

MEMO.

From Editor
Spectator.

Spectator Publishing Co. Proprietary Limited, S.

270 Post Office Place, Melbourne.

My dear Spencer,

I have no other paper handy, so I write on this, & implore your forgiveness. I hope your flight to England is not caused by any hitch arising out of Taylor's monstrous proposal. What I noted when I was in England, & he being then in a parlous state, raises a suspicion in my mind that Mrs Taylor may have something to do with that. I observed that she sat by us when we were talking, & supplied a word whenever Taylor was at a loss for one, which was of frequent occurrence, & a painful symptom of his malady, which I hear has come upon him again. I have given up writing to him, & have heard nothing from him for the last three years, excepting once - a few lines on a p. card.

I think it most likely that Mrs Dyer does most of his thinking for him now.

I can hardly realize your "shyness" at the thoughts of interviewing Frazer. It never occurred to me to tremble before him; or that there was anything to tremble about, & I am quite sure that my freedom from your complaint did not arise from excessive self-estimation. I assure you I seem to myself to be a perfect humbug, though not of my own manufacture. What I know is so abeying little that I never cease wondering at folk for making much of it. I should not object to impart to you a reasonable portion of my size if it were possible if the gift wd do you any good; but as for any of my "age", what in the world do you want with it? Surely you do not delude yourself with the notion that you are a young man! I did think I was about 40, but that arose from my native humility. I used to look upon myself as a youth, & bow before the elders. You are not built that way.

As for Frazer's theory, it will be of great interest to

From Editor

Spectator.

Spectator Publishing Co. Proprietary Limited,

270 Post Office Place, Melbourne.

5

2

me to hear it, & to turn it over in my mind — things of that sort want a lot of turning over. But I have come to care very little about theories. If I had money & leisure, I should spend the rest of my days ~~in~~ gathering facts, & other folk might theorise on them to their hearts' content. My own theorising brought me anything but peace of mind, & I always kick myself when I think of it.

Trayer has earned my unvarying gratitude by his stand just opposite to Tytor's proposal. I want to see old David Blair the other day. He modestly informed me that Providence had endowed him with "a preternatural gift of insight into men's minds & qualities"; I buy no claim to such

a miraculous gift for myself; but when a man sees
me the impression that Frayer did, I have generally - in
always - found it confirmed by experience. I may be
mistaken sometimes - indeed when I tell you that you
yourself - but I will pursue the subject no further.

If you tell Dr Jackson of Trinity what you say
in your book about the point I put to you when we were
at Howitt's, which falls in with his (Jackson's) theory
about the origin of the class-divisions, he will rejoice, & he
may be useful, though I don't think you will want any more
allies. Frayer is a host in himself, & will prevail.

You will go to Oxford of course. Do pray, I beseech
you, when you are there, call on my kind hostess Miss
Weld, of "Cobnal More", 5 Northam Gardens. I owe her a long letter
but when I shall pay it I cannot tell. My work is getting harder
& harder with the hardness of the times, & it fact more before
paying epistolary debts to one's friends. She was very kind to me -
wrote about me to the Master of Trinity, the Vice-chancellor & others, &
did all she could for me. An review, & with kind regards to Mrs Spencer & your
little ones -
Yours sincerely L. Fison