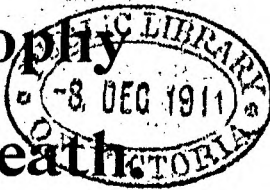


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# The Philosophy OF Life and Death



A Funeral Sermon Prepared by an Unfortunate but  
Brilliant Mind, to be Delivered Over His Own  
Mortal Remains.

Reprinted in the *Harbinger of Light* from the *Progressive Thinker*.

[Dr. P. J. BARRINGTON, who passed to spirit life on the 10th of November, 1902, at Sioux Falls, S.D., prepared his own Funeral Sermon, which we publish in full. It was read over his mortal remains. The Doctor was pinched with poverty at the time of his death, but was rich spiritually. He was always generous, kind, and thoughtful of others, and did a vast amount of good during his earthly career. His own Funeral Sermon contains many beautiful thoughts and will be read with interest.]

After diligent study and investigation upon the great problems of life for nearly fifty years of his physical existence, the writer desires to leave something behind showing some of the conclusions at which he has arrived along those lines of thought.

## MY PRECEPTS—MY ETHICS.

Principle, to me, stands front and foremost of all the considerations which go to control my actions in life. It means to me the God in man—the Christ principle lived as shown by Gautama, Pythagoras, Jesus, and a dozen others; the erring reclaimed; the fallen uplifted; the human made divine; the probabilities of all souls developed; the poetic idea realised—a demonstrated fact.

## MY PERSONAL CREED.

In my consciousness I recognise that God is; and He does not, and cannot exist apart from man.

Therefore, I do hope for, and in some little way have always worked for the brotherhood of man. I have always endeavoured to so live that I might commence my progress here, instead

of waiting until I get beyond. I have always believed that our spirit friends help us best when we best help ourselves. My Spiritualism is entirely eclectic. It aims at heaven but does not ignore earth; it includes every form of progress and reform. I do not believe all is spirit-land glories, for it considers humanity, its glories, its sorrows, its sins and its needs. I have had a friendly hand for every honest work for human good, and I respect all men despite their creed or no creed, if they live manly as all men should. My creed is progress. I am a progressive Spiritualist.

But I best desire to be a man in all that makes a man. I know that I shall live after my body is laid away among the rubbish of the grave-yard. I know that the immortality of the soul of man is just as susceptible of demonstration as any problem in mathematics to any and all persons who are willing and honest enough to lay away their prejudices and superstition and commence an honest investigation to arrive at the facts for Truth's sake. However, I do not mean that the soul of man can be demonstrated by any weights or measures known to physical science. Oh, no; this evidence must come through our own individual consciousness.

I have on several occasions left my body sleeping in repose and visited other scenes and places and impressed my personality upon other persons so plainly and vividly that I have been seen and described very accurately though my body lay in repose many hundreds of miles away. I have been written to many times upon this subject, the writers wishing to know my whereabouts at such a particular time. I could give many such experiences which I have had through my own consciousness, all through my past life, which have been and can be corroborated by thousands of persons living to-day, and who have had like experiences, thus proving beyond a doubt that the soul and consciousness of man are not entirely dependent upon his body to give expression to his personality while living here. Then why is it not true that man can and does live after his body is lying mouldering in the grave?

Man does not have to pass through the process of death to become a spirit soul, because he is a soul here and now.

The popular or theological orthodox idea is that man "has a soul" that belongs to him. On this concept rests the whole soul-saving machinery of ecclesiasticism, the essential predicate without which a "saviour" would be out of harmony with the needs of human welfare. What may be called the more modern concept of the soul is, that it is not a principle of life, but the life; that it is not given to man, or an attribute of man, but man—the All; that the body is of itself nothing, so far as potentiality goes, but an instrument, a tool, a tenement, for the time being, of the real man, or what we call in our home nomenclature, the Intelligence.

Our thought premises are so scattered with the material, that to grasp the spiritual concept of the soul is almost an impossibility to the general thinker.

The Soul's existence is one of the problems, perhaps, that can never be mastered entirely by reason, from the fact that we must admit that the soul of man is an eternal entity, having no place in time, no discontinuity, no fatality, but a progressive, expansive consciousness arising from its combinations with matter. Therefore, to suppose the soul to have a beginning in eternity would be absurd.

