

THE

Harbinger of Light.

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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SOME two years since we drew attention to the lyceum movement, and gave an outline of the system on which the Children's Lyceums were based. As we have now one established amongst us (The Melbourne Children's Progressive Lyceum), it is well that we should again revert to the subject, with a view of putting the basis and objects of these institutions clearly before the public in order that the important influence they are calculated to have on the rising generation may be apparent. The most important and basic feature of the system which distinguishes it from all other systems of education is—that it aims at the drawing out of the intuitions and the development of the originality of the individual. It is assumed that the interior principle in all children is essentially good, and only requires favorable conditions, and the quickening action of the love and wisdom of more advanced minds, to ensure its steady expansion till it becomes the positive or dominant power of the mind, developing in all goodness, and attracting towards itself all that is congenial to its highest aspirations. It is further assumed that this divine principle cannot be harmoniously developed in an unhealthy or inharmonious organism. Hence with the presentation of moral and religious sentiments—cleanliness, temperance, and a natural mode of living, are inculcated, and a system of light calisthenic exercises, calculated to bring into action every muscle and tendon of the body, is introduced. By these means mind, soul, and body, receive their legitimate share of attention, giving a simultaneous impetus to the mall. Colors, their significance, and correspondence with the perceptions of the mind, form a feature in the instruction, each group has its color typical of the sentiment appropriate to the age of the group. For instance, in the primaries, Red is significant of sensuous experience; Blue, intellectual and

mental energies; Yellow, light and spirituality. The blending of these make the secondaries and tertiaries, signifying the various sentiments. The leaders of the groups wear a badge with ribbons of the appropriate sentiment color, and each child is provided with a rosette to correspond; by this means they acquire a knowledge of colors and their significance, while their harmonious blending and general philosophy are explained by their leaders. The Melbourne Lyceum have adopted the "Guide" compiled by J. M. Peebles, J. O. Barrett, and Emma Tuttle. Glancing over its pages our attention is attracted by a section headed "Moral Lessons," giving such a comprehensive idea of what an instructor should be, that we cannot do better than transcribe that portion of it. It says:—

"If we, as instructors, are truly enlightened in love of truth, we shall find a divinity in every thing we touch. The simplest language which clearly expresses the idea we wish to convey is the best. If we employ the simple, yet expressive words of children, use illustrations which they can comprehend, become their companions and fellow-students, irradiating warmth from enthusiastic hearts, we are sure of success.

To create interest, and carry conviction, we must *feel* what we say. If we would impress a great moral truth, it must come from a soul of which it is a part; falling from the lips like a jet of water from a sunlit fountain, carrying with it the demonstration of its worth and beauty in the noble life which it helps to illuminate. Such are true teachers. Under their instructions, the mind of the child will expand to wisdom and harmony as naturally as the roses unfold in the sunshine of June. To make our lives worthy of imitation by those we teach should be the ceaseless effort of all who lead the young.

Feel what you impart, and the attentive mind will almost catch your thought before it is uttered in words, so strong is the silent influence which we exert upon other minds."

The above remarks must commend themselves to the reason of every unbiased reader; they are the key-note of the whole lyceum system. Nothing in the nature of a task is presented to the child, everything is made as attractive as possible; rewards and encouragement is offered, but no punishment is contemplated, save what naturally flows from neglected opportunities. The moral influence of such a system as the foregoing cannot be over-estimated, and should commend itself not alone to Spiritualists but to all liberal and progressive minds. No creed or dogma is taught, nothing binding or cramping is tolerated; freedom and progress are the watchwords, and truth is sought in every open channel. The success of a lyceum depends entirely upon its officers, and here lies the greatest difficulty. It is hardly to be expected that in the present condition of

society a full staff of officers can be got together having all the necessary qualifications, hence perfection cannot be looked for in the first attempts. Nevertheless a few earnest minds with willing coadjutors may ultimately bring all into harmonious action, till in time, competent leaders will be available from the higher classes of the Lyceum. In country towns or villages, where it would be impossible to carry out the whole Lyceum programme, the nucleus of a Lyceum may be formed, by one individual gathering together but half-a-dozen children, and acting as conductor until with the growth of the Lyceum he may be able to find others who will join in the work. Therefore let none be discouraged by apparent difficulties in the way, but if you approve of the principle, put it into practice at once, by starting a miniature Lyceum as suggested, to those who have the welfare of coming generations at heart, no work should be more congenial.

COMMUNICATION.

It is customary for people to estimate Spiritualism by the phenomenal facts and evidences that come under their notice through public media, while as a rule the more advanced teachings, and intellectual evidences, are obtained at private circles and only participated in by the immediate friends of the members. Amongst the numerous private circles in and around Melbourne, there is one that has been in existence upwards of three years, which has by steady application gradually progressed from the rudimentary stages to a fluent intercourse with advanced intelligences in the spirit-world, both by writing and speaking. Until recently no record was taken of the spoken matter, but as that matter became of more general interest and importance, the necessity of preserving it was felt by both spirits and mortals, and the former suggested the introduction, into the circle, of a gentleman who understood short-hand, and whose influence would harmonize with the circle; this suggestion was acted upon, and several discourses have already been reported and transcribed. It is intended, when a sufficient number are ready, to arrange them for publication, meanwhile we publish the following specimen of the matter received which we think will be read with interest:—

ON LIFE IN THE SPIRIT-WORLD—PERSONAL NARRATIVE &c.

Life and motion are the beginning and the end of all things—the one inseparable from the other. My last discourse treated more particularly upon that phase of life called physical, or earth-life. To night it will have a different bearing, it will be more properly called spiritual life, as we shall have to lead you away from those things which seem to embody your idea of life. Man, while in connexion with earth, submits all things to, and recognises all things by means of his senses. That there are exceptions to this as a rule, we do not dispute. But now we have to adopt a different practice, and while we close the eye—the material eye—to all that we see on earth, we shall investigate this matter by the interior force, or consciousness, which really in all constitutes the man. Man's idea of the spirit-world is exceedingly limited; it is so because of his education, because on earth he is allotted, as it were, a small circle in which to roam, his eyes take in but a few short yards at most, and he must judge of all things under laws that have no power to restrict the investigations of the spirit. If a man ascends to the topmost pinnacle of a mountain and gazes around, how very dim do all things become; he is unable to recognise familiar objects if they be but a short distance away; they are hidden from his vision. But open out the spiritual vision of such an one, to all physical sense he sleeps, he is unconscious, but he has stepped into his

natural sphere—the spirit sphere—and there is now no limit to his vision even while within the earth's atmosphere. And when his spirit is relieved from all connexion with the material world, and he finds himself truly in spirit-life, there is indeed no limit to his power of consciousness and vision.

From this stand-point I shall take up my experience. On the morning of my awakening, when consciousness dawned, this open vision was the first feature of the new life to astonish, and to call forth feelings of adoration to Him who, in his wise creation, devised the means of so great a happiness. Somewhere between earth and the sphere to which my natural inclinations would lead me, I found myself with other forms, three of whom were near relatives. Imagine my feelings, when the earth was pointed out to me as the world I had just passed from. It had the appearance of a balloon; taking the measure of its diameter, it seemed about fourteen or sixteen feet, and luminous. I cannot say how far distant we were, From the same position, in another direction, there seemed to be an open country. To aid your imagination, I will remind you of clouds, which you have gazed at with pleasure, which had the forms of a beautiful landscape, with hill and dale, and all suffused with a glorious light that seemed to point to another state of existence—a world outside the one upon which you live; it impressed me much in this way; casting upon me a light, warm and refreshing. After approaching something nearer to the earth, to see and satisfy myself of the truth of my guardian's statements, for it seemed to me more like a dream than reality, I became satisfied, and afterwards, moving with what appeared to be a brilliant stream flowing in a direct line to the earth, I was conveyed to that city or country I pictured to you. Bye-and-by I shall have occasion to speak of this stream of light; it will have a bearing on my last discourse, and prove interesting. It is not a magnetic current that exists between the sun and the earth, but rather an influence, a magnetic influence that exists between mind and mind, a link which binds sphere with like sphere in the spirit world and on earth.

Amidst the astonishment of all new scenes, and the realization of a new life, the grandeurs of a world unknown and strange had a depressing effect upon me. I was unable to express my feelings, and longed to be quiet and away, that I might muse by myself, and endeavor more fully to collect my own thoughts. Without forming my ideas into words my guardian knew them. One, who was not my relative, but who appeared to be attached to me by a love deeper than any I had yet experienced, even from most loving earthly parents, seemed to understand each fleeting thought, and to his suggestion my friends readily yielded. Leaving me with him we passed on, through gardens where nature seemed to rejoice, among flowers such as I had never seen on earth, and landscape scenes hitherto beyond my imagination; and as we walked together, I found my mind opening out, my spirit gaining strength, and I seemed to derive from the very emanations of the trees and plants a principle which added strength to my spiritual body. And as we walked my guardian explained, and, in the course of his explanation pointed out, at a very short distance from where we were then standing, large multitudes of spirits who were very happy in their present state, yet were quite ignorant of the fact that there was a still higher state to which they might attain, or one from which they had come, and to which they could return. He spoke of the prejudice, of the fixed impression in the mind of nearly all, that, the spirit once having left the body on earth, could not return thereto. This I could understand, because it was exactly the impression I brought with me, but how glad was I to hear that there was a means by which man could return and make himself felt to those dear and languishing ones left behind. After some hours of repose, for rest in spirit is as necessary as rest to you, I became refreshed, and sufficiently strong to accompany my friend and guide through the sphere. We approached what you might call a town; I was astonished beyond degree to find houses there, buildings that looked like churches; towers and mansions. I enquired of my guide "of what are these constructed, they appear to be much of the same

material as those on earth." He replied, "we will go and examine them, and see if we can ascertain the nature of the substance of which they are composed." Some appeared like wood, I could recognise no difference, others of stone of various kinds; I asked for an explanation. He immediately pointed to my body and said, "Feel your body, be sure that you have a body," which I did, and I was satisfied that my body was as real to me as the one I had left on earth. I removed the robe from my arm; he said, "See! is it not like such material as you had on earth?"—and I noticed that it was very like the same. "Then the same God by precisely the same law, developed the material for the use of man on earth to meet every requirement; all things in this world exist, and all things are changed. Life and motion is the order of all nature. There is no substance in the universe but is in motion; emanations arise from every substance that exists, whatever may be the requirements of the spirit in the natural state of its development. Matter in its grosser form is continually being refined, and that, in conjunction with finer fluids and ethers which, in a manner develop themselves in the spheres to meet the altered,—the changed, condition of the spirit, constitute the substance from which these works you see are created or built," "Are there workmen," I asked, "or do these things grow? are they made with hands or are they eternal?" "They are made with hands, men build them," he replied, and immediately I seemed to tremble as I began to realize that the battle of life which I had fought through on earth was here to be recommenced, and again to be fought—work, labor once again; I became depressed, and wished almost that I had ceased to exist, so dark and so heavy had been my earth life. My friend knew my thoughts, he seemed to feel what I felt, and showed me that labor was one of God's best gifts, that all men were naturally adapted to some form of labor, some kind of work, and if the laws of nature controlling such matters, were observed, instead of work being irksome and distressing to humanity, it would be a source of health and happiness. "What would you do?" was his argument immediately, "because that for years your occupation has been a burden to you—you have been compelled to do that which, by nature you are not suited for—your plane was above it—it does not follow that the same course must be pursued here. There are many whose desires, whose natural inclinations are to construct; who will be only too glad to aid you, and to carry out any design you may wish." As these ideas opened out my mind I saw the beautiful harmony—the necessity even—of labor. How dreary would the hours of eternity be if there was nothing for us to do but to study nature, and to read the thoughts that course through the minds of men, for all minds in the spirit are like mirrors, their ideas are reflected though they be thousands of miles distant, where there is harmony and sympathy of sphere.

