

BANNER OF LIGHT.



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THE LADY AND LOVER.

A REAL ROMANCE.

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CHAPTER XIII.

"But what? You have not raised a hand against one of our order? If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not! I would not stay—but then I must not save thee! He who has shed patrician blood—"

The Doge arose from his seat, soon after this ceremony was concluded, and, through the herald, commanded silence. Forthwith all became still.

The Doge proceeded to speak:

"In behalf of Venice, great and wealthy, mistress of the seas and queen of the hundred isles, I return thanks most graciously to all you proud nobles and fair dames, and you people here assembled. This night, the palace hall is to be opened wide for my loyal subjects, the citizens of this free Republic; and I shall be ready to drink your health in sparkling goblets. On the morrow, we are to unite against the bold outlaw, Bandolo—the scourge of the city and State. I have in my power, to-day, a person whose secret respecting this bravo will make all the people glad. Bandolo shall soon be ours!"

There was a general rising and moving as this speech was concluded, for now the excitement of the recent tournament was over. The thousands that had been for hours jamming and jostling around the lists, now started to go; and confusion soon reigned around the vast square.

Their attention was suddenly arrested, however, by the clear blast of a trumpet in the amphitheatre, and all noise was instantly hushed. The spectators paused, anxious to learn what it might mean.

In the centre of the arena sat a herald upon his horse, wildly brandishing his trumpet over his head. "All the people!" said he, at the top of his voice. "Once more! Though the Doge has already dismissed you, yet I ask both him and you to listen to the words that Don Calderon, the victor knight, now desires to speak!"

The silence was profound. Riding forth from his chosen position with a slow and stately step of his milk-white horse, he reached the centre of the arena, and there halted. His spear and shield he at once threw down upon the ground, and, adroitly removing the heavy helmet from his head, he held it calmly in his hand. Elevating himself to his utmost height in the saddle, he cried, in a loud voice, that threw back its rapid and sharp echoes from the massive walls of San Marco:

"The Doge has just given out that he will to-morrow go forth against Bandolo, the outlaw, and his followers. I offer my services at the head of his army!"

When the spectators heard words like these from the lips of one who had proved himself so gallant and brave in the eyes of all of them, they set up a deafening shout of applause. The Doge, too, paused and regarded him with perfect wonder, as well as delight.

The victorious knight continued:

"Bandolo is the bold outlaw. Venice hates him, and would pursue him to the very ends of the earth. Every one fears him. His name is whispered by pallid and trembling lips. But fear this outlaw no longer! I will go against him with you, wherever he may be found! I do not fear him!"

The assembly interrupted him with another round of applause.

He continued:

"Hear ye further, people of proud Venice! I have hitherto said that my name was Don Calderon, and that I was a son of Spain. As Don Calderon, and as a son of Spain, did I crown the Queen of Youth and Beauty, the daughter of your Doge. But now I renounce that name! I am not Don Calderon! I am Bandolo, the outlaw and the bravo!"

The spacious square of San Marco never before witnessed such a general confusion and tumult as on that instant arose. The excitement was indeed fearful to behold. The vast crowd, now densely packed, was swept and surged by one single passion, even as the dense and dark forest is torn by the gust and roar of the hurricane. Some tossed their arms high in the air, calling out in loud voices—"Death to the outlaw! Death to Bandolo!" Others frantically rushed toward the arena, as if they would not be satisfied with what they had just heard. The faces of the ladies, however, turned pale with rage and fear.

For a moment or more, the Doge stood statue-still, unable either to move or to articulate a word. Around him were his nobles still, and they had no apparent power of speech, either. Violets still occupied her chosen seat, where she had been just crowned, voiceless, and almost pulseless. Her features were like those of obelized marble.

As soon as he came to himself, the Doge called out to the heralds, while the bold outlaw still sat motionless and rigid on his steed, his countenance betraying anything but emotions of fear:

"I command you to arrest yonder traitor! The outlaw—arrest him!"

Some four or five of the plumed heralds instantly rode up to where Bandolo sat on his steed, and were in the act of laying their hands upon him, when, with a motion of the helmet which he still held in his hand, he waved them all away.

"Noble Doge!" said he, in a clear, calm tone of voice; "by this token which you have just bestowed on me—this cross of honor, I claim full pardon for all my crimes, whatever you may suppose them to be!"

An expression of deep perplexity chased across the countenance of the Doge, on hearing this reply, and he hesitated what to say; but, as several of his nobles crowded closer around him, he seemed to gather courage, and instantly called out to the heralds, regardless of what the outlaw had just said:

"Arrest that villain! Away with him to prison!"

"As thou wilt, then, proud Doge!" exclaimed Bandolo, submitting. "But understand that I fear thee not! I possess this badge! It is a sacred and solemn pledge of the word of Venice!"

"Away to the prison with him!" again ordered the Doge, excitedly.

Immediately the heralds surrounded him, and made him their prisoner. He offered nothing like resistance. It was necessary that they should escort him to prison without the least delay, else the aroused fury of the populace might have destroyed him.

Thus ended this famous tournament. For the rest of the day, in every street in Venice, there were to be seen excited crowds of people everywhere, talking over these startling revelations. Almost every tongue had something to say of Bandolo, and of his wonderful appearance. After all, as the excitement began to cool down, the sympathies of the masses could not but be divided for the outlaw, for he had shown to them how admirably he could behave in the lists and what a gallant and truly valorous knight he was, too. The very magnanimity he exhibited served to half excuse his crimes and make him a general favorite, after all.

The character of this most mysterious being was discussed, not merely in the streets and all public places, but in every social circle and gathering. As for the ladies, they could not conceal their admiration for his handsome and handsome; and there was many a beautiful lip that trembled with its own words, when it attempted to say that the outlaw ought to suffer death for his crimes. But the height of the wonder was, to know the reason of his thus voluntarily disclosing what could not fail to lead him to a terrible punishment. Some supposed that he must have a sinister purpose in his thus openly making his name known.

And every hour the excitement continued, running at last to an exceedingly high pitch. When the Doge was to give his grand levee, it was publicly given out that, on the morrow, at precisely the hour of ten, the great enemy of Venice would be brought to public trial. And this proclamation served to intensify the public feeling still more.

At an early hour the next morning, his keepers opened his prison door and bade him make all needful preparation for the event that was about to take place. Bandolo, therefore, set about preparing himself for the event in sober earnest. He took especial pains with his attire, scrupulously arranging every article that had been displaced in the encounter and arrest of the day before, and appearing to be anxious to make the best possible impression on the audience he was to find assembled to witness his trial.

Attendants came soon, and led him away to the chamber of justice, which was within the palace. As he entered the apartment, he could not omit to notice the numbers that had already assembled in anticipation of this event. Ladies of the rank of nobility, with daughters, fair and haughty, beside them, were there to behold the countenance and mien of him who had so long been the terror and scourge of Venice. The Doge sat in the stately chair he occupied on such occasions, clothed in his robes of office. Officers were on either side of him, attentive to his slightest wish. No scene could offer more numerous points of exciting interest, on every hand. Every eye felt, and indeed, knew that it must finally end in tragedy.

The populace gazed on the captive robber as on a caged lion. He was a mystery before; but since he had boldly and needlessly avowed himself, when he might just as well have escaped—what were they licensed to consider him now? He was more than a mystery. He was a riddle, and a perplexity to them all.

Every eye was riveted on his handsome figure, as he entered the trial hall. It was very rare, even in Venice, that the curiosity of spectators could be wrought up to so high a pitch. The prisoner by no means looked downcast and demure, or timid and cowering—nothing of the kind. He rather returned the glances that were showered upon him, glance for glance. He even wore an air of haughty pride, as he looked so royally around him.

"Uncover, sir! Uncover!" In the presence of the Doge, too!" ordered the subordinates.

"I bare my head to him!" exclaimed the prisoner, with deep meaning. "Noble! Why should one like me do obsequence to him? Merely because he wears the dual bonnet? As well may he bare his head to me, because I wear the crimson plume—which is the badge of the proud leadership I hold."

"Thou art unduly haughty, methinks, for a robber!" said the Doge. "Dost thou truly comprehend the Doge's power?"

"I think I know that dreaded power full well," was his ready answer. "I know the power of his inquisitors, his council, and his spies. But they

have no terror for me. Over the waters of yon blue Adriatic sea, Sir Doge, whence came the odor-laden breezes to the nostrils of your people, I possess a power full as mighty as thine. There am I the chosen leader of a brave and loyal band. None of them fear me—all love me; and in the consciousness of that love I am rich. Why, then, kneel to your power here? I know no master. I acknowledge no human superior. I devote myself to no purpose but that of defending the oppressed, and assisting the weak. I stand in the van, and with all my powers beat back the powers of oppression and merciless tyranny! Do honor to *these*! Why should not *thou* rather do honor to *me*?"

"Art thou ready for thy trial now?" demanded the Doge, not a little touched with his impassioned words.

"My trial? Yes! Hasten it on! But for what am I about to be tried, Sir Doge?"

"Thou knowest! For subverting every law of Venice and of humanity!"

"On that latter charge, then, I am perfectly willing to stand my trial. To the first charge, I am ready to plead guilty. Go on!"

"I wish to know of a truth, to begin with. Are you really Bandolo?"

"Am I Bandolo? Go, ask the blue waves of yonder sea that have so many times fostered me into your midst, to steal into your night dreams and terrify you! Ask the glittering stars of heaven, that like twinkling lamps, have so often lighted my lonely pathway at the midnight hour! Ask the door of the secret cave where my band of lion-hearted men this very day await their master and sovereign leader!"

"Bring in the boy!" ordered the Doge.

The door of an ante-room immediately opened, and the young page, Fedore, was ushered in by an attendant. He was gallantly dressed, and his beautiful hair rained in thick clusters down his well-set shoulders. Upon his countenance was such an expression of gentleness, yet secretly mixed with strong determination, that a deep sympathy was at once rained in all hearts in his favor.

When he entered, he made a low bow to the Doge. He did not see Bandolo, indeed, was he not to that time, as yet aware of his capture. He naturally supposed this trial to be his own.

"Look at yonder prisoner," commanded the Doge, pointing in the direction of Bandolo.

Fedore turned his face, and his eyes fell at once upon those of his former master.

"Dost thou know him?" asked the Doge. "Is that prisoner, in truth, Bandolo?"

The boy hesitated. He continued to look Bandolo in the face, as if he might, perhaps, take the coloring of his answer from his expression.

"Tell me at once if he be Bandolo, or no!" again spoke the Doge, imperiously.

"He will not tell thee, Sir Doge!" cried out Bandolo, observing the boy's hesitation. "He never will tell thee! But I will relieve him! I will tell thee all! I am Bandolo! If I am not, then let him speak!"

Fedore bowed a silent assent.

"But thou shouldst release the boy, now, since you have me prisoner," added Bandolo. "What need hast thou more of him?"

"Yes," immediately answered the Doge, anxious to propitiate the favor of the populace. "Yes, boy; from this time you are free! Go; but go not back to your old haunts of vice and crime; for wrongdoing will inevitably conduct thee to death by the handsman! Go!"