But before the statements of being, the relation of man to the Deity, can be rationally understood there will necessarily have to be a great deal of clearing away of the cobwebs and rubbish of a false and superstitious religious concept. It is not because we have not the evidence of the oneness of God and man. We must lay aside all pre-judgment. We must at once acknowledge ourselves as in the one life of which the manifest universe is the harmonious expression, affirming God and man are one. The infinite Good, or God, and the absolute principle of the being, man, is the expression of Deity. Being, acknowledged no several personalities or separate entities, but each individual a conscious unit, maintains its true selfhood in, not out of, the infinite.

Is it not written in Genesis, "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness;—so God

created man in His image, in the image of God created He him." Here we have a clear-cut statement of this fact written many thousand years ago. If it were true then, it is true now. Now this idea of the oneness of God and man must become clear. It will not do to pause at dim or feeble conceptions; we must get the largest and most helpful ideas possible. If man was formed after the image and likeness of God he becomes the highest organisation of intelligence in which the Deity has to express itself. Within man the idea of infinite is organic. This is in harmony with the irrevocable law.

We must know from within. Do not ask any questions from without, expecting a final answer, since that within us is the substance of God—the Manifesting Eternal; and when we say to ourselves that we have consciousness, thought, love, power and will, we but name the attributes of God. Our function is to realise the growth of these in consciousness. In God, as the realised Unit, they are all absolute. If we love in degree, then God realised is infinite love; if we seem to know in part, then God is Omniscient; if we have power to do some things, then God is limitless potency. To explain the import of these statements we must have recourse to physical science, which is true in correspondence, and we will learn to discriminate clearly between being and existence. God is I am. God is all. I am in God; the all includes me. My body is but the expression of my idea. As I am the expression of God's idea I am an idea in the Infinite Mind. My body is that idea expressed in form. God is the absolute thinker. But man receives his life into himself as the birds that fly through the air breathe that air, or as the fishes of the ocean drink the water in which they swim. Therefore, I shall affirm my own divinity; I shall claim my portion of the living bread and water as the offering of the great Source of Supply from whom I can never for one instant be divided. Then why should I not most reverently but confidently exclaim; "My Father and I are one!" Perhaps there has never been any one who expressed this idea of the oneness of God and man so simply and so lucidly

as the man Jesus of Nazareth did. Let us turn to the Testament and hear what He says. "Had you have known me, you would have known my Father also, for I and my Father are one." In Luke, 17th Chapter, 21st verse, he locates the Kingdom of God within you; meaning you, the soul, the ego. He could not certainly have meant that God was a personality or that the Kingdom of God was an empire in the sense in which he answered this question of the Pharisees.

Again he says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all things else shall be added unto you," the kingdom in this sense meaning your real self, able to add to yourself all things whatsoever you may desire or wish for. And he even tells us that having sought this Kingdom and found it, man becomes equal with God; that he experiences a new birth; that this new birth constitutes a consciousness of hidden God-hood. Having attained this knowledge, this truth, man becomes free, free from the law of sin and death; he assumes not only fellowship or heirship with God, but he is equal in every sense with Jesus Christ, being a joint heir with him. Or in other words, if we take Christ's explanation, the Christ in Jesus and the Christ in you is and must be the same. It is infinite life. It is the knowledge of God revealed in you; and within you are all the potentialities that exist. Do not lose sight of the fact that it was the promulgation of this principle, the statement of this truth, that cost Jesus Christ his life.

Again, Jesus declared you cannot destroy life. I can lay my life down at will and pick it up again. "If you destroy this kingdom, in three days it shall rise again." And thousands of other persons of this day have had similar experiences. He did rise, and was seen by the two Marys at the sepulchre; then by the two men on the road to Emmaus; then again before the eleven men as they sat at supper in an upper chamber. He stood before them in the materialism of his old body, showing the nail prints in his hands and with the spear wound in his side. He asked for meat and bread, and He sat and ate with

His disciples. They did not see Him come and they did not see how nor when He disappeared. Similar manifestations are occurring all over the world in the home seance.

