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JASMINE;

OR,

THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

BY CORA WILBURN.

Dedication.

To all true Spiritualists throughout the land of my adoption, and in especial to my friend Mrs. M. H. Watson, of Saint Paul, Minnesota, this story of a life's pilgrimage is dedicated, in sisterly love, by

THE AUTHOR.

Introduction.

Still bowed beneath the heavy burden of that stroke that has awakened me from the fancied security and the rose dream of my happy life, I sit with clasped, trembling hands, reflecting on the strange, eventful changes of the past few days. His place is vacant, and my silent heartstone reflects no more the illumined joy of home. A willow shade droops over it, and the memories that arise are of life's sorrowing landmarks—separation, grief, estrangement, care. The barbed arrows of the past rattle anew in wounds I deemed long healed. My mother's life-long sacrifice—my father's pain haunted face—the cruel enemies and ruthless antagonisms that pursued my childhood; the seemingly wasted years of youth and hope; the mystery and the agony of my life; the terror revelations and the bitter disenchancements, all bearing with jacobus power on my struggling soul; finally the utter desolation and the mocking gleam of love and happiness—all overwhelmed me with a rebellious flood of most impassioned grief in that first hour of my departure, and I wept—I wept—with what utter abandonment ye alone can tell whose compensating cup of joy has been dashed from the eager, thirsting lip!

Oh Victor, my beloved—fondly deemed, mine own—why has this devastating war torn thee, too, rudely from the dear sanctuary of home? Is patriotism worth more than love? Is this land to be saved from the doom of despotic sway by the sacrifice of hearts, the rending of life's holiest ties? Must I bring to thy shrine, oh stern and sacred Liberty, all that makes earth an Eden and heaven desirable to longing souls? When the first alarm sounded, when the long, lumbering Non-Spirit, dormant so long, awoke in the breasts of the people, when from every loyal household in the North floated proudly on the flower-whispering breeze, the star flag of the world's dearest hope, I deemed not that the trumpet call was for him also, that the banner's mystic flow bore to me a message from the freedom-lands above! I saw his kindling eye and glowing cheek, and knew not what they looked to me! And when the flag was spoken by those firm, untrembling lips, though the sad eyes gleamed with unutterable tenderness, I shrieked aloud in my first terror of surprise, and, like a faithless coward, besought him on my knees to stay!

Then, as the sweet times before, that dear voice soothed me, and that mighty and pulsant soul led me far beyond the worldly calculation and the shrinking dread of the flesh, upwards into the regions of eternal calm and security, above the terrible effects of man's perversion to the immutable, all-ordaining good, to the imperishable realms of peace and immortal beauty. And as the fierce, threatening panorama of battle field and siege, defeat and conquest, faded from my sight, uprose in its stead the regenerated land of my adoption, the glorious mother of the great Republic yet to be; and I saw, as in prophetic vision, the morning stripes and stars of heaven bathed in a divine light and radiant with a new significance; for they waved above a united nation of freemen, and the blot and curse of slavery had been washed out, in martyr-blood, from our star-flag's folds.

And then thrilled to my heart's core the heroic struggle of the good and great of all time, and self was merged in the universal aim. The woman's weakness, the wife's apprehension, the lone heart's dread of loss, all swallowed up in victory! Again, as in many of the trial pangs of my life, I felt the rest upon that Omnipotent Love that ever enfolded me, and beneath the safeguard of His shield I knew I could trust my loved one; and so, with unflinching valor and fearless eye, my consent was given, and a strength not mine was awarded me to bear unto the last. He called me his brave, his heroic wife, and I glistened not the words of proud fondness, lest I should cast a shadow on his way; for I would that all his memories of home be fraught with sunshine and with smiles.

But removed from the magnificence of his presence, thrown back upon the weak and self-accusing heart, the fears and terrors, the alarms and haunting images of blood, return. And I dare not indulge these moods, hot with prayer and soul-strength must wrestle against them; for afar in his solitary tent, or sharing his comrades' dangerous duty, these moods of mine will overshadow him, and cloud for him the brightest day and the fairest prospect of success. If not cheerful, I must at least be calm and resigned, for the sake of my obedience to God, my love for the absent.

My home in the dear Quaker City is indeed a haven of rest for feet long wandering and a heart long weary with the search for home-repose. Situated where the rural aspect reminds of the country's freedom, with my neat garden, so inviting to the eye, and now upspringing in bloom and freshness beneath the balmy breath of May, with my indoor comforts, my faithful dog and handy maid, I feel that even in my loneliness I am blest, exempted from the fatigues of poverty that at this time of the nation's trial afflict so many. I can look around my cozy home, in which comfort and not unnecessary luxury dwell, on my ample but simple pictures, on the various mementoes of other lands and bygone days, on the books that enrich my mind and cultivate my heart, and say with fervent gratitude: "I thank thee, Lord!"

My Victor said before he left me, "You will be lonely for want of occupation, Jassie. I know your repugnance to much society; your little sensitive heart shrinks from flippant discourse, and cannot tolerate either fashionable gossip, nor the contact with minds coarse and unrefined. Your household duties will not suffice; you must have an engrossing occupation. Write out the story of your life. It has been eventful, full of teaching discipline. Strange and startling occurrences have been crowded into a small compass of years. By penning its incidents you may confer a benefit upon the world; you may become a silent, powerful teacher of many truths. While I wield the sword in defence of the beloved country I revere, do you take that far mightier instrument, the pen, and, forgetful of present sorrows, retrace the past, and for the sake of humanity, tell how the divine ministrations of our Father led you from darkness to the light."

Have I ever failed in yielding to that will that never seeks to guide save in love and wisdom? Yes, I will fulfill the request, and far above the vista of the past lead you who may peruse a checked life history, trusting that its lessons may bring a balm to some wounded hearts, that the narration of my trials may serve to lessen yours, and that from them you may glean anew this world old truth, that God is ever nigh, though man forsake; and that for every ill of life there is a compensating gain.

Allow me to introduce you to my household Lares. There, over the mantel in my snug parlor, is the picture of my beloved husband, Victor St. Leon; if we were of the worldly bent of mind, we might find ancient and famous warriors and nobles of that aristocratic name in France and Spain. But we leave such foolish distinctions, unworthy of the age and the residents of a Republic, to our occasional visitor and tormentor, the widow Waltham, who, at each visit, regales our ears with a long account of ancestral glories, mingling the insolent haughtiness of the English nobility with the illiterate and unfortunate pride of South Carolina, of which place the widow in question is a native. She will, no doubt, come before you some time before I conclude my story; for whenever I am particularly engaged with book or writing, she usually makes her appearance, and there ensues a long catalogue of family details and greatnesses, of past grandeur and present privations, mingled with so many invectives against the "foe-hearted North," and so many eulogiums of the "magnanimous South," that combativeness aroused struggles with pity; for Mrs. Waltham is a true woman in reduced circumstances, and I would do her all the good I can.

But I am digressing, and you must forgive me. It is a fault I have, for which stern critics would have no mercy; but at the hearts of indulgent friends I crave a humble pardon.

My husband's picture, life-like, smiling, earnest, brooded, is before you. Mark well the breadth of forehead, the indications of mental power, in that finely shaped head. Admire the clustering, jet-black, light brown hair, tipped here and there with gold. Look into the serene and unflinching depths of the June-blue eyes. Note well each manly feature, chiseled, as it were, by thought and energy, refinement and poetic aspiration. The month has a shade of melancholy reflection added to its beautiful repose, and over the face is cast the veiling tenderness that so well becomes the proudest and the bravest heart. Do you wonder that I love him? that the brightness of the day is gone where he is not?

Next is an ideal portrait of a sweet mother of Jesus, one of the pure and rapt creations of Raphael's pencil. Dark, sorrowful, divinely tender eyes beam from a lily face, tinged with the faintest roseate glow. The smile she wears is that of the beatified. The golden hair, half curled, half loosely braided, veiling the snow white neck, seems imbued with sunrise glories, and the small, clasped hands, so freighted with the mother's love and longing, seemed to have gathered heaven's floral benedictions, its choicest emblems of purity and peace. Once I worshiped that radiant face and form; now I love it still, and look up to it in reverence, but not with the superstitious adoration of old. For, to my memory and heart, our lady wears the semblance of my own idolized mother; and as a spirit blest and ransomed, methinks she wears that garb of saintly motherhood. My Mary smiles, as does the worshiped one of many lands.

Yonder is the portrait of my father, Herbert Northrop, stern and proud and handsome as he was when I looked up to him in awe that fate would have changed to love. I have no portrait of her who gave me life, but her dear image is impressed upon my soul; and she who bore in cruel mockery that usurped and holy name, I have striven to banish her recollection as I would her pictured face.

There are landscapes here and lovely sea views; tropical hills and plains; the burning waste of the Arabian desert; the picturesque views of the dear old Rhine; home scenes of merry England, and skies of Italy and Greece. Scenes, too, of our adopted and treasured America, beautiful as night of earth can give. All these are my friends, and each tells a story I love.

Then there is my faithful, neat and thrifty girl, Terese Solzen, a German and an orphan, whom I am striving to educate up to a higher plane. She is graceful, honest and industrious, but certain refinements of speech and action seem entirely beyond her comprehension. Of course, she deems me fastidious in the extreme, because I object to her too frequent use of that old myth, the devil's name, and will not permit her to use sundry other expletives, besides reminding her, at least once a day, that leaning both elbows on the table at meal time is not the proper way to take one's food. Terese persists in holding knife and fork in most uncomfortable positions, or sitting with her knees drawn up to her chin, of staring fixedly, with several other like awkward ways that cause me to admonish her, to her very great astonishment. "Vat's de use of bein' so perfickler?" is her invariable but good humored response, followed by, "I vill try and doon better, me'am." She is somewhat of a thorn, but also much of the wildwood rose.

Last and not least of my household is my faithful dog, Baby, who has been my constant follower and companion for seven long years. When friends looked on me coldly, and many returned with scornful looks,

ship offerings, he remained faithful, steadfast, true, unchanged. I love him dearly, and so does Victor for my sake. He is a link between the dark past and the comparatively blissful present, that little, white, curly pated pet.

"We would like to know what the hero of the forthcoming story is like," I hear the reader exclaim. Well, friends, I am not good at self-description; but there is my portrait beside that of Victor—a woman of some twenty-seven years, girlish in figure, slender but not thin; with dark brown eyes and mischievous, dark brown hair, that, despite of every effort, will curl and wave, and remonstrate against the prevailing plain fashion. The features are irregular, and there is a marked resemblance to the firm and sternly set countenance of my father. But years of sorrow have softened the pride once beaming from the eye and brow. Tenderness and compassion have changed the rigid lines of iron determination once settled around the unforgiving lips. Life's awarded compensations have melted all the hardness, and discipline has led my feet into "paths of pleasantness and peace." For two years I have been a happy wife, and my life's best ideals have been realized in home and love.

I will commence my task of mingled pleasure and pain, retrace once more, albeit with bleeding feet and aching heart, the retrospective.

Hark! the sounds of martial music, the stirring tones that nerve the warrior's arm, and lead the hero heart to defy danger and death. They pass by with floating banners, waving plumes and glistening bayonets, these free, proud, stalwart sons of Freedom—these brothers, husbands, well beloved sons! Oh, Victor! thou, too, art among this patriot, must it be, this martyr band?

