

## SPIRITUALISM,

BY AN AGNOSTIC.

I have no doubt you see the 'Liberal,' a weekly paper published in Sydney. The last three or four numbers contain an account of certain "appearances" said to have been witnessed by ten or twelve ladies and gentlemen, who have appended their names. The appearances (?) are so marvellous, and the good faith of the witnesses seems to be so genuine, that I wonder you have not taken any notice of the occurrence in your journal. Anything of the same kind that we read of having occurred in the States we should not take much heed of, but when those alleged miracles, or perhaps natural phenomena, are witnessed at our own doors, it behoves Materialists and Agnostics to give them an anxious inquiry. Either these appearances are true or false. What I mean by true is, that they appear without the aid of jugglery, optical illusions, or any collusion. The statements made by those ladies and gentlemen ignore all these. Well, what are we to do who are looking after truth? We are told that some time after Miss Wood—who is described as a medium—had taken a seat in a small room, examined her audience to see that she had no "spirits" about her, and when the lights were turned down, several female figures appeared, spoke, rang bells, scattered lolly-pops, and indulged in many anti-spiritual antics, but which were accepted by the audience as messages from the other world, brought to them by some of their dead relations. Now, Mr. Editor, and you, his readers, if you can throw any light on this mystery you will oblige. Are those ten or twelve ladies and gentlemen sane or insane? Are we who boast of an age of common sense to be fools or cynics? Is it possible that those ladies and gentlemen saw anything unnatural? Many things happen on this earth that we cannot give an explanation for, but this gross imposture, or eternal truth—for everything that happens is eternal—should admit of explanation. The numerous testimonials given by thousands of people that they have seen or felt other than matter, staggers the Materialist or Agnostic. If Spiritualism has any claim on our senses by evidence given to our senses, let us embrace it. We want nothing but "truth;" be it ever so antagonistic to our feelings, the truth will prevail. It seems to be such an easy matter to establish or condemn this phantom or reality, that meets our gaze in every Spiritualistic publication. If humbug which can be easily exposed, let us expose it; if truth, let us throw Materialism and all its train of progress to the winds, and be not like so many children and believe a thing because they are told to do so. If Baal is the Lord, let us worship Baal; but if the Lord is the Lord, let us worship Him. I hope your readers will give these remarks their earnest consideration. Do not jump at a conclusion and say it is all humbug. Remember that thousands of men and women tell a different story. Try and devise some means to successfully expose this 1884 phantom, or proclaim its reality. It will then be known whether this is truth or falsehood by those who are privileged to investigate the matter practically. From the circumstance that the inquiry at present discussed took place at the house of Mr. W. Bucknell, a gentleman well known in Sydney, whose very name stamps honesty on any proceedings he may engage in, cautions us to inquire respectfully into the following condensed account of what took place:—"In a short time—in a light sufficient to distinguish—a small figure covered with white drapery came out. The figure spoke, said, poor 'pocha' is tired, rang a bell, took up a doll, &c. Shortly another tall figure appeared, took up a pencil, and wrote Lizzie, &c. Another figure wrote on a paper, all in view of the undersigned: 'A friend to all; go on in your good work.' Signed—'Martha.' The small one then appeared, lifted a small table, &c., and then gradually faded away (dematerialised) before our eyes, the others retiring behind the curtain. Signed—A. W. Bucknell, Geo. Wright, Henry Miller, Thera Livi, Fred. Braun, A. Tucker, James Braun, E. J. Tucker, L. Crocker, S. G. Gale, Geo. W.—, Hy. Gale." Greymouth, May, 1884.

## NAMES OF FREETHINKERS IN THE CALENDAR FOR JUNE.

2. Monday—Guiseppe Garibaldi, died, 1882.
4. Wednesday—Adam Smith, born, 1723.
6. Friday—Corneille, born, 1606.
11. Wednesday—Roger Bacon, died, 1294.
12. Thursday—Harriet Martineau, born, 1802.
14. Saturday—G. Leopardi, died, 1837.
19. Thursday—Pascal, born, 1623.
20. Friday—Bishop Colenso, died, 1883.
21. Saturday—A. Collins, born, 1676.
22. Sunday—J. Mazzini, born, 1805.
26. Thursday—Armand Barbès, died, 1870.
27. Friday—Harriet Martineau, died, 1876.
29. Sunday—Rousseau, born, 1712.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H E X.—We think the evidence in favour of Sir Philip Francis being Junius is overwhelming, and that the claims for Paine or Burke are extravagant in the highest degree. Paine's style, though strong and clear, lacks the academic polish of Junius. Nor had he the opportunities of information. Burke, who was the essence of truthfulness, distinctly denied the authorship.

C R E D A.—We have no space for such topics as the Ten Lost Tribes and "their descendants the English." Besides, life is too short to waste any part of it in seriously discussing the absurd.

S R T.—The *raison d'être* of the REVIEW is not to establish half-way houses, easy resting stages, for minds in a state of transition. We should consider such a course immoral if consciously pursued.

We regret having to omit reports of Auckland, Waverley, and Woodville Associations, as they were received too late for insertion in this issue.

We would again remind correspondents that all communications must be in the Editor's hands not later than the 24th of each month, in order to ensure insertion in the following number.