

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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MR. THURLOW WEED, an octoganerian American statesman, whose religious ideas have been fossilised by the process of time, is troubled in his mind at the progress of what he and his co-religionists are pleased to call "Infidelity." In the hope of stemming the flood he wrote a long letter to the *New York Herald*, which has been transferred for the benefit of the weak kneed in this city, to the *Southern Cross*.

The immediate object of Mr. Weed's letter seems to be a refutation of Colonel Ingersoll, who is creating a considerable sensation in New York City, by his able, eloquent, and rational lectures against the fallacies of popular religion. The *Cross* with its usual fecundity of epithets, characterises him as "an athiest of a peculiar malignant and aggressive type," and Mr. Weed, who is certainly more gentlemanly in his style and language, regrets that a gentleman of such learning, eloquence, and attractiveness, should have got on the wrong track, inasmuch as he would have been a very "Goliath" in the Christian army had he only been properly shepherded when young.

We might have reasonably expected that in an article directed against Colonel Ingersoll and his teachings, some attempt would have been made to refute the latter, but in this we are disappointed. The principle portion of the matter is taken up in eulogism of the the beneficent influence of Christianity and a disparagement of such reformers as Voltaire, Paine and Robert Owen, who, we are told, are remembered (by their Christian opponents we presume) "for the evil rather than the good they done," but the climax is reached in a comparison of Ingersoll and Moody, of the latter of which Mr. Weed appears to be an ardent disciple. Words seem inadequate for him to delineate the marvellous influence which, according to Mr. Weed, this great Christian

missionary has exerted in New York, "Hundreds of drunkards reclaimed, gamblers and prize-fighters converted, destitute wives and children and desolate homes made happy," and he informs us, "The city is made fragrant with Tabernacle memories." Now we for one have some doubts about the "fragrance" of Tabernacle odors, it is at the best but a dubious perfume and would be repulsive to those who are accustomed to inhale the sweet atmosphere of "God's temple not built with hands." The Jews and other semi-barbaric nations in olden times considered the odors of blood and beasts with which the sacrificial altars were fed, sweet, but the progress of civilization and refinement have carried the tastes of the majority beyond the appreciation of this kind of perfumery, which to sensitive persons would be anything but refreshing, and in like manner are Tabernacle memories repulsive to individuals who have inhaled the fragrance and basked in the sunshine pertaining to a higher plane of thought and a purer form of religion.

We must confess also our inability to exclude from our minds a lurking doubt about the wholesale reclamation of drunkards, gamblers, and prize-fighters, by the preaching of Mr. Moody, we feel that some statistics are necessary to satisfy us of the fact. Members of the "P.R." we should imagine were very tough customers to "reclaim," even in the orthodox sense of the word, and a single specimen in the shape of some pugilistic luminary exhibited on the Moody and Sankey stage, would be too good an advertisement for those shrewd revivalists to neglect utilising. However, the matter may soon be set at rest and our doubts dispersed if our religious contemporary the *Southern Cross* will take the trouble to procure and publish the New York statistics of crime prior and subsequent to the "Moody" ministrations in that city, and should we find a sensible diminution of crime and drunkenness during that period and no more rational cause to account for it, than that suggested, our present doubts in relation to Mr. Weed's assertions will disappear.

A CONFERENCE of Spiritualists, to take into consideration the state of the movement, and how its interests may be promoted, its adherents more closely united, and its working forces more efficiently utilised, was to be held in Manchester during the latter part of October. We shall give a notice of it in due course.

CONSTITUENTS OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

(A COMMUNICATION)

"For the structure that we raise
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.
Truly shape and fashion these,
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen."

A universal religion; one which a man can understand: profitably cultivate in this life; and carry with him into the next stage of existence with equal profit.

The term religion, is very much misunderstood—even by those who profess to be governed by its principles. Consequently it is made to present a great many different aspects as a controlling factor in men's lives. It ought to be the habit of life; the dress in which the individual is arrayed at all times; the robe of beauty which, covering all the other garments, should impart a lustre and a dignity to them, and make of the man a living impersonation of truth and goodness. It is not my business so much to find fault with present mistakes, as to teach what are the real principles of a life in harmony with the All-prevailing Will; to build up, rather than pull down; to endeavour to show by contrast, the more excellent way, that my fellow men may choose the true and reject the erroneous. Let all things be done in the spirit of love which ever hath regard for the right of everyone to think for himself in view of the light which he may gather around him to guide his course. On this principle, then, I will frame my discourse, so that those who are desirous of attaining the more perfect way, may have some help afforded them, such help as I am able to give, and which I feel it to be not only my duty but my highest privilege to present.

Of life, and all its faculties, an old writer hath truly said:—"Ye have this treasure in earthen vessels." Clearly implying thereby, two most important considerations. First: That the treasure is characterised by permanency; and, second, that the vessel in which it is placed may be destroyed without in any way invalidating the essential principle, which is of a durable nature. There are two things, then, which characterise a religion which shall be of universal acceptance. First: That its object is to preserve the treasure, the life, in its highest condition of efficiency. And, Second: That the religion, or the habit of life, will to a great extent be characterised and influenced by man's surroundings as he journeys onward from plane to plane of his existence.

Religion as I understand it comprises that bond of union which unites all the powers and faculties of life into a compact agency, to be used with special and continuous regard to the recognised Will of the Supreme Fountain of Life, as manifested in the laws of the Universe; and, also in consistent operation with the happiness and well-being of the race at large. The brotherhood of man, is the one great consideration which both these propositions involve, and whereby, notwithstanding the changed aspect which the circumstances of human life may undergo in its pilgrimage through the spheres, shall be accomplished, the paramount and all important object, the preservation of the treasure which the Inscrutable Governor of the Universe hath been pleased to place in, and encircle with habiliments which from time to time require to be renewed, and thus provide for the demand which arises from the prevalence of the principle of growth and advancement which characterise a living entity.

Now, guided by these preliminary considerations, let me endeavour to lay down a line of thought which shall reveal the nature of that religion which man can understand, which he can cultivate with effect, and which he may carry with him to his next state of existence and find profitable to him there; the fixed and permanent habit of his life, guiding him in all things, and securing for him that measure of happiness which he is capable of enjoying however he may be situated, or wheresoever he may be located.

My religion, then, shall be first of all, characterised by knowledge. Secondly, by due consideration. Thirdly,

by a full recognition of operating causes producing certain effects. And, fourthly, by the persistent determination to preserve the harmony of operation which is the reasonable concomitant of the preceding considerations.

I do not say that an ignorant man cannot be a religious man, but he will only be so to the extent of his knowledge; and if his imagination outrun his knowledge, he will be superstitious to a degree which shall sadly hinder his spiritual progress. The mind of man will operate apart from knowledge, and very often, when there is no knowledge, it will conjure up ideas of the most extravagant nature. Hence it is that either because there is little knowledge, or the mind has, in the exercise of the imaginative faculties, fixed itself on one or two ideas, all the evils, and discords, and mistakes arise in connection with the religions of the world; and these discords and mistakes will only be got rid of as knowledge becomes more extended and rigidly accurate, and in accordance with the laws of the Universe.

In defining what I mean by religion, based on knowledge, it will not be so much my object to point out the mistakes of the present day, as to show in what way knowledge is its proper basis; its only safe basis; and that, then, in proportion as the knowledge extends, so will the soul grow and rise to higher and higher conceptions of its mission in the wide Universe. Knowledge, then, arises from the exercise of the mind in relation to the things it sees round about it, or to which its attention may be called in the way of instruction. Acquired knowledge, is very desirable; that is, the information which is sought in the exercise of the individual's own persistent will; but added to this, the knowledge which comes by way of instruction, or the applied experience of others will, when the judgment of the recipient is sound, be also a great acquisition.

But under either circumstance, great care must be taken to test the reality of the propositions thus presented for reception. It is said by some writers, that only through the material senses can knowledge be obtained, and I am ready to grant that thus many palpable facts, or results, may be gained, and that this is an important step secured; but the operation of the mind is capable of examining the causes of these results, and thus by a deductive process grasp a larger amount of knowledge than could otherwise be acquired. The mere Materialist possesses a very contracted field of vision compared with the Spiritualist; and while the former realizes only the circumference, the Spiritualist goes to the very centre, and perceives not only the underlying forces, but discovers the laws which govern these, and so at length, the great moving force of all as far as it is possible to do so. It is thus a knowledge of the government of the Universe is acquired, a perception of its unvarying laws, its universal mode of dealing with man especially. And herein lies the basis on which religion, or the government of the life in accordance with certain rules should be carried out. For religion, in its very essential requirements is, to seek to live in harmony with those laws, to regulate the thoughts, the desires, the speech, the actions, both relatively and personally so that the results shall be conducive to personal and relative well-being.

By this means, the mind will be relieved of those conceptions which are simply distortions of the great facts of the Universe, delivered from the monstrous contradictions which prevail so plentifully in the religions of the world; for it is a fact that the object of even the so-called Christian religion seems to be to compel men to accept propositions repugnant even to common sense, to the law of man's own nature, and highly objectionable as they refer to the Great Being who is made the centre around which the scheme is supposed to revolve. There can be no contradictions in exact knowledge; and the religion which is suitable for universal acceptance must be a religion based on harmony, whether its laws be few or many. In dealing with this subject, I do not propose to enlarge on any of my points, but rather to offer suggestive thoughts which may lead to inquiry and application by my readers. But in addition to what I have said respecting knowledge as the basis of religion, I would submit that the process should always be carried out with the view to the most natural and consistent

realization of the value of human existence and its value as a factor of the Universe, discarding all ideas which would either degrade the human, or cast a reflection on the Divine; since the object of religion is to raise the earth seedling into a plant worthy of transplanting to higher regions, to cultivate its qualities so that it may eventually become a tree of renown, a tree of the Lord's own right hand planting.

(To be continued.)

Marnias Meti.

Melbourne, November, 1880.

SPIRITUAL ASTRONOMY.

Continued.

THE PROGRESS OF ASTRONOMICAL DISCOVERY.

No. V.