But again thrills to my inmost soul that sweet, low answering voice of God; and I seem to behold them from afar, those African mothers, kneeling on the soil forever dedicated to Liberty thereafter. They clasp in their tawny arms the exulting children of their life-long agony; their trembling hands meet the fervent grasp of husbands and kindred; there is no separation more for them. The sacred bonds are broken, and on the Star Flag rests no lingering stain of slavery! I hear the shouts of liberated men ascending unto heaven itself. I behold the Reunited States forever linked in a compact no earthly might can sunder, for it is based on Freedom, Justice, true Equality. A new song of victory is breathed triumphantly by North and South, and in a thrilling cadence, in four million of God's liberated children in thanksgiving joy? Is not this worth laboring, praying, toiling for? Ay, even unto the sacrifice of life itself! The military pageant has gone by, and I return to my self-imposed task.

"Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe, that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in every average bosom
There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness
—And are lifted up and strengthened—
Listen to this simple story."

CHAPTER I.

The Dream and the Realities of Childhood.

"I was a strange and moody child,
They called my feelings cold;
But had a mother fondly smiled,
The truth had all been told.
The truth that clouded my aging eyes
O'er my a burning tear:
That in my bosom checked the sighs,
And sealed my lips with fear."

SARAH BRICKLAND.

I was a child of seven years when my father brought home his new wife, Agatha Strong; and I was told to call her mother. And well do I remember, with a return of the same thrill of repulsion, how her cold kiss chilled me to the heart; how her glittering blue eyes scanned me, how her words of fondness fell heavily upon my ear, divested of all their sweetness. And a new feeling, unknown till then, uprose, defiant in my breast, as I met the false smile, the steel-cold sparkle of her mother's eyes, as my little hands were grasped, my hair smoothed on my brow by the gaunt, bony, vigorous hand of Mrs. Catharine Strong. The whole current of my life was changed from that day. Over my untrammelled freedom of speech and action was cast the bondage of a constant surveillance. My laugh, my song, my childish glee were checked; my innocent amusements forbidden. I was to be made a formal little puppet, and trained to a serious, unnatural deportment. I was to be broken in to their will and pleasure, for their own secret and selfish ends. Do you think that the usual step-motherly cruelty was resorted to?—that I was scolded incessantly, or suffered the indignity of bodily punishment? Oh, no; my dictators had better plans; mother and daughter were too well versed in worldly arts to gain for themselves the fame of the oppressors of a helpless, motherless child. They appeared to the world the patient benefactors, while I was the babe, the plague, the home torment. Nothing could be more affectionately solicitous, more tenderly indulgent than was my step-mother's manner toward me in the presence of others. Even when alone with me she never raised her voice in anger, nor lifted a finger to chastise me; but she crushed me to the earth with looks of such intense disdain and abhorrence, as could scarcely be deemed possible could disfigure her pretty and placid face. She sought to force upon me at all times the conviction that I was a child of wicked inclinations, an intolerable pest, a little villain; that I was hateful to my father's sight because of my manifold transgressions; that I was lovable, hardhearted, indolent, a fright, and half an idiot.

In all this she was warmly seconded and urged on by her grandaunt-like mother, a woman of tall, majestic frame and robust constitution. Mrs. Strong's high cheek-bones, prominent nose, firm set lips, high color, and yet abundant and unvarnished brown hair, gave evidence of perfect health and undiminished vigor. But it was one of that lady's pet follies to play the invalid, and sometimes for days to seclude herself in her chamber, and surround herself with all the paraphernalia of the sick room. All the servants in the house were then compelled to dance attendance upon her, and confusion took the place of the usual household quiet.

Mrs. Catharine, as the servants called her, when they were respectfully inclined, always compelled me to drop a courtesy on entering her august presence, to drop another when leaving the room, and she particularly enjoined upon me the necessity of speaking always in a subdued tone, and of "keeping out of papa's way as much as possible." For the latter command I never could find a reason. My mind "Why?" was always repelled with the unsatisfactory rejoinder, "that children must not ask questions."

The old lady was the veriest tyrant that ever held despotic sway, and I feared her as does the slave the uplifted hand of the cruel task-master. She, too, was all honey-sweetness in the presence of strangers; all artfully veiled gall and wormwood when alone with me, Agatha, and my father. She had many names and titles bestowed upon her in the kitchen. The household called her "Plague of Egypt," the cook said she was "An old Tartarus," the coachman and groom called her "a Fomeline Satan," the rest of the maids, "Jezebel," and her own attendant, a mulatto woman from the West Indies, called her "Witch-cat," in a long-drawn malicious whisper. My nurse Ainslie, often mentioned her as the "old thing," and I, miserable little imitator that I was, to revenge myself for the broad relationship, gave her a name I deemed surpassing all the rest in expressiveness. I had heard that the Evil One was deceptive and a fabricator of lies; I knew that Mrs. Strong possessed these afflicting qualifications, so I named her "the Devil's grandmother!"

My step-mother was a beauty, after the standard of a surly judgment; for her complexion was fair and rosy, her small figure faultlessly symmetrical, her features regular; her smile bewitching; her blue eyes were large and bright, but to me they never expressed the heart-glow of deep and hallowed emotions; they were lolly bright, and her smile lacked the soul's warming impulsiveness. All with her was calculated, studied; nothing was spontaneous, not even the graceful attitude she assumed; there was no ring of truthfulness in her sweetly modulated voice; no cordiality in the slight, cool pressure of her delicate hand; her well-shaped head was deficient in the breadth that indicates Ideality; and conscientiousness was low indeed when compared with the towering self-esteem, the selfish, worldly propensities that held sway over her moral nature. Her golden and abundant hair was devoid of that lustre of life and soul that lends it to sublimity. It wound around her shapely head, and framed her small and pretty face in massive braids; but despite of its fineness of texture and abundant length, it could not be called beautiful—it was too colorless and devoid of life.

She was punctilious in regard to all the outer observances of worldly decorum and etiquette; possessed of exquisite taste in dress, wearing always the most becoming colors, the most suitable ornaments; ever faultlessly attired, never in dishabille. She could not have tolerated the slightest speck of dust upon her nails, the least stain upon her delicate robes. Ah, that she would as carefully have guarded her soul from sin, and her spirit from contamination from without!

In direct contrast to the wife he had chosen, Herbert Northrop was of Herculean frame and most commanding presence; tall, dark, stern of aspect. Severely just and yet largely benevolent, his society was courted, and his friendship highly prized. Yet, this man, so self-contained and so haughtily self-reliant, was at times possessed of a strange and moody spirit, that, more than all demonstrations of violence, alarmed the household. For days he would seclude himself in his own room, and at such times his meals would be taken up to him. He permitted no inquiries; he gave no reasons for these fits of ill-humor or dependency. With a look or a word he silenced Agatha's common-place consolations, and stayed the torrent of her mother's whining condolences, and abounded in his own secret, held himself apart and aloof from the rest.

He never talked with me, or took me upon his knee as other fathers did. Sometimes he put out his hand, and said, coldly, "How do you do, Jassie?" Or, he would answer my shy salutation with a short "good morning," "good night, Jassie." He never kissed me or called me Jassie, as did the rest. And when my step mother called me "dear," and "darling," in his hearing, I would as soon she had called me dog or stone.

It had been ever thus since I could remember, this coldness on my father's part; but before she came I revelled in the full enjoyment of my childish liberty. The old Hall was mine to roam about in at will, to sing, to dance, to build fairy pictures in. Mine was the spacious garden and the most secluded nook with its mine the clear stream, meandering past the willow grove and the ivy-covered ruins of the ancient battlement that skirted my father's grounds. I was a free, wild, almost happy child, until he brought home this usurper of my mother's place. With her advent came restraint and fear; and troubled thought, and feelings, bitter, retentive, awakened in my breast, before whose rebuke I shuddered even then, child as I was. I felt myself capable of an intensity of hatred fearful in one so young, and often on retiring to my room, galled and wounded to the quick by my tormentors, have I planned, with a diabolical fixedness of purpose, how I could best annoy and worry Mrs. Catharine and my step mother; and in my ignorant grief and burning desire for vengeance, have offered up most fervent prayers for the speedy and violent end of my hated "grandma," and the removal by fraud or force of my dreaded step-mother.

"Oh, please, dear Lord," have I entreated with clasped hands and streaming eyes, "do make them die! Make the 'old one' jump in the pond, she's so wicked! I please don't let any one else die! Do take away, new mamma away! If she's too young to die, please send a fairy or a magician for her and change her into a big cat or an owl, and I'll be a good girl, and do all I'm wanted to when they are gone!"

Many older prayers sound much after this fashion. We invoke punishment upon the heads of those who injure us, and promise obedience and goodness if the obstacles in our life-path are removed. Poor, silly child! I mingled strangely the Orthodox teachings of my church with the legendary lore of my English home, and the traditions of fairy elf and spirit haunt.

Large I had gleaned from Nurse Ainslie's recitals of the olden time, when lords and ladies banqueted on the site where now stood Oakfast Hall; when warlike voices resounded through its corridors, and beautiful and terrible forms from the lands of the unseen, visited the good and the pure, the evil-minded and the tyrannical, at the olden Castle Ulenfall.

That some dread and avenging demon might present itself to my persecutors, was the secret prayer of my life, and Anna Ainslie encouraged me in the insane hope and expectation; for, as she philosophically remarked, "Such things have been, and may happen again."

I loved my father with all the enthusiastic affection of my fervent nature, and that he responded not to that love formed the clouding sorrow of my life. I have lain in wait for him for hours, perched behind a folding screen or door, only to behold him pass, to feast my eyes upon his noble countenance, to hear his step and voice, to throw him kisses which he never saw. And to the outbursts of passionate fondness and sorrowful yearning, would succeed the deep and powerful resentment that swelled my child-breast with all the violence of untaught hatred, impotent as fearful in its way. I then hated all the world, myself included, and in the silence of my chamber, or the seclusion of some distant grove, I would weep in that intensity of hatred and stinging sorrow the desolate alone can know, until exhausted nature closed my burning eyes in soothing and recuperative sleep.

No one would tell me of my mother. Nurse Ainslie said she was with God. My father never mentioned her, and there was no picture of her amid the family assemblage that decorated the walls of our sitting-room. Nurse Ainslie I know could tell me all about her, but whatever the secret was, she guarded it well. She only told me that my mother looked like the picture of the Virgin Mother, in our drawing-room; and that I should pray for her, as some souls did not get out of purgatory soon. "But," added she, "she has been gone these five long years, and I doubt not, our Lady has been merciful to her, although—" and she broke off abruptly and changed the conversation.

Never shall I forget the pallor of consternation that overpread her broad and ruddy face, the dilating horror of her eyes, when I announced my intention of questioning my father concerning her. In wild, incoherent language, she told me that if I dared to talk to papa on the subject, it would be the death of him and of me. That would all be driven from the house; that it was the master's stern injunction that the name of his first wife should never be mentioned by any inmate of Oakfast Hall. I desisted in sorrowful submission, giving to Nurse Ainslie a sacred promise, ratified upon the crucifix of my little altar-table, that I would never again renew the subject. I never did. But on my heart the shadow enshrouding the mystery of my mother's life deepened into a lasting gloom.

