the allusion to successive re-incarnations after longer or shorter intervals of errancy is self evident.

(VI.) "The spirits (dæmons) fill the place which divides heaven from earth; they are the bond which unites the Great All with itself. God never enters into direct communication with man, for it is through the medium of the spirits that the Gods keep up an intercourse with him both waking and in sleep."

The word "*dæmon*," of which "*demon*" has been made, was not taken by the ancients in the same bad sense attached to it by the modern nations of Europe; it was not exclusively applied to bad spirits, but design-

nated spirits generally, amongst which the ancients distinguished superior spirits, called "*theoi*" or "*dū*," and less elevated spirits, or "demons" properly so called, who communicated directly with man. Spiritists also assert that the spirits people space, that they communicate to man the will of God, both whilst waking and asleep. We have only to substitute the word spirit for that of "*daimon*," and we have the doctrine of spiritism clearly evinced, and by putting "angel" in the place of "*daimon*," the Christian doctrine is represented.

(VIII.) "The true philosopher is constantly occupied with taking the utmost care of his soul, not so much with a view to this life, which is only of momentary duration, but with a view to the life eternal which follows this earth-life of ours. If the soul is immortal, is it not an act of wisdom to live for eternity?"

We ask any candid mind, does Christianity and Spiritism teach anything different?

(VIII.) "If the human soul is immaterial, it must, after this life is completed, go to a world equally immaterial and invisible, just the same as the body, by the process of decomposition, returns to matter again. We have, however, to make a distinction between the pure and truly immaterial soul, which, like God, lives in pure thought and knowledge, and the soul which is more or less steeped into material impurities, which prevent it from soaring up to the Divine, and keep it fettered on its clod."

From this may be seen that Plato and Socrates possessed a perfect understanding of the different degrees of dematerialisation of the human soul; they actually insist upon the important difference of situation which exists between the different degrees of purity of the souls. What they knew by intuition only, spiritism proves by numerous facts and examples which it places before our eyes.

(IX.) "If death were the complete dissolution and annihilation of man, it would be a great advantage to the wicked after their death to be simultaneously liberated from their bodies, souls, and vices. He who had adorned his soul, not with exterior ornaments but with internal jewels of virtues, can alone tranquilly wait for the hour of his departure to another world."

In other words, this means that materialism, which proclaims that there is nothing after death, would do away with every ulterior moral responsibility, and thus encourage evil doing. This would prove that the bad had everything to gain by such an annihilation, and that only the virtuous man can cast his glance beyond the grave with equanimity. Spiritism shows to us by daily examples how painful it is for the wicked to pass to the new life, and how their struggle may even after death be read in the distorted and ugly features impressed upon their faces by the frigid hand of death, whereas the calm and smiling countenance of the just reveals the peaceful state of the soul, which even before its departure from the body is allowed to obtain a gladdening view of the happy land promised to the good and innocently suffering.

(X.) "The body preserves the traces sharply expressed of the care which has been taken of it, and of the sufferings and accidents through which it has passed; the same also holds good with respect to the soul. When the soul is released from the body, it presents evident traces of its character, its affections, emotions, and impressions which its acts in life have made on it. Thus the greatest misfortune which could happen to a man is to go into the next world with a soul loaded with crime. You see, Calicles, that neither you, nor Polos, nor Gorgias were able to prove the necessity of leading a life which would be of use to us over yonder. Of so many different opinions the only one which remains unshaken is that which affirms that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong, and that above all things we must study not only to appear good, but to be it."

Here we meet again with that other capital point now confirmed by every day's experience, that the impure soul retains the ideas, tendencies, character, and passions which it had on earth. This maxim: that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong, is it not a truly Christian one? This is the same thought which Jesus

expressed when he said, "But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also."

(XI.) "One of these two things must be true: death is either absolute destruction or the passage of the soul into another state and place. If all light is going to be extinguished, death will be like one of those rare nights without a dream, and with a total loss of consciousness. But if death is only the change of locality, the passing over of the deceased to a place where all men assemble after this life, how happy will be the feeling to meet there those whom we have known and loved? My greatest pleasure would be to examine the inhabitants of that locality, and to distinguish there as here those who are wise from those who believe it to be without being it. But it is time for us to leave; for me (Socrates) to die, for you to live."