The astonished boy for some moments stood perfectly motionless with wonder; then he silently withdrew from the hall, bearing away with him the memory of the last most expressive look of his master.

"Well, Sir Doge," spoke up the prisoner, as soon as he had gone, "now for my trial!"

"Bandolo," answered the Doge, in a low voice, "art thou guilty, or not, of the murder of Count Roberto? Answer me that!"

"Already have I answered it," said he.

"Where, and when?"

"Was not my own dagger, with my name on its hilt, found buried deep in his faithless, coward heart? Is not that answer enough? What would you have more?"

A thrill of horror ran through every frame, at this bold confession of crime.

The Doge began again.

"Art thou not guilty of poisoning Francesco, the son of a noble, and the scion of a lordly stock?"

The prisoner answered not.

"Afraid to answer to that?" asked the Doge.

"Afraid? No! Bandolo is afraid of nothing! The wine of Francesco was poisoned by me, because he had himself sworn to have my life. It was merely a question of time, which should conquer the other. I was too quick with him! He drank from his cup, and he died. I would do the same thing again, Sir Doge!"

"Hold, sir! Diddst thou not murder, most foully—because secretly—our late Doge?"

"Who says that?" demanded Bandolo.

"Was it not written in a little packet, and left purposely on a table in one of the rooms in this very palace?"

"How was it known to any one that such a packet was mine?" asked the prisoner.

"Was not one precisely like it given by yourself to the daughter of the dead Doge?"

"What! To her whom I rescued from the yawning sea?"

"Yes."

"When her own bridegroom was too cowardly to risk his paltry life in her behalf, but left her to the mercy of the elements?"

No answer this time from the Doge.

"Yes, Sir Doge," continued Bandolo, feeling that he had gained ground; "that packet was from mine own hand. This same right hand wrote the confession found within it—the same hand that, but yesterday, vindicated the honor of thine own peerless daughter! You are right!"

Over the brow of the Doge there passed a dark cloud, which grew perceptibly darker still, as the spectators turned, one to another, and set up their audible buzz of approbation. The bandit was fast finding friends among them now. They had already been most favorably disappointed in his looks, for their impressions had led them to consider him a monster, both in person and in name.

"Then," spoke the Doge, "for this last and highest crime of murdering the late Doge, thou hast rightfully merited death."

"But I show you this sacred cross of honor, which you but yesterday gave me, Sir Doge, and by virtue of earning which, you declared that I enjoyed a full and free pardon of all past offences, even against the State!"

As he spoke, he held up the bauble he received the day before, for the Doge's inspection.

"What dost thou say to that?" continued the prisoner.

"I say nothing to it," was the Doge's answer.

"It has no power to absolve thee, or any one, from such a crime as this."

"Sir Doge, from all crimes!"

"You are too confident."

"So said you, at any rate; from all crimes and faults already committed, and from all that may be committed hereafter."

The Doge was thoughtful. But it was only for a brief interval. He said, at length:

"I cannot see how such a pledge as this can absolve you from so fearful a crime as that."

"No," answered Bandolo, "and wouldst not see, if I plainly remind before thine eyes! No! but thou must needs away to the Secret Council, and then thou wilt take courage, even in the face of a pledge like this, to rob me of my life! And yet thou wouldst charge me with murder. What is this but murder of thine own? And what are all the highest and most solemn of the pledges Venice can give, worth after this day? Who will respect her word, from this time forth?"

The audience could not suppress, at this speech, a low murmur. It was one of approval entirely. Already there was much excitement among them, and no little, either, in the prisoner's favor.

The Doge rose in his seat.

"This assembly must be dismissed at once," said he, very abruptly. "I must convolve the Council."

"Then farewell, life!" exclaimed Bandolo. "I am now in thy power, in thine iron grasp! I yield, but it is to nothing but a tyranny that holds me defenceless!"

"The assembly is dismissed forthwith!" announced the Doge, in a loud voice.

"And thus is this Cross of Honor, then, disgraced!" said the prisoner, snatching the coveted badge and trampling it passionately under his feet. "Thus do I spurn thee, Doge! and thus thy craven minions! There is no longer honor or truth in the name of proud Venice! These high walls of the Chamber of Justice are stained—stained—in the sight of Heaven, forever."

"Drag him away! Away with him!" ordered the Doge, with a wave of his hand, to the attendants.

The attendants proceeded then to fasten heavy chains about his limbs, and the spectators all stood in their places while it was done. There was something in the prisoner's presence that bound them like a spell. His miserable situation challenged their sympathies already.

The Doge arose and left the hall, followed by his retinue. One by one, the vast audience dropped away, until the large hall was left entirely empty. The Doge immediately repaired to the council chamber, to determine there how the proper punishment could consistently, and without breaking his own faith, be dealt out to the guilty outlaw. So strange an event had not occurred, in many and many a year, in Venetian history before.

CHAPTER XIV.

Doge.—"Is this the Guiltina's sentence?"
Doge.—"It is."
Doge.—"Can it endure it? And the time?"
Doge.—"Must be immediate. Make thy peace with God!"

On the third day after this event, the preparations were all made for the public execution of the prisoner. His sentence, at the hands of the Council, was that he be beheaded by the executioner at the foot of the Giant's Stairs. Down those same marble stairs had once rolled the head of a Doge, trunkless. The grisly heads of conspirators had fallen there, too.

At an early hour the square was crowded with human beings. The liquid arteries of the city were blackened with boats that were packed full with people. The stairs, the house-tops, the balconies, the chambers—all places were crowded with excited and eager spectators.

The condemned man, still a youth, was led forth by the guard from his dungeon. His dress had been carefully arranged for the occasion by his own hands. It was strikingly gay, and as free as any that he wore in the forest, or on the trackless sea. A pair of kid breeches encased his lower limbs, whose outer seams had been fancifully embroidered by some fair and skillful hand. The tunic of crimson silk that he

had worn in the tourney still set loosely about his chest, and was fastened about his waist by a slender scarf of blue. He wore his jewelled cap upon his head, from whose crest flowed his long plume far down his shoulders. About his well-shaped neck his abundant hair hung in luxuriant masses, and, as he walked forward, a deep flush played about his cheeks and his curled lips. His eyes wore all its former brightness, and, when he glanced around over the spectators, it threw them such an expression—half of chiding and half of love, that from almost every breast proceeded in response a deep and sincere sigh.

The Doge himself spoke:

"Prisoner, the people of Venice have this day come together to behold deserved punishment administered to their great enemy and terror. If aught, therefore, thou hast to say, before going into the Eternal Presence, say it at once, for thy last hour has, indeed, come!"

Bandolo's eye kindled anew, and he lifted his voice and answered:

"People of Venice! You behold me to-day doomed to the headsman! You have all of you seen how, but a few days since, I earned in the open lists a free and unconditional pardon for all the wrongs I have ever committed. But of what avail, I ask, has that been to me?"

"Enough!" interrupted the Doge. "That matter has already been determined by the government. Wouldst thou speak at this time on aught else?"

"A single word more, then, and I bow my head. Venice! though I die, and am called an outlaw, yet I love thee still! Thy name shall be the last word on my lips, as it is the last thought in my heart. For thy sake alone has my ambition been strong—for thee has my whole hope grown until this day! But now I take my leave of thee! I die, though called an outlaw, yet loving thee!"

Thou clear, blue Adriatic water, roll on as thou hast always rolled! Ye liquid streets, throw back to the sky the glories of this great and noble city! But crumble, ye palaces; and fill up, thou beautiful harbor, before the long years of desolation that are yet in store for thee begin to dawn! Venice, ever loved, farewell!"

Then with his own hand he bared his neck and laid him gently down across the begrimed block, beneath the axe of the executioner.

"Strike now, headsman! Only one blow!" cried he, in a clear and firm voice, making a signal with his uplifted hand.

The glittering blade was raised high in the air by the strong arms of the grim headsman. While it was thus poised, gathering strength, as it were, for the fatal blow, an unusual murmur and commotion was observed in a further part of the crowd, and in an instant the loud cry was raised:

"Stop, stop the execution!"

The Doge caught the voice, and called out, "Hold!" to the headsman.

The eyes of the multitude were fixed on the spot whence arose the confusion and interruption. All that could be seen was an old woman tearing at the top of her speed through the crowd, and shouting at the highest pitch of her voice:

"Stay—stay the execution!" the excited thousands repeated impulsively after her.

The blade of the axe did not come down: but the headsman stood, obedient to the command of the Doge, gazing at the approaching cause of this interruption to his bloody work.

The old woman was no one but old Nancie, the astrologer.

She rushed up with all possible haste to the Doge, with a loose robe flowing almost at random about her limbs, a large hood upon her head, that more than half concealed her face, and her haggard countenance and sharp features, expressive of the most painful anxiety. The moment she came near the Doge's person, her long, skinny hands stretched out supplicatingly to him, he turned laughingly upon her and asked to know what all this proceeding might mean.

"Doge! Doge!" she fairly screamed out, at the top of her voice, "would you murder your own child?"

"Woman! what mean you?" he exclaimed, suddenly starting.

"I mean this," she answered. "That person, whose head lies on yonder block, is your son!"

"This woman is insane," said he, impatiently.

"Take her away!"

"No—no—no!" still louder screamed and shrieked old Nancie. "I am not insane! I am not insane! I have my reason as clear as you have yours! Know you not, Doge, old Nancie, the nurse of your own child?"

His gaze now was riveted upon her. After some moments he spoke:

"You do resemble her somewhat."

"I am she! I am she!" she cried in reply.

"Then explain what you mean, when you say that this prisoner is my own son."

"I can explain. Should I not know all about it? Was I not his nurse? Doge, I do but tell you the truth. I am old Nancie, and that is your own child! Would you see the bloody axe strike off his head?"

There was a slight hesitation in the Doge's mind, and then he ordered the prisoner to be raised from the ground and taken together with Nancie, into the audience chamber of the palace. The execution, therefore, was of necessity deferred, and the crowd separated.

The Doge and his Council sat in the audience chamber, and the prisoner and the woman were brought in.