But I had learnt that my mother's name was Mary, and when I lifted up my supplications to the Divine Mother of Christ, I added a prayer for my Mary mother, and invoked for me, her love and untold child, her celestial guardianship, for I deemed her then, and forever, a denizen of the city of our God.

She had named me Jasmine, for her favorite flower, and it formed no small portion of my sorrow to hear the name bestowed on me by the sainted one, ridiculed by Agatha and her mother. They were both devout Catholics in all the outer observance of form and fast days, but I felt that both were arrant hypocrites. My father joined in their observances with the air of one whose thoughts and aims are with far differing objects. At that time no spark of true religion had illumined his intellect, or sanctified his heart. I have long since laid aside the ceremonial observances and the creed forms, with its manifold abuses of the faith I was taught in childhood. The discipline of years, the visitations of sorrow, the expansions of soul and heart together, the convictions of reason, faith and conscience, have brought to me far wider rules of Christian obedience than can be found for me within the limits of any creed form. But all that is beautiful, simple, teaching and elevating in all religions, I revere and accept with all the fervor of its devout worshippers. Then, stripped of its outer materiality, of the formal rules and abuses of the faith I was born in, I accept to this day that worship of purity, meekness, and ideal womanhood, that is symbolized in the Divine maternity of Mary. Before me hangs the pictured celestial countenance of the Virgin Mother of my earliest dreams of Heaven, and I call her yet the Guardian of youthful innocence; the sanctuary of the afflicted; the love-worship, pure and sorrowful mother of the Great Teacher of humanity.

To give you an idea of the heart privations of my childhood, of the seeds of evil passions engendered by neglect and cruelty, I will relate a scene that occurred somewhere about a year after my father brought Agatha Strong to Oakfast Hall.

I was standing one day in Mrs. Catharine's sitting-room, holding a skein of silk which was winding off with a deliberation truly torturing, when my father entered. Agatha was embroidering lazily, and she lifted up her face and smiled, while a heightened glow suffused her pretty cheek. She said in those sweet, languid, even tones of hers:

"Home already? Take a seat, Herbert."

I cast one quick and timid glance at his face. The heart started unbidden to my eye. A long-drawn sigh of mingled longing and indignation quivered on my lips. My heart was full, and I was forbidden the utterance of affection.

The old lady applied her smelling salts to her nose, and remarked in her own emphatic and deliberate manner:

"How do you feel this afternoon, my son?"

"I am very well, thank you, mother," he replied, in his own courteous manner; and, turning to his wife, he said, as he gazed upon her with a fondness I would have given the world to call forth:

"Well, Agatha, what say you of a journey to London, Paris, perhaps on to Italy? Hitherto, we have only taken flying trips of a few days. I am ready now to grant your favorite wish. What say you, Agatha?"

The hand that put away the embroidery frame trembled visibly. She started up, with the color flushing her face, and with more animation than I had ever witnessed in her before, she threw her arms around my father's neck, and called him "a dear good angel." He kissed her glowing cheek, and I felt the strong life

My darling her skin like the snow-dew is whiter
 Her cheeks are bluer than the diamond in bright;
 Her lips like red roses buds with honey o'erlaid;
 Her breath like the sweet-scented zephyrs of June,
 Her hair it is pure as the bright silver frost;
 Her step it is light as the deer of the mountain;
 Her eyes like calm and grand as the slumbering ocean;
 Her hair like soft ripples in gentle commotion.

Alone by the brook at the twilight I've seen her
 With her angelic look and her graceful demean;
 The wild flowers around her appeared in their glory,
 But none of the scene was the nymph of my story.
 She seemed like some sprite from the heaven
 Who descended.

In whom all the virtues and beauties were blended
 So rare as the skies that looked amingly on her;
 Where angels methinks hovered round to adore her
 And she seemed by their slanders to laugh scorn
 And thus regard my heart's most anxious desire
 Till wrapped in delight from those heavenly beams
 I worship the darling that blesses my dreaming.

The Lecture Room.

Does Science Conflict with the Bible?

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY A COMMITTEE.

A Lecture by Mrs. Corn L. V. Hatch, before the Lyceum Society of Springfield, in Lyceum Hall, Boston, Sunday, July 5, 1863.

(Photographically Reported for the BANNER OF LIGHT, by J. M. W. YANTRON.)

INVOCATION.

Oh thou infinite God, soul of great Nature, motor of all worlds, light of every sun, and author of all being—thou whose wondrous name from age to age rolls through human thought, is pronounced in every tongue and symbol in all forms of devotion, and still cannot be comprehended—thou whose power and love each moment and each second fill the universe with light and life, who art in the pulsations of every heart, and still filleth the universe with light—oh, God, from the beginning thou art, and still thou wilt not end. Thou art in present and past time the same, and the future shall find thee still unchanged. What greatness of power is thine—what infinitude—what love! And still we only know the smallest portion of these, for we see dimly through the windows of eternity, whereas thou art as the open day. We, in prison, see through the corners of immensity, while thou fillest the grand temple of the universe with thy light, as through prison bars we look, while thou art in the broad, endless space. Oh God, we know that thy love is all of thy life, and thy being is endless power, and we praise thee, for thou art our father. We come to thee for counsel and for aid, for strength, for succor in our sorrows and distress need. We come to thee for knowledge and for joy; we come to thee for life and for immortality; we come to thee for consolation and for wisdom with which to perfect our understanding. We come to thee for all things, and yet we know that thou hast bestowed them all munificently everywhere, and that thine infinite love cannot change. So let us know more of thee, that we may understand thy blessings. Let us not ask for special favors, but appreciate those thou hast given. Let us not ask thee to bless us individually, but know the blessings that are strewn around every pathway. Let us not ask thee to receive our praise alone, but to read each heart with thy soul, and understand what is there expressed. Our words fall meaningless on the air, while the aspirations of our spirits are known to thee, and thy mind can read our inmost thoughts. Therefore do we know that thou art good and just and true, and that thy divine mind will judge all in love and in mercy. Oh God, receive our praises—for we bless thee for every gift, even of sorrow and darkness, for we know that in the end, these shall work out our perfection. We bless thee for tears; they but illuminate the hues of thy love, and show the brightness of thine infinite mercy. Father, receive our prayers! Let us grow in knowledge of thee. Let us gain more wisdom, as we progress higher and higher up the steps of knowledge. Let us remember that, all of change, of darkness and decay, is but given by thee, in thine infinite love, that we may work out forever the endless progress of history. Father, receive the prayers and offerings of every mind. Some come with joy and thanksgiving, others with depression and sorrow; some come from whom death has taken loved ones, and transported them to heavenly bowers—and these mourn, for they see not the light of immortality, nor can they, through their tears, which blind the eyes, behold the lovely visions of eternal life. Oh let the mourner's heart be comforted; let the whisperings of love come to their souls, that they may feel that those who have departed are not indeed dead. And, Father, Spirit, God of Life, may we know that thou art endless and eternal; that we trust our life in thee, so may we trust eternally; that as thou hast been from the beginning, and we with thee in soul, so may we trust thee throughout endless, eternal life, and thou wilt not fail us. We know that, above the storm, above death, above the tomb, above even the desolation of worlds and the blotting out of suns, thou remainest the same, and therefore do we trust in thee, and praise thee for all blessings, for every gift, for all things in heaven and in earth, and for the light of knowledge in the human soul, which strives to know more of thee, and will praise thee for ever and ever. Amen.

"Does Science conflict with the Bible?" is the theme presented for our consideration. As we have no option in the selection of the theme, we can also have no option in the discussion of it. Things which are well established need not be apologized for; therefore, we shall speak the truth—what is regarded as such—what can be sustained without reference to the consequences.

Science, properly so called, is yet in its infancy, and especially those sciences which have a bearing on the subject under discussion, the most important of which is geology, which is yet comparatively new. While astronomy, under the form of astrology, and chemistry, under the name of alchemy, have existed for indefinite ages, that peculiar form of science known as geology is comparatively new; and, as such, open to many criticisms, and also not well established in many of its bases. But what facts are established can be clearly proved by the tangible senses of humanity, and by the usual rules of logic and of the mind.

The "Bible" is a very indefinite word, but we suppose that the Committee refer to the Jewish record known as the Old Testament, for the New Testament contains very little that could be applied to this subject. We suppose it refers more especially to those records or accounts of creation found in the book of Genesis—to some of the so-called miracles of the Bible, also; but particularly to the general Mosaic account, as it is known and adopted in Christendom. In the first place, nowhere in any intelligent community is the literal word of the Old Testament on this subject regarded as true; and we would not insult the intelligence of any audience by supposing that they so regard it. Here, under the very wing, almost, of one of the oldest theological schools in the land, where the scientific professors ignore altogether the Mosaic account of the creation, it would scarcely be in good taste for us to suppose that you adopt it; and especially when that school (the University at Cambridge) gives to the world some of the finest scientific minds of the age, who in their developments clearly reveal the fallacy of theological historians concerning the accounts of creation.

Again, even those schools of theology which claim to adopt the Bible as it is, also claim to have a spiritual interpretation for it. Therefore we cannot rely upon them. And since there are so many ways in which theologians interpret and translate this work, we scarcely think we can rely upon any of them. If we take the record as it is translated, we can only say, distinctly, clearly, and without any equivocation, that it does most entirely disagree with science, and that science most fully, in its present developments, contradicts it. In the first place, the Mosaic record is, in its present form, profoundly imperfect. And always has been regarded as such by the Jewish people. It is supposed to have a distinct bearing upon one point only, and that point, the literal descent and birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world. All other subjects seem secondary to this one, of giving the correct line of the House of David, from whence, it is said, Jesus of Nazareth originated. This seems to be the purpose of the record. If we suppose this

account to contain all the Jewish traditions or records concerning the creation, we are much mistaken, for in their records it is distinctly affirmed, that no one can understand the beginning of the world.

But, taking the literal Bible, as it has for many years been understood and accepted by the Christian world; there is presented to the mind such strange inconsistencies, that we deem it perhaps wise, in order to have our position clearly understood, to state them briefly. It is said that the world was made, and the heavens, in six days, (and nights, we suppose,) and that the seventh day was allotted to rest. But if you will observe the account, you will see that it states that the heavens were first made, and that it took five days—nearly six—to elaborate the earth. Now, it is known that the earth, compared with the universe, is but as an atom compared to a mountain of immense size; and if God could speak the sun and moon and stars into existence in one day, and it took five more days to make the earth, then his creative power fell short, for we find other worlds of greater magnitude, of greater density, and greater power, while the sun itself controls all the solar system. These six literal days and nights were supposed to complete creation. Some geologists have attempted to show—and in this have signally failed—that these "six days" referred to periods of time of immense duration; that they were distinctive periods, or ages, perhaps, which the Jews, or which the original language, for the sake of brevity, called "days;" that they are cycles in the great scale of development. Then we would respectfully ask, When did the seventh day begin, and when will it end? If the sixth days referred to infinite cycles of time, has God been resting ever since? And how long does the seventh day last? And what then became of the Sabbath? If they are not periods of time, it is strange that God could not make the world in as short a time as he could make the sun and all the stars.