According to Socrates, the people who have lived on this earth meet and recognise one another after death. Spiritism teaches us that there is an uninterrupted intercourse not only between the souls of the departed but also between them and the living, so much so that death is neither an interruption nor a cessation of life, but only a transformation without a solution of continuity.

Socrates and Plato would not have spoken in this manner if they had not been acquainted with the doctrine which Christ taught five hundred years afterwards, and which Spiritualism teaches to-day. There is nothing surprising in this if we consider that all the great truths are eternal, and that all advanced minds must have known them before they arrived on this earth, and must have brought them with them; that Socrates, Plato, and the great philosophers of those times may have been afterwards of the number of those who have aided Christ in his divine mission, and that they were chosen because they were more able to comprehend his sublime doctrine, and that, finally, they may form part of that legion of spirits whose task it is to teach the present generation of men the same truths.

(XII.) "We must never return injustice for injustice done to us, or do evil against any one, no matter how much we may have been wronged. Very few people, however, will admit this principle, and all those who do not assent to it must, as a matter of necessity, hate one another."

Have we not here the principle of Christian charity plainly expressed which inculcates not to return evil for evil, and to forgive our enemies?

(XIII.) "The tree is judged by its fruit. Every action must be judged according to its effect or result; we must call it evil when evil arises from it, and good when its outcome is good."

This maxim: the tree is known by its fruit—everybody knows is found literally in several places in the New Testament. How then can it be looked upon as the product of the mind of the inspired Jesus exclusively?

(XIV.) "Wealth is a great danger. Every man who loves riches neither loves himself nor that which is essentially himself, his soul. Riches is often a greater trial to man than the greatest misery itself."

(XV.) "The finest prayers and the greatest gifts are less pleasing to God than a virtuous soul which strives to resemble him. It would, indeed, be a strange thing if the Gods were more delighted by our offerings and sacrifices than by the purity of our souls. Were this the case the most wicked would have it in their power to make the Gods love them. But this is not so, for only those are truly just and wise who by their words and acts fulfil their duties towards the Gods and men."

(XVI.) "I call that lover a vicious man who loves his body more than his soul. Love is everywhere in Nature, and we are invited by her to exercise it with intelligence; love is even found in the movements of the heavenly bodies. It is love which dresses nature in such beautiful garments; love takes up its abode in the colours and perfumes of the flowers. It is love which gives peace to man, lays the storm of the sea, silences the roaring of the wind, and lulls to sleep pain and suffering."

That love which must unite men by a fraternal tie is the outcome of Plato's theory about universal love,

which he treats in the light of a law of nature. Socrates said that love was neither a god nor a man, but a great *daimon*, that is, a great spirit directing the current of universal love; and for having said so he was treated as a criminal.

(XVII.) "Virtue is a thing that cannot be taught; it comes to those who possess it as a gift of God."

In this expression we find the doctrine of Christian grace; but if virtue is a gift of God, it is a favour, and we have a right to ask why it has not been given to everybody. And again, if it is a gift, it has no merit for him who obtained it. Spiritism is plainer on this subject, for it teaches that he who is possessed of virtue has acquired it by his own individual efforts in anterior and successive existences, by divesting himself little by little of his material imperfections. Grace is the strength which God gives to all men of goodwill who strive to mend their vicious and selfish habits and become good.

(XVIII.) "It is a disposition natural to all of us to notice the faults and defects of others before we perceive our own."

And does not the New Testament say exactly the same thing, when speaking metaphorically of the mote in the brother's eye which is seen, and of the beam in his own eye which remains invisible? Whence this identity of thought and sentiment, if not from that vast storehouse of universal truth from which everyone may draw its treasures who has in time procured the key to its gates, which is love universal.

(XIX.) "If the physicians are often unsuccessful in their treatment of diseases, this arises from the fault of attending only to the body without taking care of the soul; and the whole being in a bad condition, it cannot be expected that the part feels well."

Spiritism furnishes the key to the relations in which your soul and body stand to one another, and it proves that there exists a constant reaction between the two. It thus opens up a new path for science, and by showing it the true cause of certain affections, it also supplies the means to relieve or remove them. If science would once begin to take into account the important action of the spiritual element in the economy of the human body, it would most certainly work with success far oftener than it now does.