The gardens in the spheres grow wild, as on earth, unless cared for by those who love such occupation, and are there not thousands and tens of thousands of earth children, who would feel the spirit-world, however beautiful, to be a blank if they were deprived of those simple pleasures that form their happiness now? Music, recreation in every form, was shown to me; I was taken to a building; the number that it would hold I could not tell, multitudes might find themselves comfortably seated therein, beautifully decorated, simple, natural withal. There were only a few individuals or spirits here at the time we visited, but we learned that very soon there would be a grand musical entertainment, when spirits of another sphere or circle of the same sphere, would be present and in charge of the performance. We determined to be present, and in this matter I must leave you to your imagination; no language could convey to the human mind what I then heard. As the finite mind cannot comprehend that which is infinite, so no more can it comprehend what I mean when I say that I heard music, vocal music, on that occasion—it must simply be left for you to imagine. Thousands and tens of thousands of voices seemed to swell in one, with many of the earth's great musicians having full control. When you have entered into this life, we shall take the first opportunity of

leading you to such an entertainment, and when you return to your earth circles, you will be placed in the same difficulty that I am to-night in attempting to describe the sublimity and the indescribable beauties of the spirit voice. The spirit voice is, in some instances developed on earth, to some extent, and is capable of leading away the lover of music, almost beside himself; but it is clear that the material organization affects the spiritual. How often is it the case that men's conceptions of music are higher than their power to express, but, when relieved from the difficulties that overhang this state, their spirits, having full possession of their own powers, and the most competent leaders, are able to express that which have always had an internal desire to do.

I shall probably have to occupy some time in answering questions, and will not therefore, enter into the next visit that I made, which was into the *thought sphere* for I soon became inquisitive, and after hearing such grand music, desired to make myself acquainted with the productions of those great masters. This led my friend, my guide, to take me to the thought sphere, which I will describe in my next discourse. It is now many years since these experiences, yet they were so shining, that throughout my future life they will ever be bright in my memory as then. No doubt, in the course of my descriptions of spirit life there will be other scenes equally interesting to you, and some more instructive perhaps. You must always bear in mind that, in accordance with the natural or spiritual development of the individual, of the spirit, so will be the sphere to which he will migrate; and only those whose desires are to higher attainment of the spirits, will ever attain them, therefore, you may receive communications from other spirits that may not be in harmony with those I now give you. Ere long, I will give you an account of my travels through the spheres, the lower spheres, which will correspond with the lower conditions of animal life on earth, when the subject of re-incarnation—a subject upon which you have asked for information before—will be treated fully. I shall there be able to shew you the true basis upon which these doctrines are founded, which, you will at once observe, is the result of a low form of development, or often perhaps, which is worse, a warping of the intellectual faculties, and so bringing down those who are specially and intellectually capable of better, and higher attainments.

Perhaps I derived as much good, and 'real good knowledge' from my visit in this sphere; I was enabled to take hold of the thread of causes which unite the spirit-world with earth, and most carefully did I trace them through higher spheres up to the one in which I am now located.

Q. What sphere have you been speaking of to-night?

The fourth sphere, third circle. There are commonly said to be seven circles in each sphere, but a close observer will find that there are innumerable circles within circles. Within these seven outside circles there are communities, as there will be on earth in the course of a few years.

Q. You remark that you speak to your friends, and at the same time that thought answers thought; are the vocal organs used in addressing each other?

They can be used; it is not necessary but it is usual. Spiritually minded, or spiritually developed individuals on earth, when in the trance state, can communicate with each other by a process of impression; yet they would prefer to make use of the vocal powers, although neither would hear in reality. Although I were present in your midst and spoke, spoke aloud, you could not hear me. Yet spirits can make themselves heard by those on earth occasionally in the same way as they can make themselves seen, by bringing into action the laws that are not common. We may be in the room with you, and you do not see us, but by the accumulation of certain particles that we may find emanating from the earth or from mediums, we can clothe ourselves, and make ourselves luminous, or sufficiently luminous to attract the attention, and at rare intervals, when circumstances favour it, we can so clothe ourselves as to make ourselves visible even in broad daylight, but such we do not often practice because it is injurious.

Q. Is the ground you tread on affected in any way by the atmosphere, so as to become moist, for instance?

No. You at once imagine the necessity of rain, to induce life in the vegetable creation; on earth it is necessary because of the peculiar nature of vegetation, and to supply man's physical body. He drinks water to quench his thirst, but he takes rest to refresh the spirit; he takes bread to supply the body with nutriment, but he reads, and studies nature, to feed the spirit. And so it is in the spirit-world, all things are of the spiritual only, and the atmosphere or the rains that would produce this moisture we have not. We have no rain, neither is there a direct light from the sun. All things seem to unite their own light causing one bright illumination of all.

Ordinarily we use the same means of locomotion as you do on earth; in like manner as birds walk along the earth with wings at their side. We have no wings but we have a power by which we can pass through your atmosphere—atmosphere to you, but to us nothing—in fact, when we would traverse any considerable space, we avail ourselves of certain magnetic currents which run in harmony and in certain directions. For instance, there is one current that I noticed in early consciousness, and which I told you passed between the earth and this sphere. If I wish to return to earth, that is the current on which I must travel. If I wish to travel to another planet in the same system, I must take a magnetic current from our sphere to the sun. After approaching very near to the sun, I there find very powerful and rapid currents between it and every other planet belonging to it, I remove myself from one to the other, and no sooner am I placed upon it—simply by the action of the will—than, almost immediately, so rapid is the action, without knowing that I am moved, and without passing against the atmosphere in which I am placed, but with it, I am at the desired place. It requires then, the action of the will to remove myself from these currents. At first it requires the assistance of others who are well acquainted, as the child requires the assistance and direction of its mother to teach it to walk, and to make it conscious of the laws of gravity. So it is with us, at first there are some difficulties but as we grow stronger, and have a better knowledge of our new state—it is truly a very happy one. In the spirit-world in our community, everything is beautifully natural, there are all things that the spirit needs, there are sports and games and there is labour, but only sufficient to make it pleasant to all parties. God has arranged all things beautifully there, as he has on earth, suited to the various conditions, but still there is room and necessity for the labour of man. There are conditions of mind—refined intellects spiritually developed—who can enjoy the greatest pleasures in nature's scenes, who will wander into the woods, and on to the mountain sides; there is something in nature that will lead man away and cause him noble conceptions of Him who has created all things—but even that is not all that is necessary for the intellectual development of man. Of these scenes he soon grows tired, and it is wisely ordered that it should be so, for a desire arising to develop other faculties of the mind, he feels a pleasure in it. The organs of the brain that are rendered active in the one case, are not the same that are rendered active in the other. Man looks upon art, through other perceptive faculties—in a manner—than those through which he looks at the beauty of nature, they have a different tendency; the one points the soul to God, as the cause, the other to man as a great intellectual being; shews him what man can do, and so prompts him to greater actions. Man requires something to serve as a kind of stimulus to his actions. He may admire a picture, but in the end it leads to a desire, on his part, to produce something which shall embody his conceptions of natural beauty. It is the same with a garden where he re-arranges and develops the works of nature, and by the act he develops certain qualities of his own nature which would remain undeveloped were it not for that exercise. You observe the necessity then for labour, both on earth and in the spirit-world. Nature itself is always perfect in its way—in its degree. You extract from the earth iron; well,

you will say, that is perfect. It is iron, but, however perfect as a substance, how imperfect it is as an article for the use of man until it has passed through his hands, and become utilized as it were, and converted into machinery. Thus you see to what an extent nature, beautiful and perfect, may be developed by the labour of man.

FREE WILL AND NECESSITY.

FREE Will and Necessity are questions which have agitated the minds of thinking men during all ages; and they will perhaps always remain in a great degree matters of dispute, as to draw the line of demarcation between the two is almost impossible.

Were man, however, not a free agent in the true acceptance of the term he would not be a responsible being, nor would he of consequence be (in accordance with that strict justice which marks all the acts of the Deity), liable to punishment for errors committed. But he is a Free Agent, and has the gift of Reason bestowed upon him, for the purpose of using that Free Will with a due regard to his own interests and happiness, and with a like regard to the happiness and well-being of his fellow creatures; and being made lord of the brute creation he is also responsible for the proper use and careful treatment of all things below him in the scale of being.

We will illustrate our meaning simply by stating, that all suffering arises from error, and may be averted by the proper use of reason, which leads to knowledge! and when a man deliberately enters upon a course which he knows is opposed to the laws of strict justice, however he may be attracted to the commission of that injustice by the example or influence of another, he yet did so of his own free will, and because his free will tendencies lie in that direction; did they not do so, he would not have been so influenced; in other words, his free will would have led him in an opposite direction to the said error of conduct, and would have brought him in contact with other and higher influences.

This does not contradict the fact that there is not a man on earth but has the free will to choose for himself the road he must travel on his journey through the time sphere; and should his tendency be towards the low and the criminal, his journey is indeed one of perpetual misery, and an incessant fight against his soul principle.

We would here say, that by his tendencies to evil, we mean the imperfect development of his animal nature through inherited imperfections, for the individual often suffers for the sins accumulated through the lives of many individuals composing the race, and the soul which is a pure and holy principle incapable of corruption by any debasing influences, lives in a state of torture and suffering only known to the arrested sinner; the souls of all men, of all and each individual upon the face of the earth, is a pure incorruptible essence, it cannot draw around it anything that is evil or corrupting; it is ever striving with the animal instincts in man, and suffering for the crimes induced by such errors of instinct, and will eventually triumph over all and bring the will of the body into affinity with its own will and then, and not until then, will the individuality of the soul be perfected and made truly happy.

Each soul is so constituted that it wills the individual to correct deeds; all feel this when about to do wrong, even when about to commit an evil in the name of right a still small voice ever warns of the error, and it is only through ignorance of the nature of man's constitution as a dual being, that such warning is not understood and followed.

We may here observe that the great reason why any one ever raises the question as to the existence of free will as the conditions of human beings while on earth, is, that, all having erred, and all seeing a frightful amount of evil in the world, would shift the blame, hoping for an escape, the hope is not without foundation, but is looked for in a wrong direction, no wrong that is not punished, it may be sooner or later; here on earth, or hereafter in the spirit-world; for if on earth, the individual has become so hardened, and delighted with a course of errors as to feel neither pained nor degraded

thereby, it is because his soul has become deadened within him, not able to make itself heard in the embroiled condition of the animal body, and should such an awakening never happen in the time sphere as would enable the soul power to be heard, and by suffering to become purified and elevated; then assuredly a time will arrive in the higher spheres, when such an awakening must eventuate and the soul assert itself and gradually purify itself from its gross envelopment.

How perfect man might be, is intuitively felt by each individual, not one who has not a sincere veneration for true purity and righteousness; not an individual that has not a detestation of all pretence to the possession of these qualities unless they shew themselves in the life and conduct of the pretender to them; this may be observed in the greatest criminals; clearly proving that within them is a sure monitor shewing them the road which they are at liberty to follow or to deviate from in exact accordance with the law of affinity, which they strengthen or weaken in opposite directions of their own free will and in spite of the admonitions of their soul principle.