Again, it is clearly shown by the revelations, not only of the sciences of astronomy and chemistry, which tell us of the geography of the heavens and of the properties of the earth, but more especially by the science of geology, that the world is more than six thousand years old; that it is impossible for the dates in the record called the Bible to be correct; and, as is clearly shown by that science, it is quite impossible to determine when the beginning of the earth was. As to the question, whether it has always been in its present form, that is a problem for future science to solve; but that such a length of time must have elapsed for the creation of certain forms as to prove the incorrectness of the Mosaic account, is certain. From the known revelations of science, from the histories which are observable in the structure of the earth, and from the nature of matter previous to its organization.

The geological theory upon this subject is, briefly, this: that all worlds were in the beginning in some chaotic state; that the substance of which worlds are made was never taken and added to the universe; that all matter must have existed from infinite time—from this fact, that there is no place outside of the universe for matter to originate in; that in some form—as vapor, or as condensed substance—it must have existed; that there may have been no form to the several portions of the universe is true; but in some part of the universe, there must have been systems, suns, worlds, from time immemorial; that infinite mind and infinite space did not dwell alone, without matter; that if they could do so, there is no place outside of them for matter to be called from, and all that is within the universe must have been within the universe forever; that time only changes its form. Now, the question simply is, how does it change its form, and by what process are worlds and systems made? There is no accurate answer to this question. Various theories have originated with astronomers on this subject. Some suppose that worlds originate in nebulous substances that exist in the atmosphere, and are floated around unorganized. Others suppose that they are fragments of broken planets, which assume, perhaps, another position. Another theory is, that the sun eliminates all worlds from its disc, and they are periodically created, born into existence, assuming an orbit, and causing an entire change in the arrangement of the solar system. Others believe that comets are incipient worlds, first thrown off from the planets, and assuming a revolution round them as satellites, and at last as worlds. In all these theories, there may be some probability; neither may be correct. But it is supposed to be known that worlds and suns are in a progressive state, by which we mean, a state of change. There may not be, perhaps, any absolute progression, but there is in the beginning of the world, and in its incipient organization, comparative chaos; that chaos is the result of matter, without an atmosphere, revolving in an incipient stage of progress, and finally, through its revolutions, producing an atmosphere, organic life commences, first in the lowest forms, as the geologic theory supposes, and finally, through infinite changes and gradations, up to the highest known form of existence, namely, humanity.

There has been a favorite theory among geologists, that this system of progress was such, that one species was the advanced stage or type of the other species beneath it, and that, finally, human beings were the advanced and progressed beings of those who were next in order beneath them. But, whichever theory be true, or if neither be true, one of two things is certain: the geological theory of creation is correct, or else the world is much older than even geologists suppose, and in that case, theology is wrong. If, as is supposed by the geologic accounts, the world was in chaos, and, according to the known computations of science, revolving round the sun on its axis, in its present orbit, it must have required at least six thousand years for any form of organic life to exist upon its surface. With the known properties of the earth itself, if in a chaotic form, and that chaos the result of heat—which is supposed by men of science—there could not have been sufficient atmosphere created by revolution, in short of six thousand years, even to produce the lowest form of organic matter. Then, when we take into consideration the infinite variety of forms, each one of which requires almost endless periods for its perfection, before the atmosphere can be prepared for any higher object, assuming that geologic account to be true, it would at least require, for the present forms of life upon the earth's surface, more than a hundred thousand years.

Geologists divide the structure of the earth into various classifications, which are known as geologic periods, a few of the most prominent of which we may mention. The Silurian period, the carboniferous period, the upper and lower sandstone periods, and, finally, those higher forms which are the result of combinations in vegetable and animal matter. Each one of these, they suppose, upon all parts of the earth, represent a comparatively similar period, and show, not the exact time of the earth's development, but its order, and arrangement. No geologist pretends to date any of these periods to a distinctive time in the past; they only profess to compare them relatively to each other, and to show, that whatever the time may have been that was required to perfect them, such and such periods, upon different sections or portions of the earth, existed at a similar time, and were the result of similar geological combinations. These, moreover, do not and cannot illustrate any definite period of progress; and according to the computations which are known with reference to, fossil remains, the deposits of animals, and various other things, within the earth, it is shown that at periods many millions of years ago, there were these forms of life—plants, fishes, huge animals, and, in some places, gigantic fossil remains are found of animals which are not

known to exist at the present day; while in other places, masses of trees, in full form, yet changed entirely in their nature to solid rock, are discovered, and these it has been ascertained, must have existed more than six thousand years ago, and perhaps twelve. When it is known that immense cedar or pine trees have been discovered in certain sections of the United States and in Central America, beneath the surface of the earth, with six or seven stratifications covering them, each one of which would have required more than a thousand years to grow and decay and pass away, it may then be computed how long it would have required to form the immense mineral and coal beds which exist beneath the surface of the earth, which belong to the carboniferous period; how long it would have required to form the deposits which constitute the alluvial period; how long it would have taken to form the sandstone periods, both upper and lower; how long it would have taken for the different deposits of lime, and the various minerals and precious stones; and, finally, for everything that exists upon the surface of the earth known as organic, animated life, which has sensation. Aside from this, various experiments and discoveries have shown that in estimating the gradual growth of a single class of animated life, ages are required. Take, for instance, that which is commonly called the coral insect. You are accustomed to call the remains of these animals "deposits." They are not so. They are simply the thrown-off shells, like the decaying bodies of any species of animals, which gradually accumulate and accumulate, until finally it is supposed they produce even islands; in any event, they form a great portion of the oceanic life. It is known that it requires a certain number of years to produce a layer one inch in thickness; and when it is found that it requires perhaps a hundred years to produce that, it is discovered that to produce the immense beds which are discovered in some places in the ocean, it must have required at least twenty-three thousand years. This, together with other developments, shows that not only past periods, but even the present forms of life upon the surface of the earth, differ with reference to the time of their creation many thousands of years from the history recorded in the Bible.

Aside from this, while we are dependent upon the Alexandrian and the Hellenic nations for our records of civilization, we have other evidences, which recent investigations and experience in other countries have furnished. We refer to those nations known as India and China, which for long years, thousands of years, have been isolated from the rest of the world. There, they claim to have distinctive records for at least twelve thousand years, and to trace their own ancestors and origin back to that period. In the Hellenic period, different nations claimed to have lived before the sun and before the moon and stars; showing to what great antiquity they dated their origin, even three or four thousand years ago. We have from the Chinese, as they tell in their own language and sacred writings, evidence of greater antiquity than Moses, greater antiquity than the origin, according to the so-called record, of the first parents in the Garden of Eden, of greater antiquity than any supposed account that exists on the earth; other sacred writings date the birth of their divinity far antecedent to the supposed origin of the world, according to the Mosaic account. Whether this be true or false, in its literal interpretation, it shows that among no other people than Christians and Jews is this account supposed to be correct; but on the contrary, all others believe the world to be more ancient, and profess to have absolute records of that fact. Whether, in the destruction of the Alexandrian libraries, any manuscripts were lost which might have revealed this, is uncertain among historians; yet it is true, that among the ancient Jews, and especially among the Egyptians, there existed what was then believed, and what is now believed to have been a correct idea or version of the first creation. It was believed by them that they knew correctly concerning the origin, not only of the earth itself, but also of the human species—that origin not transcendental or supernatural, but one which was capable of scientific explanation and understanding. But this is lost from history, and you have to depend either upon historians who are prejudiced in favor of some religion, or those who, in the absence of religion, depend upon sophistry, or else upon modern science.

There are only two ways of arriving at positive knowledge. One way is by the absolute evidence of the senses; the other, by the correct mathematical comprehension of the mind. These may, when blended, supply a fixed and definite knowledge. Now it is positively known, in geologic science—though we differ very much from geologists on many of their principal points—it is positively known that the different geological periods which are known in the earth's structure, (and the surface of the earth, compared with the whole bulk, is like the shell of an egg,) would have required many more thousands of years for their creation than it has been affirmed by theologians the world has lived. Also, it is known by historians that nations existed and passed away before the supposed creation, according to the Mosaic account. It is likewise known that in the translations of the Bibles, changes and interpolations have been purposely made to suit the desire of Christians in answering the special purpose of revealed religion. It is also known, that in all these compilations of sacred writ, there is nothing reliable, further than that the Jews, as a nation, did exist; that their tribes were wandering; that they committed all manner of oppressions and outrages; that they were taken prisoners by the Egyptians and held in slavery; that they were released from bondage by Moses, and entered Jerusalem; and that they were the terror of all surrounding tribes. Among them, it is not recognized or believed that their history had any reference to Jesus of Nazareth, and they fondly wait for the expected king who shall rule over them, and be their potentate. So that, if Christ was the Saviour of the Jews, and was to be their literal king, they all failed to recognize him; and in the absence of their being correct with reference to their expected king, we may reasonably suppose that they are also incorrect in reference to the origin of the world. Adam certainly made no record. Noah, his descendant, did not, and we do not know what man could have known and distinctly understood with reference to the creation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. And since we have, in ancient astrology, a correct and true type of Adam and Eve, in the astrological signs and symbols given to the solar system, we may reasonably suppose that they had their origin among the ancient priests, and perhaps the learned Egyptians, who, for the sake of convenience, named the constellations, and the names were afterwards introduced into the Mosaic and Jewish accounts, as literal facts. Certain it is; that many of the characters which figure in the Biblical record have their direct origin in astronomical science, and had we time, we could point directly to references made, not only to Christ and his disciples, but also to every character prominently known in the record, and even to Adam and Eve.

If the Mosaic account is true, a simple question might occur to any one in reading it. It appears that Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel; that Cain, slaying his brother Abel, was banished, and the brand of the Almighty put upon him, lest some man should kill him; that he went then to a geographical territory known as the land of Nod, and there took unto himself a wife. Now, since it is supposed that Adam and Eve were the first parents, who could have been the parents of Cain's wife? There are a variety of other trivial things in that account, which might seem astonishing, and perhaps stagger the impatient, ingenuous mind; but the only answer which you can receive

from theologians who profess to believe the whole Bible, is, that God can do anything; that nothing is impossible to him. This, to the scientific mind, is not satisfactory, and by the theological mind is not believed.

Now we do not hear in any church, even those which adhere most strenuously to the Orthodox creed, anything concerning this account of creation. We hear them valiantly appealing against science. The Church has long and seriously tried to overcome this science called geology, which reveals so perfectly the record of God's creation. It could not be done; and finally they attempt to make them go hand in hand together; and in theological universities they band the Bible as God's revealed word with one hand, and with the other a geological work, and ask you to believe both—one revealed by God, which shows that the world is but six thousand years old, and was made in six days; the other written by man, who dares to affirm that it is not true, and says that if those were days, they were long periods of time, or endeavors by some possible means to cause the days and nights of the Mosaic account to assume a sphere large enough to take in creation. Hugh Miller, in his vain endeavor to cause the Bible to correspond with geological revelations, lost his reason, and finally his life. So will any mind that attempts to make the fallacies of the theological account conform to the unmistakable proofs of science. We must give up the one, or deny the other.