But modern spiritual phenomena do not in themselves bring to light any new facts. They only verify the fact of that which has always existed. Could we but comprehend it; could we but rend the veil of ignorance that enshrouds us in a false interpretation of the religious concept of God and man; could we be allowed to look into the storehouse of knowledge, such as the prophets and seers were allowed to look upon; "could we but climb where Moses stood, and view the landscape o'er;" and could we experience what Paul did during the time when he says, "I know not whether I was in the body or out of the body," we would be able to comprehend what he meant when he says: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the hearts of man, the glory that shall be revealed in us." I make these quotations from the Bible with the hope that my remarks here may be more acceptable to my friends. Since I have become born again into the light of those concepts of God and man as the oneness of each other, the Bible has become a great illumination to me. Yet I do not believe that one should worship nor bow down to any book. He must look wholly to the Infinite. This is of the utmost importance; let us understand it. It need not matter to us whether the personality of Jesus can be established by history or is a myth. However, I have always admired the character of Jesus, and I believe His character will live while time shall last.

My friends, what I have stated to you are not mere opinions of mine; they are the burning facts, which may and can be verified through any one of you who will take the time and trouble to investigate this subject for yourselves, and these facts shall be revealed in you. The last battle in which the race will be engaged is now on. However, I do not mean that it will be a battle of cannon and the sword, but it is a conflict of ideas. It is not going to be destructive, but constructive. It will not be a destroying war-

fare, but a fulfilling. It will not knit the human family together in combines and associations, in lodges and congregations, but it will individualise the race and each person will be able to stand alone, recognising within himself all of the divine principles. When man can see himself thus, he will see this kingdom within.

It is not within him only, but is within all men. He will then be interested in bringing the rest of his fellow-beings into a consciousness of their oneness with Divinity. And he will add his influence to help hasten the time when no man will need to ask his neighbour, "Know ye the Lord?" (the law) "but all shall know Him from the least to the greatest." Let us repeat these facts until they become a part of our very being; and when we have learned what that means, we know all. To-day we are as much enfolded by Divine Presence as we shall ever be. It is God's active presence that now appears in us as being. It is life eternal that now animates our frames, and it is divine power by which we think and move; and so long as we are consciously a unit with the law, so long does manifestation become easy and delightful. With such a concept in view, there can be no place here for the necessity of a saviour for mankind, the atonement or the fall of man. Within ourselves deliverance must be sought. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Bow not down, then, before shadows and myths; for they shall pass away. Be strong in all strength. In the midst of thoughts, knowledge dawns. In perception of the Real, all seeming vanishes. Do not longer strive to dispel outer darkness, but turn to the eternal inward light. Take it from the objectionable bushel and place it upon the candlestick of the soul's high altar. Do not look for power, for light, or for redemption in some miraculous way after death. "To-day is the day of salvation." There is no to-morrow for the eternal being,—man.

Modern science has proclaimed that life, matter, force, energy cannot be destroyed. Then by virtue of these facts, the continuity of the soul of man is established. It is unfair, then, to argue that life

which animates, energises, illuminates matter, is or ever can be blotted out. Pebbles may be ground to powder; water may be transformed into steam; the air we breathe may be liquefied; matter in all its forms may be made to enter into new combinations; but it cannot be destroyed. Energy in any of its forms may be utilised, manipulated, changed; but destruction, extinction, never. Therefore, a man may be called dead, but he is not dead. The house the man lived in is vacant; the tenement he once occupied has been deserted; but the tenant has not been lost or destroyed; he has only moved out. The house is not the tenant; the tenant is not the house. The body is not the man; the man is not the body. The body is but the house the man lived in. Why not continue to occupy the house for all time; why move out? We do not know. But the time is coming when we shall master this problem. We know more about man to-day than ever has been known before. We know now that man has a physical body and a spiritual body; we have learned, likewise, that this spiritual or spirit body is the real man. We know also that this world is surrounded by a spiritual realm, a spirit world which is apart from and yet a part of this physical world in which we live. We have discovered that life comes, not from without this world, but from within; that the real source of energy, force, power, lies within the spiritual world and not in this as we have been taught to believe.