(XX.) "All men from their infancy to their graves do a great deal more evil than good."

This word of Socrates touches the grave question of the predominance of evil over good on earth, a question which remains insoluble without the aid of the knowledge of a plurality of worlds, and of the destination of the earth upon which lives a very small fraction of mankind. Spiritism alone gives the correct answer to this enigma of the ages.

(XXI.) "There is great wisdom in the knowledge of our ignorance."

This saying of the great precursor of our Master is addressed to those who are apt to criticise and condemn that of which they often do not know the first word, so to speak. Plato finishes this thought of Socrates by saying: let us try first, if it is possible, to make men more honest in their choice of language; but if we cannot do it, let us take no notice of them, and only follow the truth. Let us seek for instruction, and be careful not to commit any wrong against our inner self. This line of action ought to be adopted by the Spiritists with regard to their ill-intentioned detractors. If Plato were to come back again to-day he would find things in pretty nearly the same state as they were in his times, and his discourses would not require much altering even now. Socrates also would find that people are still fond of ridiculing the belief in spirits, and look upon him and his disciple Plato as fools.

It was for having openly avowed similar principles that Socrates was first laughed at, and afterwards persecuted and accused of infidelity and impiety, and finally condemned to drink the poison cup. The example of his life and career shows us how true it is that no great and new truths can become established in the face of the virulent opposition of egotism, ignorance, and prejudice, without a severe struggle and shedding of blood.

Hamilton, 11th July, 1878.

SYDNEY PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

In our last issue we mentioned that Mr. Thomas Walker was busily engaged with others in organizing a Lyceum. The following letter from a former member of the Melbourne Lyceum, who has been actively engaged in the work, informs us of the successful inauguration and cheerful prospects of the Lyceum there. This step towards the enfranchisement of the minds of the rising generation, and the public introduction of a rational system of moral and spiritual education is in our opinion the most important one yet taken by the Spiritualists of the sister colony.

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Among the Spiritualistic and Freethought community of Sydney, a social organization has been wanting. This has led some of the most energetic to take advantage of Mr. Walker's presence, and together with his decided intention to establish such an organization, and with the promptings of our Melbourne friends, they met together for the purpose of considering the formation of a progressive Lyceum. The meeting was a large one, and caused instant action in the matter. Our lady friends under the guidance of Mrs. Durrant took the flags and standards in hand, the result being, that we have a very handsome set of flags and standards, silken ones, displaying the sentiment colors, and names of the different groups. For the lettering we are indebted to Mr. Minchen, who had some acquaintance with the Melbourne Lyceum. In addition to time and trouble freely and cheerfully given by each, we have collected a good sum of money so that we are secure as to funds. To Mr. Etherington we are greatly indebted for staffs, and indeed all that can be wanted in the carpentering way, such as boxes, &c., all in the most finished manner, and most liberally given as all the above mentioned has been.

Mr. Terry has contributed some books which form the commencement of, we hope, a large and useful library.

Mr. Walker with his usual energy, fixed a day for the inauguration of the "Sydney Progressive Lyceum" and standards, or no standard, it must be the 7th of July, which was the following Sunday. Of course this necessitated the calling out of more energy. However, the Lyceum did have its first session on the 7th of July, commencing with the golden chain recitations, singing, and then the Calisthenics which were gone through with energy and enjoyment. Then Mr. Henry Gale addressed the Lyceum, citing that one of the main objects was to bring each, however young, to the understanding that they had a soul of their own, and a voice that they must not be afraid to make heard, all and each being workers in the great world of life.

Marching was then gone through; here be it said that to Mr. Gale's incomparable energy and enthusiasm, we owe nearly all of our success. He has also turned his residence into a meeting place for our necessary practice, his only trouble being that it is not more central. A choir of twenty-four good voices has been formed, with Miss A'Beckett as pianist and leader, she being an excellent musician, and one of the Lyceum's most enthusiastic friends.

Our second session was so encouraging and well attended, that the Temperance Hall proves too small, for us, this however, brings us back to Mr. Gale's energy, he and a few other friends have been active in obviating that difficulty, and making themselves acquainted with the pleasing fact that we can get a larger and more central hall, which will, if we choose, be a permanent assembly place.