Here we would speak of the law of Necessity, which exists only as a dream; there is no necessity for any individual to err; by which we mean that man is under no law which necessitates sin in any sense except as the result of ignorance, and such a law would have no place in man's mind were he perfect in the knowledge of self.

Under existing circumstances, man, in the time sphere is greatly biased by surrounding influences; but not of necessity; only by reason of an ignorance of the laws of cause and effect, a knowledge of which would enable him to avoid such errors. When once man is fully convinced that every error is punished by an unerring law of cause and effect, he will then be on the road to happiness and perfection, he will also understand, that while on earth, he must ever strive against error, if he would avoid punishment which will assuredly follow such error, either directly or remotely and often by indirect means; he will also understand that past errors do not cut him off from future perfection, for when the soul makes itself sufficiently heard to convict of sin, and succeeds in establishing a sincere desire after a higher and better aim, the body assuredly follows newer and higher influences, and has begun its journey onward in the soul sphere, hourly throwing off the grosser and more selfish instincts becoming almost a new creature.

Verily a man shall answer for the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil. Some are brought before to judgment and some follow after.

Rest assured that when the soul once gains sufficient power over the more animal instincts to convict of error and to induce the individual to seek for a higher and holier life; then does the soul with the body work in true affinity, creating harmony, having but one will, and ever progressing, first in the time sphere, and then through endless ages in the spheres beyond; there may be stops by the way, blots on the fair sky, but every step gained in the right direction is gained for ever, and will eventuate in the perfection of the individual, and he will acknowledge that man is free to choose his way, and to follow the good or the evil influences surrounding him, and if he chooses the latter, it is of his own free will, only following that for which he has a propensity animally, and which he does not yet care to combat with; he stifles his soul's admonitions and must suffer the penalties thereto attached, and which are meted out most righteously and unerringly; greater is the suffering of the purer and more refined individual who errs than that of the grosser individual; in obedience to a beautiful law, which renders the penalty for error more intense to the more refined soul, as their responsibility should be proportioned to their capability to understand and to resist. Could man truly comprehend the laws of nature and his own being, he would see a beautiful compensation in all things; which is designed to bring all things to an ultimate perfection, when man recognising his own free will, shall use it in all righteousness, and shall acknowledge that those who have erred from inherited imperfections have their punishments ameliorated by having a less acute perception

of their degradation, and God's ways shall be justified to man when he understands fully all the glorious provisions made for the gradual development and refinement of the soul in the future life, where by a course of suffering as the soul awakens to a sense of its degradation it shall by that suffering be raised and purified and drawn to a higher life.

Free will is assuredly the gift of all men, and only man of all animals has this free will; all men are therefore responsible beings.

To Correspondents.

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

THE SPIRITUAL PILGRIM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir.—Since my arrival in town, a book entitled "The Spiritual Pilgrim"—purporting to be the biography of Mr. J. M. Peebles—has been placed in my hands. I have read it with intense pleasure, and have been surprised that I had not heard of it before, and that it is not more generally known, I think that you, my friend, deserve a mild rebuke for not acquainting me and your readers, that such a work was in existence—and issuing, as it does, from the Spiritual press. As a biography, it is the most interesting and useful book of that kind I have ever read; and I feel certain that every thinking man, whether he be a Rationalist, Materialist, or Churchman, would be as fully satisfied with its perusal, and would as strongly appreciate it, as I have done. It ought to be in the hands of every man, who loves his kind, and desires their advancement—of every one, who is warmed by noble sentiments, and Christ-like aspirations. The actual "living epistle" of these sentiments and these aspirations—bravely outlived amongst us at the present time by the subject of these biographical notes—is not often to be met with during a life-time in this work-a-day world.

S. G. W.

Melbourne, December 19th, 1872.

(Our friend S. G. W. has not read his "Harbinger" as he ought to have done, for which we think he deserves a "mild rebuke." We should indeed be culpable had we ignored the work referred to. In our May number, page 225, our correspondent will find a review of the "Spiritual Pilgrim" written shortly after the press copy reached us, in which he will see that we appreciate the book as highly as he does. Copies are also advertised as received and for sale, in October issue.—Ed. H. L.)

CASTLEMAINE NEWS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir.—Since last writing to you, the two principal events in our progress in this district are the Soiree held by the Castlemaine Universalists, a most successful and pleasant gathering, a copy of the "Representative" I enclose with this, contains a full account of the proceedings, also the excellent and original address read by Miss Finlason. The other event was the visit and lecture of Mr. Peebles, which was held in the Mechanics' Institute, the large hall was filled, an attendance of 450 to 500 people being present. The lecture was listened to with a deep interest, and judging by the frequent applause, with much pleasure and profit by the audience. The admission though free was by ticket, a collection being made at the doors at the conclusion.

Many of our Circles are making steady progress. The striking manifestations at the house of Mr. J. P.—accounts of which were published a short time ago, are again resumed. The Mediumship I find is not confined to Mrs. P. alone, but the children are also possessed of strong mediumistic powers, promising to be equal in power to any of the noted mediums of America and England. Our respected lecturer G. C. Leech, Esq., is now giving a course of lectures on the Religious History of England, most interesting and instructive discourses, showing the gradual progress of religious

thought in our fatherland. We may congratulate ourselves in having amongst us, a lecturer so well qualified to lecture and so devoted to the cause of free thought, and at the same time so disinterested, giving his time and services without fee or reward, except his own consciousness of doing good.

BETA.

BRITTAN ON THE SITUATION.

(From the *Banner of Light*, August 17th, 1872).

EDITORS BANNER OF LIGHT.—A literary gentleman submits several interrogatories with a view of eliciting such answers to the same as the undersigned may be able to give. As some or all of these questions may possibly present themselves to other minds, I propose to answer them in this communication, trusting that the points comprehended may be of interest to your readers.

1. "I notice that Spiritualists have not organized in any way that promises results at all commensurate with their estimated numbers, and the assumed importance of the movement. Can you explain the reason?"

You are quite right, and to my mind the reason is obvious. Hitherto, the separate individualities among men have been held in utter subordination to their institutions. The organic forces of sects and parties have ruled the world too long, and man has been well-nigh lost in the midst of his accidents. But while the spiritual movement unsettles the platforms of politicians and the arbitrary claims of hierarchies, it also excites to preternatural activity all those faculties that serve to elevate men above the sphere of abject submission. The facts and principles of Spiritualism unfetter the mind. The individual is thereby exalted to his true dignity, and the real manhood enthroned above the circumstances of its outward relations.

Necessarily, the first effect of this individualizing process is to *separate men*; and hence to create seeming antagonism. Wherever the power of the institution is supreme, the lines of individual development are either obscurely drawn or invisible. All blend together in the same common background, like a crowd viewed from a distance, or in the midst of a dim twilight. But when the institution loses its power of assimilation, the separate forms appear; the lines of individual character are more sharply defined, and man declares his independence. The hostilities occasioned by the development and recognition of individual rights and prerogatives, if not merely apparent, are, in the very nature of things, of short duration. We shall come together again in obedience to the common law of social attraction; we shall blend by the power of a moral cohesion, and the more subtle chemistry of our spiritual life. We shall form a more perfect union on a higher plane, where the laws that govern our associated action will neither restrain the exercise of our noblest faculties, nor subvert the sacred principles of personal liberty.

2. "If I am correct in my inference from the views you have occasionally expressed, you are not at all opposed to organization?"

Certainly not. *I am only opposed to the chronic habit of perverting such instrumentalities to sectarian and immoral purposes.* Organization, in its most vital and comprehensive sense, is a spiritual-natural law, clearly illustrated in all visible forms of life. Indeed, I can conceive of no clear revelation of the life-giving principle, here or elsewhere, without an organic instrument as the medium of expression. The elements of earth, and air, and water, everywhere exhibit a disposition to assume organic forms and relations. In some sense even the solar rays are organized, as they descend from the heavens; and they are re-organized on earth, in the bow that spans the summer cloud, and in the prismatic colors of the flowers. This law of organization is at once universal, and indispensable to the normal development of all natures and institutions on the earth.

3. "How do you explain the conspicuous failure of all the attempts at organization hitherto made in the interest of Spiritualism?"

The disciples of the new faith have thus far failed as interpreters of the natural law of organization. They have, consciously or otherwise, followed the old examples, and attempted to unite on the basis of some general declaration of faith and statement of principles. The intense individualism that everywhere shows itself does not admit of the acceptance of any such sharply defined doctrines and opinions. There is no real coalescence, because the true ground of unity is not recognized. The conventions would somewhat resemble the meeting of troubled waters, if there was any proper commingling of the elements that compose those bodies. As it is, however, the members rather remind us of the pebbles on the shore. The waves of human thought and passion bring them into collision; they roll over and under, rub against each other and are polished by the friction; but they do not cohere. They rattle about like parched peas in a hot skillet, and not a few of them jump out into the fire. But the laws of attraction are not subverted because the accidents of society and civilization have temporarily placed us in false relations. We shall inevitably gravitate to our proper places. The work of organization will be simplified and rendered easy of accomplishment when once the true basis of union is generally perceived and its essential principles accepted. I rest in the conviction that Spiritualism will yet be clothed with appropriate forms, and that it will leave its sacred record in the most enduring memorials of the age.

4. "But the organizations employed to propagate theological ideas, and to fashion religious institutions have usually manifested an intolerant spirit, and exercised improper authority over the minds and consciences of men. Are we authorized to presume, that any organization, founded on our religious conceptions, can exist without entailing the evils that have characterised all similar institutions?"

Certainly. Incidental evils do not justify the sacrifice of any really good thing. The conditions complained of do not necessarily belong to the organic structure, *per se*, any more than insanity and lockjaw belong to the mind and body. These, and many other forms of disease, are developed in the system; but neither constitute a part of the human organization, nor are they in any way dependent on its normal action. The omnivorous worm may make its way to the root of a tree, and ultimately destroy its life; but no one makes any objection to trees on that account. The forest and the orchard have still their beautiful uses. We prize them none the less for their grateful shade and the precious fruits they bear, because of the evils incident to their growth and decay. Worms do not necessarily belong to trees; nor is vital derangement an essential condition of human life. The phases of disease may be regarded as the perverted conditions of the organs and their functions; but disease never represents the several parts of the corporeal frame. Organization is neither to be viewed as a special convenience in the economy of the universe, nor as a mere accident among men. On the contrary, it is an essential law of all matter, operating wherever the forms of life exist.

Now, to doubt the propriety of applying this principle in our efforts to advance the chief interests of society is to relinquish our faith in the divine method as revealed in the natural world. It is only in the organic creation, material and spiritual, that we recognize the presence of the eternal Life. We may, if we are so disposed, defend the organized forms of plants, animals, and men, against the agents that impair vitality and destroy those forms; but our neglect to do this would never suggest the wisdom of abolishing the three great kingdoms in Nature to which they respectively belong. In like manner—in human institutions—organization is necessary to a normal and permanent growth; and *it must exist*, as a means to the great and beneficent ends of Infinite Wisdom and human destiny.

5. "Is not the attempt to inaugurate any great practical enterprise just now premature, from the fact that we have only fairly commenced the work of forming primary organizations among Spiritualists?"