MY FRIENDS,—Before entering on my explanations of the solar corona and zodiacal light, which I propose to make the subject of my principal remarks at this sitting, I find it necessary to refer first to that portion of my last communication which had reference to the spiritually-impressed thought of the illustrious Copernicus. That similar opinions relative to the movements of the planets were entertained by certain ancient philosophers, this illustrious philosopher and astronomer fully admitted; for does he not make mention in the beginning of his great work this important fact in the following manner: "I found in Cicero that Nicæus maintained that the earth was in motion." And, referring to the writings of Plutarch, he says: "Philosophers in general maintain that the earth is at rest in the centre of the celestial sphere; but Cleanthus of Assus and Philæus the Pythagorean, opposed the opinion of these philosophers and asserted the earth's movement around the central fire. This central fire was the then supposed focus of the universe;" following the same path in the celestial sphere as the sun and moon. Also Aristarchus of Samos taught that the earth was not only imbued with an annual motion round the sun, but also with a diurnal rotatory movement on its own axis. This would seem to indicate that Copernicus was not the discoverer of the system which bears his name, but that he founded his theory upon the opinions maintained by these ancient philosophers. Nevertheless, he asserts, and I know justly maintains, that such was not the case, but that he rightly sought among the writings of the ancients for such records as would tend to confirm the impression. But these opinions were entertained only by the few, and well and learnedly argued against by the great analytical and pre-eminently logical mind of Aristotle; therefore, wholly to the spiritually impressed thought of Copernicus do mankind owe the restoration of the true system of the universe. But that the planets were regular and harmonious in their movements, and therefore governed by fixed laws, does not seem to have suggested itself to the seers of antiquity; and it was reserved for Kepler, who immortalised the age in which he lived on earth, to shed undying lustre on his name by the discovery of those laws which govern the movements of the planets. That a wonderful forecasting of knowledge existed among the ancients, there can be no doubt whatever; for with what marvellous prescience Anaxagoras propounds some remarkable views relative to the existence of an attracting principle inherent in all bodies. These were great truths, mighty discoveries, dimly foreshadowing their existence in the classical minds of antiquity; just as I foretold the existence of properties yet unthought of, and which later discoveries have fully verified. But these spiritual impressions have been the mysteries of science—sublime mysteries, which it was reserved for Spiritualism to accurately define and trace to their true source.

It now becomes necessary for me to explain why I referred so particularly to a matter which may possibly require neither assurance nor explanation namely that the greatest benefits which have accrued to the human race have had their origin in spiritual impression. Inde-

pently of the great and pleasing interest which must ever attach itself to such heaven-born knowledge, we must take it into consideration, that as my communications are given forth to the world, it behoves me to distinguish between two classes of minds in the world—the spiritualistic, and that class which I shall term the non-spiritualistic—under whose notice these communications may fall. To the former, my remark on the spiritually-impressed thoughts of Copernicus will seem so natural and to spring so directly from the nature of things, that it is not necessary to reassure them upon the subject; but to the non-spiritualistic, who are blind to the intellectual grandeur of such a simple truth of nature, it will appear fallacious from every point of view, and they will class the remark amongst the aberrations of the human mind. Alas! there are those whom nothing could convince. This is but another example of the struggles between prejudice and truth, and affords a still stronger evidence of the suitability of the spiritual creed to the complex wants of the human mind.

Spiritual impression has been for ages a life-giving power to the human intellect, and thereby shows its adaptation to all conditions of the human race and to all ages of the world. As there is a great spirit of incredulity abroad among the masses of mankind, it behoves me to show by my knowledge of antecedent facts the evidence which may be brought against it.

November 18th, 1880.

Having dealt fully, in the last sitting, with that transmitted thought which has been for years upon your earth, called inspirational knowledge, but what is better and more accurately defined by Spiritualism as spiritual impression, I have said sufficient on that matter for the spiritualistic portion of the world to collect my opinions therefrom, and shall conclude my remarks by saying that we, the spiritual beings of the inner life, all fervently hope that a truer appreciation of the ennobling fact will shortly prevail among the masses of mankind. I will now turn your attention, if you please, to the beautiful attendant phenomenon which solar eclipses reveal to the human view: that halo of bright light which surrounds the great leading orb of your system, and which has been well termed, in modern astronomical nomenclature, the corona of glory. The nature and origin of this singular phenomenon have been a subject of marked diversity of opinion among latter-day astronomers and physicists. But before proceeding further, I find it necessary to remark that the great question which doubtless will perplex many minds on earth, now reveals itself clearly to me on the threshold of my exposition. Is it scientific to advance an explanation of natural problems which is not demonstrated by positive proof, or proved incontrovertibly by positive facts? I unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative; because, controlled and limited as spiritual beings are by natural conditions, to demonstrate this matter fully would compel me to enter upon a course of scientific abstract reasoning that would take us wholly into the regions of another science. Such a mode of demonstration must necessarily be based upon certain conditions; and these conditions, I regret exceedingly to say, are not available; or, in other words, the anomalous physiological construction of the cerebrum of the medium does not permit of the necessary conditions. It would, therefore, be unreasonable for mortals to impose conditions which are not accessible; but, were adequate means placed at our command, we could not only fully satisfy the most searching investigations of science in the completest manner, but communicate such knowledge, as far transcends the conception of the greatest scientists of your day, and which the minds of philosophers yet unborn—the great thinkers of the future—whose minds built upon the knowledge of the philosophers of your day, and with all the acquired wealth of thought which may be their heritage, could but feebly grasp.

Restricted by natural conditions, I can only hope to lay before you simple truths of nature, which can only be disclosed by facts of observation, which later observed phenomena will abundantly confirm. But remember I would not that you should accept one tittle of know-

ledge from me that will not bear the most penetrating scrutiny from the eye of reason, or the most searching investigation by rational scientific thought. Nevertheless, without the aid of mathematical investigation, without abstract scientific reasoning, or technical terms, I hope to unfold to your minds the true solution of the phenomenon: stripped, however, of such imposing accessories that I greatly fear my explanation will go forth to the world weighted with the great drawback of extreme simplicity.

"GOD."

(From the Rig Vedas.)

There is an essence pure as light,
Which o'er creation reigns,
In calm repose the Infinite,
Who nature's power sustains!

That power supreme, all power above!
Extending everywhere;
The universal source of love,
All creatures are his care.

The greatest and the least partake
Of his paternal care;
His creatures he will not forsake,
They all his mercy share.

'Tis He who makes, preserves, destroys,
Keeps up perpetual change,
A wise progression he employs,
Dissolves to re-arrange!

He regulates creation's laws,
Is infinitely wise!
The glorious, the eternal cause,
Sustaining earth and skies.

That source of life, and truth, and light;
On whom all things depend,
The Invisible, the Infinite,
Doth every blessing send.

The universe is all his own,
The Holy, Good, and Wise,
And day and night to Him are one,
His throne the starry skies!

That fountain of beatitude!
Perfection, life and love!
To whom belongs all gratitude,
For favours from above!

At death the souls of saints don't die,
Like flame they upward move,
Toward their Parent in the sky,
Ascend to Him they love.

Through higher spheres the just ascend,
As they increase in light,
Their hopes, their joys, their powers extend,
As stars in radiance bright!

Till full of wisdom, love and power,
From imperfection free;
They rise until absorbed once more,
Into the Deity.

From God, a spark of life they came,
Progressing on their rise,
Till lost in the eternal flame,—
Their parent in the skies,

Where imperfection, grief and pain,
And personality
For ever swallowed remain,
Absorbed in Deity.

R.

An admirable letter on "Exposers of Spiritualism and their methods of investigation," by Susan E. Gay, appears in the October number of *Spiritual Notes*.

We have received, from the Rev. Samuel Watson, an advance copy of his new book on "The Religion of Spiritualism." It will be reviewed in our next.

COMMUNICATION.

ILL fares the man whose heart is set on things below. A grovelling life is his; his whole nature, spiritual and mental, buried, so to speak, in the mire. Content to be a worm, he seeketh not the light. Can it be that he is of the same flesh and blood as yonder toiling man, who, scarcely allowing himself time for rest, all his aspirations high and noble, seeks to know of the hereafter, feeling with each breath he draws that this life cannot be all? Yes, verily, twin-brothers are they! Alike in outward form to the casual observer; but within as far apart as are the poles!

Now, how is this diversity to be accounted for? Born of the same mother under apparently similar circumstances, man would expect similar results; but nature steps in, and speaking with authority, saith, "Not so!" For indeed no two germs are in *all* things precisely alike, whether animal or vegetable.

This might be inferred by comparing any two human beings; any two animals of whatever species; any two plants of whatever genera you please. Though your very life depended upon it you could not find, search where you may, any two that in all respects are precisely identical.

Gather a leaf from the nearest tree, and you will weary ere you find its fellow, though you may think that you have succeeded. Hold it up to the light and count the numerous pores with which its surface is dotted, if you can; then trace the wondrous arrangement for the circulation of its life-blood, the sap; and you will be content to own that a life might be spent in the vain search for nature's double.

Allowing that you agree with me, does not this account for the differences in disposition, mind, and talents to be seen in members of the same family wherever you turn? The laws that underlie this truth are subtle in the extreme. Points of resemblance are to be seen on all hands, but duality, never. This knowledge, when acquired, should tend to make man more tolerant, less exacting in his dealings with his fellow man, teaching him to bear and to forbear.

If all the notes of an instrument were in unison what would become of the beautiful effects of harmony and melody? All cannot be the key-note, though each may take his or her part in making the theme of the Great Composer a perfect work. Each one has a work to do, and the more heartily it is done the less likely is the whole instrument, of which you are but units, to be out of tune.

Remember that we are co-workers with you; for we too are a part of the great whole that goes to make the harmony of nature—that grand instrument whose Operator is He whom ye call God.

K.

Castlemaine.

AN EXCERPT.

Is there a thought can fill the human mind?
More pure, more vast, more generous, more refined
Than that which guides the enlightened patriots toil;
Not he whose view is bounded by his soil—
Not he whose narrow heart can only shine
The land, the people that he calleth mine
Not he who, to set that land on high,
Will make whole nations bleed, whole nations die—
Not he who, calling that land's rights his pride,
Trampleth the rights of all the earth beside.
No! He it is, the just, the generous soul,
Who owneth brotherhood with either pole.
Stretches from realm to realm his spacious mind,
And guards the weal of all of human kind—
Holds freedom's banner o'er the earth unfurled
And stands the guardian patriot of a world.

Mrs D'Suisemont.