All is most encouraging and makes it so evident, that such Sunday schools need only to be properly started to ensure success. The orthodox notion as to the marching and exercises, being inappropriate on that particular day, like a dark cloud will pass away and discover to all, light and reason, truth is truth, wheresoever it be found.

Before many years have passed, let us hope that there will be more of these institutions started.

Sydney, July 15th, 1878.

E. M.

PROGRESS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

A Sydney correspondent writing on the 18th July, says that the interest awakened by the spiritualistic movement in the colonies, at least, so far as New South Wales is concerned, evidently increases, notwithstanding the persistent efforts of the press, aided by the so-called evangelical religionists to frighten people into giving the "new superstition" a wide berth, because of its asserted intimate relationship with that great moral policeman of theirs, His High Mightiness the Devil! In the long run lying most assuredly falls short, and when some of these who have had this *devilism* dinned into them, stretch a point, and go to meetings of Spiritualists just to see into matters for themselves, verily the devil is transformed into an angel of light and goodness! Thenceforward, in many cases, the confidence placed in former Spiritual guides rapidly declines, and such individuals learn a wholesome lesson of the folly of placing implicit truth in those who, through force of circumstances were accident or simple choice, have become representatives of the priestly or ministerial office.

Every Sunday night the attendance at the Victoria Theatre, Sydney, is very large, and our mediumistic lecturer, Mr. Thomas Walker, never fails to engage and rivet the attention of his hearers, who invariably express their delight with the beauty of the language he employs and the admiration of the noble ideas enunciated through him. The subjects he dilates upon, though wide in range and greatly diversified, all have serious veins of thought permeating them, and the moral and spiritual effects of the teaching listened to are admittedly humane and highly beneficial. Last Sunday, his subject was "the Spiritual Land"; its constitution, laws, inhabitants, &c. The discourse was a most admirable one. His style was excellent; the matter carefully arranged, the expressions couched in the choicest and most appropriate language, and the illustrations given were of a vivid and telling character. Of course, in so large an assemblage, there were some who could not adopt his ideas, although they readily conceded that those ideas had been presented in a logical, forcible, and very attractive way, and consequently at the close of the lecture, many questions were put to the medium. He answered all the interrogatories clearly, concisely, and to the satisfaction of the greater portion of the audience.

Our principal "daily," the *Herald*, says of him:—"The number of those believing that the deliverances of Mr. Thomas Walker, who is known as the trance medium, are inspirations of spirits of departed people, does not seem to have diminished much since his first public appearance in the colonies. His claims to be considered a medium are made very impressive by the fact that his lectures are marked by an unusual perfection and finish, no matter what subjects they are based upon. The fluency of speech, the command of words and matter, and the excellent composition of which he is master, make his lectures extremely interesting to those who attend them; and if persons cannot bring themselves to conceive that Mr. Walker's utterances are not the result of efforts of memory, they must admit that they are at least instructive and worthy of attention. Last night Mr. Walker delivered an oration in the Temperance Hall, on "Intemperance and other Immoralities of the Nineteenth Century." The subject was well handled throughout, and marked by the close attention of a rather numerous audience. The lecturer took a view which is very rapidly gaining ground; it was to the effect that intemperance and immorality were very rife during the present age, and that their suppression might be accomplished more easily by kindness and persuasion than by according punishment or unkindness to their victims. The Hon. J. B. Wilson presided."

We have established a Childrens' Progressive Lyceum, with which both young people and the older folks seem much delighted and we think it bids fair to be permanent and successful. Mr. Walker takes great interest in it, and some of us think that his connection therewith reacts in a beneficial manner upon himself, for it is generally allowed that of late his orations have improved,

and that both in the style and matter of his trance addresses there is "progression" plainly observable.

The return of Mrs. Hardinge Britten is anxiously looked forward to, and we fear our theatre will not prove capacious enough to hold all who may wish to be present when she again occupies the stage as lecturer on Sunday evenings.

VERIFICATION OF A SPIRIT MESSAGE.