Not premature at all. If you have a present opportunity to do good, why lose the interest of a generous deed for years to come? Why wait for every body else

to move in the same direction, and for the same object? When that happens, there will be less need of your assistance. If you have one thousand dollars to give to a public charity, why wait to draft a constitution? You neither require the authority of a convention, nor the intervention of a public meeting. Long preambles involve unnecessary delays, and resolutions are best expressed in deeds. Send along your cheque!

I am reminded that when people have been ploughing up the ground and sowing seed for twenty-five years, it is high time to begin to enjoy the fruit of their labours. The farmer who goes West and sows a thousand acres of wheat, naturally expects to gather a harvest the same year, with no other authority for so doing than that which warrants every man reaping where and what he has sown. If he should wait to effect a primary organization of his neighbours, and get himself and his interests fairly represented in a County State, and National Agricultural Convention, he might sacrifice his whole crop. When "the fields are white and ready for the harvest," the proper thing to be done—by the man with the strong arm—is to *thrust in the sharp sickle*; gather the golden sheaves, and rejoice in the harvest-home. The discoverers of new worlds and systems; the civilizing powers that conquer savage brutality and subdue the wilderness; the great inventors who revolutionize the industries of nations, are not expected to call a town-meeting before they are authorized to go to work. Some men are so much employed that they rarely stop to elect delegates to a convention. Neither do they memorialise Congress nor the King for permission to do what Providence ordains.

6. "If the Spiritualists are as numerous as represented, and if their views are calculated to inspire liberality, why have they not made greater personal sacrifices for the cause they have espoused?"

Individuals have certainly manifested a becoming spirit and commendable liberality in efforts to reduce their principles to practice. The examples of this class are quite too numerous to admit of a detailed statement. I must, however, mention, *in transitu*, the praiseworthy efforts of the Misses E. L. and Belle Bush and their associates, who have established an excellent seminary at Belvidere, on the Delaware. Their school buildings, the terraced grounds and the surrounding scenery are all beautiful and remind one of an Italian villa and landscape.

But the reasons why greater personal sacrifices, on a more liberal scale, have not been made are obvious to my mind. Spiritualists have not, hitherto, possessed the machinery necessary to secure united effort for any specific object. No comprehensive plans have been presented for their adoption; and hence we are without the proper data for estimating the real strength and the just measure of their liberality. When we shall have devised the ways and methods whereby great practical results may be surely accomplished, and the spiritual public perceive that the same are under the immediate superintendence of competent parties, I trust that the requisite means for the execution of such plans will be speedily furnished. When I am reminded that less than half-a-dozen men, entertaining comparatively illiberal views, have, within the period of a few weeks or months, at most, absolutely donated nearly half a million of dollars to a sectarian college in New Jersey, I am not prepared to believe that the great body of American Spiritualists will close their hands and steel their hearts against the just claims of Humanity.

We can perceive it to be quite possible for a true follower of John Calvin to go through this world with clenched fists; but a sincere Spiritualist, whose faith is illuminated by the divinest hopes and charities, must, of necessity, be a man of active benevolence; otherwise his principles and his practices sustain no apparent relations. When at length the appeal is properly made, by persons in whom the public have confidence, the Spiritualist must have an open palm, or it will be said of him—"He has denied the faith."

7. The base instinct of fear and the selfish desire for personal safety, prompt ignorant men to great sacrifices for the support of sectarian institutions. Is it your opinion that the higher motives of enlightened reason and

sincere love will yet accomplish as much for your cause?"

I should discount the divine love and defame human nature if I did not entertain such an opinion. It should be remembered, that both the fear of punishment and the hope of reward are selfish incentives to action. They exert the greatest power over the meanest natures. The moral constitution is degraded and the soul dwarfed by their influence. There is no real merit in any service that is not cheerfully rendered from unselfish considerations. An obligation reluctantly observed is not respected at all, in any sense that reflects honor on human nature. Only the poor slave is scourged to his task. His fear of the lash is the measure of his obedience. The State still governs its subjects by appeals to such motives; and even the Church waits to be emancipated from their unhallowed influence. But the human heart will yet recover from the momentum derived from its self-love, for God is mighty as we are weak. The world, at last will get out of its old ruts, and feel the force of a celestial gravitation. In my judgment, the strongest motives are those that have their ultimate springs in our spiritual relations and divine life, and that illustrate by example the true nobility of MAN.

S. B. BRITTAN, M.D.

166 Clinton Avenue, Newark, N.J.

A SEANCE WITH DR. DUNN.

The above named gentleman having incidentally mentioned that most of the phenomena which occur in connection with the Davenport Brothers had been reproduced through his mediumship, some years since, he was requested by a few friends to give a private cabinet Seance and eventually consented to do so. A cabinet was accordingly prepared consisting of four panels each four feet wide, with a door in one of the panels, a circular opening eight inches in diameter in the front, over which was hung a piece of dark cloth. This cabinet was erected in a large private room, and some musical instruments consisting of a Guitar, Violin, Tambourine and hand-bells were provided by the investigators. The Seance was arranged for December 14th, at 8 p.m., and at that time the gentlemen interested assembled, a large kerosene lamp was lit giving a good light. Dr. Dunn said that before commencing the Seance he was desirous to make a few remarks that all might understand the circumstances under which he was there, he said he did not believe in the efficacy of physical manifestations inasmuch as they could be imitated, and this brought the genuine ones into discredit. He thought the mental phenomena were the most satisfactory, but having been asked by friends to give the Seance he had done so to give them the opportunity of seeing what they desired. He requested those present to appoint a committee of two, to bind him, and promised to resign himself uncomplainingly to their hands, there was one thing however he wished to call attention to, and that was, that the spirits materialized hands for the purposes contemplated, and that these hands could not accomplish more than mortal hands. For instance, if they tied him in such a manner that *they* themselves could not untie him, the Spirits were not likely to be able to do so, they might tie him as tightly, and in as complicated a manner as possible, and he would not utter one word of complaint. Two gentlemen were then selected one being a gentleman who has a good knowledge of ropes, and the other a gentleman who had been in the Navy. They went to work in a business-like manner, fastening one hand to the leg, and the other near the shoulder, the rope used being half inch Manilla. The tying being examined and pronounced satisfactory, the Doctor was conducted into the cabinet, the musical instruments placed in with him and the door closed, the kerosene lamp being placed on the further side of the room opposite the aperture. In less than two minutes the guitar began to sound, then the violin to scrape, then the bells were sharply rung, attention was then directed to a hand, small and dark in color, which appeared at the opening, this disappeared and was followed by a renewal of the musical sounds, the tambourine being struck vigorously, and shown at the opening. One

of the committee on being called opened the door of the cabinet, and saw the tambourine fall to the ground, the medium was examined and the tying found undisturbed, on the door being closed the music recommenced, and at one time the guitar, violin, tambourine and bell were heard at the same time, the bell was then thrown violently out of the opening, the sound ceased and the medium called the committee to examine the ropes before the Spirits untied him. Finding them all secure, the cabinet was closed, and in three minutes and twenty seconds the medium walked out of the cabinet minus the ropes which were found neatly coiled up on the floor. After a short interval Dr. Dunn re-entered the cabinet taking the rope with him to see if the Spirits would tie him. A chair was placed inside for him to sit on. Eleven minutes elapsed during which time sounds as of the rope being passed rapidly through the rails of the chair, were heard, and a suppressed exclamation of pain from the medium on two or three occasions. When the committee entered the cabinet they discovered the medium bound to the chair in a very extraordinary manner. He was lifted into the room, and the tying examined by all present. The right hand was passed between the legs, and bound very tightly to the front rail of the chair, the legs were bound tightly together, the end of the rope running through to the back of the chair, the left hand was fastened behind, near the shoulder, the balance of the rope was interwoven between the rails of the chair, where the rope passed over the flesh the veins were painfully swollen, the termination of the tying was distant from either of his hands, after a minute examination it was determined to see how long it would take the committee to untie him, this was done with celerity, but occupied nearly four minutes. For an improvised Seance, and taking into consideration that the medium had not been used for such manifestations for a very long period, it was a highly successful one.

UNIVERSALIST SOIREE AT CASTLEMAINE.

Some of the members of the Universalist body, and their immediate friends, to the number of between sixty and seventy, held a social meeting in the hall of the Institute last evening. There had been no advertisement of the intended reunion, which was of a *quasi-private* character. The hall was divided for the occasion into a tea-room and a drawing-room, the latter being elegantly decorated with flowers for the occasion, and furnished with a piano and a harmonium. After the tea, which was provided by Mr. Lloyd, the company retired to the drawing-room, where the chair was taken by Mr. G. C. Leech, the principal lecturer in connection with the Universalists. The spiritualist hymn by Longfellow, "When the hours of day are numbered," was sung by the choir, and a piece of music was then played by Mrs. Hodgson, after which Mr. Leech gave a short address. He did not touch in any way upon theological topics, merely giving the history of the Universalists in Castlemaine. In the course of his address he stated that the services had not been inaugurated for the purposes of proselytism, but merely to supply a want felt by many people who could not conscientiously attend the orthodox churches. He also expressed his satisfaction at being able to announce that they were negotiating for the purchase of a piece of land, and hoped before long to have a place of their own, so that they might not be amongst those described by the *Age* as a "landless, houseless sect." A balance-sheet was afterwards read by Mr. Pritchard, and the old committee re-elected, with two gentlemen added and three ladies. The rest of the evening was devoted to music and readings, the former being sustained by Mesdames Hodgson, Urquhart, Adams, Cleaver, and Carter, and Mademoiselles O'Hea, Curle, Johnson, and Cleaver. Some of these ladies were members of the congregation; but others were visitors, who kindly complied with the request of the chairman to play or sing, though some had no music with them, and played without. Amongst the readers were Miss Finlason, who read a very able original paper, and Mr. Jackson, who gave a reading from Dickens; Mr. Leech also gave a recitation from

Hamlet, having ascended the step for that purpose. There were no religious exercises whatever, during the evening, the proceedings being altogether of a festive character. The company sang the National Anthem about twenty minutes past ten o'clock, and then retired, evidently well pleased.—*Castlemaine Representative*, Nov. 22nd, 1872.