In this, we do not say that the Bible is wholly wrong. In this, we do not deny the spiritual teachings of the Bible. We simply state that science, in these days, was not so far advanced as it is at the present time; that those who interpreted the Bible could not have been inspired, even if the authors were—therefore, they may have fallen short of the original meaning; that those who compiled the Bible were not inspired, even if its interpreters were, and they arranged just such manuscripts as suited their individual purposes, for the sake of perpetuating a distinctive form of religion; that the Bible has no other purpose in the Christian Church than to show the literal descent of Jesus from the House of David, and the consequence, of Christianity, and therefore, as a scientific work, it cannot be relied upon. And yet, in the book of Job and in the Psalms, we find a greater knowledge of science than many even of the present day possess—a consciousness of the currents of air, of the revolutions of the earth—which, had they been arranged according to the original manuscript, would probably have shown that not among the Jews alone, but among the Egyptians—who were undoubtedly their teachers—there existed a great amount of scientific knowledge, which, however, was at last so much entombed by superstition and prejudice, and into which was introduced so much of heathen mythology, that the truth of science could not be distinguished from that which was false, and hence the superstition that finally prevailed; that the darkness of the middle ages probably obscured much of the brightness of early history upon scientific subjects; and, if the truth were known, probably among those nations which constituted the Hellenic races, and the earlier periods of the Alexandrian races, we would find as much true knowledge of science, although exclusive, as now exists. Certain it is, that in many computations upon astronomical subjects, they were correct. Certain it is, that after the introduction of the Copernican system, while it changed the material form of creation, many of the recorded points were similar to those which had been revealed ages previous. But all this is lost sight of in the literal, material, superficial belief in the letter of the Bible. We forget the spirit, and only dwell in the external words, believing because we are told to believe, while we doubt our senses, which tell us the reverse. Why, in those days, when they believed the earth was flat, and upheld by a tortoise, and that tortoise by a serpent, that the stars revolved in glass tubes, which were transparent, that the sun and the moon revolved round the earth, each designed to be equal with the other, and give light, one by day and the other by night. Should we believe that, because it is seemingly foreshadowed and spoken of in the Bible?—and should we believe that, because revelation does not tell us any better? By no means. We must believe that which is, according to science and according to the laws of mathematics, true; we must reject all else. If there existed a doubt, however, in modern minds, with reference to that subject, that doubt would be dispelled by the revelations of geology and the progress which science has made.

Again, in those days it was supposed that the earth was really the only important planet in existence; while now, by the aid of telescopes, and the advance in the science of astronomy, we discover worlds unnumbered, any one of which would compose, perhaps, a hundred earths, and all varying in size and power and brilliancy according to their position. Then they supposed that these stars were only satellites, minute points, revolving round the earth; and in most ancient histories we find but three planets spoken of as being of any importance, and one of these is the earth itself. History, geology, chemistry and astronomy will finally compose the four sections of the square that will at last show the world, perhaps, the true secret of life. Geology is something opposite to the science called theology, inasmuch as it is the opposite swing of the pendulum, and claims too much in its revelations, while geology always claims the reverse. This will be remedied by time. Among geologists, there is no more harmony of opinion concerning the order and structure of creation, than among theologians; but there is this to be considered: geology is capable of improvement, theology is not; geology does not claim to be perfect, theology does; geology, with every new overturn of the earth, says, "We may find some new light on this subject;" when a spade is forced into the soil, they expect to find something new upon the science which they are studying; whenever an excavation is made in the earth, they suppose a new leaf will be turned in the book of creation; whenever they go out upon the mountains, they find the written word of God there, which tells of the past and the present; wherever they move, they find evidence of the past existence of creation; they find mountains that were once immersed beneath the waters; they find oceans where once was dry land; they find rivers, which, during the lapse of ages, have changed their course; they find vast plains, where once were lakes and inland seas; they find that these changes require time, and they expect by time to discover the secrets of the past. But this we know: that no man exists, nor any revelation, nor any form of work, which can tell the beginning of creation. This we know: that there exists no mind, however profound, no book, however carefully written or however mathematically composed, that can tell when God commenced to work, or when his work will end. This we know: that neither science nor religion can tell us when the particles which compose the flower were first breathed into life, or when the atoms which constitute the atmosphere you breathe first had a beginning, or when those forms, the particles of which were taken from the earth and the air, first had a being. We can only judge of the change of the form, but of the beginning, never. Of their gradually changing from one position to another, we may judge from observation in the present and by witnesses in the past, which, though dumb, speak loudly of the greatness and power of Nature. There is in the mountains and the rocks, in the deep ocean beds and in the silent cave, in the forests, thousands of centuries old, in the coral reefs, in the sparkling of the jewel, and in the deep ore imbedded beneath the soil, a voice which cannot be mistaken—letters, words, sentences, volumes, written by the careful hand of Nature—Nature, who holds her pen and dips it in the morning sky and in

the evening glow, tracing upon every leaf and flower the records of her creation. She makes no mistakes. She has no interpreters but those forms that live upon her surface. To her, there is no language which she cannot understand, nor secret which cannot be revealed. To the true lover of Nature, she shows all life and all past history; and there, and there alone, can you find the impress of the hand of God. Stored away in the caverns of the earth, imbedded beneath the soil, in rocky caves, in coal beds, in iron ore, in mines of choicest minerals and precious stones, we see the work of Nature's hand. In the carved palaces of the sea, in the shells of animals of curious forms and habitation, in the various plants that grow beneath the sea, where there is no light nor sound, save that which the winds make upon the surface, there is written the word of God. Dive down there and bring the treasures to the light—you will find them centuries old. Drag up the coral reefs, and you will find them thousands of years of age. Analyze the rocks, and you will find them of ages' growth. Investigate the structure of the earth, the mountains and the valleys, and you will find where age after age has caused the river's course gradually to change. Journey to where Niagara pours its foaming breath over rocky caverns, and you will find where, year after year, it has worn the rocks away, until perhaps a hundred miles have been so changed. This could not have been done in a day. Examine the vast bed of the Mississippi, or the great prairies of the West, where, opening wide their arms, with flowing verdure upon their bosoms, they entice the husbandman to labor, where once the Indian paddled his light canoe, but where now were green fields and luxuriant harvests, and you will see the evidence of change. Year after year, first in the form of simple blades of grass and fresh water plants, and finally through deposits of soil, these lakes and rivers have changed their course; and not in one century nor in twenty centuries could you count the gradual filling up of the soil thus made.

Surely, there is no man who can tell the beginning of these things. There is no record which can picture when the arms of the mighty Mississippi had birth, nor when the current of the vast inland lakes of this country first changed; nor can any one paint the changes which in other and remote countries have taken place; and, finally, we cannot tell but what the world is still moving and moving. In vast cycles of endless progress.

Yet read this record well. Nature, in all her volumes, is true, correct; and to those that love her, she never fails, for you can lay your head in calm confidence upon Nature's bosom, and she will never tell you falsely. Man's records and interpretations fail; languages are forgotten, or blotted out; the hieroglyphs of Egypt and Persian lore may all be forgotten; but Nature loves nothing, nor does she ever forget, but in the same language forevermore reveals to the ages her living history. The God within her speaks, saying that she is endless—endless—endless. Such are science and theology.

The gentleman on the Committee, or the audience, are invited to propose further questions on this subject, if we have failed to sustain any position assumed; or to criticize us, if they desire to do so.

Ques.—If the world has neither beginning nor end, and fixed chronology becomes a necessity in accounting for the seventh day, must not the seventh day be left in the past?

Ans.—Perhaps we do not understand your meaning exactly. It is necessary as human life is, but can only act with reference to matter and the distinctive purposes known to human beings. As to the seventh day, to which you refer, we do not think it is left in the past nor in the present, because all days, with reference to the revolution of the earth, are the same; all days with reference to each nation are the same; but every nation and every class of religious believers have their own days of worship, their sacred days; and among these, the Christian and Jewish Sabbaths are known. That is all. It is merely a consideration with reference to sacred times introduced, as we suppose, by the Jews, for the benefit of the spiritual and temporal of man.

Q.—Is it wise, in the present state of progress in this world, to suggest the thought that science conflicts with revelation?

A.—Certainly; since it cannot be avoided, if you would have any scientific progress. You must either bear the stigma of being inconsistent, or else accept that which science reveals.

Q.—The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." When was that beginning?

A.—We do not know; and it has been difficult for us to understand how they knew.

Q.—What more knowledge have spirits of creation than you have revealed to us to-night?

A.—Perhaps none. It was not what knowledge the spirits have that the Committee desired to know; they simply wished to know if science conflicted with theology.

Q.—Have spirits any means of studying the past that mortals have not?

A.—Since spirit, unencumbered by matter, may perceive more clearly in that respect, they may; and as all things in the past are daguerreotypied upon Nature, so all past histories may be thus understood, when the mind is sufficiently advanced. As far back as we can trace, we can see endless change, but no beginning.

Q.—If, according to geology, human existence only occurs through the manipulations of organic matter, how comes it that the soul, which was with God from the beginning, should inhabit the human body, and return, after a lapse of time, to God again?

A.—That is not a geological question, but somewhat of a theological one. We cannot tell the reasons for any forms of creation; we only know that they exist; that in the order of the universe, life comes into being and then passes away to another form of being. So it must be with soul. We know that organized forms exist through the gradual advancement of lower forms, or are the result, to speak more technically, of combinations; and since we can discover no combinations of soul, but merely an element, we therefore assume—and there can be no doubt of the fact—that soul, being a simple element, and not compound, passes again to the sphere of life or soul. But there is no evidence to show that organized beings, possessing souls, have not always existed. Theology assumes that fact, but theology does not know.

Q.—Is there any evidence in geology to show that soul ever existed at all?

A.—Geology does not treat of soul, but of matter.

Q.—You spoke of the soul returning to God, and seemed to assume its existence as a matter of fact.

A.—We answered the gentleman's question. Geology treats of matter. The soul is supposed to inhabit that form of matter known as humanity. Another name, if you choose, might do as well; but something exists there. Whatever that something is, it passes away when the body dies, and must return or change its position with reference to the body: either return to the primitive source of soul, or exist as a separate substance elsewhere.

Q.—Then you simply choose to call that something, for convenience' sake, "soul."

A.—We do not do so for convenience' sake. We call it so because it is believed to be such.

Q.—What predicate does that belief rest upon?

A.—The consciousness of each individual.

Q.—That is very indefinite, too.

A.—Not in the least. It is very tangible.

Q.—What can be tangible that rests upon consciousness?

A.—Intelligence is mere consciousness, and yet in

COMPENSATION.

For every act of unkindness we do to another, we shall receive in full measure upon ourselves, sooner or later, in some form or other. So it shall be of every generous act. No deed of love is ever done for the benefit of another that shall not reflect its own goodness upon the doer. No deed of hate is ever done to another that does not rebound in its own nature upon the doer. The deeds of good and ill we do to others may not be paid to us in such a way that, in our surface view of things, we shall see it as the balance of compensation. But there is an unseen world that rules the affairs of men, even in minutiae, and wisdom balances all things in strictest justice, though man does not see it. If I speak a slanderous word of some good man or woman, the malice of that ungenerous word must surely fall on me some time, somewhere, and probably in some way I have not dreamed of. If I make a cruel wound in malice on another, that injury must reflect on me, but not perhaps in a way that I shall recognize the injury I bear as a compensation for the ungenerous injury I caused another. So it eminently becomes us, if we would be made happy, to do all we can to make others happy. If we would be prosperous, to do all we can to make others prosperous. If we would not be injured, not to injure others. If we would not be wounded, not to wound others. If we would not be poor, see to it well that others are not made poor by us. There surely are powers above and around us, that, settling in higher wisdom, rule all these little affairs of men, powers and realities of which we yet take but little if any cognizance. All the affairs of all men are strictly ruled by intelligence, wisdom and justice we cannot see.