Said the Doge:
"Woman, tell me the exact truth respecting this young man now before me, or else forfeit your life as a penalty for your falsehood."
"By the holy angels! Sir Doge, but what I now say of him I would not hesitate to utter with my dying breath! Well dost thou remember that I was the nurse of thy child, for long, long years—dost thou not?"
"Perfectly well," answered he.
"The child's mother had died, when I was called in as its nurse."
"Yes—yes."
"I had still another child in my charge, at that time—a girl. It at once occurred to me, on seeing that babe of yours—now standing a full-grown man before you—that this world of ours is full of chances, and a mere plaything for fortune, at best. I determined to see how far I could thwart fortune, and oppose even her favorites. I conceived the plan, therefore, on the instant, of exchanging these children, unknown to thee, and of giving to my little weakling the chances of the young noble; for—said I to myself—why has not this defenceless little girl the same right to the privileges of high birth as the boy?"
"And so you exchanged them, did you?" asked the Doge, much excited.
"Yes, I did," she answered frankly. "I made thee think, Doge, that the girl, Viola, was thine own; and the boy—thy real child—I thought to throw upon the waves of the world and let him buffet them."
The Doge looked at the prisoner without cessation. "Only a few words more have I to say," said the old astrologer. "I gave thy true child, Bando, to a poor gondolier—one who worked early and late for the necessities of life. He and his faithful wife were childless, and as this boy of yours was handsome, and showed plainly enough the marks of good blood, they said they were willing, and even glad, to adopt him. And so they did. He grew to be brave, strong, and beautiful. He learned to adore his father, who taught him all that his poor means allowed him. When he went on his boating excursions, he frequently took the boy along with him, showed him all the sights of this wonderful city, and told him how such a mighty state was governed. The boy was fired with ambition, and became more spirited, the more his intelligence enlarged within him. The true spirit, you know, was born there, in the first place."
"While he was coming forward in this way, and manhood had just begun to dawn over him, the spies suddenly came upon his poor father, and bore him away, nobody knew whither. Of course, however, he found his way very soon to a dungeon. After he was snatched up in this manner, no one ever saw him afterwards alive. No reason, either, was ever given for his disappearance. It was all a mystery. His family and his friends made inquiries for him, for a long time, but nothing was ever heard. At last, one day, when Bando was sailing over the Laguna in his lost father's gondola, he chanced to espy a dead body floating not far from him. Rowing up to it, he turned it over on its back to see the face. What a sickness of horror must he not have felt, to find that the body was that of his dead father!"
"That moment, Doge, a great passion took possession of him, and has controlled him ever since. He hated men with a vengeance, and he swore that he would live to revenge himself upon the wicked tyrants of this proud city. Instantly he disappeared. Nobody knew whither he had gone, or for what purpose. He has had his revenge, and all Venice to-day knows it. It has been sweet indeed to him, I know it must have been!"
"But the girl, Viola? What of her, woman?"
"The child was still?" interrupted the Doge.
"She was the daughter of a lady of Sicily, who had been passing some time in Venice. During her sickness, I was her nurse; and so great was her fondness for me, when she died she entrusted to my keeping a little packet, which she said would hereafter be of the greatest value to her child. When she died, this child Viola was but a few hours old, and then she became your child!"
"But the packet—the packet! Where is that?" demanded the more excited Doge.
"Here it is," answered she, drawing it hastily forth from her bosom, and holding it up before him, though she still kept her own hold upon it. "But before you see it, proud Doge, first own thy son—else will I forever destroy what I now hold in my hands!"
He turned to his son, the prisoner. Bando was, just at the same moment, gazing with steadiness upon his father, with moisture in his eyes and a truly sorrowful expression of countenance.
"My son! my own son!" exclaimed the Doge, holding out his arms toward him.
"My father! Yes, I know it must be my father!" cried Bando, while the tears now rained from his eyes.
"So fearfully deceived! So cruelly wronged! So near committing such a heavy deed!" exclaimed the Doge, deeply affected.
"Oh, my father, my father!" was every syllable he could utter in reply.
The entire council was melted to tears. Even the faintest hearts must have been subdued and softened by such a spectacle. Those ambitious and intriguing nobles had never beheld such a sight before, and it fairly overcame them.
When the excitement had subsided in a certain degree, the Doge turned to Nuncio and said:
"Woman, your story is a true one. This is my son. I know it well. I see his mother's features there."
"At a time like this," replied she, "I would not have dreamed thee for worlds untold; but thank Heaven, not me, that your own child was not beheaded before your very eyes, and by your own orders!"
The Doge could not restrain the tears from trickling down his cheeks; and, reaching forth his hand to Nuncio, he said:
"Let me have the packet now; I would know the contents of that."
She forthwith withdrew it from her bosom, and passed it to him. Taking it in his hand, he broke the seal. When he opened it, he discovered a miniature. Nuncio averred that it was an accurate likeness of the child's mother. Then the Doge opened a paper that was carefully folded within the packet, and began to read as follows:
"The lady, whose real name was Lavoie Harfleur, died, first of all, that her child should be named for herself. When she bestowed upon that child all her possessions, consisting of a beautiful villa site in the north of Sicily, as well as her own title of Countess. Respecting her marriage, she expressed

it to be her dearest wish that she might by some honorable means be allied with a noble family of Venice, but that she should, nevertheless, reside on her possessions in Sicily.
Thus was Viola not the daughter of the Doge, but the Countess Lavoie Harfleur!
None were more astonished than the Doge himself, at this most unexpected revelation.
"Send for her at once!" said he; "let her be present, and in her own hearing shall the whole matter be explained. Let her look upon her own mother's miniature, and take upon herself the name that really belongs to her."
An attendant immediately hastened away to the apartment of Viola, but speedily returned without her, reporting that she was nowhere to be found!
[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Written for the Banner of Light.
THE CELESTIAL BANQUET.
BY ELIZA A. PITTSINGERS.

Oh, come to the banquet! Come, Phœbus, Apollo!
Oh, come with the lyre—bring music divine!
Come, Bacchus! come, Juno! and let the rest follow;
Come, Hebe, the lovely, and bring round the wine!
Oh, bring on the nectar,
The glorious protector
Against all the ills that mortals can know!
And gladly bestow it
On the soul of the Poet,
As we drink to the god of the lyre and the bow!

Oh, bear us aloft to the groves of Olympus,
On thy soft, dewy wings, oh, spell of delight,
Where the rose-laden airs evermore shall tempt us
Beyond the blue ether to fountains of light!
Now, gently, more gently,
We'll quaff the nectar,
And view the bright glories as onward we roam;
The golden hues splendours
Of those who attend us
To the heights of Olympus, "neath yonder bright dome."
"Neath the glad swell of music above us now stealing,
In Elysian repose we forget every pain.
As we list to the Sun-God his love notes revealing,
While echoes the fountain each soul-thrilling strain.
Oh, bear me up higher,
Where the quivering fire
Of your joy-thrilling music may burn in my soul!
Higher, still higher—
On the strings of your lyre—
Ah, now I'm entranced, for I've gained the bright goal.
Oh, yes, I'm entranced, for I hear the sweet trilling
That wafts from my soul every wayward desire:
Like the spray from the fountain its fragrance distilling,
To my soul comes the voice of the low-breathing lyre.
Entrancing and joyous,
It charms to decoy us
Away from the earth and its vista of gloom,
Through the cloud-enwreathed portals,
Where the love of Immortals,
In the bowers of Elysium, forever shall bloom.

Then, haste to the banquet, where the Sun-God, Apollo,
Shall strike his bold lyre to numbers divine!
Come, Bacchus! come, Juno! and let the rest follow;
Come, Hebe, the lovely, and bring round the wine!
Oh, bring on the nectar,
The glorious protector
Against all the ills that mortals can know!
And gladly bestow it
On the soul of the Poet,
As we drink to the god of the lyre and the bow!

Original Essays.
THE AGE OF VIRTUE.
BY GEORGE STEARNS.
THIRTEENTH PAPER.

TIME AND MANNER OF ITS EVOLUTION.
"The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation."—Jesus.
I hope the readers of the twelve preceding papers are convinced that the Age of Virtue is a future earthly reality, identical with the sublimity Kingdom of Heaven; that is, that the satisfaction of all human aspirations will certainly follow the world's practical acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus, which I have elsewhere identified with the Religion of Nature and Reason. Whoever so believes must be interested to know further when this blessed era is to dawn on Earth, and whether its Evolution is in any wise dependent on human enterprise. Can it be virtually deferred by individual neglect of duty, or hastened by aught that mankind can do, beside praying to the Supreme Worker?—This I now come to.

I shall answer affirmatively, after disposing of the first member of the question, which seems not to admit of being settled very precisely. Of all the ancient seers and sages who have predicted an age of surpassing felicity, as the mundane sequel of many seeming cycles, not one has designated the time of its evolution, except in the most indefinite terms.

I think no one who has read the whole book of Isaiah understandingly, will doubt that he anticipated the Age of Virtue. Apocalypticizing a metaphorical Zion, whose future inhabitants are to be called "Trees of Righteousness," he gratefully prophesied: "Thou shalt no more be termed *Korakim*, neither shall thy land any more be termed *Desolate*; but thou shalt be called *HURRYHURRY*, and thy land *BURNHURRY*: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." But he does not say when these heavenly nuptials are to be consummated. Neither does the context of this beautiful Scripture import how long Man must wait for the fulfillment of the Divine Promise to "create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy;" when "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying;" when "there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days;" but wherein "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat;" when there shall be nothing to "hurt or destroy" in all God's "holy mountain."

The canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament contain several similar predictions, all quite as destitute of temporal designations, except that of Daniel, who foretold the fall of Babylon and the successive rise of three universal empires, the last to be resolved into ten contemporary kingdoms, "in whose days the God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom which shall stand forever." The Scripture of this prophecy represents the ancient seer himself as ignoring, though desiring to foresee, the time of its fulfillment, and being unable to divine more felicitously than in the symbolic diction of his apocalyptic inspiration—"a time, times and a half" from an unknown and indeterminate epoch.

See "The Mistake of Christendom."
† The Vision of Peace.

Prophetic glimpses of the glorious era are also recorded in the New Testament, still with the same defect as in the Old. John of Patmos, "in the spirit" of rational affluence, foresaw the end of human woes and the final consummation of human desire; but with no sort of perspicuity as to the time when or the manner how this "mystery of God is [to be] finished," or this incomprehensible Good is to be realized, which he presumed to describe the "Alpha and Omega"—the beginning, midst and ending of the universal miracle of supernatural powers.

I regret to say that nothing more definite touching the time when "the Lord's Prayer" is to be answered, has come down to us from the lips of the world's most excellent moral preceptor, Jesus of Nazareth. Notwithstanding it was the business of his life to inculcate this sublime truth; though it was the heart of his Gospel—the all-absorbing theme of his daily meditations, as well as of his public and private discourses; and though he is said to have uttered many a beautiful simile concerning the *natural growth* of this blessed hereafter, which he was pleased to style "the Kingdom of Heaven" on Earth; still, we are not scripturally assured that Jesus himself entertained any just conception of the temporal distance of the last stage of human development, which he most certainly recognized as the basis of Universal Rectitude. Not that I believe he was ever heard to say, as the mouth-piece of Christian dogmatism so often imputes to him, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It is impossible that so rational a teacher as he is generally represented to be, could have erred so egregiously as his apocryphal apostles and nominal followers have done, in imagining that the earthly reign of Righteousness is to be ushered in by a sudden regeneration of Nature, after the manner vaguely described in the 24th chapter of Matthew, the 4th and 5th chapters of 1st Thessalonians, and the last chapter of 2d Peter; that "the new Heavens and new Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" are to be re-created out of the ashes of the old, the present constitution of Nature, or the physical Universe "passing away with a great noise," the heavens being literally "dissolved," the elements thereof melting with fervent heat, "the Earth also and the works therein being burned up." Since these preposterous predictions were made with such temporal distinctions as to require an almost immediate fulfillment—to take place before the generation in which they were uttered should pass away, time has abundantly refuted them. But Faith is never to be abashed; and Christians, regardless of the towering monument of their error which has mocked their pretensions for eighteen centuries, are as dauntless as ever. All I wish to say here is, that Jesus never authorized their presumption, if in his reply to the Pharisees who "demanded of him when the Kingdom of God should come," he said "Nor [at any time] with observation," or in a way to be sensuously perceived.