The following is the address referred to, as delivered by Miss Finlason:—

DEAR FRIENDS,—On the occasion of this happy social meeting, the first of the kind we have had in connection with our particular phase of religious thought, I would, if permitted, express to you, though feebly perhaps, the feelings which the thought of this meeting has engendered in my mind, and should they in any way find an answering echo in your own, they will serve in a degree to bring us nearer in the bonds of true sympathy and friendship; feelings of deeper earnestness than perhaps the enjoyment and gaiety of the occasion ought to produce; but, though earnest, they are not sad. Thoughts, born of love for the cause of truth, have oftentimes a tinge of sadness in them, and necessarily so from the labyrinthine mazes of error which overshadow the brightness of the great river of truth, ever calmly flowing, although unknown and unseen by us; those mazes of error so closely woven by the unskilled hands of man, but by his skill *man* must also unweave, before he can remove all trace of sorrow; nevertheless, the fountain of truth will yield many a stream of pure delight, from whose sparkling drops will flow, ever and anon joyousness and mirth. Ever changing, ever varying, ever new, is the crystal stream of truth, that stream which we are all seeking to follow, and into whose innermost depths we are seeking to penetrate. Having found then, even ever so slender a thread of that pure water, we would fain follow on whithersoever it would lead us, onwards, ever onwards, guided by its beauty, its purity, its clearness; onwards, ever onwards, allured by its soothing song; onwards, ever onwards, would we follow the spreading river, now grown deep and strong, encouraged and strengthened by its rich full tones of joy which tell of the infinite source of truth, of beauty, and of love, from which it springs. Oh this mighty river of truth for which men have been seeking so diligently that they might taste even one precious drop to refresh their wearied souls and still the yearning cravings of their hearts. We think that we have caught a glimpse of its pure waters, gleaming like silver amidst the darkness. We think that, with deep earnestness, with unwearied patience, and unrelaxing perseverance, we may follow it upwards unto God, the beginning and ending of all truth—the alpha and omega—whence proceeds "the pure river of water of life," from which all may drink freely that are athirst." In such a work we need to be in earnest, and I think that this evening gives a proof of the earnestness of those assembled here to, as it were, congratulate one another and rejoice with one another on having reached at least one step of their journey of progress up the course of this pure stream; accordingly, we can afford to make this season one of joy and gladness. Resting a moment on our oars, we can review the past, drink in the beauty of the present, and gather fresh strength and courage for the future. Shoals and quicksands we are sure to encounter, and perhaps for a time be enveloped in the gloom of night, yet the silver stream will still shine forth, if we look steadily on beyond the obscurity, with an eye of consciousness and hope which will grow clearer and stronger to pierce the clouds of night, as we get nearer and nearer to the approaching day, as the murmuring song of the rivulet deepens and strengthens into the full harmony and grandeur of the mighty river. Then, as I have said, let us gather full courage, fresh hope for the future, let this evening begin a new era in our Spiritual progress, let us cheer one another, let us encourage one another with sympathy and love, helping the weak, instructing the ignorant, and assisting all as we have an opportunity, although ever so little; one kind word, one kind smile, one kind deed can do much, as we were told so well, not long since, "Let us cast our seed upon the waters, and we shall find it after many days;" and above

all, let us hold up the hands of *One* who has been working for us so long, so unweariedly, so devotedly striving to make the way clear for us, endeavouring by every means in his power to force back and tear down the interlacing branches of superstition and error which have so long hung over and intercepted the clear pure river of unalloyed truth from our gaze. Branch after branch has been broken off and let the light of day pour in, that we might behold that stream whence it flows and whither it tends. Had it not been for his untiring courage and bravery in thus breaking down these barriers for us, we should still probably have been feebly struggling with many difficulties, instead of which, I doubt not, many are catching bright gleams of the light and beauty of that eternal day, and tasting the waters of that crystal stream which we hope more fully to enjoy when we reach that higher plane of thought whereon we may gain a wider, deeper, and clearer view of this most glorious, all sufficing, boundless river of life, without whose blissful drops our souls could not exist. Let us drink then of it more freely; let us seek after it more diligently, that we may more fully live here, thus comforting and supporting our beloved lecturer in his noble work, and fitting ourselves for the abode of peace that awaits us, where—

Flowing ever, flowing ever—
Pure and radiantly bright,
Rippling where the sands are golden,
And the crystal sheds its height;
Murmuring where the flow'rets blossom,
Blossom never more to die,
Gliding where the purpling clusters,
The celestial vintage lie.

Where no icy fetters bind thee,
Where no cloud or storm can come,
Flowing mid eternal summer,
Richer than Arcadian bloom;
Lingering 'mid the fields Elysian,
Where the white-robed angels stray,
Brighter than the stars that cluster
In the spangled milky way,

Flowing ever, flowing ever,
Pure and radiantly bright,
Rippling where the sands are golden,
And the crystal sheds its light;
Oh, we want to taste thy waters,
Breathe the air from sin all free.
Thrilling with the rapturous chorus
Of the heavenly minstrelsy.

AMERICAN CRITICISMS ON MR. PEEBLES.

The San Francisco press seem to have treated Mr. Peebles with far more consideration than the Melbourne papers, as the following extracts will show:—

"The afternoon lecture consisted of a general exposition of the principles of Spiritualism, and was sufficient to demonstrate that Mr. Peebles possessed no ordinary ability as a lecturer. His style was energetic, forcible, and earnest; his gestures effective; his command of voice good. He opened the proceedings by reading a poem, the subject of which was the progression of the soul, and by offering up a short prayer, petitioning for communion with all that is 'noble and pure' in heaven or earth; thanking God for 'every vision, and trance, and spiritual manifestation' that had been granted them, and concluding in these words: 'And to God and the good angels everywhere will be ascribed the praise, amen.' He introduced his lecture by saying that it was twelve years since he had been in California. At that time he had been in very bad health, and suffering from hemorrhage of the lungs. Those who walk the sunny slopes of the 'summer-land' had told him that this climate would benefit his health, and he had come here in obedience to their desires. When he came, his doctors told him he could not live but two years longer; instead of which he had lived twelve of the most active years of his life. Space prevents us from giving an extended report of Mr. Peebles' remarks, and, without that, justice could not be done them. They were eloquent and telling, the speaker frequently and vehemently testifying to his assurance that the spirits of the departed hovered around him and guided all his actions for good."—*Daily Morning Call*, August 26th.

The *Daily Evening Post*, of August 26th, says:—

"Mercantile Hall was filled yesterday afternoon to hear the Hon. J. M. Peebles lecture on Spiritualism. Mr. Peebles is a middle aged man, kind and genial looking; he is a fluent and eloquent speaker, and commands the full attention of his auditors."

The *Daily Post*, of Sept. 10th, contains a report of his lecture; also, the *Chronicle*. The latter paper, after peppering its notice at the commencement with the usual tirades against Spiritualism, à la the religious (so called) press, just to please some of its orthodox readers, says:

"In San Francisco, this struggling and unaccepted doctrine has quite a respectable following. It has an incorporated society, with officers of the highest character and standing in the community, and the patronage of some of the best and most cultured minds among us. For the past month, the society has secured the services, on Sunday, of the Rev. J. M. Peebles, a well-known member of the Spiritualistic world, who has delivered a series of lectures on the subject at Mercantile Library Hall. Mr. Peebles was formerly a Universalist minister in Chemung County, New York, and a number of years ago he created a sensation in the western part of the State by the great power of his oratory and the earnestness of his efforts in the cause of religion. Latterly he has become a convert to the cause of Spiritualism, and in that cause he has employed the same power, the same fixedness of purpose which actuated his labours years ago."

DO THEY SEE SPIRITS IN HEAVEN?

Is there a time between the two worlds when the spirit, about to depart from this one, is so freed from its clogs as to be able to see the other world with its spirits, its beauties, and its glories?

We believe it fully, and the evidences of it scattered along the history of ages, is too strong to be contradicted. During our own observation, we have been personally a witness of several very remarkable instances of this kind, and one of them, some months ago, in these columns.

A very remarkable one has very lately occurred at the city of Austin, Texas. Little Frank Cotton, as already detailed several days ago, was riding on a dray upon which were two heavy barrels, when the horse becoming frightened, started to run away, threw the barrels and the child off, and the latter was badly crushed by the barrels.

He was only ten years old, but was a very remarkable child, intelligent beyond his years, obliging and affectionate, the joy of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Cotton, the pride of his grand parents, Prof. H. L. Cotton and his wife, of this city, and a favourite with all who knew him.

This great misfortune happened to little Frank on Saturday, 17th August, 1872, and his grandfather did not hear of it until his death, and hence could not answer his request.

But a dear mother is the best historian of the particulars of his death, and we are, by the kindness of Prof. Cotton, permitted to make the following extracts of a letter written to him by his daughter, the mother of the child. She writes:—

AUSTIN, Texas, Aug. 21, 1872.

MY DEAR FATHER,—Your kind and sympathizing letter has just been received, and found all in great distress and almost heart-broken.

Little Frank was hurt on Saturday last, about 4 o'clock p.m., was partly delirious Saturday, Sunday, and Sunday night, but recognised all the family. He suffered a great deal. On Monday he was perfectly conscious.

He told us he was going to die, and not to cry. We were all standing around his bed early on Monday morning, when he looked around at us, then threw his little hands above his head, and said:—

"Ma, I am going to Heaven," and pointing above, he continued—

"Everything looks so bright and beautiful, and I see every person, all my uncles and aunts, and such beautiful trees. I can't stay in this city much longer. I am going up THERE. I will have everything I want when I get THERE."

I asked him if he wished to leave his ma and pa, and he answered:—

"Yes, you will both come soon, for it is such a pretty place you can't stay away."

On Sunday evening, I was sitting by his side on the bed, when he put his little arms around my neck, pulled me down, kissed me and asked if I had written to grandpa and if he was coming, as he wished to see him before he died. I answered that you would come as soon as you got the letter which had been written to you.

He died at half-past 12 o'clock p m., on Monday.

I have often heard of death-bed scenes, but little Frank's was the most touching of all. He did not talk like little Frank always did, his language was so beautiful. The little darling is gone from us to a better world and we must submit.

It is a part of our faith as well as consolation, that departing spirits, prepared for Heaven, are permitted often to see into the other world, and to drink in the glory and happiness that awaits them there, and we have not a doubt that this was accorded to the good child.

We also believe that the spirits of the happy relatives of those prepared for Heaven are the angels who receive their spirits, bid them welcome, and bear them upward to their Heavenly Home.

To the good and pure, death is but the entrance to eternal joys.

THE PROGRESS AND CHARITY OF SPIRITUALISM.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." JESUS.

"I hold that heavenly grace abounds
Where charity is seen: that when
We climb to Heaven, 'tis on the grounds
Of love to men." ALICE CARY.

"As other men have creeds, so I have mine;
I keep the holy faith in God, in man,
And in the angels ministrant between."
THEODORE TILTON.

TRUTH is final authority. As to what is truth, each must be his own arbiter and judge. Books, sects, creeds, spiritual manifestations must all abide the decision of individual reason—conscience and the spiritual perceptions. Souls preceding are necessarily above all book babble, or ecclesiastical authority. Education, investigation, and toleration—these are three great words of the century. To the casual observer the vineyard of spiritualism may present a bewildering variety—grapes green, snowy, and purple—wild wine-presses and tart untempered juices. Still the vineyard is one—unity in diversity. Octave notes do not jar. The unripe apples of summer do not contradict the mellowed ones of autumn. They only manifest the different stages consequent upon the law of growth. Atheists, Secularists, Catholics, Methodists, thinkers from all denominations have flocked into the ranks of Spiritualists; and each naturally enough brought with him a little wine from the old bottle—a few shreds from the old worm-eaten garments of sectarists. And that he should wish to weave into and patch some of these shreds on to the shining vesture of spiritualism is neither strange nor criminal. Let none assume infallibility—let none condemn for mere opinion's sake. Experience, evolution and deeper draughts from the fountain of inspiration will culture the affections and expand the soul, ultimating in a harmonial manhood.

The common definition of spiritualism is this:—*The possibility, and certainty of a present conscious communion with the immortalized inhabitants of the spirit-world.* All believing in such communion and living true, calm and Christ-like lives may be rightfully denominated spiritualists. They abound in all lands—in all churches. Judge Edmonds with the above definition in view, and

basing his conclusion upon an extensive correspondence, upon the assurance of clergymen, upon personal experiences in traveling, and upon carefully collected statistics furnished by the Roman Catholic clergy and bishops, estimated the number of Spiritualists in America as high as eleven millions. And the church enemies of the movement have never denied nor questioned the general soundness of the statement. On the contrary, secular and religious journals sustain Judge Edmond's estimate.