If we are slanderous, bitter, war-like, ungenerous, toward others, we shall be rewarded with the fruit of malice, and shall be unhappy. But if we are kind, peaceful, generous toward all we meet, we shall be rewarded with the fruit of goodness, and shall be happy.

A. B. C.

Brownfield Street Conference.

The subject discussed last Tuesday evening was, "WAR AND CHRISTIANITY."

Rev. Mr. Thayer thought that war was incompatible with true Christianity, but concluded that the war now in our own country is a fine illustration of what is called Christianity.

Mr. Richardson.—The world has not yet come to the comprehension of the teachings of Christ, and it may be that this is impossible in this life. A few years ago the Church recognized war, now it supports it. Evil can never be overcome by its resistance. War and true Christianity cannot go hand in hand.

Mr. Wetherill.—There is no authority for saying that Christ related evil. His teachings and practices are different from the saying. Christ related evil. There are wars of necessity, and before I am rubbed out of existence I shall fight. Christianity is common sense and nature. A man is made better for being sick, so a nation is made better for war. I would fight our present war through to the bitter end. [Applause.] Our country can only be sustained by putting this war through.

Mr. Salom asked why war was compatible with Judaism, if it was incompatible with Christianity?

Mr. Richardson.—War is incompatible with a government by love, but is compatible with a government by force. Judaism presents a government of force—Christ presents a government of love.

Dr. Gardner thought that Christ's teachings concerning war were conflicting and contradictory. The old Bible is full of war, and the old Bible is the base of Christianity. There are many incidents in our lives when it is better to resist not evil. But war is sometimes necessary and inevitable, and our present war should be put through in defiance of all Copperheads.

Mr. Bacon.—I know full well how unpopular peace devices are at the present time; I know how the war spirit rages everywhere to day, and the man who stands up in these times and tries to assuage the war element in the human bosom, must be a man of courage and bravery. I believe that the government of love is the best and most powerful government for humanity. Man can never be well governed by legislation—he may be by love. War may be a necessity, but war and Christianity are not compatible.

Mr. Burke.—Some years ago many reformers were peace men, who now are warriors. Once it was fashionable to be a peace man—now it is fashionable to be a warrior. Peace buds no comfort North or South in these times. The pulpit and the nation go for war. I think if bloody warriors could see themselves reflected in the mirror of common sense, each one would be ashamed of himself.

A. B. C.

To Travelers.

I wish to call the attention of the readers of the BANNER, who may be contemplating a trip to New York, to the great advantages offered by the Stoungton route. It was my good fortune to pass over this road a few weeks since on my way to the Empire City, so that I can speak from actual experience of the peculiar merits of this Steamboat Line. Leaving Boston from the Providence depot at half-past five o'clock in the afternoon, I encountered myself in a seat in one of the most comfortable of cars. I reached Groton about half-past nine o'clock in the evening, after a pleasant ride by rail. I must not forget to mention that very gentlemanly conductor, Mr. Smith, who came on board the train at Providence, and whose gallantry to ladies traveling without company, deserves special notice. Arriving on board the splendid steamer "The Commonwealth," we began to feel ourselves as if we were at home. A more genial and kind-hearted man than Captain J. H. Williams, we have rarely ever met with. His obliging manner, and yet graceful courtesies to strangers, at once insure for him the respect and good will of all who chance to come within his sphere. The "Commonwealth" is an excellent accommodation for voyagers of all ages, and such a man at the helm as Captain Williams, it is no matter of surprise to us, that people traveling either on business or pleasure to New York, prefer the combined attractions of the Stoungton Line, to the long and dusty ride by rail. If the first experience of travelers by this route be half as agreeable as mine proved to be, I am sure they will never visit New York by any other line. To the public generally I recommend the Stoungton route, as being in every sense of the word worthy of their patronage and support.

O.

To Correspondents.

[We cannot expect to return rejected manuscripts.]

B. W. R., CORNER, ILL.—We do not know, is our answer to your first question. Our opinion is, that you had better not move in that direction at present. It is not a humbug, and yet not all truth. In answer to your second question, if we could inform you of the P. O. address of Prof. Anderson, we can only say we have him in Boston a few days hence; but whether he is here now, or not, we cannot inform you.

B. T. D., NORTH WENTHAM.—You can ask the questions again, if you like, and they may or may not be answered. Try the experiment. The correspondence can be kept up the same as between two friends in the earth-life. A deduction will be made by the medium, without doubt.

H. E. M., NEW YORK CITY.—Mr. C. B. Foster, the medium, was, as yet, asleep, in Lowell, Mass. We are of the opinion a letter will reach him at that point.

ALL SORTS OF PARAGRAPHS.

The reader will find lots of good things in the BANNER this week.—Literature, Lectures, Spirit Messages, Current Events, Poetry, etc., etc. Those who purchase a copy every week at the periodical depot, should secure two copies of this number, and send one to some friend, and request him, or her, to subscribe at once. This is the best agency a newspaper establishment can have. When we reach the hearts of the multitude with the beautiful teachings of the Higher Life, those hearts must and will respond, to scatter such teachings broadcast throughout the land.

THANKS.—We are under obligations to Mrs. H. F. M. Brown, Mrs. M. Moulthrop, Wm. F. Jamieson, Mr. L. B. Brown, Miss Louise T. Whittier and Mr. Thomas Middleton, for their timely services in reporting the proceedings of Spiritual Conventions which have recently taken place.

The anonymous writers who assail us and our cause occasionally in the columns of various newspapers, remind us of the wind whistling through a keyhole.

"Lecturers, teachers, preachers, etc., ought to be the best kind of types extant," says a correspondent; and we incline to the same opinion. We feel that it is all-important that lecturers should especially so conduct themselves as not to cast the least stigma on our beautiful and holy faith. It mortifies us when we hear of the shortcomings of any of the teachers of the Spiritual Philosophy.

Ladies will find a splendid assortment of lace, embroidery, hosiery, linens, muslins, cambrics, handkerchiefs, and various other kinds of light goods which they are constantly in need of, at the store of J. M. Beckett, 74 Hanover street, opposite Elm street, at prices far cheaper than the same kind of goods can be found elsewhere. The proprietor of the establishment is a very polite and affable gentleman, and nothing is more pleasing to him than to give the ladies good bargains in their purchases.

We are to have another picnic soon—so Dr. Gardner says. The when and where will of course be duly chronicled, as the Doctor never does things by halves.

We have politics and trade, and the daily dust of life rising with the morning mist and settling with the dew; but over all things, serene and silent and starry, rises the heaven of a nation's soul—in literature.

Any man can tell a truth easier than a lie; can do a good deed easier than a bad one; can be honest easier than dishonest. The natural inclination is to do right, and it is easier to do it than a wrong. It is not an irksome task, as some maintain; a sacrifice of all pleasures; a hard, doleful crucifixion of the natural man; to do right; far from it. Right lies in the straight-forward path of life; wrong is in the by-ways and behind the hedges. To do right is both easy and pleasant. Righteous smiles upon her followers, and pays them well for their service. There is glory in the right, and every body knows it. To live honorably, is to get the world's esteem. Men know this. Why, then, do they not so live? Ah, that old theory, that it is hard to do right, has frightened them from an attempt to live by the principles of honor.

The recent elections in Vermont, Maine and California, resulted in the complete success of the Republican tickets.

The most agreeable of all companions is a simple, frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive greatness—who loves life, and understands the use of it; obliging, alike at all hours; above all, of golden temper, and steadfast as an anchor. For such a one we gladly exchange the greatest genius, the most brilliant wit, the profoundest thinker.

Thanks, Laura, for your "shadow." It will be placed in our picture gallery.

THE FABLES.

The press is free,
As it will ever be,
And untrammelled.
Let despots live in awe,
And rule by Reason's law,
Or let their influence draw
On them dislaid!

A little boy once said to his aunt—"Aunt, I should think that a man must be an awful sight of trouble to God." "He must be trouble enough, indeed," I should think," she answered. "I don't see how he came to turn out so, when there was no devil to put him up to it," said the boy.

The slaves are running out of Maryland so fast that it will soon be a free State.

A new peer has been created in England from the literary ranks. R. Monckton Milnes has become Baron Houghton. The London Times says he is eminently fitted for the dignity, being respectable in many things, but superior in none.

The boot-black urchins about our streets, are schooling themselves to be, when full-grown men, thieves and vagabonds. The authorities should have an eye to this class of nuisances immediately.

There are times, when, although speech might be silver, silence is gold.

Any one who chooses, can see in a shop window on Washington street the effects of Southern right living, by looking at a card photograph of a lacerated slave.

A thousand Sabbath Schools have contributed a thousand tracts each to aid the cause of temperance in the army.

Mexico.—The French Government does not seem at all disposed to disappear, but is raising troops, fortifying and annoying the French, apparently to some purpose.

The French say that the death of a young horse is as that of a calf. That may be; but, upon the whole, we prefer beef to see.

They have the same sort of mock auction shops in London that no long infested New York. A befuddled country clergyman writes a grievous letter to an English paper about it.

Never marry a woman till you know where her dress ends and her soul begins.

The rumor in diplomatic circles in Washington is that President Juarez is now in that city, keeping the strictest incognito. He had several interviews with Mr. Seward, to whom he is said to have unfolded a plan for the maintenance of the Republic of Mexico, and for driving the French out of it.

Digby thinks a hero woman must possess a large amount of masculinity.

The Boston Transcript speaks of a clergyman who is accustomed to seek recreation from the fatigue of too long sermons by devoting every Monday to labor editorial. Says a master bricklayer to his apprentices, after supper, "Now, boys, as we have got through with our work for the day, we'll go down cellar and play saw wood." "And so they" reconverted.

The expedition to Lawrence was a gallant and perfectly well blown attack, says the Richmond Examiner.

Indeed! But when Gen. Gillmore threw Greek fire into Charleston, that was really, was it? Charleston may strain at a gnat, but Lawrence must swallow a camel.—N. Y. Independent.

Start.—The great secret of the superior health of the English is the greater amount of quiet sleep. The Americans, as a nation, are wearing out prematurely for want of rest.—Dr. Hall.

An English writer says, in his advice to a young married woman, that their mother Eve married a gardener. Some one wittily remarked that it might be added that the gardener, in consequence of the match, lost his situation.

A thick-headed quaker being worried by the Rev. Sydney Smith in an argument, took his revenge by exclaiming: "If I had a son who was an idiot, I would make him a parson." "Very probably," said Sydney; "but I see your father had a different opinion."

The sins of ignorance are most numerous, but the sins of knowledge are most dangerous.

Ardent spirits are unfavorable to bodily toil. The greatest pedestrians walk on water.

People who talk of the "rendition" of a song or a drama, are informed that such a use of the word is incorrect. "Rendition" is the one which should be employed. "Rendition" is a surrender, as when the "rendition" of Sidiell and Mason was decided.