It may be hard to demonstrate, and yet I am almost certain that the terms "Kingdom of God," and "Kingdom of Heaven," represented two distinct conceptions in the oral teachings of Jesus, though completely confounded by the Christian mutilators of his Gospel. So rational a mind as is denoted by some of his reported apothegms, must have recognized in God the *Ruler of the Universe*, and in Nature the *Method of Divine Beneficence*; and the *Kingdom of God* was an apt expression for both, in the elucidation of which he attempted to inculcate the progressive transformation of Being to the harmonious unity of Truth. This Kingdom, being everywhere and always present, can never come in any other way than as truth comes to be known; and it was exactly in this sense that Jesus told his disciples to seek the Kingdom of God, or principles of Divine Government, which are primarily unknown to every soul. In this light I understand the reply of Jesus to a certain scribe to whose mind this truth had come so nearly as to enable him to say that "there is but one God," and that the mutual love of mankind is more pleasing to him than "all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God," said Jesus. This Kingdom hath no ocular manifestation; for, when you have found it, behold, it is "within you."

Who doubts that this IDEA had fully come to Jesus? And yet we find him praying still to God, "Thy Kingdom come!" that is, not only the universal recognition of God's Government, but such a hearty yielding of Humanity as would correspond to the Heart-yearning of our Heavenly Father, constraining every soul to pray, "Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." This must be the Holy Spirit of the Age of Virtue, whose coeval consequence is the Kingdom of Heaven, or human fruition of the Kingdom of God. Was it not concerning the dawn of this era, that Jesus said: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of Heaven, but my Father only?"

In view of all these notable limitations of human wisdom, touching one of the most interesting questions that a soul in its earthly state has conceived, I can hardly propose, without incurring some imputation of conceit, to elucidate in any appreciable degree so abstruse a subject. Nevertheless, I shall try, begging the reader not to expect too much in advance of my adventurous pen, nor foster a prepossession of its long-winded promise. A clear forecast of my resources reminds me of the limited typographic capacity of the medium through which I address the public, which determines a division of this paper, and duly explains why my present offering includes only its

FIRST SECTION.
THE STAGES OF HUMAN LIFE.

I rest all I have to say upon this subject on the principle of Universal Progression. Creation is the temporal work of God. It is also the eternal working of God. The Universe from first to last is a thing of all Time. To Omnipotence it is one grand achievement of Omnipotent Power; but to finite beholders, it is an ever-changing phenomenon—a panorama consecrated of worlds—a kaleidoscope of transient creations, of which all the beauties of the perishing series are conserved and unfolded anew in the last.

It is so with every department and planetary constituent of the Universe. The Earth has not always been what it now is, nor can it ever return to what it was. To the geological inquirer it is evident that our globe has already passed through five stages of transformation, and is now in the sixth—the *lyncean*, the *petrous*, the *clemental*, the *vegetative*, the *animal* and the *human*, which last is to be followed by the *spiritual*. Thus the world of sense is found to be but a transitory phase of Creation, of which the era of Humanity is a temporal subdivision—in comparison with Eternity, a very twinkling.

Man is a finite, progressive being. He is never in *status quo*. Time was when he did not exist, and

time will be when he will disappear. First a human germ, then a child, then a man, then an angel, is the history of God's noblest work below the skies. As the spiritual transformation of every human being is inevitable, so is that of collective mankind—the whole house of Humanity. The visible Universe must in time give place to the spheres of spirit-life, and our material Earth will cease to be the nursery of human souls. Man, therefore, is a temporal form of Human Nature, which, when fully generated and matured, will yield to celestial aspirations, with as little esteem for such a world as this as any adult has for the embryo form of life.

In view of this interior manifestation of truth, I am moved to ask, *How old is Man? and when will he die?* I distrust my ability to answer these questions, especially the latter, to my own complete satisfaction, notwithstanding the author of "the Penetrator" asserts that "the power rightly to put a question presupposes and guarantees the power to answer it;" which I believe to be true in so much as this: that it is impossible to construct a problem which nobody can solve, though the constructor may not always be able; and the hope that somebody will answer me, is as impulsive as the wish to impart instruction to unknown inquirers. But I will first do what I can toward answering myself.

The general development of Human Nature through the collective experience and mutual education of mankind, is governed by the same law of Progression as its special developments by individual birth and growth. In other words, the progress of the Race through all the terrestrial ages, is analogous to that of every man and woman through the several stages of sublimity. As individuals are born in ignorance, weakness and imbecility, and rise gradually in the scale of power, intelligence and moral character, so the great Humanity was unfolded in the savage state, has advanced by tardy steps to that of civilization, and is still wending toward superior heights of improvement, not yet discerning the summit of human perfection. So exact is the similitude of this comparison, that one of its subjects fully explains the other. I only want to know the temporal ratio of their resemblance and the normal maximum of human longevity—the time necessary to the soul's development, or the period of physical and psychical adolescence, to be able to divine to a century how long since Man was born, and when he will cease to propagate his kind as a tenant of this lower world. Not only this, but I will predict also the beginning and duration of the Age of Virtue, which certainly must precede the heavenly apotheosis of the last earthly child of God.

But who will give me the requisite data? There is a vague notion abroad, derived as I suppose from a casual scripture, that the allotted time of a soul's earthly pilgrimage is "three score and ten years." Yet there is a "peradventure" of the same authority for "four score," and an older scripture for "a hundred and twenty years;" and, what is more acceptable, living Nature still repeats her testimony that mankind do not live out half their days: since now and then one, even of the fast-livers of modern times, attains the rare age of a hundred and fifty years. Here, then, is our first difficulty: to determine how long the body is useful to the growth of the soul; which is the probable measure of natural life, or the unvarying longevity of human beings, if not shortened by the casualties of error. Another desideratum is the temporal difference between any one of the corresponding stages of individual and human progress. History, however, offers a clue to this ratio, which enables me to say with assurance that it is not far from that of a year to a century. Though unable to explicate the essential term of life in the body, I think we may, by the form of analogical reasoning here proposed, deduce certain natural predictions of Human Destiny, and elaborate the time of their fulfillment within certain negative limits; with a nearer approach to truth than to my knowledge has ever been attempted.

The most obvious phases of individual development, are *Infancy*, *Adolescence*, *Stature* and *Senescence*; but the first and last of these, which are in a manner contraindicated from each other, the latter being both physiologically antithetic and psychologically respondent to the former, are subdivisible into three personally distinct degrees, making in all seven stages of individualization.

The first is *Infancy*—a period of seven years from birth, which may be designated as the *age of unconscious Dependence*.

The second is *Childhood*—a period of seven years between the epochs of permanent teeth and puberty. It may be styled the *age of involuntary Selfishness*.

The third is *Youth*—a period of seven years extending from puberty to adult growth. It may be called the *age of impulsive Conceit*.

The fourth is *Manhood*—a period of twenty-eight years embraced by the two epochs of physical and rational maturity, the latter initiating with the fiftieth year, in defiance of the adage, "Forty, wiser or never." It is the prime of virility and muscular power, and may be denominated the *age of personal Ambition*.

The fifth is *Mindhood*—a period of at least seven years; it may be twice or thrice as long, which divides the two epochs of rational and moral maturity. It is the respondent of *Youth*, as the corrective of conceit, and may be termed the *age of maximal Discretion*.

The sixth is *Harthood*—a period of indeterminate length which separates the epoch of moral from that of spiritual maturity. It is the sponsor of *Childhood* by its converse of *selfishness*, and may be distinguished as the *age of ideal Integrity*.

The seventh is *Soulhood*—the sequel of spiritual maturity, or psychological stature, which would be the only cause of death, if mankind had always lived naturally. It corresponds to *Infancy*, inasmuch as it synchronizes with the first stage of spirit-life, and as the harvest of recognized Dependence, may be entitled the *age of innate Charity*.

Now, since the progress of mankind is in all respects analogous to individual development, in the proximal ratio of one to a hundred, the foregoing synopsis of the latter becomes a rule for measuring the former; the numerical exponents of the advancing steps of individuality being merely centuplicated for the corresponding strides of Humanity. Thus the *Human Era* of mundane development—the *Sixth Age of the World*, is just as comprehensible as the maximum of human longevity; and the stages of generic progress are as clearly defined as those of the soul's sublimity pupillage, with which, it is important to observe, life in the body rarely coincides. Physical death, as it ordinarily happens, is no indication of psychical growth or spiritual advancement. *Natural death is the phenomenon of spiritual birth*; but almost universally hitherto and now, the soul is thrust

out of the body by disease. In this case it is no less an *inhumanity* of this world for being bodiless. Invariably to mortals eyes, it cleaves as an infant to the breast of Mother Earth for spiritual nurture, and perambulates the terrestrial sphere in quest of the rudiments of celestial wisdom, and thus progresses through all the complementary stages of individualization.

The process of investigation which reveals the *Birth of Human Nature*, is now before the reader, whose attention is respectfully craved to the end of my task; which, with the editor's permission, I hope to complete on another rumple of our auspicious "BANNER OF LIGHT."

TO THE SPIRITUALISTS OF AMERICA.
BY A. D. WHITING.
NUMBER THREE.

As the external founders of a new religious system—new in comparison to the theologic forms of Christianity—you are called upon to define your position, and be ready at all times to explain the principles that are the corner-stones of your knowledge; I will not say belief, for that word falls of expression when applied to Spiritualists. The law of spirit communion, and the truth of progression here and hereafter, established as they are by the testimony of nature, reason and human experience in all ages and both worlds, are the corner-stones of the beautiful edifice our angel friends are assisting us to rear, that its more perfect proportions may take the place of the thousands of one-sided and three-cornered structures that the ignorance of man, in the dark ages, has builded and deified by the sacred name of religion. In order to do this, the first principles must never be lost sight of, for a single moment.

The phenomena of Spiritualism in all its multitudinous forms instead of being on the decline, as some theorists would strive to maintain, are on the increase, and will continue to exist through all time, unless, as formerly, humanity relapses into that slavery of mind brought about by priests, kings and their satellites. The incentives to and assistants of spirit intercourse are freedom, civilization and a desire for knowledge. The stumbling-blocks in its way are ignorance, superstition and blind faith in ancient theories. Therefore, as the phenomena of Spiritualism prepare the way for the study of its philosophy, so a recognition and adoption of that philosophy leads people to seek and find the demonstrations. The two must go hand in hand in order to lay the foundation of a lasting religious system founded in the demands of man's spirit for growth and moral culture.

True religion is that which speaks to the soul, and would strive to develop man on the spiritual plane. False theology strives to build man up from the external by surrounding him with pen and ink circles, called creeds, and binding his reason to the edicts of an ancient record labeled holy; and even that explained by a set of tyrants variously named pope, priest, king, dictator, etc., etc.; thus crushing the loftiest aspirations of the soul, and preparing the way for all manner of misery, representing theirs as the only passport to happiness beyond the grave.