The following testimony is from late orthodox periodicals in America.—

"If Spiritualism is defined to mean holding intercourse with the dead by means of trance, 'clairvoyance,' and dreams, as well as 'table-tipping,' there are probably more than the eleven millions named and numbered by the New York judge.—*Church Advocate (South).*"

"Has not the time come when it is safe to treat Spiritualists with as much respect as is shown those who advocate eternal punishment in the life beyond this?"—*Troy Budget (New York).*

"Spiritualism, sitting in high places, and numbering its millions, is exerting either for weal or woe a wide influence. It must be tried by its 'fruits.' This is the scriptural test laid down by Christ."—*The Christian Witness.*

"At this point candor requires some concessions to Spiritualists on the part of their opponents. We must concede to them a certain basis of phenomenal facts. Eyes, ears, and fingers are tough witnesses to these facts, which go to prove the presence and activity of extra-human intelligence."—*The Presbyterian Advance (Chicago).*

"Spiritualism has already planted its doctrines so firmly and generally in Church and State, that the victory is nearly complete. The opposition is now very feeble, like that of a dying man in last moments."—*Christian Herald and Review.*

Henry Ward Beecher in his weekly *Christian Union* of April 3rd 1872, has this paragraph in treating of Spiritualism.—

"Every scientific man who is studying human nature is bound to open his eyes and ears to study all its phenomena. I read that Huxley refused to attend a *séance* of spiritualists. He said, contemptuously, that it was a waste of time, and gave expression to other sentiments of disdain. * * * But phenomena which are wrapping up millions of men and vitally affecting their condition, are not to be disdained by scientific men, whose business it is to study phenomenology of all kinds. No scientific man can excuse himself from examining them. He may say that he has no time to do it, and that some other man must investigate them. That would be right. All men cannot do all things. But to speak of anything of this kind with contempt is not wise. I am not afraid to look at this thing, or anything. I am not afraid that we are going to have the New Testament taken away from us. We must be more industrious in investigation, more honest in deduction, and more willing to take the truth in its *new fullness*."

The Rev. J. W. Potter of Boston while lucidly touching upon the meaning of the New Jerusalem with its "tongues," and "gifts" and "pentecostal baptism," hails the approach of another and higher form of religious manifestation which shall not be Hinduism, nor Buddhism, nor Judaism, nor Christianity, but a religious development of humanity, in which all technical distinctions between these specific forms of religion shall be obliterated, and nations and races shall meet in a spiritual fellowship whose limits shall be commensurate with humanity itself. * * * It shall be intellect daring to think, unawed by public opinion. It shall be Conscience daring to assert a higher law, in face of a corrupted society and a conforming church. It shall be Will setting at naught the world's tyrannies, and putting into action the private whispers of the still small voice. It shall be Heart resting in the universal and changeless law of eternal, transcendent love.

Spiritualism is a demonstrated fact. Its banner in some form floats under all skies, and what most interests us is its moral bearings and practical tendencies. May it not be safely said, that what these millions of spiritualists most need at this stage of the dispensation is organization, system, culture, self-consecration, enthusiasms and a warm generous charity. Love and charity were the distinguishing tests of discipleship in Christ's time. When the good quaker poet, J. G. Whittier, accompanied by an English philanthropist, visited that eminent Unitarian, the Rev. Dr. Channing, for the last time in Rhode Island, their themes of conversation were reform, progress, peace, toleration, and human elevation. Sweet and sacred such hours of social converse, when soul pulses to soul in kindred love and sympathy. Mr. Whittier, referring to it afterwards, wrote these tender lines:—

"No bars of sect or clime were felt—
The Babel strife of tongues had ceased—
And at one common altar knelt
The Quaker and the Priest."

Thus may, thus *do* the hearts of the good and the erudite ever blend in unison. Such fellowship constitutes heaven upon earth. When the pilgrim puts off his sandals and drops his staff, when the white feet of mortals press the sunny slopes of the summer-land, the angels that make radiant the upper kingdoms of God will not inquire, "Were you on earth Catholic or Protestant, Independent, Spiritualist, or Christian Spiritualist?" but "Were you a true man, a lover of humanity, and a brother of mercy?"

Religion is natural. Wherever are found the foot-prints of humanity, there are found symbols of men's worship. Many of the older faiths have passed away. The present outward expressions of religion may perish as scaffoldings fall when the edifice is finished; but the principle, integral in human nature remains.

Genuine religion has little to do with theology. All catechisms are man-made; while creeds have crimsoned the earth in blood. The genius of the age however is modifying the most rigid of them. They must die the death that knows no resurrection.

Abraham Lincoln our martyred President denominated by terms "infidel and spiritualist" said in a public speech:

"I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to the long, complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterise their articles of belief and confessions of faith. When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, Jesus' condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul."

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this—to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

"By this said the Nazarene, shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

Self-abnegation being among the first laws of life, the highest good necessarily consists in aiding and doing good to others. The pleasures of benevolence are unspeakable. The loving, the pure and the charitable ascend daily the mount of transfiguration. When that spiritualism as a phenomena, a philosophy, and a practical power—shadowed in twilight by Indian sages, seen in increasing sunlight by Syrian seers, and consciously felt to-day by the more highly inspired—becomes actualised in, and outwrought through, the personal lives of earth's surging millions, it will no longer be selfishly said, "Mine, mine," but Ours, yours, *all* who appropriate it for holy uses. Then our country will be the universe our home the world, our rest wherever a human heart beats in sympathy with our own, and the highest happiness of each will be found to consist in aiding and blessing others. Then will the soil be as free for all to cultivate as the air they breathe; gardens will blossom and bear fruit for the most humble; orphans will find homes of tenderest sympathy in all houses; the tanned brows of toiling millions will be wreathed with the white roses of peace; and the great family of humanity will be obedient to, and trust in love, law, liberty—God!

J. M. PEEBLES.

MR. DENOVA'S LECTURE AT SANDHURST.

A lecture on "The Evidences of Spiritualism," was delivered in the Rifles Orderly Room, Sandhurst, Dec. 22nd., by W. D. C. Denovan, Esq.; before a numerous and attentive audience. The lecture was a very able one, free from Dogmatism, and containing a mass of evidence with many telling arguments, appealing to the reason of the audience. In the course of the lecture Mr. Denovan gave an account of his own experiences as an investigator, and counselled those who thought the subject of any moment to read and investigate, before forming an opinion upon it. The lecture was fully reported in the *Bendigo Evening Star*, of the 23rd. Want of space prevents us giving a fuller notice of it.

THE HARMONIAL CYCLOPEDIA.

AURA—Every principle wears appropriate garments. The life within the blood, like the sensation within the nerves, puts on an armor of many-colored atmospheres, compounded of particles derived from the constitution within, as grass grows out of the soil, or hair upon the head. These particles, which form an atmosphere about a person, are pleasing or repulsive, and can be detected by animals like horses and dogs, and more especially and certainly by impressible sensitives called mediums. It is this *aura*, going before a person or trailing along the path the feet have pressed, which makes it possible for the bloodhound to track the slave, the fond dog to find his master, or for you to realise when a particular acquaintance is near your house, or for two silent persons to think the same thought at the same moment. There is a great reality in this atomic emanation about a person, which, in progress of science, will lead to great discoveries and social revolutions. It may do far more than the ten commandments to regulate the marriage relation and the production of children. Real individuality and spiritual status can be accurately ascertained by the aural atmosphere which, in spite of either wish or will, surrounds a person, preceeding and following him everywhere he goes and under all circumstances, indicating and analyzing him as completely as words can impart an idea to the mind.

CONTRADICTION.—The tongue speaks by education, and does not always obey either the thoughts or the feelings. Some adults, like some children, have an uncontrollable bias to say what they do not exactly mean. Correct speaking, like good dancing, comes by frequent practice, under the guidance of wise instructors.

The habit of uttering contradictions is apt "to strike in," like a suppressed eruption; after which it takes the form of mental inconsistency and dissimulation. Hypocrisy begins in the art of imitation. A false appearance is a counterfeit upon a true appearance, which is coveted. It is not a contradiction that more people will forgive a man than a woman for the same transgression? Is it not a contradiction to forgive a person for doing a wrong, which he *could* help, and at the same time hold him strictly responsible for being what he is, which he *could* not help? I have known persons who would morally approve what they religiously condemn. Morally and medically, these persons agree that recreation on Sunday is right; but religiously and scripturally they insist that it is wrong! Thus men talk contradictions because they were taught inconsistencies.

CHILDREN.—If you would rear your child to health, industry, and usefulness, let your principal virtue be *patience*. It will clothe a large family with peace and harmony. Labor to bring a child into the world is continued in the unceasing work of patience to bring it to a period of self-protection. Children, in the constituents of their being, come from the bright and blooming field of Nature; hence it is but natural for them to seek, at every risk, to return and enjoy their original, beautiful liberty. They yearn for the open air, and for the magnetism of the warm sunshine; they climb fences, wade the streams, jump the ditches, run up hill and down, roam over the fertile fields; because "they find acquaintance there," being one in spirit with the soul of things, all of which they *feel*, and a part of which they *are*. To be a mother is a sacred, painful, pleasurable privilege; but to be born, to come into the world, to exist, to grow, to attain the full statute, and live forever—this is indeed sacred, wonderful, awful, attractive, beautiful!

All the little nothings about a child interests its loving mother. She accepts the great care and anxiety with a song of praise and thanksgiving. She loves its merry and wild ways, and its laughter she hears

"Ringing out in the air with its innocent gush,
Like the thrill of a bird at the twilight's soft blush;
Floating out on the breeze like the tones of a bell,
Or the music that dwells in the heart of a shell."

Many a mother sincerely thinks she sees an angel in the cradle. She has a feeling about her little one that cannot overflow in words. The climax of perfection in

love was (she thought) reached, when she conceived a never-ending attachment for her lover-husband. But what a wide garment of love is this which covers the expansion of self-existence and conjugal affection into parental devotion to the child just born!

MR. PEEBLES AT THE PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE.

We take pleasure in laying before our readers the fair and candid report appearing in the *Melbourne Argus*, Dec., 16th, of Mr. Peebles' lecture delivered the previous evening in the Prince of Wales Theatre. The report appearing in the *Melbourne Age* was also manly and impartial. There is a radical change in the tone of the entire press throughout the city.

Though the Theatre seating some 2500 was densely packed, many remaining standing—and others unable to gain admission—the audience was perfectly orderly, listening to the end with almost breathless attention. Here is the *Argus* report.

The announcement that Mr. J. M. Peebles would lecture in the Prince of Wales Opera-house drew a very large audience, the building being well filled, with the exception of the gallery, which was closed. The proceedings were opened with a hymn by Pope, after which Mr. C. Bright, who occupied the chair, addressed the audience.