We are no more born for ourselves than we are born for ourselves.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.—In the neighborhood where we once lived, a man and his wife were almost constantly quarrelling; during the quarrels their only child, a boy, was generally present, and of course had caught many of his father's expressions. One day, when the boy had been doing wrong, the mother, intending to chastise him, called him and said, "Come here, my boy. What did you do that for?" The boy, completely folding his arms and imitating his father's manner, replied, "See here, madam, I don't wish to have any words with you."—Es.

Health and Happiness.

Of all the blessings that are bestowed upon man, health is the greatest and most important; without it what is life? Life without health is misery; existence with this desirable ingredient is beautiful. If man kind were only sufficiently developed to understand this important problem, health even in the present day could be enjoyed by thousands who now have not its advantages, and in a generation or two, health and happiness would be the universal lot of man.

J. T. A.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

BOSTON.—SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, LYONS HALL, TEMPLE STREET, (opposite head of School street).—Meetings are held every Sunday, at 2-3 and 7-8 P.M. Admission Free. Lecturers engaged:—Miss Lizzie Dole, Sept. 27; Mrs. Sophia L. Chappell, Oct. 4 and 11; Mrs. Fanny Davis Smith, Oct. 18.

CONFERENCE HALL, NO. 14 BROADWAY, BOSTON.—The Spiritual Conference meets every Tuesday evening, at 7-8 o'clock.

LOWELL.—SPIRITUALISTS hold meetings in Wells Hall. The following lecturers are engaged to speak, forenoon and afternoon:—Sept. 27, B. Brewster, 8 o'clock; Sept. 28, J. H. Pomeroy, 8 o'clock; Oct. 1, M. A. Middlebrook, Nov. 1, 12 and 8 P.M.; Miss Maria L. Beckett during Oct.; Miss Nellie J. Temple during Jan.; Annie R. Simmons, first two Sundays in Feb.; Mrs. C. F. Weeks, last two Sundays in Feb.; Mrs. Sarah A. Hunk, during March.

MEETING, MASS.—MUSIC HALL has been hired by the Spiritualists. Meetings will be held Sunday, afternoon and evening, speakers engaged:—Mrs. Laura D. Foster, Oct. 27; Mrs. A. M. Middlebrook, Oct. 28, 29 and 30; Miss Nellie J. Temple, Nov. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

QUINCY.—Meetings every Sunday, at Johnson's Hall, services in the forenoon at 10-11, and in the afternoon at 2-3 o'clock. Speakers engaged:—Mrs. M. E. Townsend, Sept. 27.

PORTLAND, ME.—The Spiritualists of this city hold regular meetings every Sunday in Mechanics' Hall, corner of Congress and Ouse streets. Sunday school and free conference in the forenoon. Lectures afternoon and evening, at 8 and 7-8 o'clock. Speakers engaged:—Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Sept. 27; Emma Houston, month of Oct.; S. J. Finney, month of Nov.; Mrs. A. M. Spencer, Dec. 2nd and 9th; Isaac F. Greenleaf, Dec. 30 and 31.

SARASOTA, ME.—The Spiritualists hold regular meetings every Sunday afternoon and evening, and a Conference every Thursday evening, in Pioneer Chapel, a house owned exclusively by them, and capable of seating six hundred persons. Speakers engaged:—Mrs. A. M. Middlebrook, Sept. 27, 28, 29, 30, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13; Charles A. Hayden, Nov. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

NEW YORK.—DODWORTH'S HALL. Meetings every Sunday morning and evening, at 10-11 and 7-8 o'clock. The meetings are free.

A CERTIFICATE.—I have been troubled with Catarrh in its worst form, for the last twenty-five years, and after trying some of the best physicians in Boston, and receiving only a temporary relief, I at last resolved to try a healing medium, and I was under the treatment of Mrs. R. Collins about four months, and my Catarrh was cured. I would advise those who are suffering from this or any other disease, to give Mrs. Collins a call, as I am convinced that she is one of the best mediums of the kind in the city.

Yours, doc., J. E. MORSE.

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READERS OF THE BANNER will bear in mind that our DOLLAR sale is J. F. Snow, 6 Cedar street, N. Y., will get by return mail good Steel Pens than you can get any other way. We have used them. J. F. S.

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IN considering the race and his destiny, I view him in three lights; (1) as that which is born in conception and birth; which I call his pre-natal state; (2) in that which intervenes between his birth and the death of his body; which I call his post-natal state; (3) in that which begins at the death of the body and never ends, which I call his disembodied state; or, his life within the life.

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These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earthly life to that beyond—whether for good or evil. But those who leave the earth-sphere in an undeveloped state, eventually progress into a higher condition.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

THESE CIRCLES ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC. The Banner Establishment is subjected to considerable extra expense in consequence, therefore those who feel disposed to aid us from time to time, by donations, to dispense the bread of life thus freely to the hungering multitude, will please address "BANNER OF LIGHT," Boston, Mass. Funds so received promptly acknowledged.

The Seances are held at the BANNER OF LIGHT OFFICE, No. 155 WASHINGTON STREET, Room No. 3, (up stairs), on MONDAY, TUESDAY and THURSDAY AFTERNOONS. The doors are closed at precisely three o'clock, and no person admitted after that time.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED

Thursday, Sept. 10.—Invocation: "Psychometry." Questions and Answers: James Whitford, of Cornwall street, London, Eng.; George Hollingdale, to his brother; William K. Perry, late of the 11th Ohio Reg., Co. G; Thomas Kent Williams, to his father, in Jackson, Miss.; J. P. Trest, of Gloucester, Mass.

Monday, Sept. 14.—Invocation: "Will you explain the full meaning of this passage in John, where Jesus said, 'Father up the fragments, that nothing be lost'—referring to the loaves and fishes? Questions and Answers: Fanny Payson, of Montclair, N. J.; to her father, in New York City; Walter, a slave, and daughter of Major Jason Conrad, of New Orleans, La., to her father; Timothy Craven, to his wife, Mary, in New York City.

Tuesday, Sept. 15.—Invocation: "The Attainment of Christ." Questions and Answers: Cynthia Downing, to his brother Thomas Downing, of Springfield, N. Y.; Harriet Cummings, to her mother, in Troy; Col. Moses Dolson, to wife, Evelyn Dolson, of Richmond, Va.

INVOCATION.

Oh God, our Father and Mother, here within the sacred influence of human love we kneel before thee, and upon the altar of human spirit we lay our offerings. Oh our Father and our Mother, these offerings, some of them, are born of sorrow and some of joy; but we know that each and every offering that the human soul brings to thee will be accepted, and that "well done good and faithful servant," will be their reward. Oh Spirit of Undying Love, we praise thee for the gift of life with its countless manifestations and vast variety of form, whether it be good or evil. For all life we praise thee, oh our Father, Oh Spirit of Eternal Truth, while we stand before thee craving thy blessing, may we also be willing to bestow ours upon fallen and weak humanity. May we, oh Father, be willing to extend the right hand of mercy and forgiveness to every erring son and daughter of thine. Oh Father and Mother, we know they are dear to thee, and should be even so to us. Oh God, as we visit earth may we be enabled to teach thy children the law of love and forgiveness, that they shall cherish in their hearts no enmity toward any of thy children. Oh our Father, when that portion of thy family who have learned to know thee through that new dispensation called modern Spiritualism, when they shall meet the fallen ones of earth, oh God, may we never see them turning the cold shoulder, or lifting the lip in scorn to any of thy children who may be poorer off than themselves. Oh God, we thank thee for the glorious privilege of return. We praise thee that we are this day permitted to speak to the children of earth through the weak temple of mortality. And though our own bodies are crumbling to dust, yet we thank thee for the manifestation of life called death, and though by death we have been deprived of our earthly bodies, yet we own the robbery just, and thank thee, oh our Father, for the same. Mighty Spirit, the world as yet knows little of thee. It wanders far, far through the regions of thought to find thee, but fails to look for thee within the sanctuary of the human soul. Oh, may it be our noble and divine mission to lead these earthly children within the temple of Self, there to kneel down and worship thee in spirit and in truth, for well we know that though we look outside the human soul for thy love, thine infinite justice and mercy, still there is none other than we find within ourselves. So, our God, it is a fitting temple where-in to fall down and worship that ever present spirit that never forsakes us. Oh our Father, lead us still onward, up higher, still higher to thee; and at last, oh crown us with perfection and beauty, such as the human soul ever aspires to. And to thee be all honor and glory forever and ever.

Sept. 7.

Request of the Invisibles.

Hereafter we shall make it a special request, that some one or more of the friends attending these circles will furnish us with a subject on which to make a few remarks during the afternoon seance. It has been affirmed by many persons, that our medium was well acquainted with the subject upon which she was to speak, prior to her coming to this place. Now to obviate this unbelief upon the part of our friends, we particularly desire that the subject for discussion be presented after we have control of our medium.

Sept. 7.

"Thou Shalt have no other Gods before Me."

This afternoon the theme upon which we are to speak is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me."

It has been said that this proclamation or command of Deity was given upon Mount Sinai to the ancient Egyptian, who was the special delegate appointed by the Most High to deliver this to the people. Now that this may not be truth, according to the letter of the proclamation, we are ready to admit, but we are in noways disposed to doubt its truth concerning the spirit of the command; for we find that spirit living broadcast everywhere in this nineteenth century.

Let us see how this spirit lives, and who are its worshippers. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," so said the God of the ancient Israelites. "Thou shalt bow down to none other, for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

Let us look at the miser as he counts over his hoard of treasure. Shall we not see upon the face of every glittering coin this same command, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me?" Does not the miser become a true worshipper? Does he not obey this command implicitly? Is not that daily command his God? Does it not rule him in all his walks through life? Let him go where he will through life, it is con-nected with every undertaking. It is engraved upon the face of the idol, and he becomes, as he is aware of it, a willing worshipper and servant to the God of Mammon.

Again, we enter your churches or houses of modern worship, and there, in spiritual meaning, if not in material, we see this same inscription written upon the dread which they worship. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," says the Orthodox. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," says the Baptist. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," says

the Universalist. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," says the Catholic. And the same command we find written upon your Spiritual walls. That which is nearest and dearest to the human heart we are apt to worship. Idolatry seems to be inherent to the human spirit. Why is it so? Of necessity it may be. Where is my God to be found? he cries. The human soul points one to Mount Sinai; another to the Church; and another to some far-off heaven. We go here and there as we are directed, but cannot find our God there. We turn within our soul and there upon the throne of human reason, we find this same inscription, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me." Reason declares this to humanity. Now as this human reason is the only oracle between man and the Almighty, were it not well to hear its call, to abide by its power? We think we should be safe if the human spirit had no other guide to lead it to heaven but human reason; for that is a thing which must dwell forever with us.

So it is because of the existence of human reason that we may expect to find God. Some tell us that he is here, some there, because human reason differs—because all are not constituted alike—because there is a variety pervading this human family. Is it right? We think it is, for the wisest and best of beings made it, and therefore it must be good.

True, that which is human justice to me may not be such to you. Your reason may ignore and set aside that which I call good and true. But shall I complain because your reason differs from mine? Not if I understand the unfolded volume of Nature. Surely I cannot complain of you, my brother, because you do not bow down to my God and worship as I do, for I well know that the Infinite has given you a way of your own, by which to find heaven, a God of your own to worship. My God does not say to you, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me." He only utters that command or proclamation to me. It is not for you. So it is with reference to the entire human family. Each has a God of their own. He enunciates a command for them, and not for us.