In connexion with a review of Professor Zollner's book which appears in the last issue of *Breethought*, a full page illustration of some of the phenomena is given as a supplement.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

LIFE is a busy scene. The stream flows on perpetually adown the gulf of time. Mark the rapid strides it makes! All time misspent is so much valuable matter irreparably lost. Pleasures, joys, sorrows, pains, disappointments, trials, afflictions, and remorse are its attributes; without which life would be a dreary monotony. Enter the city, wherein is the central base from whence flows the busy stream, and behold the average life represented by the multitudes that throng its streets; watch the dispensers of its luxuries and its necessities, and mark how on the nature of its surroundings is built the essence of its being. We trade with the merchant for the bare necessities of existence, with the artisan for its refinements, with the philosopher for its wisdom; and in return, dispense our little by way of compensation. Mark how each atom in existence responds to our unceasing call, and here behold the essences of being, wrapped in the sordid lap of luxury, for which we barter our better selves. O! man; wake fully to thine own responsibilities! Know that on the shoulders of another cannot be placed your mistakes, your follies, your short-comings. Does not the whole philosophy of nature teach that like attracts like; that in the unceasing activity of thy being is dispensed the just rewards of action. Use all the forces of nature with economic effect, and to thy will responds the endowment of self with all that is imperishable. Mount the ladder of progression and behold the little that is below thy better self.

Mark how the low and base in these grovels in the dregs of life, not caring to follow the imperishable in the upward struggling. Seated on the summit of yonder hill behold thy kindred struggling still with the perishing things of life, and with pity descend to breathe on them the atmosphere of thy purer dwelling; drink deep, give much, and thou shalt not exhaust the eternal spring; it flows on perpetually, there is enough and to spare for all time; that which uplifts thyself is surely for thy kindred also, but man in his selfishness is unmindful of all but his little self: he who has treasures seeks only the gratification of self; he who has none knows nothing higher than self. But from this mediocrity of human life arises the aspiring soul, who, touched by the finger of Eternal Being, sees more than one existence. He may trade with earth, but the surroundings of his nature bespeak that without that his better self remains undeveloped. Thus he teaches his fellows that in the abundance of riches lies not the end for which he should seek, but stretching far out in the regions beyond his physical gaze, lies the life that is uncorrupted by the pollutions of his baser self; refined by the process of outward action, he bathes in the sunlight of the celestial, but facing the stern realities of earth's existence, with which he has not yet done, is impelled to use with advantage the forces by nature supplied, not abusing the ends of being by pandering to the gratification of the senses, but divesting himself of the grosser forms of being, he stands with eye fixed on something which is as yet undefined, but which the eloquence of silent witnesses more subtle than the demonstration of auricular powers, reveals to his intuitive being. Thus the philosophy of life is undefined by the mere process and monotony of returning needs, but in the regions of the metaphysical, controlled by higher powers revealing wherein lies the true philosophy of existence, untrammelled by the ends of physical being, he is landed into regions from whence are obliterated the sordidness of his baser nature. Dare we follow the soul in its upward progress? Step by step see it pick up its lessons by the wayside. The fashionable man of the world, when his soul turns to its goal, turns with unesse away from his pursuits; the want of something upon which the mind may eternally dwell is felt; the gap is unfilled, and the vagueness is sickening. But the essences of the soul returning to itself, robbed by the abuse of mispent energy, is seeking to satisfy itself; give it free scope, and its power is wonderful; cramp it up in environs of selfishness, and it lies dormant. Thus it is that the end of being is as it were divided by the twofold nature of man—the base and

perishable; the better and the immortal—that which gratifies the one retards the progress of the other as it tends to its natural end. Thence arises the necessity of developing by the aid of imperishable forces, the essences of immortal being. These forces are in our midst; rising high above the mere surface of existence, they shine as the beacon lights that guide the soul to its unerring destiny. Follow on! for in the silent chamber of thine own being is the instruction of the soul. The years roll on and bring with them the increasing activity of being. Time marks the pulsations of existence, but the last throb brings with it the final scene, and then to all appearance is ended the struggle. The chamber is closed—the essence gone—the soul pants for its source—and man asks whence am I, and whither do I tend?

Apart from the instruction of the soul, all the research of science is unanswering. Retire; the world shut out, and with thine inner self commune, and rising on the ages of time, mark each pulsating atom obeying the universal will, and following on till the end of being, when freed from baser impulses it stands immortal, imperishable. Such is the soul's eternal destiny; such is the reason why every atom obeys its all-potent will. To this end is man endowed with reason—the knowledge of good and evil; that that which is in him should remain as the transcendent essence of the Godhead, refined, purified, and made fit to stand in the presence of the Everlasting One. Surely the time is not far distant when man shall learn the lessons of life, and profiting thereby develop that which knows no end, which is destined by the potency of a higher will to abide for ever.

EMMA.

JOTTINGS FROM THE NORTH EAST.

SOME short time ago I told in the "Jottings" of a minister of the Church of England giving in lieu of a sermon a discourse on Spiritualism. It appears that the particular *Harbinger* with the account in fell under the eye of the minister aforesaid. Nothing daunted by the publicity of his discourse, he gave another on the same theme, on a following Sunday, in the course of which he made remarks something similar to this—That there might be, and he had no doubt there were, hundreds of spirits in this building, and that walls were not the slightest impediment, being nothing more to them than a vapoury substance, and therefore of no solidity to their spiritual senses, etc. Hearing of this, I went to hear our worthy friend and to discover what light he could throw on a subject that is the ground of investigation of some of the ablest minds of the present age. Whether he had been cautioned by his Bishop not to speak on a subject adverse as Spiritualism is to the dogmas of the Church, or whether your humble servant's presence, who, through the *Harbinger*, might blazon to the world the backsliding of a shepherd of a Christian fold, I know not; at any rate, I could see him now and again cast a sly look towards the place where I sat. I do not wish in any way to impute cowardice to him, but I must say it is very strange that he should on that particular occasion have struck his colours and gone in a totally different direction in his discourse to what he did when I was not present. The ordinary service of the Church, "Dearly beloved brethren," etc., was waded through, and then he commenced to enlighten the people as follows—"Some short time ago I gave a discourse on 'Spiritism' (he termed it 'Spiritism' this particular occasion, on former ones it was 'Spiritualism'.) I would have continued giving them, but I found this congregation does not approve of the subject being used instead of the regular sermon; but (he added) I can easily account for it from natural laws. All the wonders that are ascribed to Spiritism are, dear friends, *nothing more nor less than thought reading*." How easily everything is explained by our worthy friend. And what an enlightened congregation they must be to believe such stuff, although it does issue from the lips of a canon of the Church, and a gentleman with M.A. tacked to his name. I really think he was trying to see on that occasion how far their gullibility would extend. He capped the climax by informing his hearers that "all

dreams occurred just at the moment of waking." I think the saying of Christ is very applicable in this case—"When the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch."

THE lecture by Mr. W. C. Smith, in Yackandandah, of which I spoke in one of my former "Jottings" was the means of rousing the ire of the local correspondent of the *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*. He, in writing his weekly budget of news, spoke of the lecture as a "tirade of blasphemies," citing some of the most objectionable sentences contained in it, which were used against the creed, dogmas, and the orthodox idea of the Trinity. But what seemed to put "our correspondent" more on his mettle was the imputation of Mr. Smith that the "God of Moses was a bloodthirsty God." Mr. Smith answered him in a very well written and exceedingly sensible letter, proving that "our correspondent" was any where but in the light of the present age, kindly adding, "That if he wished to be helped out of the orthodox mire, he (Mr. Smith) would extend a willing hand for that purpose. Mr. Smith was, and no doubt is, very sorry that a man of the intellectual attainments that "our correspondent," possesses, should be so terribly deep in the mire, and at the same time thinks he can see further than the slime will let him.

In a late issue of the *Sydney Mail* there appeared a critique on a new journal—the *Illustrated Christian Weekly*. Speaking of the subject matter, the writer complains of it being too much of the "goody, goody" order; and also "that if the Christian teachings of the day be not robust, they will fail to satisfy an increasing large section of the community," adding, "Articles such as the one bearing the superscription of Mr. Thomas Spurgeon can only irritate those who wish to see Christianity treated with the intellectual power which is now commonly devoted to the exposition of much less important subjects." (The last sentence was, no doubt, a side-blow against "Freethought.") He also complains of the "Zeal without knowledge," "Words without thought," "Mere vapoury earnestness," "Anecdotal twaddle," "Puerile expostulations," etc., that "they will fail to have any effect on the forces in the community," etc. Further on he writes, "A portion of the sectarian journalism is characterised by an almost 'Brutal bitterness of tone' and 'Cowardly unfairness of argument.'"

Here's a critique of a Christian writer in a Christian paper, on a subject affecting the teachings of Christianity. Why, its enough to make the Bishops of Christendom hide their heads under the cloths of the altar and scorch them with their blushes, at the abject nonsense with which the men and women of this, the nineteenth century, are sought to be kept within the orthodox folds.

THE Melbourne correspondent of the *Southland Daily News* wishes it to be known that he is a Christian! and has been giving evidence of his zeal in the cause by vilifying and abusing the Spiritualists and Freethinkers of this and neighbouring cities. "He has no hesitation," he says (and we believe him in this) "in denouncing it as a system of impiety, infidelity, and blasphemy." This energetic "Christian" does not seem to hesitate at anything; he lies and abuses with apparent guile, doubtless congratulating himself that this congenial work is all for the glory of God. It is rather too bad on the Southlanders to take advantage of their ignorance of the geography of Melbourne, as he does, in the following paragraph:

"Without making invidious comparisons, I may say that it is somewhat unfortunate that the lowest form of Chinese life, the most glaring forms of immorality, the homes of the most disreputable larrikins, and the haunts of the Melbourne Spiritualists should be within a few yards of each other.—Yours, &c."

He might have also informed them that the Temperance Hall, the head quarters of the Young Men's Christian Association, and the largest Wesleyan Church, are within the same distance from the unsavory localities he alludes to. In Melbourne, the disingenuousness of the paragraph is too apparent to need comment.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

EVERYWHERE we gaze, wherever we turn, in whatever direction our vision penetrates, we see the evidences of wisdom, beauty, order, and benevolence. In the open pages of the creation around us, in the tiniest particle therein to the mightiest orb around which all else revolve, we have presented to us the manifest evidence of an unseen intelligent power, infinitely superior to the power possessed by man. Limits this power knows not; circumference it has not; space, latitude, longitude, are all unknown in that magnitude of power that propels the mighty machinery of an endless universe. To rightly define this power is not given to man, for in the increasing perpetual round of activity with which this universe is propelled and guided, that Unseen Power remains unseen. We are unable to arrive at even an imperfect sketch of the hidden attributes of that Divine Mind which has displayed itself in all the concentrated forces of nature which have presented themselves to the intelligence of man, inviting him as it were to fathom the depths of its omniscient greatness.