Nature, in all her glorious beauty and endless variety of visible forms, teaches us how man should be developed. Look at the opening rose-bud. Is it unfolded by external pressure? No, the life germ within the root and stalk responds to the call of its mother earth and expands, grows to its maturity, and then, by the action of the same life principle, the bud opens from the force of its inner life; then it can drink in the summer sunlight, and the refreshing dews of evening can lend their charms to the opening flower.

Take the tiny acorn, place it beneath the soil; in a few weeks the germ within enlarges, bursts the shell and dies as an acorn that the oak may live; soon it shows its fairy-like leaves above the earth, the promise of a giant tree that centuries alone can fully develop.

So with all material life, the germ within is the first to which nature speaks. The soul is the germ within man, all of him that lives eternally; therefore all religious and spiritual development, to be real and lasting, must begin with an unfolding of the mental nature.

Christianity has been trying, for fifteen centuries, to make man religious by compulsion, or, by reversing nature's order, striving to develop the soul from the external plane, by force. What is the result? The thinking portion of community, the men of thought and scientific research, particularly for the last two centuries, have been infidels; and the number has been rapidly increasing, until the advent of modern Spiritualism promised a religion that should be in harmony with the laws of the universe and the teachings of science.

The theologies of the world, founded on a system of blind faith and compulsory belief, have always arrayed themselves against progress, civilization and the sciences; always the handmaids of despotism, causing a blind devotion of the servile masses to the titled few—not to mention the horrid cruelties of earlier ages, the persecution and martyrdom of men of learning and research. Take the Christian world for the last six centuries for an example, and in every year, in all nations, are to be found numerous and well authenticated proofs of our assertion. We will glance at but few of the many.

In the year 1318, when the notorious Pope John 22d had fully established his pontifical court at Avignon, there were a large number of alchemists, chemists and magicians, who, under the teachings of a learned Persian astrologer, made themselves familiar with astronomy, chemistry and other sciences; and in addition, the truth of spirit-control. The Pope issued a terrific bull of denunciation against them all. We take from this remarkable document the following quotations:

"To the Lord Bishop of Frejus. We have been informed that Jean Damant, Jean De Imoges, Jacques, surnamed Drabandien and others, students and followers of a wicked magician, and using themselves with condemnable perseverance to magical arts; that they frequently make use of mirrors made under certain constellations and enchanted figures; that they place themselves in cabalistic circles and force the spirits of darkness to appear in their presence; that they can put men to death by the violence of their enchantments. Finally, that they have conspired against us at the instigation of Louis, of Bavaria, to wrest from us, by conjuration, our throne and our life. We consequently order you to proceed against them as you would in case of felony; that is, hand them over to the Inquisitors, that the violence of torture may draw from them an avowal of their crime."

This is ever the way with priests and kings; they call the discoveries of the learned diabolical; and when they have the power, burn as *servile slaves*

REV. ADIN BALLOU AT LYCEUM HALL,
BOSTON.

Sunday Afternoon, February 23, 1882.

[Reported for the Banner of Light.]

Rev. Mr. Ballou spoke to a large audience both in the afternoon and evening. In the afternoon his subject was: "Differences in the spirit-world," using as a motto, the words of the Apostle:

"All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory."—1 Cor. 15: 39-41.

In the first place, he said, what do I mean by the spirit-world? In the broadest sense, the whole universe is a universe of spiritual things; since all forces and actions are undoubtedly spiritual; but I mean distinctively the state into which spirits pass from the material body, in contradistinction from their earthly existence. What differences are there, mental, moral and social, in the spirit world? What are the prevailing ideas of religionists on this subject? In the first place, the Church teaches of two antipodal states, termed heaven and hell. Understand that there are many various forms and doctrines on this point, but the great mass of religious minds conceive of heaven as a fixed and unchangeable state of happiness, and the other as fixed and unalterable misery. This is the general opinion. There is a small number, in comparison, called Universalists, who believe there is a fixed state of absolute happiness, but the number is limited, and was never very large.

What are the ideas of the future life, as taught by spirits? I am proceeding upon the premises that there are spirits, and with you this claim is granted. We have been taught that when we enter another life, we know all that is knowable; that it is not a state of gradation from one point to another. We have placed implicit reliability upon the word of spirits, as though they had a full and entire knowledge of the spirit-world, on the basis of absolute experience; and it shakes the mind of faith to be compelled to believe that departed spirits are fallible—can err. Many pretend to deny the inspirations of spirits at all, and yet, if any there be, they are infallible! Whenever we enter the state either of heaven or hell, it is a life of perfection—perfect bliss or perfect misery. The moment we leave this world, our existence in which is but as the tick of a watch to a century, we enter upon a crystallized state of perfection—perfect good and perfect evil—as fixed as the great boundaries, measureless eternity. This, we say, is the generally prevailing idea. The society, too, is all of heaven, or all of hell. There are no differences there—no conflicts of the different classes, but all belong to one grand swarm, either of heaven or hell. Theology, too, has represented the state of the blessed as an endless state of rest, or, if its denizens are employed at all, it is in the choir, where they sing away, from year to year, for millions of ages, to the glory of God. As for change, they either have no inclination to, or cannot. All affinity between the living and the dead is severed, and the blessed, in their selfish enjoyment, know nothing or care nothing for their kindred on earth.

Now I turn around and ask, What does Spiritualism teach on this subject. It teaches that, with regard to essentials, the spirit-world corresponds to this. If we have external scenery here, we have it there; we have a living world of external nature. It teaches, in the second place, that the circumstances of the spirit change. The spirit, housed in the clay, is incipient, not absolute; but at the change of death, it is an advancement one step higher, and a reconstruction of everything that constituted the human being in its primary state, in the purer and truer human form. Spiritualism teaches us that we shall retain our identity, and our surroundings on earth we shall bring around us there. I have been compelled to believe I shall know my friends in the next life, and that our social ties are not ruptured. Whatever goes to make up our identity here, will be retained by us, and we will be known for just what we are. Here we are known for better or worse than we are; there, the filmy disguises and obstacles of earth will be stripped off, and we shall be known just as we are. The essential characteristics of man will reappear. As to morality, the moral character we form and sustain before we pass out of the rudimentary sphere or earth-life, just as it is, reappears there—not as we see it here, for the eyes and senses of humanity are not immaculate in their discernment; but from childhood, or manhood, every individual has a moral character, and passing from the veil and entering the other state, he carries it with him, and must stand or fall by it. Thirty or forty years ago, I was called a strange, wild thinker, by my own people, when I declared I could not see why the perverted nature should become immediately pure and holy, by the outer change of death. My Universalist brethren called me visionary, and my Orthodox brethren called me a fool; but the years between have only strengthened my conviction, and Spiritualism has demonstrated it.

On earth, much good is done by association; and as we enter upon the enlarged scale, the tendency to association is stronger. We cultivate the society our characteristics harmonize with, and verify the old adage that like attracts like. And there are as many varieties of life and society there as we have here, and each society has its sub-society, with the same regulations and responsibilities—for we have precisely the same work to do, whether here or there, and the test of spiritual advancement is human activity; and we cannot enter a higher state of existence without passing through the intermediate ones. The time may come when there will be perfect harmony, but changes must exist forever. Each spirit has a moral atmosphere or aura, each for itself—a certain sphere of intellect or morality must draw to itself its satellites, or affiliates, just as every society on earth has its core, and draws other minds to it. So it is with man. He stands between the two forces of attraction and repulsion. To every one of you there are those whose touch, speech or glance sends a cold chill through you, while others attract you to them in spite of yourselves. With some natures you are never at home; with some others you always are. We can set no real limitations, and yet each society has its factions, and each sends out its spherulic influence.

There is, then, in the spirit world a social, spherulic and representative influence, and what do they teach regarding the action and reaction between the two worlds? They teach that there is a constant action and reaction—a constant interchange and interblending of the two spheres. To be sure, we are

not always individually aware of this close relationship, yet we are influenced or prompted to a certain extent, from the fact that we are ourselves spirits, acting upon others, and continually being acted upon. So you must see that the two worlds are not absolutely distinct, but, according to the great laws of nature, united and interblent.

Society, then, with my ideas, would be dull and dead, and unprofitable to anybody, if according to the conceptions of the old theology. We claim to be distinct individualities, and yet we are always more or less dependent upon those around us; and it may be that we are not very independent, after all, sometimes.

Now is there anything in the Christian Scriptures to disprove, or contrary to, the general teachings advanced? I have found nothing. Wherever the Bible seems to sustain the teachings of old-fashioned theology, it is because the former has been garbled, misquoted and strained for the occasion. Rather than the Bible being an obstacle to the truth of spiritual communications, I think the Bible is their best defender and expositor. At any rate, they have been the key which has unlocked the hidden mysteries of the Book, and many rejoice in the Book to-day, who never would have received it save as Spiritualism thrust it upon them.

Some talk largely of the hallucinations of Spiritualists; but I have implicit confidence in my own judgment and senses; and when I see a stove tipping up and down, in answer to questions, and to spell out a communication with only a little girl six years old in contact with it, I know it is done; and if there is any blindness or hallucination, it is on the part of those who declare they would not believe, if they saw with their own eyes.

The parable of Lazarus and Dives can be interpreted under the light of Spiritualism, but sensibly done in no other way. There is nothing unnatural about it—all is perfectly plain. Under this new light, too, passages about which commentators have wrangled their lives away, become clear as crystal. The tendencies of the old theologies is to belittle the Almighty and render him hideous; but Spiritualism strips off the husks of ignorance, and bids the truth stand forth in its own grandeur.

The old church theology has painted heaven as a state of unvaried sameness. In such a universe, we would not know ourselves. A universe without variety would be indescribable to the eye of reason. If we lived in a state where everything was chiseled out to Phidias's perfection, how soon would heaven become a curse? What is existence but progression, and where progression stops, life is lost in death and nonentity. Who can imagine a more comfortable place than such a theological ideal? Reason teaches us to begin at the bottom. It is better to be crude ourselves, than to be so crystallized as to possess no individuality. How much better is the idea taught by Spiritualism, that life, existence, is a continual and unending progression, through never unrollings, onward and upward forever. Why, the lazy heaven of the orthodox is fit only to be classed with the ideals of the sensual Orientals—is unfit for and degrading to the sober common sense minds of to-day and this enlightened nation.

The greatest blessing we have now is the power to benefit and aid others, and, if robbed of this, what would life be worth? Some people believe they will be raised so high that they will lose themselves. Reason does not teach such a thing.

Some there are who want no demonstration of spiritual truth. They have immortality in their souls, and want no further proof of it. I cannot feel this. Though I have perfect faith in my immortality, and that of every other human being, yet I cannot resist the desire to behold the most simple manifestations of it. Immortality is so pleasant a thing to me, that I cannot know too much of it. If I did not have the external evidence as well as the inner belief, I should tremble for my immortality. I do feel the need of these things, and my feelings are as good as theirs. If spirits never manifested through material organisms, I should be far from sure there was any immortality. If you take away the evidence of it we have in Spiritualism, I should feel my faith tottering.

