

WELLINGTON FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

The following is Mr. Jardine's usual monthly report of the doings of the above Association for the past month:—

Wellington, March 24th, 1884.

SIR,—Since my last report two lectures on spiritualism have been delivered in our Hall by Mr. J. Chantry Harris. At the first lecture, delivered on the 23rd ultimo, there were about 100 people present. The lecturer stated that a close relationship existed between evolution and spiritualism, and also that the force known as modern spiritualism was the same force which was manifested throughout all ages, and which were known as miracles. At the second lecture, on the 2nd instant, there was another large audience. Mr. Harris remarked that, although spiritualism was nearly forty years old, the spiritualistic movement was remarkable for incoherency and a want of coalition among its supporters. Those people who had cast off their ecclesiastical beliefs were afraid to band together and investigate spiritualism, for fear that they should introduce something worse; and others had rested, quietly waiting for results. The lecturer eulogised the late Professor Denton as a man of pure religion, whose life was passed in the elevation of his species. He also said it was human nature to cavil at great principles of reform; men and women would always be found who disagreed with them, and it was all the better such was the case. Mr. Harris, in conclusion, urged those who wished to investigate the phenomena to avoid public exhibition, and to develop domestic circles at home. He also pointed out the benefits that would accrue if meetings were held once every week, to exchange experiences, and help and strengthen the movement. On the 9th instant a well-known resident of Wellington, and a member of the Association, delivered a very able and interesting lecture in reply to "Eche's" lecture of the 3rd ultimo on "Men as compared with animals." On the 13th instant the second social gathering of members took place, and was an unqualified success. On Sunday evening, 16th instant, one of the best lectures ever delivered in the Association's Hall, subject, "The Nationalisation of the Land," was delivered by Mr. Robertson. We sincerely hope that Mr. Robertson may be induced to favour us with another lecture on the same, or another, subject at an early date.

The half-yearly meeting of members takes place on the 26th instant, when the undersigned will be reluctantly compelled, through pressure of business, to resign the Secretaryship.

Yours truly,

A. T. JARDINE, Hon. Sec.

WANGANUI FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

We received from the Secretary the following report for the past month:—

Wanganui, March 25th, 1884.

SIR,—Nothing has transpired in connection with our Association this last month of very special importance. The Lyceum children, however, deserve honourable mention for the creditable manner in which they sang at the meeting on Sunday, March 2nd. Their performance reflects great praise on the conductor and teachers of the Lyceum, for it is no easy matter to bring about such satisfactory results in connection with children. On the same occasion a recitation was very ably given by Master Hollow, one of the Lyceum children. Several others, I believe, are preparing recitations of a similar character, which shows that the teachers are doing their best for the intellectual advancement of those under their charge. I would strongly impress upon parents who are interested in Freethought, and the welfare of their children, to send them to receive instruction at the Lyceum on Sundays, and I am sure they will grow up better, morally and intellectually, for the instruction received. I know a strong prejudice exists in the minds of parents respecting freethought institutions. This is natural from their religious bringing up, and their want of knowing what is really taught. Let them once find out all about it, and the real facts of the case will be shown, truth will be contrasted with error, and our Lyceums will become one of the most popular institutions in our midst.

Mr. Willis returned from attending the Dunedin Conference last Saturday, and on Sunday gave us a very interesting account of what the Conference had decided upon doing, &c. Mr. Willis expresses himself highly pleased at his reception in the other Island.

Some time next month we propose having an entertainment in the way of a tea meeting and concert; but nothing definite has yet been decided.

Yours faithfully,

J. J. BUCKRELL, Secretary W.F.A.

A FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION FOR WAVERLEY.

We are indebted to a Freethinker at Waverley for the following items:—

Waverley, March 26th, 1884.

SIR,—Knowing that you take an interest in the spread of Freethought principles, I take the liberty of informing you that active steps are being taken for the formation of a Freethought Association here. Sunday last was chosen for the first meeting, but as the day proved very wet none but the town residents turned out, consequently the meeting was adjourned until Sunday next, when we anticipate a large attendance.—I am, &c.,

FREETHINKER.

Gems.

[APOTHEGMS FROM THE ESSAYS OF LORD BACON.]

Revenge triumphs over death; love slights; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupieth it.

The virtue of Prosperity is temperance; the virtue of Adversity is fortitude: which in morals is the most heroic virtue.

Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel because, when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on.

Virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.

Clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it.

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise. For the distance is altered: and it is like a deceit of the eye that, when others come on, they think themselves go back.

It was a notable observation of a wise father and no less ingeniously confessed, that those which heed and persuaded pressure of conscience, were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends.

Dissimulation is but a faint kind of policy, or wisdom. For it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it. Therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the greatest dissemblers.

As for talkers, and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal. For he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down that *an habit of secrecy is both politic and moral*.

Men have a foolish manner (both parents, and schoolmasters, and servants), in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers during childhood; which many times sorteth to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families.

Chaste women are often proud and forward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife, if she thinks her husband wise; which she never will do if she find him jealous.

Let parents choose betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take; for then they are most flexible. And let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most mind to.

A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others. For men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon other's evil; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other; and whose is out of hope to attain another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand by depressing another's fortune.

Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed:—*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum* (to deeds so dreadful could religion prompt.) What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France, or the powder treason of England.

This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own words green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Cæsar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay rather, vindictive persons have the life of witches, who, as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.—B.

Good temper, like a summer day, sheds a brightness over everything. It is the sweetener of toil and the smother of disquietude.—WASHINGTON IRVING.

No one of my fellows can do that special work for me which I have come into the world to do; he may do a higher work, but he cannot do *my* work. I cannot hand my work over to him, any more than I can hand over my responsibility or my guilt.—RUSKIN.