The spirit world impinges our own; blends with it so perfectly that it is very difficult to tell where one begins and the other ends. Just as air passes through the lung tissues into the blood, so spirit penetrates, permeates all things. The musician produces music and tones by touching the keys of a musical instrument; so the spirit man plays with equal ease upon the elaborate piece of matter mechanism known as brain and body. We connect our house with the central station by telegraph or telephone; the spirit Man is connected with his house, the body, by a system embodying the same essentials of both in manner, surpassing in completeness anything yet devised by man. But sometimes we are forced to abandon a



station; the building falls into a state of decay, but the system survives. There are times when the spirit man is unable to maintain connection with his station; the body falls to pieces, and is resolved back into the elements; but the man lives on. The body is but the casket, not the jewel; the spirit man is the jewel, transferred to a setting more brilliant by far than anything that earth can ever hope to offer. Matter does not originate itself; is not possessed of life or intelligence on its own account. Life, intelligence, energy, are not inherent in matter. Light, air, sunshine, are not the products of the things of this earth. Man's epitome of the universe came from without and is bound into the vast realm of spirit; not matter, but spirit, which governs matter, is the originator, moulder, controller of the animate and the inanimate. Matter is not master, but the servant of the master; the body is not master, but servant of the master, the soul.

We are told that chemistry and the dissecting table furnish no evidence of the continued existence of a separate entity; that life, love, memory, are the results of a combination of forces, dependent largely upon the introduction and assimilation of food stuff. But chemistry and the dissecting table may be dismissed with a word. Chemistry and the demonstration of anatomy deal with the physical side of life supply. The spiritual is beyond their grasp. Man, the spirit, cannot be weighed or handled like you would handle a clod of earth, or made the subject of a knife unto a cadaver. Spirit defies analysis, cannot be brought within the scope of those whose mental horizon has been limited or dimmed by the arbitrary rule of the scalpel and the microscope. The claim that the physical body constitutes all there is to and of man is based upon assumption, pure and simple. It cannot be shown to be true.

Life is not the outgrowth of, is not dependent upon matter. Life is not matter. Life is the mirror of the soul. The fading of memory is not evidence that man has been or is being blotted out; far from it. It shows only that man is losing his hold and control of his body, nothing more. Not understanding the law governing connection with the physical organism,

man is obliged to let go his hold. Life is the force used to animate matter; it is the light in the tower. When the body, matter, falls by the wayside, man, life memory, and all the other soul attributes move on to a plane or sphere as well adapted to his spirit as this earth is to the physical existence.

There is nothing mysterious about it. The mystery is only a creation of our own. All nature is replete with the evidences of the immortality of the soul, and none against it. Nature makes no effort to hide or conceal. Neither is reason a sealed book. There can be no fixed limit to human thought and action. No barriers exist in Nature. Nature does not bar, but on the contrary invites investigation. There is nothing really deep or complex when we get down to the facts. When we are willing to lay aside our prejudices and brush away the cobwebs of the past, then spirit and matter will appeal to us in a new light.

Because we do not see the soul is no evidence that the soul does not exist. We do not see the air we breathe, the fragrance of the flowers, the energy latent in the water, the force which propels the street cars; yet we do not question. We do not see the laugh; the thought that rouses the brain; that something which makes the woman's heart beat faster; the thing that causes the father's bosom to swell with pride and joy, yet we feel and know that we are dealing with things that are potent, but are invisible.

Therefore, man is invisible yet none the less real. We do not see man, but nevertheless man is here. The change, cold death; the faculties and functions fail us; it is not the end. The change only marks the opening up of a newer and grander chapter. The physical expression is only changed, but man remains a living, acting, active entity. The faculties, instead of fading, are being gradually withdrawn. As the child is merged into the man, so the man reaches out to and becomes a part of a more perfect state of being. The supposed decay is but the melting away from the here into the hereafter. But the memory is not lost; it survives the change called death.

When ready for launching the blocks are removed, and the ship glides down the ways into its native

element. When we are ripe in years, the faculties and functions are all withdrawn and man glides down the ways of peace into the harbour of eternity. The time is coming when we shall be able to grasp these important truths in their entirety. Then the darkness will disappear, revealing in all its beauty and glory that other real world toward which we are all advancing. What man laughed at yesterday is the admitted fact of to-day. What we dream of to-day will become the demonstrated facts of to-morrow.