Some say the world must have Jesus and his truth, to be saved. But, to this day, not one half of the human race ever heard of Christianity, or of the God Christianity inculcates the worship of; and it is only by missionary labor that a few thousands in the East have ever heard his name! What kind of a God is that that so loves humanity that he sends his only begotten son for an atonement, and yet has allowed the greater part of the world to die in ignorance of him; or, if a few souls do accept his truth, it depends upon the poor girl's finger ring, contributed to the missionary cause! According to this, human beings have far greater conscience and finer feelings than God himself has. Who can believe this, and hold up his head? How it belittles God to believe that he has drawn a line between good and bad, and has no means left of destroying that distinction and saving the souls of his children! What an impotent, beggarly conception that is, of the Almighty! To believe that what was erroneous must continue so—that what is wrong must stay so, puts back all the wheels of progress on the track of time. Comparing thus the teachings of theology with those of Spiritualism, we must come to the conclusion, first, that the condition hereafter of departed spirits, depends upon what they really are, morally and materially. Secondly, persons are surrounded and influenced by spirits like themselves. Some people say they will have nothing to do with Spiritualism, because of the Babel of testimony it brings. Very true; this ground is a safe one for people to take who cannot discriminate. But how is it with the clergy? Do not the hundreds of differing sects on earth, all built upon the Bible, differ as widely as human testimony or opinion can? It is our duty to seek the aid of these spirits on high in the scale of moral and intellectual purity as we can; then we shall have the consciousness of having done the best we could, and neither God nor man can ask more of us.

The Bishop of Oxford has recently preached a sermon on the death of Prince Albert, advancing the idea that the calamity was a chastisement of Providence; and the Public Opinion, a new London weekly, alludes to the prelate and the sermon in these choice words: "That groveling sensualist, oily Tartuffe, and sanctified hypocrite—Epiphanius's own bog in the sacred fold—the Bishop of Oxford, by way of blistering the Queen's grief, informs her and the nation that the death of the Prince consort is provoked 'by the national sins.' Would the smooth prelate kindly explain why death is to be understood as a mark of Divine displeasure? To our comprehension, his sleek and soapy life, his very existence among us, appears the most conspicuous source of our sins."

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1882.

OFFICE, 188 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON,
Room No. 5, UP STAIRS.

LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

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ISAAC B. RICH,

Publisher for the Proprietors.

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SEARCHING FOR MOTIVES.

In continuation of some thoughts expressed by us, in the direction of the above topic, in the BANNER of two weeks ago, we proceed now to remark very briefly upon the wrong habit, which is indulged in by such a multitude of persons, inadvertently and otherwise, of running in behind person's acts in quest of some secret motive for the same, or of some previous piece of that person's history inconsistent with the same, or of some rumor, and innuendoes, even, which might somehow seem to throw down a shadow upon the fair and proper thing he proposes to do, or is doing, to-day.

Is it not the top and crown of fairness and justice, to let a person's deed, just now performed, stand for what it is, and what it is worth? Why need it be referred at all to the performer—much less, to the performer's deed of yesterday, or last month, or last year? Because he was guilty of doing foul things then, shall it be insisted, by those not a whit less human and liable to err than he, that he can do nothing but guilty deeds now? Even if such an one bears the reputation of being regularly, and right along, a bad man, does it follow that every one of his noble instincts, more or less of which are at birth implanted in every nature, is so completely smothered and buried up that they may not, at intervals, flame forth as it were by an accident?

What we have special need to guard against, in the attempt to exercise charity toward others, is the inclination to visit judgment upon them—to mete out the due measure of their guilt as well as the forfeiture it works—and to pronounce, as if we were ourselves entrusted with the line and plummet, which we are called upon to apply to every man's conduct as it happens to offer. The habit of free judgment ordinarily is a confession of guilt on the part of the judgment given, in the particular direction judged. So is human nature constituted.

But some good friend here interposes, and says, "Yes, but you must admit that there must be some common standard, some fixed line and limit to which men's conduct may be referable." Well, let us admit that. Does it therefore follow that this common standard is a fixed and determinate one? When everybody is making money, helter skelter and heels over head, and scarcely any practices are deemed improper to be resorted to that will help on the general and controlling purpose, will not our good friend allow, confessing it with a blush of shame for these rigid and self-righteous judges, that the standard of public morality, of honor and conscience in trade, and of social regard itself, is very different from, and very much lower than the common standard, when a general panic in business is the order of the day, when banks are suspending, and powerful manufacturing corporations are breaking down, and men are refusing to pay their notes, their hearts failing them for fear, and everybody is rushing to the public prayer-meeting because that is the only place where anything is said about "what they must do to be saved?"

What, then, does this same standard really amount to?—this something that is so-and-so-to-day, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, and something still different afterwards, according as popular passion, desire, prejudice, interest, or weakness directs and turns it? Shall we pay it the respect which we should pay to the counsels of conscience, and the suggestions of the absolute sense of justice? But it cannot be done, whether we will or not; this is in no sense a matter of will, but of reason and enlightened instinct, rather.

Now, if a person who has wronged me last week, suddenly concludes to change his tactics and do me a blessed deed this, am I right in refusing to take the good deed for all that it is worth because he would not do as well a little while ago? Has the to-day-to-day necessarily any connection with that of yesterday? Is it an impossibility that each should stand alone? The same person, it is true, is the instrument by which each act is performed; but there are no circumstances, conditions, or surroundings which may be considered in a great degree responsible for the ill act, and which parted with their power over the man when he was prompted to do the good one?

We would not urge a blind charity, either, upon others; we are all human, and must needs err, disorganize, protect ourselves, and act in accordance with the highest wisdom that lets its light into our hearts. But we wrong both ourselves and others, if

we confound this needful wisdom with a self-righteous judging of others, if, while intending merely to protect ourselves, we wrong and even destroy others. This wisdom requires us to be watchful of those who have done wrong, lest they may harm us by doing wrong again; but it is a safer, wiser, diviner way, to first let the new deed stand forth as it is, divested entirely of any association with former deeds, and afterwards use our discrimination, and even our judgment, when the deed plainly betrays its sinister motive and design. The just way of managing such matters, without entering into any of the labyrinths of casuistry, it is always to act up to our highest wisdom in our relations with others, and to suffer our thoughts to proceed in no channel inconsistent with the highest charity.

The First Warm Wind of Spring.

When will it come? and, where does it come from? We all look out for it as eagerly as the children do for the first cheery carol of the blue-bird in the bare apple trees. Lewis Gaylord Clark once hit the thing, to our mind, exactly, in giving off a bit of his own experience in the matter. Said he, after quoting the old text—"The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c., &c.,—"We did not 'take rail' to town this morning, for a wonder, but staid 'at home,' to perform some 'outside' professional labor for a friend, which required library consultation. It was a warmish early March day; an inch-deep snow lay upon the brown-green grass, as we took our way over the gently 'rolling' meadows, tracking sanctum-ward from school a little girl and her smaller brother, by familiar footprints, (often seen in 'splosh' and 'mud,') along the upland slopes. All at once, there breathed over the landscape the first Warm Spring Wind from the South. Where do you think, in our 'mind's eye,' that breeze came from, and went to? 'It cometh,' said we, 'from the East, and it is going directly back to the sunny side of our old clustered barn-and-out-buildings; it is lifting the clean straw and hay-litter from the frozen snow-humps beneath, and scattering the 'barn-yard odors' of the same; brightening the great eyes of 'Old Spot,' 'Old Brin,' the 'White and Red' heifer, with all their sweet-breathed kith and kin; setting the horned ram and the 'Old Yoes' 'bah'-ing, and evoking from the long-tailed, crumby-legged lamblings their short, musical 'eh-eh-eh! eh-eh-eh!' Then the airy messenger passed on, along the tops of the reddening forests; taking with him lazy wreaths of pale-blue smoke from several 'sap-works' which we 'once knew,' and ruffling the surface of overflowing bass-wood, 'sap-throughs' or cedar 'sap-buckets,' which we so often had assisted to empty, when there was a 'freshet' from the neotectonic maple. This is why we say, that we think we know where the first warm wind of spring, which but a moment ago melted upon our forehead, came from, and where it went to."

Is not the little sketch fresh and beautiful, and well worth giving again? Now is the particular time when the heart, weary with winter, is sending out its longings for those delicious signs and tokens of spring which make it glad beyond the power of expression.

A New and Good Thing.

We are going to tell the readers of the BANNER about a new invention, which we have fairly tried for ourselves, and found to be one of the best things of these latter days; nor do we speak of it on account of the inventor, or any other person, but simply because it is, in our judgment, an invaluable aid to the comfort and happiness of all civilized beings who dwell in houses.

It is called Davis's Patent Radiator—with the additional name of the Reverse Draft Flue. The object of it is just this—to save and use the heat wasted by ordinary fires, and thus economize fuel. In addition to this, it keeps the air of an apartment always in a state of circulation, offers the most improved method of ventilation, consumes or carries off the noxious gases that are generated by ordinary heaters, keeps rooms free of dust and a stove smell, and is simple in construction, and very easily managed.

The mode of operating this Radiator is very simple; the heat that passes into the chimney flue from a stove or range, is made to pass into the Radiator, by tapping the chimney above it and inserting the same; the slight movement of a rod effects this; and then begins the work of merely saving heat from smoke and vapors that usually escape without being made to yield up anything of value. The heat can be turned on or off, almost instantly. An even temperature is thus secured—the air of the room is never dry, but always moist and natural—there is no dust, gas, or smoke, to be taken into the lungs;—the furniture requires no dusting, neither does it ever warp, or fall asunder at its joints—headaches are impossible—persons can keep uniformly warm, and the apparatus is simple and economical.

Could more, or as much, be said of any heating apparatus ever invented, since the attempts of Count Rumford or Dr. Franklin? Any chimney, where a stove will burn, will support one of these Radiators at not a penny's additional cost.

The President's Bereavement.

Death has walked into the White House, and taken away a prattler. The President has been called to part with a favorite child—a little boy. Even in the midst of his cares and responsibilities, with civil war raging all around him, and the nation anxiously looking to him to carry us all safely, with higher aid, through this "sea of troubles," he is not free from the visitations of sorrow that are common to men at large. Neither place nor power secure him immunity from the bereavements common to the race. Death has been called the "great leveler." In respect to the single truth that it makes men feel that they are but human, it is true. None of us may escape that ordeal, any more than we might the test of birth, in order that we might live; but this passage through what we call the "frowning portal" does not exactly make one man another man's equal, as we can see, unless, perhaps, in respect of the fact that we must every one submit to the same condition. The nation lends its sympathies to the President, in his day of affliction; and he, feeling it to be so, cannot fail to be sustained through the bereavement that has so made his heart bleed.

Meeting at Lyceum Hall.

Mrs. Augusta A. Currier will speak in Lyceum Hall, in this city, on Sunday next, March 9th, afternoon and evening. The public are invited to attend.