The CHAIRMAN said he had been asked by the committee having the management of Mr. Peebles's lecture to preside on that occasion, and had consented with some reluctance, instigated mainly by his desire to assist in every direction the progress of free religion. So far as spiritualism was concerned, he had seen too little of it in its phenomenal aspect to be able to speak dogmatically, but he was greatly attracted towards it on account of the philosophy it sought to propagate. That philosophy allowed full scope for a rational theory of cause and effect. Every cause, it maintained, produced its legitimate effect, from which there was no escape. As men sowed, so they reaped. Each one must earn his own salvation. It also taught that there was in nature a gradual and universal development—the human race perpetually advancing towards perfection, and each individual soul similarly advancing. He would leave it to Mr. Peebles to give a fuller exposition of the spiritual system, but in reference to the charge of blasphemy which had been brought against that gentleman's teaching, he thought it was time to ask what was meant by that word. If it were legal blasphemy according to the Act of William III. that was intended, he could understand it, for according to that anyone who doubted that Joshua made the sun to stand still so that the Jews might see to slaughter more Gentiles, was a blasphemer. Any one who disbelieved that Balaam's ass spoke, notwithstanding the number of those who had spoken quite authoritatively since, was a blasphemer. So was the man who doubted that Jonah had ever taken up his lodgings in the interior of a whale. If that was the blasphemy indicated, he thought Mr. Peebles might with advantage go on blaspheming; but if it were meant that he had said a word derogatory to the highest conceptions of Deity, that human reason and aspiration were capable of forming, the charge must be stigmatised as a baseless one. He trusted they would give Mr. Peebles the quiet and respectful hearing which was his due as an earnest, conscientious, and truth-loving man.

Mr. J. M. PEEBLES then delivered his lecture, the subject being "Inspiration—and the Moral Power exerted by Spirits."

He quoted the words of Jesus, "The hour is coming and now is when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." such worship said the speaker, might be acceptably rendered under all skies—upon mountains or in valleys—in churches, cathedrals, or theatres. The Divine presence was everywhere, and all true aspiration was worship. It was natural for men to worship, because they were endowed with spiritual natures. All truths were immortal, and must exist for ever, and all errors were perishable. A thought or dogma might be as ancient as the Roman eagle or golden

fleece, yet, unless it harmonised with the immutable laws of the universe, it must fade into eternal forgetfulness. Inspiration was an in-breathing—an influx from the Infinite Soul—from the beautiful and the true everywhere. Inspiration did not create any new faculty or power, but intensified the moral forces of the whole being. It pertained to conscious souls rather than books or legendary parchments.

Who (asked the speaker) does not at times feel inspired—feel a calm, beautiful in-breathing and uplifting influence from the surrounding throbbing soul of nature? Those iconoclasts, those martyrs and moral reformers who startled the world in the elder ages, would admit that they were over-mastered at times by a psychologic power out of and beyond themselves. Principles were eternal. Inspiration was universal—a present truth daily actualised. The purer and more heavenly the life, the higher was the grade of inspiration; but, high or low, it must be judged by its fruits. Reason, consciousness, and intuition must ever occupy the judgment-seat. Multitudes of persons affirmed that the book of inspiration was closed centuries since. So said the Assyrian Sanconiaton in Moses' time; so said the Hebrew Hillel in Jesus' time; so say sectarists to-day; but God's inspirations through ministering angels are as perpetual as the river of life. Were not the good and the noble of this age as worthy of God's inspirations, revelations, and spiritual manifestations as the murderous Israelites? Were not Australian lands as sacred as Judean soil, and the River Yarra or American rivers as clear and divine as the Castyr of Ephesus, or the Jordan of Palestine? Special localities were not necessarily sacred. God was not a "jealous God," nor did he ever have a "chosen people." Such an idea was a too narrow conception of the infinite Father of all Spirits. Moses though under the cloud of Egyptian superstitions, was the leader for the Mosaic era, and Noah's ark well enough for Noah's time; but modern thinkers must have principles for leaders, and there must be English steamers now for the transference of men and merchandise.

If men of the 19th century would be highly inspired—if they would find the living Word of God, they must avoid Asian legends, moss-covered sanctuaries, and churchal edifices, and go into nature's magnificent temple, and there trace the spiritual laws that map the universe, and study the principles of love and wisdom enunciated by Jesus upon the Mount of Olives and down by the Galilean Sea. God was no respecter of persons. All nations had their "sacred books;" and they were all more or less inspired, and, being so inspired, there must necessarily be inspired men to judge of and explain a plenary inspired and infallible book! Protestants were less logical than Roman Catholics. If bishops, priests, and Bibles were not infallible, they were not authoritative. There was no churchal half-way-house between absolute authority and individual sovereignty. Infallible Catholicism or no creed were the only alternatives. The spiritual brain-organs were the receivers of inspirational truths. The reasoning faculties cognising, classified them. To ignore reason was to descend to the plane of brute life. The human brain, through which principles and impressions flowed, was coarse and stupid. That, in part, accounted for the imperfect teachings from the spirit-world. If immortalised spirits were perfect—if mediums had perfect organisms—if they were perfectly entranced, and if all the conditions were perfect, then there would come perfect communications from the resurrected souls in spirit life. But as infallibility and perfection pertain only to God, revelations and spiritual manifestations should be scrutinised and criticised. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," was the injunction of the Apostolic John. God is spirit. Jesus conversed with the spirits of Moses and Elias on the mount. Spirits rolled the stone from Christ's tomb, opened the iron gate and unloosed Peter's chains; and neither God nor His laws had changed. Modern spiritualism, with its visions and entrancements, its "discerning of spirits," "healing," and "gift of tongues," was in perfect consonance with the spiritual marvels of the New Testament. Henry

Ward Beecher had said in so many words "that spiritualism settles faith." Spiritual manifestations were not supernatural—that was, they were not beyond or contrary to natural law. Whatever violated natural law was sinful. Spiritual laws were natural on the spiritual plane of existence, and spiritual manifestations, though not supernatural, were superhuman, demonstrating a future conscious existence. For this reason, if no other, they were entitled to the candid consideration of both scientists and sectarists.

Spiritualism was both a science and a rational religion. It consisted more of deeds than professions. All religions should be every day affairs, carried into every department of life. The banker should take his religion into his office and think of "laying up treasures in Heaven." The merchant should take it into his counting-house, the artist into his studio, and the politician to the polls. The common saying—"business is business," "politics politics," and "religion, religion" was a deplorable one; because its real meaning was that men might dedicate business to the selfishness of "Satan," politics to the "devil" and then push their religion into the cracks and crevices of a few leisure hours on Sunday, making it a sort of insurance day for the rest of the week. Sectarian religions usually rose on Sunday, to ebb Monday. Its tendency all the week was downward. It needed the leaven of Spiritualism, the inspirations of the angels. Old theology with its sepulchred shams was dying, it could never know a resurrection. Spiritualism was the governing religious thought in all enlightened lands.

The progress of the spiritual movement had been absolutely marvellous. Ignorance and bigotry were its worst enemies. Alive to the spirit of the age, aflame with angelic wisdom, and sunny with consolation for the mourner, millions had already flocked to its standard. Verily it was the "Angel" that the Patmos revelator saw coming down "from Heaven, having great power." And that power was moral power—the great redemptive agency for the education and restoration of humanity. As a religious philosophy, teaching the certainty of punishment and the necessity of a pure, moral, and self-sacrificing life, its practical influence could only be ennobling, reformatory, and redemptive.

The proceedings were closed by the singing of a hymn written by Tennyson, and a short prayer by Mr. Peebles. The audience then dispersed, a collection being made at the door from such as chose to give anything towards defraying the expenses of the lecture.

Prospectus of a New Quarterly Journal, entitled BRITTAN'S JOURNAL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE,*

designed to illustrate the Dynamics of Subtile Agents, the Relations, Faculties and Functions of Mind; Philosophy of the Spiritual Life and World, and the Principles of Universal Progress, conducted by S. B. Brittan, M.D.

"The trumpet of the Angels are the voices of the Reformers."

The Arts, Sciences and Industries of Nations all furnish lucid illustrations of the character of the people and the progress of civilization. Art, especially, is a true revelator of individual and national character. Employ a painter to represent his ideal in a female figure, and whether he will paint the Venus, Psyche or the Madonna will depend on the measure of his own spiritual attainments. Every man naturally enough embodies himself in his work by actualizing his ideal. But the character of a people is nowhere so clearly revealed as in its Literature. In this we find the autobiography of the inward being and the actual life. General characteristics may be forcibly displayed in political and religious institutions; in popular revolutions, and in scientific achievements and monumental remains. But it is in the current literature that all the phases of thought, the pulses of the moral sense and social life of the people; the dominant sentiment, and the specific passions that rule the hour, all find instant and constant expression.

*Orders received by W. H. Terry, 98 Russell-street. Subscription, 18s. per Annum, in advance.

It must be conceded that a large part of the current Spiritual Literature exhibits a want of early culture and proper mental discipline on the part of the writers; amazing freedom from rhetorical rules and logical restraints, with general poverty of thought and profligacy of style. The leaven of the spiritual idea naturally creates a kind of effervescence, that often results in a *cacæthes scribendi*. These facts are quite too obvious to the critical observer to admit of serious controversy. Indeed, so large a proportion of the books issued from the Spiritual Press are of the class already described, that they rarely find a place on the tables and in the libraries of our more cultivated citizens.

The more intellectual Spiritualists and Reformers have long realized the want of a periodical of the first-class in respect to its standard of literary taste, and in its ability to deal with the profound questions of Metaphysics and Psychology. The chief problems of Life, Death and Immortality; the laws of vital motion, sensation, thought and consciousness; the relations of microcosmical life to the elements, forms and phenomena of the Visible World, and the philosophy of the Spiritual Arcana, are themes that demand careful research, profound insight, subtle discrimination in the analysis and use of materials, patient thought and scientific elaboration. Here is at once a work for the finest analytical powers and an opportunity for the highest exercise of our constructive ideality.

AUREALIA CO-OPERATIVE LAND AND LABOR ASSOCIATION.

We have been informed that the Aurealia Co-operative Land and Labor Association is rapidly progressing. A large committee of friends favourable to, and candidates for membership, has been organized here in Melbourne with the view of assisting in its formation.

We see by advertisement in another column, that friends desirous of helping this movement, and those wishing to join, are desired to put themselves in communication with the committee whose offices, *pro tem*, are 32 Nicholson-street, Fitzroy.

The *Sine qui non*, of membership is, that they must be Spiritual Harmonialists—not necessarily those who have experienced Spirit Communion but those who admit its possibility in others, and who are in themselves spiritually minded, that is, those who are living, not only for the present, but for a future life, and who admit the leading principles of the Harmonial philosophy. We wish this Association God speed, as we believe it to be the only true basis of success.

THE SECULAR PRESS UPON MR. PEEBLES.

THE familiar saying—"that it is a long road which never turns"—is being verified in the case of Mr. Peebles' visit to our colony. From the commencement of his first course of lectures, the secular press with few exceptions not only misreported and misrepresented but positively slandered him because of unpopular religious and spiritual convictions. And what was a further injustice, some of the daily journals positively refused to publish corrections of their false statements. Under these volleys, Mr. Peebles maintaining a dignified silence, continued the even tenor of his ways. Rising to deliver his fourth lecture in Temperance Hall, he read in a coolly sarcastic style the long list of vile epithets—"impudent charlatan," "American adventurer," "ranting imposter," "vulgar blasphemer," &c. &c., heaped upon him—and then, while counseling good nature and charity on the part of spiritualists—while asking if these were fair samples of the *animus* the candor and culture of the Victorian Press, gave assurance that as an American editor, correspondent and book-maker, he should measure out to Colonial Journalism full justice. These remarks, were received with loud applause by the audience.