As the mind of man advances up to that stage where-in he is enabled to view the magnitude of Deity, he stands with head uncovered and gazes in bewilderment on the amazing power which meets his astonished gaze. The unceasing motion of the machinery of the universe astonishes him with its marvellous capacity, and he is constrained to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, O God; Great art Thou, O Unseen Power! and worthy to be magnified."

Man endeavours to annihilate this power, for when his intellect is so beclouded as that he is unable to perceive the absolute existence of it, he begins to deny that there is any force in the action of the universe calling for belief in any foreign agent superior to the power of mere chance; hence all the stupendously grand phenomena of nature are attributed to some blind propelling force possessing no sympathy with the nature of man, or of circumstances that go to make up the sum of human life. But to this power man stands indissolubly linked, for the whole force of nature impels him to seek refuge in some superior power to shield himself from the blasts of untoward action that overwhelm him in the struggle for existence, that for some unknown purpose is allotted. All ages have evolved their own God according to their intuitive consciousness, and we find that the God of one age does not suit a succeeding one. Hence there are gods many. But there is an All-present Power, undefined, unlimited, displayed in nature, having no concentrated origin, displaying in a magnetic current its wonderful power impressed on the mind of man; is subject to no known law; but rising superior thereto, having given law its power, and hiding itself from the most penetrating gaze, is a warranted assumption that a Supreme Being controls this endless universe. Everywhere in nature is the voice of this power, speaking to man of intelligence, force, power, wisdom. The concentration of its subtler elements is to be found in the mental organism. Having formed a world out of chaos, evolved an universe out of primary matter, (each atom bending to its all-potent will) cultivated it on earth with vegetation, clothed it in beauty, bathed it in the splendour of sunlight, divided day and night, seasons, cycles, and periods; gives man his place in nature. In a cycle of unending magnitude this power displays itself to the mind of man. All impressions of the intellect of man are but impressed thereon by the hand of Omnipotence. No mind is absolutely original. All thoughts spoken are but impressions of Deity, the current of events are but the outspoken manifestations of the mind of God; and though man may view the outward manifestations of intelligent nature from a materialistic standpoint, he cannot disconnect mind and matter without annihilating the propelling intelligent force which has endowed man with intellectual gifts for the ultimate object of displaying the wisdom of Deity. Verily, indeed, all nature inclines us to conclude with the poet Young, "That a Godhead reigns, and if a God there be, that God how GREAT!

EMMA.

SPIRITISM IN SYDNEY: ITS PROGRESS.

No. IV.

SPIRITISM is beginning to show itself in its better aspects in Sydney. Last month it showed how liberal it can be even to those who in "important matters" differ from it, although those points touch the vital spring of its life and progress. Mr. C. Bright gave a lecture for the benefit of the "Bradlaugh Defence Fund," before a large and respectable audience at the Temperance Hall; subject—"Life and Work of C. Bradlaugh." In his opening remarks the lecturer said although in many important points he did not agree with Mr. Bradlaugh, for he thought him greatly in error; for instance, Mr. Bradlaugh did not believe in a future existence; while he (the lecturer) not only believed in but knew and was sure of such a fact, and that reward and punishments would follow for deeds done in the body. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) did not believe in an overruling Deity, but that nature sustained itself; while he (the lecturer) was convinced that there *must* be a First Cause, and that an Almighty Power was dominant even in the meanest of nature's works. Yet for all that he felt it his duty to assist and uphold Mr. Bradlaugh all that lay in his power in his forthcoming struggle for liberty and the rights of the people, for he believed him to be a man of truth and honour, therefore it was not imperative that he should believe exactly as he did to gain his respect and support; for were they not both engaged in the same great work of relieving mankind from the bondage and tyranny of the Church? and as liberty of speech was the natural right of every man, all should be at liberty to use his own judgment in things religious as well as political, and while he stood up for truth and liberty, he was worthy the support of every right-minded Englishman. Mr. Bright also paid a high tribute of respect to Mrs. Besant, saying "he believed her to be one of the purest-minded daughters of nature God had favoured us with." On the evening of July 12th (Sunday), Mr. Bright lectured to an overflowing house in the Theatre Royal. On this occasion, in place of the usual choir, the platform was filled with gentlemen; the chair being occupied by the Hon. J. Bowie Wilson. The subject chosen for the evening was "The Gospel, not of Peace but Police," which was handled in a masterly manner by the lecturer, who said, he was sorry to be compelled to depart from his usual course, but as circumstances had transpired during the past few days that threatened not only the liberties of Freethinkers but other sections of the thinking community, he felt it his duty to take the step he had done, for it had been pretty plainly hinted that steps would be taken to prevent his lectures. It had also been said by the orthodox party that he was afraid to lecture in his usual way, so had taken refuge behind the Hon. J. B. Wilson and a committee of gentlemen; but such was not the case. It became every man, let him be Freethinker or not, when his liberty was threatened, to be at his post; and these gentlemen, feeling that this was the time to bestir themselves, had, like sons of true liberty, rallied around him, well knowing that "union is strength;" thus they, by their own act and free will, had shown to the enemies of religious liberty that he did not stand alone, and that there were men even in high places who valued religious liberty as much as the haters of freedom of speech enjoyed the downfall of every right of man so that their narrow bigotry prevailed.

Hitherto there had been little or no union among Freethinkers in Sydney; but time had come when it was needful for the good of all that union should exist, and he was happy to say a movement was on foot to that end, and in a few days would be submitted for approval. This statement was received with loud and prolonged applause.

We received a letter per last mail from Mr. Brown; he has had a short but very successful season at the Cape. At that place he has been doing a vast amount of good, and now he is on his way to Sydney. We expect him by the s. s. "Orient," that left Table Bay on the 26th inst. We are looking forward to the time of his coming with great pleasure, for he is without excep-

tion one of the best mediums that has ever visited this place; not so much on account of his great gifts, but for his estimable character and gentle disposition. It is his intention to make Sydney his head-quarters and future home, and we think he could not have chosen a better field for his labours; for let the orthodox party protest as much as they may, in Sydney there is a thorough "shaking amongst the dry bones," and daily there are many brought "out of darkness into the marvellous liberty of the children of God." Even the *Evening News* is "halting between two opinions;" it cannot decide which way it shall go. Sometimes it comes out in glowing colours, and its eloquence surpasses itself; when, all at once, it appears to bethink how wrong it is, and turning right round, brings some crushing argument against it. Some "wicked person" was bad enough to say that the editor has a brother a Spiritist, and he is "spoiling the family." Be that as it may, they are constantly making some grand discovery; the last being, as they express it, "a new feature has just come to light in Spiritualism—a man, who to our personal knowledge died more than twelve months ago, has his name in his own handwriting affixed to a requisition to a certain gentleman to stand for the next Election!" Can any of your readers explain the matter; I can only refer the *Evening News* to the "Writing on the wall" spoken of in the Old Testament. Sydney, Oct. 8th, 1880. S. W. M.

PRESENTATION TO MR. WALKER.

WE Extract the following from the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, of September the 22nd., last.—

On Thursday evening of last week Mr. Thos. Walker held a farewell conversation at the Theatre Royal, Kimberley. During the entertainment a deputation of friends and well-wishers presented the lecturer with a handsome diamond ring, together with the following address, numerously signed:—

THOMAS WALKER, Esq., Kimberley, Sept 16, 1880.

Dear Sir,—We, the undersigned, have heard with great regret that you are about to leave the Fields, but cannot allow you to depart without expressing our warm feelings of appreciation for your endeavours to promote "Free Thought," and "Liberty of Conscience."

Many may differ from your opinions in certain respects, but all must admire the courage and ability with which you have expounded them. We see that your arguments are based upon the statements of the highest and most respected scientists; that your eloquence adorns the facts you bring forward, while your sincerity has been proved by your challenge to all parties, either publicly or privately, to confute your statements.

You have not come forward as a foolish atheist, but as the reverent worshipper of the Almighty Architect of the Universe. You have not censured and condemned all those whose religious feelings do not coincide with your own, but have invited all your hearers to bring the good from all their religions, and with due reverence and worship of their Maker, perform his work by doing good to their fellow creatures. You have also torn away the mask of prejudice and ignorance that has blinded so many, and have offered them truth in the place of their fables and superstitions.

The continually increasing numbers of your hearers proves conclusively that your doctrines have attracted great attention, and induced men to think for themselves on the questions of life and eternity.

In testimony of our great appreciation of your public efforts, and also as a mark of our private friendship, we beg you to accept this accompanying diamond ring, and trust you will keep it as a memento of Kimberley.

We must, in conclusion, express our sincere hopes that you will return here, and give us another opportunity of listening to your eloquence, and admiring your abilities.

Wishing you God speed,

We remain, dear Sir,

YOUR SINCERE ADMIRERS.

Here follows the list of signatures

THE PROGRAMME OF SAINTS.

(CONTRIBUTED BY ANDREW TIMBRELL.)

FOR the last twenty years, and upwards, I have been expecting something gratuitous, and now I have it. And it deserves another paragraph, all to itself, to publish the fact that there is not a man, now living upon the earth-plane, more eager to receive anything gratuitously than myself. I am sure that I deserve it; and now that my merits have been recognised in high quarters, I expect to get on swimmingly in future. I have been canonised, and promoted to the dignity of a saint, and, as a matter of course, throughout all times to come, everybody will see the necessity of offering me desirable gifts gratuitously. I shall not refuse any presents, and will accept, as an inalienable right, whatever may come to my net. And, I wish it to be generally understood that I am entitled to gratuitous contributions from my more unfortunate fellow creatures,—the majority of whom come within the category of miserable sinners,—because of the consideration that I manifest for them in condescending to receive their offerings. As a saint, I can only hold communion with saints, and need only walk a few yards down the road in order to confer with Saint Bridget, although as I would prefer no rival near my throne, and should like to have a whole parish to myself, it would, I think, have been more convenient to allot one saint to one locality, and thereby promote a saintly settlement throughout the metropolis, the suburbs, and the provinces. It must be faithfully remembered, in all seasons and climates, that saints are solely dependent for temporal subsistence upon the voluntary donations of all miserable sinners, and the fundamental rule of my Order is, that every qualified saint is justified in accepting presentations gratuitously. It is a lucrative and an honorable ambition that impels anyone to become a saint, for a saint never does anything for a living, although a saint may do everyone for a gratuitous subsistence. It certainly is a splendid position, and it is a position, too, which is every way entitled to gratuities. I am thankful that I am a saint. I am thankful that I can do as I please. I am thankful that the saintly character of my high office elevates me above the law, and invests me with a dignity and a prerogative beyond the reach of even executive councillors.