There is no death. What seems so is only transition. This life is but the "dim dawn—the Vestibule." "Life's theatre, as yet, is shut." The mists of to-day will soon be cleared away by the sunlight of truth, to-morrow. Then we shall put away mortality and take on immortality. And when the day breaks and the shadows flee away, out there in the vast starry space we shall revel in new beauties and glories in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Now in conclusion, the writer desires to say that Death must be considered as a scientifically demonstrated fact; that death is as natural as birth; that death is a part of the divine order. It was no part of an afterthought with the Infinite; it was not the result of anger on the part of God; it was not the result of man's sin. Death from the beginning was as sunset is, as natural as the dawn. Therefore, I believe that death instead of being an evil, is a token not only of divine wisdom, but divine love as well. The most of those who die are as unconscious of it as they were of their birth. And most of their apparent pain means no more than the first automatic cry of the new-born babe. At the worst it is sleep, while at the best it is only going into another room of the vast universe of our one Father in whose presence we have lived here and under the guardianship of whose hand we shall be forever.

But to how many people in this world does the grave add a blackness to the thought of dying because of the false teachings of old theologies which for ages have been warning us, "Prepare ye to meet thy

God," just as though we were not living face to face with Him every day!

The idea has been to us that in some way we have wandered far away from God into some far-away country, and that some special, peculiar preparation was needed to be made just before being summoned into His presence. And the Christian world has taught us that it was really necessary to say a prayer and that speedy repentance, extreme unction, or some kind of priestly aid, could, or would at least, wipe away some of the dust and soil of earth and clothe our souls with the "wedding garment" that should make us presentable in the presence of the King. All the while we are living right under the immediate eye of this same eternal King, and making up our clear red records day by day.

Now, my friends, I want to deny as emphatically as I know how with all the intensity of my soul, all that class of conceptions. Death is but the common lot of us all; we cannot escape it if we would. It comes to tell us all that our little lives began here in a cradle, rocked by the hand of love. There are a few years—a little labour, some clouds shot through by sunshine, a little love, and some dropping tears, brief success and as brief disappointment, and then another cradle for another brief sleep, that, too, I know, is watched over by the loved ones who have gone before. Then if we could realise and know these facts, O! how much better it would be for all mankind! We could then learn while here day by day. We could add to ourselves that which we should most desire to be when we pass over there. We know that we were expected when we came into this life, and were prepared for, even without our knowledge. Likewise we shall pass over into the other life not as uninvited or unexpected guests. I know this to be a fact, and all the wisdom of those who doubt or deny is not enough to entitle anyone to tell me that my hope is an irrational one. The only thing we need fear, then, is the natural and necessary results of the thoughts we think and the deeds we do here. For they, you should know, go before us, and become our angels, good or bad, that will welcome us to gladness or regret. Let us then make the present life here as fair and sweet

as may be, holding our loved and lost in our hearts. Do not think for a moment that those loved ones over there will outgrow us. They who have preceded us may have become much wiser than we are now, but the wisest are ever the tenderest and the least conceited about their wisdom. So their wisdom instead of being a barrier to separate them from us, will only bring them closer in sympathetic help.

I have often been asked the question, "If our loved ones still live beyond the grave, why does not my mother communicate with me?" There are many reasons why; but the greatest of them is the lack of an understanding of the law of love and sympathy, and of the importance of knowing how to cultivate that law that lies within ourselves. It is this law of love and sympathy which should bind the hearts and souls of all mankind together in one stupendous whole. It is the bridge which spans the space that separates the spiritual world from our physical world, over which our loved ones come to visit us at pleasure, and over which we could go to visit them as well.

But the law of love and sympathy and charity must be studied first, and understood before we can come in touch with the finer vibrations of the soul. Then soul can and will communicate with soul.

Did not our Master, Jesus of Nazareth, command us first to love our God with all our might and strength, then our neighbours as ourselves? Now, if God and man are one and inseparable, and the kingdom of heaven is within you as He has said elsewhere, then if this statement be a fact, and I believe it is, then mankind has nowhere else to go for worship and to love but to himself and to his neighbour. Then it does seem to me that if this law was cultivated within us and studied as it should be, the world would be filled with wisdom and love in such abundance; sufficient at least, that we could and would reflect some of it upon our neighbour. Then we would not have to make a journey to heaven, for heaven would come to us, as well as to our loved ones over there, and abide with us, as there would be no barriers.