Notice.

Our friends in New York will find the BANNER for sale at the office of the HERALD or PROGRESS, 274 Canal Street, New York.

Death of President Felton.

It is with extreme regret we record the death of Cornelius C. Felton, LL. D., President of Harvard University. He passed to the higher life from the residence of his brother, S. M. Felton, Esq., in Chester county, Pa., on the evening of February twenty-sixth. President Felton was born at West Newbury, now Newbury, Mass., Nov. 6, 1807. He was graduated at Harvard College, in 1827. While in College he was distinguished for his literary tastes and the wide range of his studies. In his senior years he was one of the conductors of the "Harvard Register," a students' periodical. After leaving College, he was engaged for two years, in conjunction with two of his classmates, in the charge of the Livingston High School, in Geneseo, N. Y. In 1829 he was appointed Latin tutor in Harvard College, Greek tutor in the following year, and College Professor of Greek in 1832. In 1834, he was appointed Eliot Professor of Greek literature, the duties of which place he continued to discharge up to the time he was chosen to succeed Dr. Walker, as President of Harvard University, about two years ago.

When Spiritualism first attracted public attention, President Felton became its bitter opponent, and sought in many ways to bring discredit upon it and its advocates. But we will do him the justice to say that we believe he was sincere in his opposition. Failing in his efforts to suppress the "delusion," as he was wont to term it, he has been of late silent upon the subject. Whether he changed his views or not, we have no means of knowing. He has now passed to the Better Land, and will doubtless be able to judge more clearly, and reason more wisely in regard to the spiritual phenomena than he did while sojourning on the mundane sphere.

Rev. R. P. Ambler.

This gentleman has renounced the preaching of Spiritualism to the people, and gone to preaching in the Universalist church, for the reason, we doubt not, that the spiritual food of Spiritualism is too strong, and that it does not pay the ready cash. He refers to Spiritualism, calling it "a gigantic evil," but at the same time, as he steps out of the desk of Spiritualism, which he has occupied since 1849, and reiterates the deck of Universalism, he says: "I desire to expound to others the truths that come so freshly beautiful to my own soul. For this labor I feel that I am now better fitted than ever before, physically, mentally and morally."

We cannot doubt that Mr. Ambler is truthful; and if, as he says, this "gigantic evil" has benefited him, has made him physically, mentally and morally better, why should not it do the same to others—and then call it a "gigantic evil?"

Mr. Ambler is an eloquent man, but he needs rest from the labors and suffering that a rapid progress of soul inflicts. In the church he will find it—never in Spiritualism, for Spiritualism is now moving onward, not standing still. May his slumbers be peaceful, and when he rises again to the journey of progress, may he rise refreshed and invigorated.

A Valuable Relic.

On that bitter cold, windy night, the 24th of February, Boston was visited by one of the severest fires it has experienced for several years. Several blocks on North and Commercial streets were burned, and two firemen killed. Among the buildings destroyed, was the Passenger House of the old East Boston Ferry. The whole loss is estimated at about three quarters of a million dollars. The Boston Herald says:

"Among the interesting reminiscences connected with the conflagration, is the safety of the old bell at the East Boston Ferry slip. When the new Ferry House was built a few years ago, a bell was found to be very necessary. The Directors purchased one which was brought from Peru by a Salem vessel, it having been purchased by the master with a lot of old metal. On Monday night it was rung by the gate-keeper for an alarm, until he was obliged to surrender to save his life. The ferry building at last was entirely destroyed, but the bell landed on terra firma, amidst the ruins, without a scratch upon its hard metal. The old bell bears the following inscription: 'Maria Mater Dei Ora Pro Nobis, Anno Del, 1673.' Below the inscription is a cross, and on the same the letters 'I. H. S.' are many times repeated. It is supposed that the bell, which is a fine toned one, was used over a century and a half ago, on some convent in Spain, and it was no doubt greatly prized by the Christian people residing near the monastery. Many of the wealthy citizens of Spain would probably give the weight of the old bell in silver or gold, if it could fall into their hands once more."

A Monarch for Mexico.

"While the cat's away, the mice will play," says the old adage. We happen to be as busy as we can in putting down rebellion, just now, and so France, Spain, and England are landing on the shores of Mexico, with the intent to set aside the will of the people (whatever that may, or may not, be) of that distracted country, by placing on a throne of their own erection there the brother of the Emperor of Austria, Maximilian. They may succeed in their nefarious plans for a time, but all the thrones and dynasties they may be at the expense of setting up in that country will be as certainly swept away as that we shall ourselves come out of this war an united people, determined to deal justly and charitably one by the other, and equally determined that neither of the great foreign powers shall obtain a foothold on this continent to the southwest of us. On this single matter, it would not be impracticable to bring together the people of this entire country to-day, with a thousand times more vigor and earnestness of will than the Mexicans have recently displayed, in suddenly dropping their internal differences and feuds and uniting to a man in the work of repelling a selfish and wholly wicked invasion.

A Thoughtful Spiritualist.

One of our patrons, on renewing his subscription, fearing that the spiritual press is not adequately supported, makes the following suggestion:—"If one hundred subscribers to the BANNER will engage to donate \$5.00 each to aid in keeping the paper on a solid foundation, I will place my name at the head of the list. I cannot do without the BANNER, and would mourn over its demise, as I would over that of a dear friend." Thank you kindly for your good will; but we assure you, dear friend, that our prospects are brightening every hour, and all we ask, is that each subscriber constitute himself an agent, and induce his neighbor to subscribe. This is the better way to help us, and promote the Good Cause you have so much at heart. You need have no apprehension that this journal will not live through the mighty storm that is raging all around us. We are a fixed fact. A mighty host is laboring in our behalf. When we have God and his angels with us, who shall be against us?

Message Department.

Each message in this department of the *Banner* we claim to be spoken by the spirit whose name it bears, through the medium of H. C. O'Connell, who in a condition called the Trance, are not published on account of literary merit, but as tokens of spirit communion to those friends who may recognize them.

These messages go to show that spirits carry the characteristics of their earth life to that beyond—whether good or evil.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his reason. Each expresses so much of truth as he perceives—no more.

Our Circle.—The circle at which these communications are given is held at the *Banner* or Light Office, No. 158 Washington Street, Room No. 3, (up stairs) every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, and are free to the public. The doors are closed precisely at three o'clock, and none are admitted after that time.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

The communications given by the following named spirits will be published in regular course:

Monday, Jan. 20.—Invocation: Miscellaneous Questions; Thomas Baskin, Second Michigan Regiment; Mary Lee, to Major Robert Lee, Nashville, Tenn.; Solomon T. Hines, to Koenig, N. H.; Thomas Knox, to Penrose, N. H.; to Abby Knox, to Penrose, N. H.

Tuesday, Jan. 21.—Invocation: Miscellaneous Questions; "Light," Antonio Murrell, sailor, York Station, N. Y.; Lucy M. Pennington, Albany, N. Y.; Samuel T. Johnson, St. Louis, Mo.; Oliver Dwight, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Samuel Sprague to Philo Sprague.

Monday, Feb. 3.—Invocation: "The Rights of the Sovereign States under the Constitution." Questions and Answers; Richard Hart, Worcester, Mass.; Charlotte Stevens, Chicago, Ill.; Isaac McPherson, Third New York Regiment.

Tuesday, Feb. 4.—Invocation: "Immortality Among Spirits." Questions and Answers; Henry H. Johnson, St. Louis, Mo.; Julia Folsom, New York; Thomas West, to his wife in Hancock, Ohio; Joseph H. Verill, Baltimore, Md.

Thursday, Feb. 6.—Invocation: "Magnificent and Pleinific." Alexander McDonald, Philadelphia; Stephen G. W. Hamilton, C. W.; Louise Durand, actress, New Orleans; A. Jane Root, Laura S. Mercer.

Thursday, Feb. 20.—Invocation: "Did General McClellan really have such a dream as was published in the *Banner*?" "Was such a map given to Gen. McClellan?" "Will general emancipation result from this war?" Joseph White, Sacramento City, Cal.; Col. Baker's regiment; Martha White, Machias, Me.; to her father, Captain Wise; Jeremiah Connolly, New York City; Amelia Davis Train, to her mother, in New York.

Monday, Feb. 25.—Invocation: "The Use of Prayer?" "Will you explain the philosophy of John L. Tiverton, Chester Eng.; Vidalia Hoberg, to her mother in Georgetown, D. C.

Sunday, Feb. 24.—Invocation: "The origin and cure of Consumption as incident to the human body." Charlotte Shaw, to her sister Anna, Boston, Mass.; Patrick Daly, Dublin, to his uncle Patrick Daly; Julia Austin, Fredericktown, Penn.

Invocation.

O thou who art the life of all things, thou spirit of truth, before whom nothing dies, and with whom resteth eternal life; O Father and our Mother, unto whom all beings continually approach with songs of thanksgiving; the clouds of Nature and spiritual and moral darkness fall thick around us, and we feel like children, in our dependence upon thee. When we look into the eternal future, we behold thee as thou art, and gratitude comes welling up into our hearts unto thee. Our God, this beloved nation is now clothed with darkness and ruin; desolation and death in every form seem to dwell with us. But it is only a phantom, and not a reality. Life and love and truth are everywhere. Though these things seem to be, and though thou seemest to be walking in hell and with devils, we know that thou art walking with us. We ask only this, and we know that whatever shadow falls, thou art in the shadow. There is no place where thou art not. If this thing comes to thy people, and they shall dwell in the shades of death, we know that they shall yet praise thee and dwell in harmony with thy children, clothed in immortality. Jan. 3.

The Chief End of Man.

We are now ready to receive such questions as may be propounded by friends present.

"What is the chief end of man?"

The chief end of man, or what does man most desire for it, is what he desires, rather than what he does. From our standpoint, it is understood that his chief end is happiness. And that is not found, as the church hath told us, in a state of rest and inactivity. The spirit of man is ever active and onward, continually reaching higher and higher.

The chief end of man is at all times and under all circumstances, to do the will of Jehovah. The church and ignorance teach that he is prone to wander from God and to disobey him. We declare there never was an individual spirit that trespassed upon the smallest portion of God's law. Everything he hath endowed with faculties peculiar to themselves, to which the infinite hath given a key of their own, by which to unlock the gate of heaven and peace. We find happiness and heaven according to the desires of our own souls. One man finds happiness in crowding down humanity, that he may rise himself in so doing. This is his or her happiness. Shall we say they are wrong in so doing? It is certainly not wrong to the cause that produces it.

The chief end of man is in glorifying God, we may say, but to him this is but a small circle. To do the will of Jehovah at all times, whether we are in a mortal or an immortal state, is only to pass onward a step higher. To go on forever in seeking for happiness, is that of seeking to obey and glorify God. This is no more or less than the chief end of man. Jan. 9.

What is it to be born again?

"What did Jesus mean, when he said to Nicodemus 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'?"