The consecration of Clifton Hill into a parochial district, henceforth to be known by the title of St. Andrew's is, of course, a courteous compliment to myself; and I take this opportunity of publicly thanking the Bishop for the distinction thus gratuitously conferred upon me. I may remark, in this place, that the saints of the present century claim to be of a superior grade to the saints that inhabited the earth in former ages. Every theological student must be seized of the circumstance that, according to Scriptural morality, even David the son of Jesse, and the royal psalmist of Israel, did not become a man after God's own heart until his trespass with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. The saints of this century are a superior race—and therefore it is that I belong to the fraternity; constantly praying to the Lord to have mercy upon you, miserable sinners, and always expecting something gratuitously from the rest of this wide world. As a saint, I hold communion exclusively with saints, and in our compact brotherhood, we cordially reciprocate each others' sympathies, while a mutual amity subsists amongst us, in the interests of all. St. James and St. John can fraternise with St. Francis and St. Patrick; and, no matter what may be the technical disparities of our religious creeds, we are remarkably unanimous in the question of free gifts. We all like to get as much as we can, and it is a primary rule with us not to give away more than we can help. We can, by a mutual compact amongst ourselves, adjust our own tariffs, so that, at the present day, we are able to offer absolution for sins at very moderate charges. We can retail salvation-cards at a considerable reduction on the old rate, and, in every respect, our current quotations will be found so reasonable as to bring redemption within the means of the humblest

mechanic. St. Peter, who has the keys of heaven, is, we are happy to say, quite in harmony and unison with our principle of taxation. True, we encountered a little opposition from Paul, but it is gratifying to be able to mention that our arguments have prevailed to such an extent, with that shrewd apostle, that *now* he is a confirmed convert to our financial scheme. Of course, as I am the youngest member of the saints' calendar, I consider it my duty to treat with deference and respect the private opinions of the elders; but I shall strenuously resist any further attempt at reduction, because I am of opinion that if salvation is worth buying, it must surely be worth paying for. I consider three half crowns for a free pass to heaven is as moderate a charge as circumstances permit; although it is quite probable, that I may vote for a reduced figure, as our business extends itself, and as the beneficial objects of our institution become more generally known. Judging from present experiences, we have not so many customers as might have been expected, on account of the influx of foreigners, to the colony, as visitors to the Exhibition. Indeed of late years our tickets for the atonement-railway have not gone off so rapidly as they did in former times, and there does not exist the same desire to go to heaven direct, as was manifested in the days of the Covenanters. So far as my private opinion goes—and being but a junior saint I express myself with considerable diffidence—it appears to me that the great bulk of the community are traveling in a mistaken direction; and I attribute this movement to the deceptive but captivating eloquence of some peripatetic theologians who are trading upon popular credulity. And I am really sorry to say this. But if you will devote the next few months of your existence to a round of the Churches, taking a different denomination every Sunday, I think you will endorse my opinion that there is very, very little genuine religion in any of them. The people appear to misunderstand the whole affair. They prefer outward forms and ceremonies, and ignore an inward and spiritual grace. Christianity is degraded to a species of merchandise, and religion is converted into a trade. We saints feel ourselves disparaged by such a system, and so, in order that the children of this world shall no longer be wiser than the children of light, we shall fight them with their own weapons. It may be that, by and by, our adversaries will become convinced and converted, but, at present, it is very obvious that our opponents are infatuated with delusions, and accord implicit conformity to a lie.

You will probably remember the story of an unscrupulous speculator who sought a partnership in a commercial house. "Gentlemen," said he to the members of the firm, "you possess capital and I have experience, admit me as a partner in your business, you will soon get the experience and I shall have the capital." It was a forcible and impressive way of teaching, but as you cannot put common sense into the heads of some people without subjecting them to surgical operations,—to borrow Sydney Smith's language—so neither can you bring some persons to reflection without first training them in the school of experience. I have said that in a synod of saints, recently convened on the boundary of mysticism, it was resolved, after an animated debate to reduce the old standard of prices, so as to render salvation accessible to the poor as well as to the opulent, Seven shillings and sixpence for first-class ticket per atonement-railway is reasonable enough, and as it would be a violation of the rules of our own saintly order to issue free-passes, we have determined upon fixing the fees upon a scale of liberality which precludes cavil. We are quite prepared to accept everything gratuitously, but we are not disposed to distribute anything gratuitously. We are saints, and salvation, with us, or through us, is a pure matter of business. We have a duplex obligation attached to our saintly order: the one duty is imperative towards ourselves, the second duty is peremptory towards our clients. As I am the youngest amongst the saints, I have not much influence, although my zeal and integrity are recognised. Remission of sins, reconciliation with God, and salvation in heaven, are worth paying for, and, consequently, the whole scheme of Redemption and Glory assumes, in our eyes, a monetary

and negotiable aspect. We expect salvation, gratuitously, in our own cases, but we do not dispense salvation to our customers without money and without price. We saints are liberal in opinions, but chary in purse. The "filthy lucre" of the commercial world is prodigally squandered by many of our customers, and, therefore, to protect them from the weakness of their poor human natures, we interpose the sanctity of our character and position to despoil them gratuitously.

"He that is robbed, not knowing what is stolen,
Let him not know it, and he's not robbed at all."

The new parish of Saint Andrew's, so named in compliment to myself, is but sparsely populated, and the inhabitants care more for ecclesiasticism than for theology. I am glad of that, because now I shall have a splendid opportunity of displaying my knowledge of ecclesiastical history. As a saint, I shall experience a special pleasure in arguing with my parishioners, and I may mention, at once, that Biblical criticism will occupy a foremost rank in my curriculum. Of course, I shall endeavour to impress upon my devotees the primary importance of rigidly observing the ten commandments, and the absolute expediency of asserting the validity of the Faith first committed to my ancestral saints. Remember, always, that as ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise. So long as you have shelter, food, and raiment, you do not want reason. You have friends in the saints, who will carefully watch over you. Go to Church, and keep up your respectability. Divine worship is fashionable; so don a white necktie, black mittens, and a psalter—Stand, and deliver! Discard a fictitious god, a pregnant virgin, a fallacious avator, and a mystical trinity. Go to Church, and keep up appearances. Never mind devotion, see that you pay the pew-rents, and contribute to the offertories. Saints love a cheerful giver. Do as I say, but not as I do. Keep your temper. I shall not be too severe upon the tender consciences of miserable sinners, *provided* that they devote one day every week to repeating the Mosaic law, and the Athanasian creed. There is no necessity for them to practically fulfil the law—it would perhaps be exacting too much of any man to expect him to do so—but I cannot relax the specific rule of my theological system, which insists upon oral theories rather than positive morality. There is no occasion to be very strict; and therefore I shall invariably prefer the semblance to a reality. There's nothing like deception. My reputable ancestor, saint Paul, who declared himself to be "the chief of sinners," admitted with a frankness and candor peculiarly his own, that he was sufficiently crafty to catch the multitudes with guile. He was perfectly right. Saints must live. And we claim everything gratuitously. There is one important subject that I wish to mention, before I conclude. It is this, that my parishioners must dress in their best clothes every Sunday. Those males who have not got a shirt to their backs can adopt paper collars, and attend Church. Example is better than precept, and the congregations in my parish must exert themselves to preserve appearances. Let no man deceive himself, however grandly he may deceive others. Keep a bible on the table in the front parlour. Have a prayer book ready for all emergencies. Sing the hymns of Zion, or of Watts, for they will constitute an effectual talisman against the world, the flesh and the devil, and all his works. At all events, you must believe so, whether you act uprightly or not. Appearances, I repeat, are everything to everybody. Never mind principles. Study to advance your own interests. Villify your neighbour, and scandalise his faults. By so doing you will distract the attention of society from your own failings. Always bemoan the inevitable fate of miserable sinners, because you will thereby enhance the opinion of your own righteousness. Take my advice in all circumstances of life, and remember there is nothing like chipping the stone to make it fit for its place in the building. Give me the amount of your wages and salaries, as they become due, and I will allow you as much as will be good for you. Don't stop to consider, but do what is right at once. Reflection may perhaps induce you to change your mind—so never reflect, whatever you do. Surrender up your gifts of reason. Suffer me to decide for you in all cases, especially in affairs of extreme difficulty. I am a saint,

recollect, and admire the incense of adulation. Remember me as your friend, and be generous in your offertories. I am a saint. As Artemus Ward says:—"Now this is sarkism." Submit yourself entirely to my guidance, and you will be happy. I am a saint—having an eye to business, and will sell you my blessing. Take in the *Southern Cross*, by all means, but do not permit the *Southern Cross* to take you in. Please don't fly out at me.

Yours fraternally,

SAINT ANDREW.

Parish of Clifton-hill.

MANY VOICES FROM THE SPIRIT-LAND.

(From Dr. Peebles' New Book.)

A SAILOR'S SAD STORY, THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF PETER STERLING, OF MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.

INVITED to spend an evening at the charming residence of Miss Ricketts, West Melbourne, Australia, I found myself in a quiet spiritual séance. Very soon, Mrs. Sterling, one of the ladies present, becoming entranced, gave me among other unexpected tests a description of an adopted child, Louis, also of three immortal buds of our own, transplanted to the gardens of God ere a breath or stain had tarnished their stainless souls.