But the commercial and social worlds of to-day are very far from this condition. I am conscious that

there are every year thousands of people going beyond the grave for the want of love and sympathy here. Why this seeming indifference that keeps us from making cheery and bright the lives of those we really and deeply love? In a recent magazine I read the following lines entitled, "An Old, Old Question":

"A spirit that from earth had just departed,  
Lingered a moment on its upward way;  
And looking back, saw, as though broken-hearted,  
Its friends and kindred weeping o'er its clay.  
'It seems they love me dearly. Had I known it,  
My life had been much happier,' it said,  
'Why only at our parting have they shown it,  
Their fondest kisses keeping for the dead?'"

I once was called professionally to the bedside of a beautiful young lady, who had attempted suicide by morphine. I worked very hard all night with her and succeeded in bringing her back to consciousness. Then I asked her, "How did you dare to attempt such a cowardly act?" and she answered me and said: "Because the world seemed so unfriendly. My father and mother never seemed to understand my sensitive nature. While they never abused me, neither of them ever told me that they loved me in their life, nor did they ever kiss me, to my recollection. So I felt I could not live in such an element. So I left home only to find it no better elsewhere, and I took the fatal dose with the hope that it would end it all, and I could forget it." In my experience in life I have known many persons who would look upon it as a mark of weakness on their part for them to ever express their love and appreciation upon those whom they really and sincerely did love.

Many years ago I was called professionally to attend a little boy who passed away with scarlet fever, eleven years of age, an only child. He was the most perfectly organised child I ever saw. But after he was gone I saw that father and mother bending over that lifeless form, bathing his face with their scalding tears of anguish, and kissing his cold and ashy lips that could not respond, and exclaiming: "O! if I had known this was coming so soon how different I would have done. I would have told you, darling, how sweet and

pure your life was to us, and how deep and tender your mother has always loved you so much."

Can we wonder that we do not get communications from our loved ones who have passed beyond the grave when every door between the two worlds is closed, and every bridge and avenue of communication is frozen with the selfishness and coldness of this world?

Now, in conclusion, I desire to state that this funeral sermon over my mortal remains, upon "The Philosophy of Life and Death," is the general expression of the ideas that I entertain upon the great problem of life. I desire my friends to dispose of my body in the most simple manner, as well as at the least expense possible. If it can be at as little expense I would prefer it cremated, the dust and ashes at once to be mixed with the common earth and be allowed to nourish some rose, that being my favourite flower. I do not wish to be remembered, only by those who care to remember me, or those who must remember me by some little good I may have done. And to them I would say, forget your sorrows for me by trying to make someone else happy. Be as bright and cheery as you can, for there is already enough sadness and sorrow in this life at best,

I realise fully that my mistakes in life have been many, but I never purposely intended to grieve or unjustly injure any living soul; but I do regret that I have not done more to make the world better for my having lived in it.

I do not flatter myself that I am better than most of my fellow-men are; therefore I do expect, and I know that I shall suffer for all the wrongs that I have done, but I would much rather suffer than to know that I had done anyone an injury and that I could go free from the effects thereof. I have nothing of this world's goods that is worth the dividing with anyone. All that I have is but the experience, and what little knowledge I may possess as a natural inheritance from the many, many years that the physical struggle has brought me, which I am glad to know is not perishable, and that I can take it with me as the only capital I have to start on in my spiritual existence.

The following poem can close the services, which was so beautifully voiced by our risen brother, Luther Colby, when he depicted a vision given him shortly before his transition:—

“Within the holy realm of deepest thought,  
Where wisdom's precepts are so fully taught,  
Resides a band of Oriental seers,  
Whose lives are measured by unnumbered years.  
Here beauteous flowers of every form and hue  
Glisten in brightness with the morning dew,  
Emitting odors of such rare perfume  
That keep them ever constantly in bloom.  
This is the Land Celestial—this the Throne  
Which wafts its wisdom unto every zone;  
This, too, doth guide each planet in its course,  
From which the spheres derive their mighty force.  
This is the Godhead!—this the realm of law  
From which all nature doth its incense draw,  
This much I know! and, knowing, know no more!  
And this is why Je-ho-vah I adore.”

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Established 1870. Objects: “The Investigation and Advancement of Spiritual Truths and Purposes.” Subscription, 2/6 per quarter (with use of Lending Library, 5s.). Office and Reading Room, Austral Buildings, 117 and 119 Collins St., Melbourne.

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J. C. Stephens, Printer, 146 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.