By the June mail from England, a gentleman residing in Melbourne, whose name we are not at liberty to publish, but who we will call Mr. B., received a letter from a member of a large and influential firm at Cardiff, Wales, containing a communication purporting to come from his late wife which the sender said had been given together with B's name and complete address at a Cardiff circle, the spirit desiring them to send the message to her husband. The recipients having confidence in the truthfulness of the communication, sent as directed, having no other knowledge of Mr. B. and his affairs than was furnished by the spirit, but the information proved correct in every particular. The communication was as follows:—

"To B. No. ——— Street, Melbourne, Australia. From M.A.A.B., 'I still live a glorious life, and I love you still. If you attend a spirit circle in your locality I will attend.'"

There is no one to Mr. B's knowledge at Cardiff who know either him or his family.

PSYCHOGRAPHIC DRAWINGS.

An old and valued correspondent at Dunedin sends us photographs of some curious psychographic drawings now being executed there, through the hand of an intimate friend of his, who is almost a stranger to Spiritualism. Our correspondent speaks of him as a good christian and most estimable man. In reference to the production of the pictures he says: "The first and second were given in answer to a question put by the medium, regarding the kind of houses and gardens they had in the spirit world. The spiritual house was drawn first, it consists of a great number of circles within circles; the second was called the "spiritual garden," the circle near the top is the fountain, and that is the river coming from it and flowing round the picture. The control chose the third subject and called it the "vineyard"; the fourth is also the control's choice, some mountains (of which I have forgotten the name.) He is on the fifth now, it is to be called "summer," the originals are about three times larger than the photos* and take about fourteen hours to do. The only tools used are two lead pencils (3 B. and A. Miniature), and he never requires to rub out or correct anything.

Another peculiarity is that one half of them is done upside down, in this way; he usually begins at the bottom, and when it is done half way up his hand would be apt to injure the drawing even if he put paper underneath; to obviate this he first turns the board, begins at the top and works backwards until it is all filled in. I think I mentioned in my last that he never sat in any circle, or went through any course of development whatever, and only drew a little when a boy at school twenty years ago."

The drawings are singular and evidently symbolical, requiring a key to explain them which is not yet furnished. They may be seen at the library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, 84 Russell-street.

THE Brisbane Freethought Association celebrated their third anniversary on Sunday, July 14, by a picnic. After dinner several speeches were made, and in the evening the ordinary annual meeting was held. From the report it appears that the society is in a flourishing condition, and the library largely used. It was proposed to invite Mrs. Britten to Brisbane, but the consideration of the subject was adjourned until further particulars could be obtained.

*Probably 10 x 6 or 7.

FREETHOUGHT IN ADELAIDE.

WE have heard occasionally of the existence and doings of the "Adelaide Free Discussion Society," but were not aware until last month that they had an organ to present to the outside public their ideas. We have before us the fifth monthly issue of the *Adelaide Secular and Free Discussion Society's Review*, a twelve page 8vo., containing some very readable matter, mostly analytical of the existing Christian systems of religion. The "Bible and Moses," by a Melbourne contributor, is an excellent illustration, being a rational examination of the life and actions of Moses as a man, exhibiting him in this aspect in a very different light to that in which he is ordinarily viewed by Bible readers. A short paper on "Evil," by "Philo," is good, and harmonises with the Spiritual idea that evil is the result of ignorance. We are glad to find the society diffusing its light, and wish its little paper success.

PASSED TO SPIRIT LIFE.

It has very unexpectedly become our duty to record the departure from his earthly tenement, of our esteemed friend and brother, Arthur Devlin, through an accident, the particulars of which have already appeared in the daily prints. As, however, some of our subscribers may not be aware of the facts, we may briefly state that Mr. Devlin was at Mrs. Britten's lecture on Sunday evening, the 14th July, in his usual health, the next day he was seen in the garden of the house he was living in alone, at South Yarra, but on Wednesday, the 17th, his body was discovered in bed, cold and lifeless, in a room where, from a leak in the pipe, the air was strongly impregnated with gas. He had evidently, as recorded at the inquest held on his body, been suffocated by gas whilst asleep.

Mr. Devlin was known to a large circle of our readers, by all of whom he was deservedly respected for his many sterling qualities as a man and a true Spiritualist. He was kind to a fault, and many will remember his unassuming and more than generous disposition, for it is well known that he too often denied himself many little comforts in order that he might give to others. He was a true follower of the great Exemplar, for he was gentle as a child, and went about doing good, whenever in his power.