Sitting in the circle and quietly musing, a strange impression seized me to take the hand of Mrs. Sterling's son, and magnetically assist a spirit in taking possession of him. I did not yield to the impression till it became almost potent enough to be pronounced a voice. I have an utter abhorrence of palming off for spirit impressions what I feel may be my own. Obeying the impression at last, however, and taking the hand of the young man in mine, placing my thumb upon the ulnar nerve, he became tremulous, and then spasmodic, reeling like a sailor. But the controlling influence failed to speak. During a subsequent session this sailor spirit uttered a few rough sentences. At the fifth sitting he talked quite fluently, though in the idiom of the sea and the sailor. He was an utter stranger to us all, save the young man through whom he was attempting a communication. His story was a most pitiful one. Condensed, it was briefly this:—Himself and this young man, Mr. Sterling, were most intimate friends, boon-companions, sailing among the East India Isles. These are the regions of occasional cyclones; and during one of these terrific hurricanes, or whirling storms, and while this English sailor was trying to fasten Peter to the mainmast, that he might not be washed overboard, a rolling wave struck the young Englishman, and hurled him into the depths of the mad waves. Peter—the medium he was now seeking to control—after nearly losing his life, reached the harbour safely, and at length his home; but the young Englishman, a jolly, worldly, unspiritual sailor, loving Peter intensely, had gone down, the body at least, among the green sea-weeds of the deep! Obtaining control of the medium, through my psychological assistance, he gave his experience, his hopes, and aims in spirit-life, in nearly the following words:

"I was trying to fix Peter—this medium—safely, when an awful wave swept me off from the deck. I went overboard headlong into the deep waters. I do not remember my struggles. Sharks must have eaten my body. I knew nothing for a while, and can give you no correct idea how long I was unconscious. When I came to myself I could not understand it. I was alive, I was myself, I was alone, I was dazed, I was in space, and yet in stifling darkness. Oh, God, how I suffered! No light, no heaven, no home, no Peter—no Peter! But a spirit, once a sailor, yet now alone in space, and that space darkness! I did not know where to go or what to do. Talk about fire and brimstone! Oh, skipper, [this was a sailor term for a captain; he was now applying it to the writer, because he had supervised and aided him in controlling his friend Peter.] you have no conception of my condition. I wept, I wildly wondered and prayed, and while praying I saw a flashing gleam of light. It inspired hope; it seemed to move nearer to me, and proved to be this medium's spirit brother. He

saw my confusion, and speaking kindly, took me to this medium—you call him Peter. We were more than friends; what one had we both had; I was the oldest; and now, helped by his spirit brother, I had got to him again, and I clung right to him; but I was not happy. I followed him everywhere he went, and strange as it seemed to me, though I could turn his mind in this direction or that, I could not make him know that I was present with him. Oh, how I thank you for helping me to get this influence over him; and how I thank the lady of this house for asking you all to come!

"Write to my parents and tell them I shall never return to them again in my body—the fish have eaten that. They weep. Tell them not to mourn. Jack, their sailor son, is not so bad off as he might be. But I am not happy. No, oh, no! I am miserable."

Here the spirit wept profusely, through the organism of the medium. I said to him kindly: "Do not weep; we are your friends. Look up prayerfully to God and the good angels, and you will see bright and beautiful spirits." At this he exclaimed:

"I see them! oh, I do see them! They can take me to them, but they will not. They stand and look at me. I am unhappy and miserable. They tell me I have got to work my way up to them. All they can do is to help me; and I want you all to help me."

Turning to the medium's mother, he said, "I want to call you my mother, and I want this medium, Peter, for my younger brother. I want to claim these ladies for my sisters. And you, skipper, have been an angel to me; you've helped me, and I'm going to help this Indian spirit by you—Old Feathers.* I call him—to take care of you on your voyage home. Here, skipper, give us your hand! This is the sailor's grip. Sailors are not hypocrites, they mean what they say; and by this grip I pledge my word to go with you on the waters to your home, wherever it may be. If there comes a storm, call on me; I know the ropes! You will not be sea-sick, or have any accident. Old Feathers and I looked at the steamship you are going on, and we know the birth you are to occupy. Old Feathers impressed you to take it, and he has since been magnetizing it, but what for I don't know. Look to him on land, but look to the blue jacket on the ocean. Sailors have hearts, they do not forget favours, but stand by those who help them."

This occurrence transpired just before my sailing from Australia for Ceylon, on my way to India, South Africa, and England, homeward. This sailor, rough as the unpolished diamond, yet frank, naturally truthful, and good-hearted, was on his way to the serener light of heaven, and in justice to him I must say that, considering the stormy passages by sea, I suffered nothing from sea-sickness, incident to all my previous voyages, neither was I overtaken by any accident. When the weather was rough, I was vividly conscious of this sailor's presence; and there is not a lingering doubt in my mind but that he sacredly fulfilled his promise, accompanying me to my American home.

Often after my departure, and while on ship-board, my friends in Australia held their accustomed sittings, and calling for the sailor spirit to influence Peter, he did not announce his presence; but at subsequent sittings, and while I was upon the land in Ceylon or South Africa, he would visit the circle, and give them information that I was then disembarked and doing my work on shore.

Miss Bicketts published in the *Harbinger of Light* a remarkable test, relating to a missing letter directed to Mr. Sterling. This sailor spirit directed Peter to go to Flinders Lane and find a Mr. Smith, for he had a letter for him from the skipper. Mr. Sterling, whom the sailor spirit familiarly calls Peter, seriously doubted it, but determined to test the truthfulness of Jack, and accordingly went to the place designated, and quite to his surprise, found the foretold letter. This spirit has proved himself, though uncultured, to be eminently truthful and trustworthy.

ITINERANT STATUES OF HEROES— MEDICAL AND OTHERS.

By C. W. ROHNER, M.D.,
CHILTERN.

WHILST the Athenians buried in oblivion the God they did not know, under a new unknown altar, erected for the worship of Hellenic Agnosticism, in an out-of-the-way corner on Mars Hill, the citizens of Zion nailed their God, with whom, unfortunately, they were only too familiar (familiarity, as usual, breeding contempt) without at the same time really knowing him, on two crossed pieces of hard timber, on the Skull Hill of Golgotha. About the same time, the Romans betook themselves to making Gods of men, under the flattering designation of *Dios Augustus*, and placed their statues in the temples of all the nations of the then known *Orbis Romanus* for public adoration, or adulation. What a contrast between the *Ecce Homo Deus* of Zion, and the *Ecce Deus Homo* of Rome! Whilst of the former crucified King of the Jews and God of the Christians there is not a single genuine scrap of an authentic *carte de visite* extant, of the latter Roman divine idols of Cesar's we have images without number in gold, silver, and marble. Such are the consequences of believing in kingdoms not of this world! The last shall truly be the first, for the last vicar of Christ on earth, Leo XIII., may be seen in the show-windows of the meanest village photographer even of antipodal Australia. But to make up for this manifest injustice done by man to God, the crucified God of the Christians may now be seen, life-size and life-like, in his usual uncomfortable position, on all the cross-roads of Roman-catholic countries, not to mention the endless pictures of the "God of Sorrows" drawn from the devotional imagination of colour-poets in the Middle Ages of darkness, and even in the period of that new birth of arts and sciences known under the name of the Renaissance. Voltaire spoke the truth when he said that if there were no God, man would have to invent one! And on this principle all humanity seems to have acted in all times of human history. Man knowing nothing of the only real and true God of the universe, whose name is Abba, Father, his innate vicious tendency to anthropomorphism came to his aid, presenting the highly artistic mind of the Greeks with a gorgeous Olympian Jove, carved in ivory and gold, his arm on high furnished with thunderbolts; whilst the dreadful Sinaitic Jove-Jehovah is pictured by Moses (?) as thundering down upon his chosen race a whole decalogue of thunderbolts of categoric imperatives of "Thou shalt." Phidias was the inspired creator of the Hellenic materialisation of God, whilst Moses is supposed to have preserved in scrolls and tabernacles the national incarnation of the Deity of the Hebrews. Both these specimens of Gods have long since disappeared, or are now disappearing, and hero-worship, or man worship, has taken the place of the worship of "Unknown Gods," and "Gods Unknowable." Such are the times we are now living in! Man, no longer knowing anything either of a true God or even of his image, or faint shadow, himself, equally ignorant of his origin and destiny as an immortal spirit, has come at last to be satisfied with the shallow worship of the outward material form of His body in numberless photographs, oil paintings, and statuettes, kept for private or public self-adulatory inspection in family albums, picture galleries, international exhibitions, Westminster Abbeys, and other Wallhallas built in honour of famous God-superseding and God-superannuating man—that sorry image, or fancy picture, of a now lost, or at least unknown, God. The outward, naked form of man, in sunlight, oil, or marble, in wood or bronze, seems to be the only thing now left of man, including his own living form of flesh, as the pictures in our own Victorian Exhibition of 1880 plainly show, apparently to the utter disgust of our pious Dean of Melbourne, who in his turn also has been pictorially immortalised in the graphic pages of a Metropolitan political and social art-journal, under the Mephistophelean editorship of the omnipotent god of wit

* A name given to an Indian spirit because of the plumes of feathers upon his head.

and satire, the *magnus in parvo*, alias the *Melbourne Punch*.

But to proceed, after this somewhat ample preface, to our peripatetic statue of medical heroism, such an embodiment of a human image of an unknown God in stone stood brazenly erect until lately in Trafalgar Square, in London, alongside the College of Physicians, in the shape of a humble village doctor, inspired by a Joan of Arc of a dairy-maid, and his name was Jenner—Doctor Edward Jenner. The statue of this medical hero, the greatest of the kind, the lancet-wielding Saint George and conqueror of the dragon of smallpox, has, however, been recently shifted from his elevated pedestal of publicity in Trafalgar Square, and from the unpleasant vicinity of an eclectic and over-fastidious College of Physicians, to the comparative obscurity of Kensington Gardens. And even now there is no knowing how long poor Ned will be allowed to stand there, for some very wicked men, called anti-vaccinators, are already clamoring for the final removal of the statue of this medical saviour of mankind from smallpox to that celebrated collection of worn-out and obsolete historical curiosities, supplied with old novelties, and kept in order by the equally celebrated preserver of musty mummies, Madame Tussaud, in whose apartments the statuesque idol of the goddess of health in breeches would certainly shine, if placed in front of that venerable tombstone, now in the wall of the Lichfield Cathedral, sacred to the memory of the female friend of smallpox on two legs, in contradistinction of that other smallpox on four legs, known as cowpox.

Trusting that the time-honoured maxim of the *quondam* celebrated medical school of Salerno still holds good, and that "*quos ferrum non sanat, igitur sanat, et quos ignis non sanat, satira sanabit*," I shall bring this latest contribution to the philosophical pathology of smallpox to a conclusion, reserving my final paper on the profound subject of Vaccination for the next issue of our much-needed *Harbinger of Light*, about the only Light now shining in the Cimmerian darkness of Australian society.

November 16th, 1880.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

ANNUAL REPORT.—SEPTEMBER, 1880.

ACCORDING to custom the retiring committee, on the expiry of their term of office, present their Annual Report for the consideration of the Association.

The past year, though not one of absolute inactivity, has nevertheless been far from characterised by the great progress in every direction which pre-eminently distinguished the preceding one.

This time last year, when the Annual Report of the then retiring committee was laid before you, the Association consisted of 200 members. Since then this number has been somewhat reduced, owing to the formation of another Society, having objects in view similar to your own. Though numerically weaker, we have every reason to believe that in all other respects the strength of the Association has not been impaired, whilst more harmonious working has been possible.