We are told that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, and Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." What did Jesus mean in the use of this language to Nicodemus? Only that which seems but truth to us. We believe that Jesus had reference to the death of old errors and the birth of new ones. So long as men cling to old errors, they will not bring the desired truth to pass. In order to enter heaven, it is necessary to lay down the old, whether spiritual or moral. We must be born moral, spiritual, or intellectual, each and every one of us, if we wish to take any degree in life. Whether this birth is taken upon us, or is thrust upon us, there are none who must not participate in it in order to enjoy or find heaven.

The Nicodemus of olden time, if we are to believe the record, was a greater believer in material than in spiritual good. Hence he perceived him to be more material than spiritual. The former was more tangible, while the latter was real; but it had no reality for him. This was the reason why he asked of Jesus, "Must a man enter his mother's womb again, and be born?"

There are many materialists at the present day. Nine-tenths of the church, those who profess to believe in a spiritual birth, dwell in the spirit only in its material form, making material sacrifices, and offering material ceremonies which amount to nothing. They are not real, and no spirit is free from materiality, which looks upon things of this life with favor; when it becomes free, it shall wonder that men place so much reliance upon changeable things of materiality. This spirit is not in the church alone of today; it lived ages ago. This spirit walked with Jesus of Nazareth, and we believe the utterance had a spiritual meaning. Those who heard him speak, gave his language a material significance only.

O you men and women who put no confidence in God as a spirit, and grasp only at materiality, we commend you to lift the veil of materiality, look behind the scenes, and view the real scenes of life—that river of life flowing beneath the crust of materiality. Gather unto yourselves that knowledge necessary to make one happy, or to open unto you the gate of heaven. Jan. 9.

Benjamin Bancroft.

As we wander through life, we cannot but wonder at the Majesty of God. Everywhere we go, every step we take, unfolds something new, some new phase of life. Ought we not to lift up our souls in thanksgiving to the Oliver of wisdom, to the Eternal fountain of wisdom that is opened unto us?

When on earth, my spirit was in prison. I was a prisoner. I could only look through the windows of my prison and see God in one way; but now I can look all around and know that he is everywhere; there is no place where he is not.

I regret very much the last words I uttered when leaving the body, which I know may prove injurious, and which have occasioned my return. I told my family that I had no belief in this fanatical belief that is running through the country, called Spiritualism, and that if any one should return bearing my name, with a message from me, I protested against such being my own, and they might disbelieve the message; and never believe that I should come back to this sinful world again.

But I now know how wondrous are the ways of God. I have been impelled to come back. I desire to be happy, to serve my Master, and if I must return and tear down what I have built up, I see difficulties everywhere attending it. Everywhere there are thorns in my pathway; yet I will not murmur nor repine, but say, O God, thy will be done.

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Invocation.

Oh, Death, thou mighty spirit of change, thou genius of Creation, thou spirit before whom all things tremble, though we have dealt with thee single-handed and alone, though we have passed with thee, yet we would know more of thee, and come into still nearer communion with thee; solve all that is with thee, thou King of Terrors, and bring the hidden mysteries of thy kingdom out into the light of morning, that thy subjects may know and love thee more and fear thee less. Oh, Death, we perceive the great King of Life hath given thee thy commission, and he has bid thee go forth and gather up all things yet to be found upon the face of the earth, and bring all things into thy kingdom; and so, oh, Death, we feel that thou art walking hand in hand with Life, and acting with us according to the decrees of wisdom. Oh, thou spirit who art going up and down the earth gathering up the tender buds and blossoms of earth, and casting them into the great treasury of Immortality, we ask of thee a gift, and we know, oh Death, if we ask of thee that thou wilt bestow it upon us. And that gift is this: 'tis the gift of knowledge. Though we reside in the lowest depths of hell and drink of the bitterest cup, yet we desire knowledge; and in whatever way it may come, we would gladly receive it, oh Death—not for ourselves, but for those who yet dwell in mortality; in behalf of a hungry humanity we ask thee—in behalf of those who have yet to pass through the change, who have yet to become acquainted with thee—to feel by thy side through the dark valley of shadow and change. We ask of thee, oh Death, that thou wilt draw nigh unto them, clothed in robes of becoming garments. Oh Death, put on thy garments of immortality; robe thyself in the bright and glorious garments of the morning, oh Death; bind around thee the bright blossoms thou hast gathered on the earth. Oh Death, make thy visits to mortality without the dense darkness the superstitions of the past have burdened thee with, but lovingly link hands with those who are to go with thee, through the dark valley of change. They fear thee, oh Death, because they know thee not, and because thou hast appeared unto them in dark garments. Now, oh Death, in behalf of those we love so well, in behalf of those who are a part of thyself, and must come unto thee sooner or later, we pray thee to surround them with light, and open their eyes ere they pass the confines of mortality and enter the realms immortal. Then, oh Death the nations shall rejoice; shall mourn no more; and the children of earth shall feel that thou art their friend and not their enemy—feel thou art a bright messenger from the courts of the Heavenly Father, to lead his children home to his embrace. So, oh Death, it shall be thy King in the future to hear the songs of praise to the King of Kings from the lips of the immortal ones, and those who have finished their journey in mortality shall gladly await thy coming to lead them home to the Father. Oh Death, draw near unto mortality and listen to our prayer, and all to whom you may come will send up a song of thanksgiving and joy to welcome the right-hand messenger of immortality. Jan. 14.

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Charles Beaman.

Written: Tell my son, Charles Beaman, that I wish to speak with him. CHARLES BEAMAN, who died in San Francisco, Cal., in 1858. Jan. 9. C. B.

Sally Brown.

Sally Brown will, with great joy, hold communion with her children, whenever God shall will. Oh, my children, we cannot always come when we wish. Jan. 9.

Colman Williams.

Colman Williams will go to the circle "Star in the West," held in Detroit, Mich., when he can. Jan. 9.

Invocation.

Spirit of Truth, aid and defend us while we minister to our own necessities and the necessities of those to whom we come; and together we will bring our offerings into the great temple of wisdom, and together receive our reward. Jan. 13.

Perfection.

The chariot of thought brings us a question from a theological brother in Hartford, Conn. The question is this: "Is it not impossible to find perfection in any form on this earth?"

According to the old established belief of the subject, we will say it is most certainly impossible to find perfection anywhere, whether on earth, under the earth, or above it—either in this condition of life, or the lower or higher. Go where we will, seek where we may, we find it not. According to the past significance of the term, it is a thing done—finished—to which nothing is to be added or taken from. So, then, we declare to our questioner that it cannot be found anywhere.

But the new dispensation gives a new definition to all things, and therefore to the term Perfection. According to this, we may look for it everywhere and anywhere, and find it. We believe that every effect was preceded by a natural cause; therefore the effect must of necessity be as perfect as the cause; and if the cause is natural, it surely belongs to God—and who shall dare to call him imperfect?

The old is passing out, and the new is coming in; and behold, the new shall glid all things with a new glory, and the darkness of the present shall fly away, as the darkness of yonder midnight fleeth away before the coming morn.

Our brother and our friend, you may seek for Perfection, according to the spiritual and natural definition, and find it everywhere—even in hell. Jan. 13.

Richard S. Devonshire.

I have visited my young friends in the old world, two weeks past. I desired, through a medium there, a change to be made in regard to my affairs. They doubt my coming, and propose to me that I come here and state what deformity I had, together with my name, age, and cause of death; and they will do my bidding should I do this within two days' time.

The time is past. I visited this place at the time mentioned, and found no one here, so I leave, and find no time suitable for me until to-day. I know of no earthly way or means by which the friends here—the people here in America, could be apprised of my returning to my friends at home in so short a time, so I beg my friends to be satisfied that I did not come here within the two days.

My deformity was here [left hand]—I lost the use of my left hand when about eight years of age, by accidentally falling into the fire, burning my hand and arm, and drawing it up as you see [the medium suit the action to the word]. I was fifty-seven years old. I die of some disease of the lungs—not consumption, but I believe it was called by some, a closing of the air cells of the lungs.

My name was Richard S. Devonshire. My place of residence, Manchester, England. Jan. 13.

Ellen Maria Sampson.

Written: My dear mother—If you will go to see somebody I can come to, I will talk with you. I will tell you all about my new home, and about brother Jim, my grandpa and grandpa, and all. Don't say, "I don't believe my little Nelly can come back again," for I can. Now I will tell you how I died, and how old I was, and my name, and so you must believe. First, I was nine years old. Second, I was sick with typhus fever twenty-one days, and my full name was Ellen Maria Sampson, and I died in New York City, on the sixth day of last July. Jan. 13.

Oh, Death, thou mighty spirit of change, thou genius of Creation, thou spirit before whom all things tremble, though we have dealt with thee single-handed and alone, though we have passed with thee, yet we would know more of thee, and come into still nearer communion with thee; solve all that is with thee, thou King of Terrors, and bring the hidden mysteries of thy kingdom out into the light of morning, that thy subjects may know and love thee more and fear thee less. Oh, Death, we perceive the great King of Life hath given thee thy commission, and he has bid thee go forth and gather up all things yet to be found upon the face of the earth, and bring all things into thy kingdom; and so, oh, Death, we feel that thou art walking hand in hand with Life, and acting with us according to the decrees of wisdom. Oh, thou spirit who art going up and down the earth gathering up the tender buds and blossoms of earth, and casting them into the great treasury of Immortality, we ask of thee a gift, and we know, oh Death, if we ask of thee that thou wilt bestow it upon us. And that gift is this: 'tis the gift of knowledge. Though we reside in the lowest depths of hell and drink of the bitterest cup, yet we desire knowledge; and in whatever way it may come, we would gladly receive it, oh Death—not for ourselves, but for those who yet dwell in mortality; in behalf of a hungry humanity we ask thee—in behalf of those who have yet to pass through the change, who have yet to become acquainted with thee—to feel by thy side through the dark valley of shadow and change. We ask of thee, oh Death, that thou wilt draw nigh unto them, clothed in robes of becoming garments. Oh Death, put on thy garments of immortality; robe thyself in the bright and glorious garments of the morning, oh Death; bind around thee the bright blossoms thou hast gathered on the earth. Oh Death, make thy visits to mortality without the dense darkness the superstitions of the past have burdened thee with, but lovingly link hands with those who are to go with thee, through the dark valley of change. They fear thee, oh Death, because they know thee not, and because thou hast appeared unto them in dark garments. Now, oh Death, in behalf of those we love so well, in behalf of those who are a part of thyself, and must come unto thee sooner or later, we pray thee to surround them with light, and open their eyes ere they pass the confines of mortality and enter the realms immortal. Then, oh Death the nations shall rejoice; shall mourn no more; and the children of earth shall feel that thou art their friend and not their enemy—feel thou art a bright messenger from the courts of the Heavenly Father, to lead his children home to his embrace. So, oh Death, it shall be thy King in the future to hear the songs of praise to the King of Kings from the lips of the immortal ones, and those who have finished their journey in mortality shall gladly await thy coming to lead them home to the Father. Oh Death, draw near unto mortality and listen to our prayer, and all to whom you may come will send up a song of thanksgiving and joy to welcome the right-hand messenger of immortality. Jan. 14.

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