In Arthur Devlin earth has lost one of its most ardent and consistent mundane laborers in the great vineyard of truth, and the spirit world has gained no mean acquisition to the same great cause. Notwithstanding the very short notice, his funeral, which took place on Thursday, the 18th inst., was attended by a large number of his spiritualistic friends, in conformity with whose wishes his relatives kindly ordered that his coffin should be covered with white, and this, at the grave, was again covered with flowers, which those attending the funeral kindly brought with them. When the coffin was lowered into its last resting-place, the following address was delivered by the intimate friend of the deceased, Mr. H. J. Browne:—

"Friends, we are met together to pay the last tribute of respect to the mortal remains of our dear friend and brother, who has passed from this world of care and trouble into that inner life, where we too must, sooner or later, join him.

"We, who have the privilege of knowing that glorious truth, in the dissemination of which our dear friend took such an earnest interest, require not to hope that he is happy, for we know he is so, and although he may not be perceptible to our physical vision, that he is now standing by us, aware of all our kindly feelings towards him; and further, although absent from us in his physical body, he will frequently be present with us in his spiritual form, to aid and cheer us on our journey through life.

"I need not dilate on the many good qualities, nor the more than ordinary degree of kindness and consideration at all times exhibited by our late and present brother, for those who had the privilege of his acquaintance knew them full well; and, from his retiring and modest disposition (which we know is not altered by the change), I feel it would only pain him were I to enlarge thereon. I may, however, remark that all his

little kindnesses will long be remembered by both old and young of his acquaintance, and that he will now reap the reward of every good and every kind action performed by him in that quiet and unassuming manner peculiar to himself, and which were only known by the recipients of his many little kindnesses. I often remarked, when he used to bring some little present in the shape of sweets to my children, that his heart was too large for his purse, and doubtless many others present have thought the same.

"In Arthur Devlin, our brother, the cause of truth has lost an earnest and sincere advocate on *this* side, but we may rest assured it has gained an equally earnest and sincere worker on the *other* side, where, so far from his ceasing from his labours for the good of humanity, he will only work with renewed energy and will to forward that glorious truth which richly blesteth all its possessors,—turning sorrow into joy, and truly robbing death of its sting, and the grave of its victory."

Mr. Brown then read the beautiful spiritual communication, in verse, received through the mediumship of Miss Lizzie Doten, which was a special favorite of the deceased, viz., "I still live." After this (at the special request of our brother since he passed to spirit life), the hymn "Over There" was sung by those present, who also sang the touching hymn, "How I would Die."

During the ceremony, two clairvoyants—a lady and a child—saw the spirit of the deceased present, and the former heard him (clairaudiently) exclaim, "Hear, hear." On the evening before the funeral the following communication was received, through the hand of a writing medium, from a spirit friend of the deceased:—

"Dear friends,—I am come again. I am sorry for you, but glad for him, who was, and still is my worthy friend—Mr. Devlin. He is with me and is happy, but cannot write yet. He desires me to say, 'Do not shed tears for me. I have crossed to the other side better than I could have wished. The only thing I regret is, that I cannot speak to you all. Be with my body (when consigned to earth), and sing the hymn "Over There." I shall speak soon to my dear old friends. Cheer up—I am happy now!'"

In answer to questions, the following replies were received from the same source:—

"He says he was hours passing away—at least it seemed so to him; no pain. Ada (a little spirit-child of Mr. B.'s), and his mother were with him as he passed. I shall come again, good night.

(Signed) "ROBINSON."

On the Saturday following, at a seance, when a number of the friends of the deceased were present, he addressed each of them individually, in his usual kindly terms, through a trance-medium—the same lady who saw his spirit present at the funeral ceremony. Each of those addressed had little difficulty in recognizing him by whom they were addressed.

DR. HENRY SLADE.

In our last number we mentioned that Dr. Slade was to leave London by the s.s. Kent, at the end of June. That vessel, however left in May, and we find from later advices that he was to leave in the Somersetshire, which sailed on June 22, and is expected to arrive here about the middle of this month. Dr. Slade having the names of both vessels in his mind, has inadvertently given us the wrong one, hence the error. Arrangements will be made as speedily as possible after his arrival for a series of seances daily, at the office of this paper, and reports of conspicuous ones will be published in our next.