At the last general meeting some few members denied that the then acting Honorary Secretary had been formally elected to the position by the Association, and the validity of his official acts was consequently disputed. This circumstance was taken advantage of by a member of committee so as completely to obstruct the ordinary course of business. To overcome this difficulty it was found necessary to call a special general meeting of the Association for the purpose of amending the rules and bye-laws, so that the chairman, when supported by a substantial majority of members of committee, might have absolute control over any refractory member. Shortly after this special general meeting, the member of committee referred to, together with some of his friends, withdrew from the Association.

At the commencement of the present financial year, the Association had a balance of £54 odd; this has

been reduced to a much smaller sum through necessary expenditure, to provide for which the revenue of the Association has been inadequate. The building fund with accumulated interest now amounts to £47.

From the time of Mr. Thomas Walker's departure for England, the Sunday evening meetings were maintained through the efforts of various members of the Association who very kindly volunteered to lecture or read papers on subjects of interest to members. The committee feels that the special thanks of the Association are due to these gentlemen.

On 10th November, Dr. Hughes commenced a series of lectures for the Association, at the Academy of Music, which terminated on 2nd February, 1880, after which Dr. Hughes continued to lecture on his own account. For a time the committee abstained from providing any Sunday evening entertainment for members, not wishing to appear in any way to oppose Dr. Hughes. In compliance, however, with the urgent request of many of the members, it was at length decided to recommence the Sunday evening meetings, at the Temperance Hall, Messrs Deakin, Browne, Samuell, Cunningham, Ross, Terry, Watt, and Rollo, accordingly delivered addresses and the committee feels that the thanks of the Association are specially due to these gentlemen.

During the course of the year the committee has been in communication with Professor Denton and Dr. Peebles, with a view to obtaining their services as lecturers, they have also instituted inquiries with regard to several well-known trance mediums in the United States. After prolonged correspondence, Prof. Denton found himself unable to accept the offers made him by the Association, and the committee found it practically impossible to secure the services of such a trance-speaker as they were in search of. Dr. Peebles, however, in consequence of offers they have made him, will probably visit this colony during the month of December next, and deliver a series of lectures for the Association.

Numerous week-night Debates and Experience Meetings have been held at intervals during the past year, alternated during a considerable portion of the time with séances, for which Mrs. Bamford kindly placed her services at the disposal of the Association gratuitously. The committee feels that the thanks of the Association are specially due to this lady for her disinterested exertions in the cause of Spiritualism; and also to Mr. Carson for the very valuable personal experiences which he has placed before you at several of the Experience Meetings.

On the 24th June, Mr. W. H. Terry, the Treasurer, brought under the notice of the committee a correspondence which had taken place between himself and Mr. Geo. Spriggs, the medium of the well-known Cardiff materialisation circle, with a view to induce that gentleman to visit Melbourne. At that time preliminaries had been so far arranged that Mr. Spriggs had written to Mr. Terry, stating his willingness to visit Melbourne under certain conditions. Mr. Terry having conceived of a plan for raising the necessary funds which met with the approbation of the committee, they decided to take the matter in hand. Tickets for séances have accordingly been sold in advance, and the committee expect the arrival of the medium and a gentleman companion early in December.

The committee look forward with every confidence to increased activity in spiritual matters during the coming year, as in all probability the presence here of the Cardiff medium, and of so able an exponent of the philosophy as Dr. Peebles, will give a great impetus to public thought and investigation which cannot fail to add to the prosperity of the Association as an institution, and enlarge the field of its usefulness.

A special audit of the books of the Association took place on March 25th, 1880, at the request of the Secretary, Mr. Alkemade, whose private affairs obliged him to resign the office. Your committee accepted his resignation with much regret, for no one, in their opinion, has done so much to further the objects of the Association as that gentleman had since his connexion with it.

DEATH OF MR. JOHN TYERMAN.

Our readers will regret to hear of the sudden departure from amongst us of the above energetic apostle of Spiritualism and Freethought who passed to the higher life, from Sydney, on Saturday last.

Mr. Tyerman was lecturing in Melbourne during the early part of November, but finding his health giving way, and fearing a serious illness, he determined to return home, and left for Sydney on the 15th ult. He wrote from Sydney on the 20th, stating he was better, and no anxiety was felt on his account. The reception of the telegram conveying the news of his decease naturally created a sensation amongst those who were made cognizant of it, and sincere regret was manifest by many who knew him. The first public announcement of the event was made in the Lyceum on Sunday morning by Mr. Terry, who after briefly reviewing his career as a public man, paid a tribute to his energy and industry in the advancement of Freethought and Spiritualism during the last decade.

Mr. Tyerman, who was an ordained minister of the Wesleyan Church, in New Zealand, came to Victoria about eleven years since, bringing introductions to the then Bishop of Melbourne (Dr. Perry) who placed him, on probation, in charge of the Church of England, Kangaroo Flat. Between this and the period appointed for his induction, several of his congregation became interested in Spiritualism, and some being convinced, seceded from the Church. Mr. Tyerman, not wishing to condemn it without examination, determined to investigate for himself; the result being that instead of discovering its error, he became seriously impressed with its truths. His proceedings being reported to the Dean, he was catechised by that dignitary, and his answers not being deemed satisfactory, was suspended. He appealed to the public of Sandhurst, the Theatre being crowded to hear his justification, and shortly afterwards visited Melbourne, giving his first public address there in November 1871.

In the early part of the following year he was engaged by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and lectured for them at the Masonic, Turn Verein and St. George's Halls till the close of that year, during the same period he had a public discussion extending over three days with Mr. David Blair, ably maintaining his position and vindicating the truths of Spiritualism to the entire satisfaction of that body. In the following year he founded the Spiritualist and Freethought Propagandist Association and was elected the first president, in November of the same year he started a weekly paper, entitled the *Progressive Spiritualist and Freethought Advocate*, it was carried on with spirit for about nine months when it collapsed for want of funds. In the following year he visited Sydney and lectured there, and was subsequently engaged as the permanent lecturer of the Spiritualists and Freethinkers of that city where he continued to lecture in the principal theatre for a period of two years, excepting the time employed in a visit to Brisbane where he delivered a short but successful course of lectures. In 1877, hard mental work began to tell upon his brain, and he was compelled to abandon the platform, the medical men of that city telling him he would not be able to resume it. He came to Melbourne, and placed himself under the treatment of the writer, who told him that with the aid of magnetism his brain power would be restored. Mr. Singleton undertook his treatment in this direction; the result being that in three months he was able to resume his ministrations. It had been the object of his ambition to make a tour of the world, and in 1878, circumstances favouring its accomplishment, he left for America, staying a month to lecture at Auckland on the way.

He lectured successfully at San Francisco and Boston, and was highly eulogised as a public speaker at the latter city, his principal lecture (on Immortality) being reported in full by the *Banner of Light*, and subsequently published in pamphlet form. He afterwards lectured in London and the provinces, creating a most favourable impression, and returned to Sydney in 1879 to find his platform filled by Mr. Charles Bright. There not being room for two permanent lecturers in that city,

Mr. Tyerman paid a visit to Adelaide, and broke ground there. Subsequently he visited Dunedin, and lectured for the Freethinkers of that city, and prior to the burning of the Victoria Theatre at Sydney, gave a successful course of lectures there. Overtures had recently been made to him to visit Queensland, and it was his intention to have made a tour from Brisbane to Townsville and Charters Towers, which his untimely departure will frustrate.

Mr. Tyerman was a rational, energetic, and consistent worker in the fields of free religious thought and Spiritualism; and in addition to his platform labours, wrote a number of books and pamphlets, some of which have run through several editions, his last publication being a noble vindication of Freethought. He leaves a wife and several children who, through the naturally precarious circumstances of his work and income, are unprovided for. We trust, therefore, that some effort will be made by those who appreciate his work to help those he has left behind, and thereby pay a tribute both graceful and practical to his memory.

MR. F. W. NEWMAN AND THE SYDNEY FREETHINKERS.

THE Hon. J. Bowie Wilson has received from Mr. Francis William Newman, (brother of Cardinal Newman) the following letter in acknowledgement of the testimonial recently forwarded to him by the freethinkers of Sydney:—"To J. Bowie Wilson, Esq. Dear Sir,—To you as chairman of the committee which has so unexpectedly sent me an elegant gift, this day safely arrived, emblematic of Australia, in the negro, the emu and kangaroo, it is my pleasing duty to express my grateful thanks. You rightly judge, that as the denial of free judgment was the cardinal error which has made historical christianity a doubtful advantage to the world, so the vindication of freedom to think and judge, is the common task of all who look for a gentler and nobler future of mankind. Even in the midst of corrupt religions, science is ever uttering the cry, that with candid freedom and mutual respect, truth has the most hopeful career. I have thanked you for your gift, but I am bound to give you double and triple thanks for the cordial sentiments of your address. I am, yours sincerely and fraternally, FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN. P.S.—The emblematic piece was accompanied with an ivory and gold pen, which I ought to acknowledge. F. W. N., June 19, 1880, Weston Super Mare, England.

SPREAD OF APPARITIONS IN IRELAND.

A Correspondent of the Dublin *Daily Express* writes:

"Apparitions are reported to have been seen in a little chapel about five miles from Kilmallock, county Limerick. It is stated the figure of the Blessed Virgin was seen in the chapel yard on the 1st inst. Last night over 2000 persons visited the place. Several respectable persons at Kilmallock assured me this evening that they had seen strange lights and apparitions in the chapel."

The London *Weekly Times* says:—

"The occurrence of a second apparition at Ballyraggett, in the county of Kilkenny, drew a large number to the place on Sunday. At least a dozen persons say they saw the figure full size, white, resembling a statue, projected from the wall. Inside the chapel a brilliant star was seen over the altar 'like a ball of fire.' Others declared they witnessed groups of angels round the figure.

Wonderful apparitions are alleged to have been seen at the chapel of Knockmore, within five miles of Ballina since Sunday last. Dozens of people assert in the strongest manner that they have seen various wonderful visions, much of the same description as those said to have been seen at the now celebrated Knock, which is about sixteen miles distant. Thousands throng the chapel and grounds night and day, and the greatest excitement prevails."

THE HEAVEN OF A MENDICANT EQUESTRIAN.

By C. W. ROHNER, M.D.,

CHILTERN.