It is only right to state that the "Spiritual Pilgrim," as the Rev. J. O. Barrett terms Mr. Peebles, has borne the insults of the Press with a becoming quietness and

equanimity of temper. In the strength of the faith and knowledge of spiritualism, may we not all complacently endure the sneers and slanders hurled at our heads from cowardly pulpits, or the unclean pens of reporters.

The liberty of the Press should never degenerate into license. Freedom bears but little relation to anarchy or injustice, in spite of pulpit and press, Spiritualism since Mr. Peebles' arrival has received a new impetus. Many are asking for the evidences. His last lecture in Temperance Hall was considered the most effective of the first course. The present series now being delivered by him on Sundays in the Prince of Wales Theatre, are literally calling crowds. Many of our first citizens are regular attendants. Though this Theatre seats, 2,500, numbers were unable to gain admission, and last Sunday evening it was estimated that fully 3,000 were present. The spirit of the press has suddenly changed. Even the *Daily Telegraph*,—generally considered the organ of the clergy—puts on its prettiest face, and makes an earnest effort at fairness. It was only a partial triumph. Here are clippings from recent city and provincial journals. The *Argus* report of his first lecture at the Prince of Wales Theatre appears in another column.

"Mr. Peebles commenced his lecture by saying he had nothing to apologize for in connection with his American birth, his American education, or the fact of his having been an American clergyman. Such discipline enabled him to contrast the old with the new. He contended that inspiration was universal being an influx from God and the spirit-world. Its inflowing tide did not stop with the visions of John on Patmos—men were inspired to-day. Spiritual manifestations were sometimes imperfect because the conditions were imperfect. We must try the spirits after the injunction of the apostolic John. He said that the archangels taught the angels, the angels the spirits, and the spirits mortals. The chain of instruction was complete. All should live pure and Christ-like lives if they would be happy in any state of existence. Mr. Peebles was listened to throughout with marked attention by the crowded audience, and was applauded as he concluded each division of his address by an eloquent peroration."—*The Age*.

Mr. J. M. Peebles, the celebrated American lecturer, and author of the "Seers of the Ages," delivered two eloquent lectures at the Rifles Orderly Room yesterday. In the morning the hall was well filled with a most attentive audience, who listened to Mr. Peebles with marked attention and interest. In the evening the building was packed full of eager listeners. Introduced by Mr. Denovan Mr. Peebles came forward. He is tall and possesses a pleasing expression, and as he stood with his long hair and flowing beard he reminded one of the evangelists mentioned in the New Testament. The service commenced by Mr. Peebles reading a portion of the New Testament. A short but fervent prayer followed. The congregation then sang the first hymn. Mr. Peebles began his lecture by drawing attention to the opposition with which every new truth or doctrine was now subjected to, and, like everything else, Spiritualism had to pass the fiery ordeal, he referred to Columbus, Socrates, Copernicus, and a number of others who for years were compelled to fight their way against the opposition and prejudice of the world.

The lecturer then stated that saying nothing of many distinguished Americans, some of the most eminent scientists of the world were avowed spiritualists. He mentioned Prof. Wm. Crookes, Prof. De Morgan, C. F. Varley, F.R.S., W. Huggins the astronomer, Dr. Lockart Robinson, A. R. Wallace, F.R.G.S., Lord Brougham, Sir David Brewster and others. Spiritualism was a science, a philosophy and a religion, it was based upon the inspirations of the Bible, and the testimony of all ages, together with present tangible facts, to the truth of which millions can testify. He had come ten thousand miles from home and was highly gratified with the reception he had met with at Sandhurst. During the eloquent discourse Mr. Peebles was most patiently listened to, no disturbance of any kind taking place, indeed we should have been surprised if there had been any for there was nothing said that could have offended the reflective secularist or the most particular orthodox minds—it was with considerable difficulty that the audience suppressed giving way to bursts of applause.—*The Bendigo Star*.

The Alfred Hall was very fairly attended last evening, when Mr. Peebles, the American Spiritualist lecturer made his first appearance, before a Ballarat audience. The lecturer was well received and spoke for a little more than an hour in a most eloquent and earnest manner. Mr. Peebles gave a *résumé* of his life, and explained how and in what manner he became a believer in Spiritualism. There was no mystery about the belief. Spirit manifestations were in accordance with natural law. Its great benefits were that the Spiritualist could look beyond the grave, and hold communion with those loved while on earth. The fear of death was unknown to the spiritualist, dying was nature's process of transition. He advocated the holding of *séances* two or three times a week, the reading of some poem or passages of the scriptures and the asking of the angels (who were spirits) as well as the spirits of the ascended to hold communion with us. Guardian angels

were appointed to look after each of us in this world, and from these angels nothing that we did was hidden. At the conclusion of the lecture Mr. Peebles was greeted with cheers.—*The Ballarat Evening Post*.

Mr. Peebles' second lecture was given in the Alfred Hall last night the title being "Life in the Spheres," &c. Dr. Richardson was chairman, and there was a better attendance than on the previous evening.

Mr. Peebles, after a few prefatory remarks, proceeded to speak of man's spiritual nature, and the process of death. He said everything in life was changing. Man's physical body, the tabernacle in which he dwelt, was constantly changing, and death was equivalent to the resurrection of the spirit from the mortal body. Death was as natural and as beautiful as life. Both were links in the endless chain of being. Socrates, when dying, said to a friend who was speaking of his burial, "Bury me just where you please if you can catch me." Socrates was an ancient spiritualist. As to whom the disinterred spirits see when they reach the after world, that depends on their lives here. The spirit-world was a world of progress. There, there are forests and hills, and fountains and beautiful valleys, and schools, and the angels are the teachers. It is a region where the spirits are ever gaining experience, ever learning, ever advancing. The infant is received into the arms of angel mothers, who plant them in immortal stars until they bloom in spiritual glory. From the first moment of being they become immortal, and that moment is the period of embryonic conception. He thought of the infanticides of Paris, the abortions of his own native land, and the child murders of China; and he reflected how many mothers and doctors would go hence only to meet an army of murdered babes, plucked as birds from the tree of life. * * * Mr. Peebles, during his remarks, was frequently applauded.—*The Ballarat Courier*.

Mr. Peebles delivered a second lecture on the subject of Spiritualism in the Alfred Hall Assembly-room, on Wednesday evening, Dr. Richardson in the chair. The chairman opened the meeting by expressing his own faith in, or knowledge of spiritualistic phenomena, and by quoting Professor Wallace in support. The chairman held that the phenomena were purely natural, not supernatural, and he said there was a person in the room who would give £500 to anyone who could prove that the phenomena were due to any other causes than those declared by spirit communications.

Mr. Peebles began by reading some poetry, addressed by the writer to a departed mother. This was well written, well read, and was applauded. He held that God is immanent in all the universe, not anthropomorphic, that death is not due to sin, but is a natural operation of the physical law of change. Death is gradual—every wrinkle and every white hair brings signs of our gradual dying. Nothing was annihilated, for just as nothing could not be made something, so something could not be made nothing. Nor did he believe in endless torments, for that doctrine made the Almighty a demon. (Cheers.) The speaker thought it a miracle almost that he had not been both cheered and hissed—particularly the latter—are this. Appreciating the motive he thanked them; but would consider it a favor if they would not cheer or in any way applaud the uttering of sentiments approved. They had come to listen, he to lecture, and cheering disturbed him.

According to our lives here would be our conditions hereafter, for there was a summer land and a winter land. We could never escape from ourselves either in this life or the next. In natural death there was no suppression of consciousness, but there was in violent deaths. He read some of the horrible teachings of old theologies descriptive of the agonies of a brimstone hell and the pleasures of heaven in witnessing those agonies, and his audience cheered his denunciation of such horrors. In the summerland Mozart courted higher muses, poets revelled in purer visions, astronomers weighed and measured the heavenly orbs, and Wesley and other reformers here were reformers there. The lecturer spoke, not of what he believed, but of what he knew. There was another life, and he had talked with God's angels, and if we lived pure and holy and Christlike lives we may also have intercourse with the angels. The speaker then closed his eyes, clasped his hands, and said—"Come, O ye departed loved ones, our fathers and mothers, come angelic hosts with your baptism of love and keep us from all wrong-doing, and when the angel of death comes welcome us to your divine abodes."—*The Ballarat Star*.

Mr. Peebles, who has recently been lecturing at Melbourne and Ballarat on Spiritualism, delivered a lecture last evening at the Mechanics' Institute. Dr. Richardson presided. The chairman in introducing the lecturer, read some extracts from the works of Dr. Chambers, Prof. Wallace, and other authorities on the subject of Spiritualism.

Mr. Peebles, on rising, remarked that, the question—"What is the origin and what the destiny of the human soul?" was an all-important one. Truth and error were distinct. Wherever the power of truth was felt there were no crimson altars, no offerings, no innocent lives expiring, no churchal persecution. It was the nature and power of truth to expand the human soul. Truth enlarged our conceptions, dignified our nature, and encouraged research. Man was made in God's image, and it was his right and prerogative to think and investigate all things for himself undeterred by Pope, bishop or priest. If he rightly interpreted the past, the great error of the human race had been its disposition to lean upon and imitate others. The poet of modern days went

to the poets of the past, and the modern Churchman sought the ecclesiastical fathers in search of paragons of perfection. But he referred to such men as Martin Luther and Theodore Parker, whose achievements were acknowledged because they had the courage to think and search for themselves, and like men to enunciate boldly the truths they had found.

He (the lecturer) saw no relation between a proud persecuting sectarianism and the simple and sublime life led by Jesus and his apostles. The apostles were endowed with the power of healing the sick, relieving the maimed, giving sight to the blind, they were practical spiritualists. Modern hypocrites and Pharisees still enered, and called the followers of Jesus blasphemers. He could say, in the words of the Nazarene, "Father forgive them,"—(even the Melbourne Press)—"for they know not what they do." (Applause.) Like Jesus, the propounders of new truths were denominated infidels. Luther and Wesley had been denounced in similar terms, and the latter was pelted with mud in the streets of London. The question arose, what is truth? Truth was man's highest, deepest, and divinest conviction. Spiritualism was a truth to the speaker. It had been his study for nearly twenty years. He had witnessed the manifestations in nearly all the European countries, and in Asia as well as America. There were now eleven millions of Spiritualists in the United States, too many for any ordinary lunatic asylum, and they had managed to go free as yet. In Melbourne he had been invited to meet a gentleman occupying a high position in the present Government, and sat with him for several hours conversing on the peculiar powers of a niece who was described as writing involuntary. Some of her tests had been remarkable. He was enjoined to make no mention of this official's name. The speaker loved a bold earnest outspoken man. He did not simply believe in these spiritual truths, he knew them to be facts. The spirits of loved ones surrounded us, to impress and inspire us and lead us on to the heavenly life where there shall be joy evermore. In conclusion the lecturer intimated that it was his intention to travel from the colony to China, India, Palestine, through Europe to England and America.

The lecture throughout was listened to with wrapt attention.—*The Geelong Advertiser.*

A NEW CIRCLE.

We have just heard, by way of Bendigo, of the recent formation of a circle for investigating Spiritualism, at a place called "Yankee Creek," some miles from Bendigo. The circle is entirely composed of wood-splitters, and is meeting with encouraging results in the shape of the usual table phenomena. We wish our friends at Yankee Creek success, of which they are certain if they comply with the conditions and persevere. The members of this new circle were induced to try the table by reading the *Harbinger* and other spiritual publications supplied them by a well-known medical gentleman on Bendigo, who takes a deep interest in the subject.

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