At the conclusion of some correspondence on Spiritualism, the editor of the "Launceston Examiner" characterises it as "one of the numerous forms of modern rationalism," and as flattering its adherents by "exalting their reason, and requiring them to reject everything that is not susceptible of demonstration." How does this accord with the "Daily Telegraph," which, writing on the same side, puts forward statements and theories totally opposed to its brother editor? It is evident that at least one of them does not know what he is writing about.

A SUNDAY EVENING LECTURE.

A WET Sunday night does not present many inducements to the church-goer in Sydney. A walk over the detestable pavements of the town, or the clayey suburban paths through the pouring rain, is only rewarded by a service in a cold and cheerless building with a thinly scattered congregation. The preacher's voice echoes through the half empty edifice; the singing in the absence of most of the choir goes heavily, and one resumes his coat and umbrella with a sense certainly of having discharged a duty, but at a very great cost, and with an uneasy conviction that the game was hardly worth the candle. Glancing over the advertisements in the first page of Saturday's "Herald," amongst the religious announcements in which oddly enough between the notice of the Swedenborgian service at the Temperance Hall and the Scotch Church services, appears a notice of the Sydney Poultry Society, I find intimated that Mr. Thomas Walker will deliver a lecture in the Trance State at the Victoria Theatre, on Sunday evening next, at 7.30. The subject is to be "The Infidelity of Christians, and Civilization among Savages." Also that relevant questions will be answered at the close. Now, I sometimes feel while listening to a sermon that my views do not altogether coincide with those of my Spiritual Pastor, and that, perhaps, some of the leaven of infidelity has entered into my christianity. Certainly I never have had the chance when the reverend gentleman has finished and before the churchwardens or deacons have gone round with the plate, of putting any theological posers to him, so I determine to brave the elements and see for myself, what attraction a free thought platform has for a Sydney audience. George-street, usually so crowded is deserted, save by a few of those young men who are so numerous, and evidently think that to lounge about in groups with pipe in mouth, is the highest enjoyment attainable by civilized man. Paying a shilling at the door, I find myself in the dress circle of the Victoria Theatre. On the stage at which I first glance, is placed a small table, with a water bottle and glass and also two chairs. The back of the stage is hidden from view by a scene, painted to imitate the wall of a room. Turning to the audience I find the dress circle about one quarter filled, with persons who are evidently habitués. The stalls, and as much of the pit as I can see are fairly filled. Two things attract my attention: The audience below are principally men, and those men of middle age. The appearance of so many heads more or less bald amongst the crowd, had a very singular effect. The utmost decorum was observed, and however prejudiced I may have been against a religious service held in a theatre, I am bound to acknowledge that there was nothing in the demeanour of the audience to give offence to the most susceptible. Two gentlemen, evidently from the country, came in rather late into the dress circle, attracted it appeared to me by curiosity; it was amusing to watch how their demeanour changed from that of (as the lecture proceeded) careless half contemptuous spectators to interested listeners.

Within a few minutes of the time, the lecturer with his chairman appeared on the platform: a notice having been read by the chairman to the effect, that it was proposed to establish a Lyceum, or Spiritualistic Sunday School, at the Temperance Hall; the words of a hymn were given out which was sung by the audience, many of whom were provided with books. I did not however, notice any offered for sale, or hear where they could be procured. Mr. Walker, a young man, apparently about twenty years of age, with dark hair, and somewhat pale face remained seated during the singing; he was dressed in a black frock coat and trousers and a white waistcoat. There was nothing in his appearance to indicate the possession of any extraordinary intellectual gifts. He is said to be an almost illiterate young man, a native of Lancashire, who, during the last few years has developed the power of lecturing on certain classes of subjects, while, it is affirmed in a trance state. While the hymn was in singing his eyes became closed and remained so during the lecture. Rising and advancing a few steps, he offered a very beautiful prayer or invocation to the Deity, for assistance in and a blessing on the work