I CAN understand the fables of Æsop and Phædrus, of Gellert and Lafontaine; I can appreciate the poetical depth and grandeur of the Fairy Tales of the Arabian Nights; of Grimm and Andersen; I can perceive a glimmer of valuable light in the Mythology of Egypt and Greece; I can admire the inspired thought contained in the Scandinavian Edda of the North, and in the Divine Comedy of the South of Europe; I can also penetrate the moral depth of many of the beautiful parables of the New Testament; but the parable of Lazarus and Dives, as recorded in Luke xvi, 19—31, was always a sore stumbling-block to my mind; for I was never able to derive anything else from a repeated study of, and an earnest and protracted meditation on, this parable, than the highly immoral moral of a want of charity in heaven, and of a lack of gratitude in the celestial regions, which would meet with decided condemnation even in the lower circles of terrestrial humanity. We have here in Lazarus a true picture of a beggar on horseback in heaven, for all the rest of the beggars on horseback must be looked for in hell, Lazarus forming the only disreputable exception from the strict rule of the well-known proverb. Lazarus was mean and slothful enough to content himself with the bread-crumbs that fell from the table of Dives, and instead of washing himself, he was lazy enough to be satisfied with the good dogs of the rich man licking his festering sores. Now this poor man—this loathsome leper—this ancient Lazarus of parabolic Christianity—goes to heaven after his death and right into the very bosom of Father Abraham himself, for having been a lazy leper all his life. If this is the proper reward for leprosy, we ought to substitute the words, "Let leprosy become universal amongst us," for the beautiful words of the Lord's prayer *adveniat regnum tuum*. On the other hand, when we enquire why Dives went to hell, the only answer we can get is, because he was clothed in purple and fine linen, and had three meals a day, and perhaps a late supper before going to bed. Dives also made the grave mistake of preferring a clean skin to leprosy. Our benevolent modern Dives—Peabody—must now be roasting in the flames of hell for sharing the tastes of the rich man in our parable; and our own equally benevolent W. J. Clarke, the Dives of Victoria, can scarcely expect a different verdict from Father Abraham, unless he learns in time the valuable lesson of buttoning up his pockets and looking out for an attack of black smallpox, followed by running ulcers ever after; for, clean-skinned people evidently are condemned to hell, whereas leprosy individuals go to heaven, hell being actually a cleaner place than heaven. Can devotional absurdity go further?

Let us now proceed to study the heaven-high morality of Lazarus in Father Abraham's bosom, and see whether it will stand the test of our low human code of ethics. Lazarus having admittedly lived all his lifetime on the crumbs of Dives, is actually ungrateful enough to refuse to grant to Dives the very modest request to dip his finger, only the tip of his finger, into a tumbler of celestial water to cool the parched tongue of his *quondam* benefactor in hell. It would form an interesting problem of Christian algebra to find out how many bread-crumbs of human kindness are required to make up the weight or value of one drop of the water of heavenly charity. Leaving this knotty problem in the hands of Laplace, who was a master in calculating probabilities, I shall proceed to consider how much more charitable than Lazarus in heaven were the despised dogs of Dives on earth. I wonder how many masters of dogs would now-a-days allow those animals to lick the pestilential sores of leprosy Chinamen? Not very many, I guess; and even those few would be stopped in the execution of their mistaken kindness by the operation of the provisions of our enlightened public health statute. But all the kindness of Dives and of his dogs were unavailable to save the poor

rich man from eternal hellfire, because he had two suits of clothes, a purple one and a linen one; because he had a sufficient balance at his bankers to pay his baker's bill; because he was able to keep dogs to lick the sores of Jewish lazaronis; and because he fared sumptuously every day—*id est*, had three meals *per diem*, exclusive of a probable snack of bread and cheese and a glass of somniferous stout before going to bed. Well, if a man is to go to hell for what our poor Dives has done, I can understand why it is more difficult for a rich man to go to heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. I, for one, would prefer being in a hot place with clean-skinned companions, to being in a cool place surrounded and hugged by a host of leprosy saints; but tastes may differ, and therefore I am unable to tell what the rest of my Christian brethren would go in for. Anyhow, those anxious to take lessons in ordinary human charity must not go to Abraham's narrow-minded bosom-school for instruction, or if they intend to go there, I would advise them to wait until it has been found out up there how many crumbs of bread are required to counterbalance one drop of water; for until that problem is solved the probability of any material progress in ethics would be very problematical indeed. But the climax of Christian love, and celestial charity, as represented in our parable, is reached in that direct and hard-hearted refusal of Lazarus (Abraham?) when Dives in hell, asks Abraham to be kind enough to send Lazarus to his father's house, and to inform his five brothers of the terrible consequences of terrestrial wealth in the life hereafter, so that they may learn a lesson from him in time and repent. But, no, Abraham could not see it, and the five brothers of Dives were referred to Moses and the prophets. Well, what are we to think, when we actually find more kindness and consideration amongst the damned in hell than amongst the blessed in heaven? Let us however, trust and hope, in conclusion, that 1800 years' of contemplating the state of Dives in hell will have softened the heart of Lazarus, and that we may shortly hear that he has at last consented to dip the leprosy tip of his leprosy finger into the impure waters stagnating so long in the bosom of Abraham, not with the expectation of letting it drop on the clean tongue of a clean man in hell, but of getting rid of his own leprosy, the result of impurity of mind as well as of body, on earth as well as in heaven.

Chiltern, Nov. 11th, 1880.

ARRIVAL OF MR. GEG. SPRIGGS.

MR. GEO. SPRIGGS, the Cardiff Medium, accompanied by his friend and amanuensis, Mr. Smart, arrived here by the s. s. "Liguria," on Monday last.

We have from time to time given accounts of the wonderful materialisations which have occurred in the presence of this gentleman; but we have perhaps not made it sufficiently known that he is not a public or professional medium; he comes here under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists to help in demonstrating the phenomena of Spiritualism to sincere investigators, and it will be the object of the committee to exclude any but such from his sésances. There will be some experimental sittings to test the power and accustom him to the changed surroundings, after which the subscribers to the expense fund will be admitted in rotation as fast as circumstances permit. It will, however, in all probability be some months before all the subscribers' tickets are used, as but few can be admitted to one sésance.

THE *Ballarat Star* of November 24th, contains an admirable letter on "Spiritual Healing," written by Mr. James Curtis of that city, in reply to a dogmatic theorist writing under the *nom de plume* of "Silverpen." Mr. Curtis not only establishes his theory of spiritual interposition by the evidence of seers and clairvoyants, but exposes in a temperate manner the ignorance of his opponent.

MR. G. M. STEPHEN'S PUBLIC HEALING OF THE SICK.

MR. STEPHENS' public exhibitions of magnetic healing have been continued every Wednesday during the past month, and attended with considerable success. We were present for about an hour on the 17th ult., when the following cases came under our notice:—

1st. Woman, who stated she had had two previous treatments; had suffered from cough and asthma for fifteen years; had not coughed since last operated upon, a fortnight since, and asthma better. She complained of neuralgic pain, which Mr. Stephen ordered away, and it immediately left her.

Another woman stated that she had suffered from a similar complaint, and had seven doctors attending her at different times; had been unable to sleep without opiates for a considerable time. She had been operated on three times by Mr. Stephen, and since the last operation had slept well without opiates, and felt considerably better.

The next case was that of a man totally blind in the right eye from the kick of a horse, and only able to see a little with the other. All the doctors had given him up, and several clergymen to whom he had applied to give him an order to see Mr. Stephen, had refused. After the operation he said he could see better with the left eye, and the pain had gone out of the right one.

Mr. Stephen made some cogent remarks on the inconsistency of the clergy in ignoring the gift of healing which Paul advised them to seek.

Woman: Pains in shoulder and asthma four years. Pains left.

Child, three years old, apparently dying of hereditary consumption. On her chest being breathed on the child said "it was nice."

Young man subject to frequent fits had been operated on the previous week, and had not had one since.

Little girl: Amaurosis in eyes from birth; said she could see plainer. We tested this case by holding up a pencil case and small fold of white paper, which she saw and described at a distance of about two yards.

Woman: Suffering from rheumatism for seven years. Had several doctors without deriving any benefit; complained of being in great pain. After being operated upon she said the pain had left, though the weakness remained.

Boy: Blind in one eye, and nearly so in the other, from fracture of scull. Thought he could see better.

Woman: Rheumatic gout six years; both legs and shoulders affected. Had been in hospital and under doctors. The result in this case was remarkable, as Mr. Stephen did not manipulate her, but merely ordered the pains away, and in a few minutes she stated they had all gone. She gave her name as Boddington, and said she resided at Sandridge.

Girl: Had lost her voice from bronchitis. Could speak better, and felt relieved.

Young man, named McKenna: Epileptic fits and fullness of blood to head, relieved.

Old woman: Deafness, noises in ears and head for thirty years; could not sleep well. After operation, heard with ear that had been deaf for thirty years. Rheumatism in hand; ordered away, and left.

Woman: Deaf; could not hear watch tick at eight inches from ear; heard better after.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MR. TYERMAN'S engagement with the above Association came to an abrupt termination, through that gentleman's health giving way, which necessitated his return to his home at Sydney. Messrs. Cunningham, Brown and Terry filled the platform for the remainder of the series and the association have now moved into the lower Temperance Hall until the arrival of a professional lecturer. Through some misunderstanding as to the time of Professor Denton's intended visit, Dr. Peebles has deferred his coming until after Mr. Denton leaves here. The present arrangements are for the latter gentleman to arrive here in May next but steps will be taken to induce him to reach earlier if possible.

THE REFORMER.

We are in receipt of the first number of a new Free-thought monthly journal, bearing the above title. Its object, as stated in an introductory article, is "to offer a field for the discussion and elucidation of philosophical and theological subjects, and all vital questions of public importance and interest." The number before us contains some sensible letters on the "Revision of the Bible," "The Atonement," and one of Bishop Moorhouse's recent lectures; a portion of an interesting trance lecture on "Materialism," and a selection of appropriate extracts. It is a neat quarto of eight pages, and published on the 15th. of the month, by Mr. J. Wing of Wellington St. Collingwood. Price 3d. per copy. With the first number, a pamphlet "Essay on Truth," is presented as a supplement.

[The above should have appeared in our last, since it was in type No 2 has appeared, it contains 2 extra pages and a large quantity of original matter.]

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TELEGRAM just received from Sydney in re Mr. Tyerman's Funeral, which appears to have been an impressive event. A subscription is started for widow and children. Mr. Terry will be happy to receive contributions.

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