in which he was engaged. He then commenced his lecture, and for one hour and a half without any intermission, held his audience in rapt attention. To give a precis of the lecture would be no light task, suffice it to say that it was a very able plea for tolerance of free thought from the orthodox churches. He pointed out that the free thinker of one age was the conservative of the next, that the Protestant was an infidel in the eyes of the older churches, and that the free thought he claimed for himself he should at least allow to others. He asserted that the views held by the orthodox clergy and laity of the present day, differed widely from those held by them when the creeds, articles, and other formulas of faith were written, and denounced as disingenuous and insincere, all attempts to make the views of the present day harmonise with the statements affirmed in those creeds. The conduct of Calvin in putting Servetus to death for being a free thinker like himself only more advanced, was denounced, and the sufferings of that unfortunate man at his martyrdom were described in a word picture of terrible beauty. The lecturer devoted the concluding portion of his lecture to the effects of the introduction of christianity amongst savage tribes, and argued that to judge of so-called savages, after they had been exposed to the evil influences of intercourse with the higher races, and decimated by the firewater and the sword was unjust. The lecture ended with a peroration of much force and pathos.

Mr Walker is a somewhat rapid speaker, in parts of his lecture where he makes a point he does not wait either for the subdued applause to cease or add to the effect of a pathetic or humorous remark by the slightest pause. His voice is modulated according as his subject is grave or gay, humorous or pathetic, and he uses appropriate gestures, but his face with the closed eyes has a drawn and at times almost a pained expression. There was no hesitation in his delivery, and but one misplaced word, and his lecture was evidently composed by some one who was a thorough master of the art of composition. It was logical throughout, and bore evident marks of being constructed according to rule: it was not an extempore address. From whatever source Mr. Walker derives his lecture, or his power over his audience, there can be no doubt, as a public speaker there are few in Sydney who excel him. The Spiritualists, I am told, compare him to the Rev. Charles Clark, and allowing for the difficulty under which he labours of speaking with closed eyes, and apparently neither seeing nor hearing his audience, I should admit the justice of the comparison.

Mr. Walker is to me a curious psychological problem. The lecture I heard would by an ordinary speaker have occupied nearly two hours in its delivery. It covered a great variety of ground, and could only have been composed by a man of cultivated intellect, practised powers of composition and extensive reading. Whilst to an orthodox hearer, an argument was occasionally pressed beyond its fair limits, its general tone was candid and liberal and there was not only a marked absence of anything like levity, but a manly and reverend spirit pervaded the whole. Why does Mr. Walker deliver these trance lectures? As a minister of an orthodox church he would certainly take a higher social standing and receive better emolument than he gets at present, that is, supposing these to be his own composition. If not to those who are not Spiritualists there is only one solution to the difficulty. The lectures are the productions of others and are learnt off by rote by the lecturer. If this be the case it is singular that long ere this (for Mr. Walker has now been some time in the colonies) the real author of these remarkable addresses has not proclaimed himself and denounced the piracy.

The lecturer at the termination of his address offered in the terms of the advertisement to answer any relevant questions, but none were asked, and after a short prayer and benediction given by him still in the trance state, the effect of which was sadly marred by the noise made by people leaving, Mr. Walker sat down and I found myself at a quarter past nine in the wet and deserted streets of Sydney. Spiritualism has for a long time been associated with childish folly and chicanery, it will

doubtless surprise many of the readers of the *S. M. Herald* as I was myself surprised to find that whether its doctrines are wrong or right, Spiritualism has advocates of no mean powers of thought, who are holding the attention of that important class of our community, the educated thoughtful mechanic and other men of the middle class, for of such I take the majority of Mr. Walker's hearers to be, the very men whose absence from our churches is so much deplored.

MRS. BRITTEN'S LECTURES.

ALTHOUGH no less than twenty consecutive lectures have been given by Mrs. Britten at the Opera House, the interest in them continues unabated. The oration on the "Nature and Locality of the Spirit World," though exceptionally long, held the rapt attention of the immense audience till its conclusion, whilst last Sunday's lecture, "Ritualism, Secularism, and Spiritualism," was perhaps the most telling of all, the feelings of the hearers finding vent in several outbursts of applause, which was evidently unsought and undesired by Mrs. Britten, who tried her utmost, by quickly following up her theme, to avoid giving opportunities for these displays of feeling. Mrs. Britten has delivered successful lectures at Sandhurst and Geelong, and is now on a tour to Ballarat, Ararat and Stawell, whence she will return in time for next Sunday's lecture.

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