Yet some there are whose feeble intellects are so feeble with regard to God, that you might almost be tempted to say that they had no God, no guiding star, no bright beacon-light to show them the way to heaven. Yet if you study those weak intellects closely, you will, I think, perceive at least a small star, large enough for them, clear enough to shine upon the way of life for them, and if they are satisfied with the light which is theirs, surely we ought to be. Yet in the order of our own infinite being, we find that we are continually impelled to assist all who are beneath us in progress, who have not attained so many steps as we have in the ladder of human progress and wisdom. It is our duty, because it is a part of the great propelling power of our being to show them that which is ours, and if they are ready to receive it, rest assured they will; but if their souls are not unfolded so that they are in a condition to receive that which is good and true in our nature, we should not blame them.

Let us consider that in finding fault with any one of God's creatures, we are also finding fault with our Father. He made them all, and we are not to declare that he did not create in wisdom and infinite love. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," Oh, I would to God that every child of our Father did clearly understand this divine command; for did they, they would have no need of wandering into far-off places to find God, or ask any other human soul to point out to them the way to heaven. Let them only consult as much of God as is within their own being—then the great Infinite Spirit will never condemn. Sept. 7.

Questions and Answers.

Ques.—Did God intend human reasons to differ?

Ans.—Inasmuch as they do differ, we are to suppose that God intended them so.

Q.—If we do not have one God to worship, then how shall we know we are worshipping the true God?

A.—It is said that God created of one blood all the nations of the earth. By that we are to understand that of one principle God formed all human spirits. Now with regard to the oneness of Deity, we believe that there is an infinite principle of good which has given you human understanding and reason, precisely enough for your demands. There is one God, one principle of goodness, which we all worship; but we all worship according to our condition of unfoldment. The rose cannot worship God according to the fashion of the lily, and who shall say that one God-worship is superior to the other? Surely no one, although there is a difference in the worship of the rose and the lily. And if diversity exists in the lower forms of Nature, is it not equally great in the intellectual kingdom? If this difference in human reason did not exist, where would have been beauty, power? where the justice? All these divine combinations come from this diversity of human reasons. If there was a oneness of human reasons, there would be no incentive to development or progress.

Q.—Why does this difference exist?

A.—It is by trouble, by sorrow, by that which you term sin and crime, that you know aught of the existence of the opposite. It is by the evil that surrounds us that we are able to perceive the good. The rose and the lily are two different flowers. If all were alike, none would comprehend that they were diverse, that they were endowed with immortality; none would comprehend themselves in the slightest degree, because they would have no individuality; for where would be human individuality if human reason were the same in all men and women?

Q.—If there is but one God, why do some persons worship a different God from others?

A.—Surely not a different God. Do you suppose, my friend, that the God of the Catholic differs from your God in essence, in principle?

Q.—No, not in essence, but in form. Why does human reason differ upon this matter of religion? All agree that the sun is warm.

A.—No, we do not think that all agree upon even that point, for some declare that it is the opposite. In latitudes that differ from your own, some persons declare that the power emanating from the sun is cold, not heat.

Q.—Do you know of one thing, in an eclectic point of view, that all persons agree upon?

A.—No, we know of none; nor can they prefer hope to do so, for each human spirit is a world of human intelligence in itself, complete in itself, yet attached to every other human intellect. Now if this law exists among the lower orders of life, it also exists with your planetary worlds, else there would be confusion. The law of attraction and repulsion would cease to exist. If your planet, the earth, did not differ from the sun, the two might mingle together, as two drops of water often blend together, or sink into each other, for there would be no law to keep them apart, because there would be no individuality clustering round them. Now if you are an offshoot from the great mind of God, then you must, by virtue of infinite law, differ from all other individualities.

Q.—Then human reason seems to harmonize upon this point?

A.—We believe that human reason, or that portion of human reason that may be said to exist in the same sphere of action with your own, does harmonize on that point, if not on others. You may say that this or that way is not the right way to heaven. A close observer, we think, must perceive that the human reason can never enter heaven by any other door, save that which is appropriated by itself. We do more than believe this—we know it—for experience has given us this knowledge. Without experience, we have only belief; with it, we have the more perfect, which is knowledge. Sept. 7.

Samuel Colburn.

I have begged the privilege to come here to-day, I ought not to ask it, I know, since I was foolish enough to willfully give up my own life; but I am so terribly disappointed in what I see here in this new world, that I am here so early in the day, begging that my friends may give me the privilege of telling them just why it was that I committed suicide.

I knew something about this spirit-commonion before death, but not enough to make it of any value to me. I heard of it, and I saw something of it, but if I had been told what a great mistake I was about to make, I don't think I should have taken my own life. I was seriously unwell, and got tired of this side of life, and I thought the other could not be any worse, so I thought there could be no harm in my trying it. It was not very pleasant to find ourselves thrust into a place reserved for suicides, and to be told that it was our own fault, that we did it ourselves, and to know that we may be obliged to wait, we do not know how long, for Nature to work in a way that will enable us to return to earth again.

But I thank God for one thing, and that is, you want and anybody there who tells you that you'll ever be any worse off. They all say you are seeing the worst of your trouble, and if you can only get back to earthly conditions, and from there take up the attitudes you have dropped, you'll do well enough after that. I've made a desperate effort. I thank God for this success. I did not expect to be able to speak here to-day.

Ask my friends for me—those who truly mourn my absence, to visit some place where I can come, and I shall be benefited by it, if they are not; and I think they'll not lose anything by it. I am ashamed to tell my name. I lost it. I ought to own it now, but no matter. Samuel Colburn, of this city. Sept. 7.

Daniel Temple.

I'm from Georgia. Is there any way of my sending a letter there? [Not at present, but there will be shortly.] What do you mean by that? [That communication will be opened in some way.] Well, I've acquaintances in Springfield, Illinois. Can I send there? [Yes.]

This is rather new business. I feel not exactly at home. You're Yankee, I take it? [That's what they call us, I believe. Don't be afraid to speak on that account.] Well, I seem to have been a little unfortunate at Wagner, and I should like in the first place to inform my friends of my death; next place to inform them that I can come back; then, a little further on, I want the privilege of going home in the same way as I came here. [Your friends will have to provide a medium.] Yes, I suppose so. You say there's no communication open. How about Sumner, got it? [I guess it's down.] Well, it's no use to try, I suppose, to send word home if you can't get it through. What is it necessary to give in order to be known? [Any facts, such as your name, age, residence, &c.] My name was Daniel Temple. My age, thirty-nine—between thirty-nine and forty—near forty. Before this war I was a planter. Oh yes, a slaveholder. By the way, you have more slaves here, if I do not mistake, than we have black slaves at the South.

I have a friend in Springfield, Illinois. I'd like to speak with him, if he's not too rabid in his sentiments to have anything to do with a rebel. If he is on as good terms with me now as he was before the war broke out, I'll solicit an interview with him. Is it against the rules? [Not at all.] His name is Philip Barge. He visited me a short time before the war broke out. We had some little business together, and in the course of our remarks, I asked him what about this new religion that was flooding the North. He said he did not know anything about it himself; said he did not know, but had heard about it.

Be kind enough to inform him that I'll give him the first manifestation—that is, if he's not heard any more about it since that time—if he'll meet me at any such place as this. Good-day. Sept. 7.

Uncle Jackey Johnson.

I promised some friends if there was any truth in Spiritualism, I would come back after death if I should go there they did. And, as I find it true, I felt as if I ought to keep my promise. It is not for me to give a description of this new world. I could not do it if I should attempt; but I will do all I can to furnish my friends with a knowledge of this new world in my poor way.

Be kind enough to tell my friends that Uncle Jackey Johnson finds the spirit-world just where he was told he would find it; that he is just the same as he was when here, with the exception of the body, and if any of them are disposed to meet him half way over the bridge, he'll do all he can to give them a knowledge of this post-mortem world. Good by. Sept. 7.

Thomas H. Kelts.

I—I—must ask you a few questions. Is this Boston? America? [Yes.] What is the day of the month? [Sept. 7th.] I thought so. This morning between six and seven o'clock, I met with an accident on the road from Birmingham to London, England. I was an engineer on the railroad. I met with an accident, lost my life between Birmingham and London, Sept. 7th, you say?

I have heard something about this Spiritualism, and told my friends if ever I should go before they did, I would come back with evidence unmistakable, so that there could be no mistake. I lost my own life this morning, by an accident, while on the rail-car going from Birmingham to London. You understand, this morning, between six and seven o'clock I died.

My name, Thomas H. Kelts. I was born in Birmingham, England. I have a father, two sisters there, and a brother in New South Wales, and they are scarcely apprized of my death. Your BANNER OF LIGHT is sold there occasionally—sometimes, two or three times in a year. You will publish, of course. [Certainly.] The conductor, that is what you call him? [Yes.] His life is spared. His name is Vance, William Vance; he is from your way.

[Can you give the Agent's name?] Costque. [Is he President or Agent?] Agent. Sept. 7.

Invocation.

Oh thou in whose wondrous presence we are and ever must be, we come to thee this hour with the fullness of gratitude, offering the deepest and most glad praise that belongs to soul. Oh our Father and our Mother, in view of the mighty blessings that have been showered continually upon us from the dawning of intellectual life, we can but praise continually. Though the shadows sometimes fall upon us, and midnight darkness seems to settle around us, yet even in darkness there thou art; even in wide thy presence we feel; even though clasping hands with hell, lo! thy presence is felt, and we rejoice in consequence. Oh our Father, we praise thee for those great minds that return from the spirit-world, sounding out glad tidings of joy to every son and daughter of thine. Oh Spirit of Infinite Love and Mercy, we praise thee for those lights in the form of great minds, who in every age have stood upon the shore of Life, pointing to great attainments. We praise thee also for those lesser lights that few have recognized, yet their influence has been felt by all humanity. So, oh Father, for great and small we praise thee, and for thy greatest blessing that which we feel, to be infinite in itself—the blessing of return, the blessing of coming to morials, those dear ones that are shrouded in temples that are fast falling away from them. For the privilege of communing with them we thank thee, and when they, too, shall stand with us and drink freely and fully of

the living waters of Eternal Life, as we now do, then they, too, will join us in the glad song of praise; then they, too, will feel what they cannot now, that they are blessed by living in this present age. Oh, our Father, we kneel in thy presence, and adore thee, not only now but throughout eternity. Sept. 8.

Immortality of the Soul.

In accordance with the request made by the speaker yesterday, we presume some of the friends present will be ready to furnish us with a theme upon which to speak this afternoon.

"Is the desire for immortality the best proof that the soul is immortal?"

Or, in other words, that we as human beings combined with spirit are immortal. The term soul has never been fully comprehended. It is sometimes applied to one portion of the internal, by mortality sometimes to another. But we believe it generally has reference to that part of the human body that outlives the physical, passes beyond the tomb, or endures forever.

We believe that the desire for immortality which we find inherent in our nature, is one of the strongest proofs that we are immortal, if not the strongest. We will not presume to declare it to be the strongest, but one of the strongest proofs of man's immortality. If not given for good and use, why is it with us? Why do we desire immortality? Why do we cling to life? We do not only cling to life on the earth, but to life as it is throughout the entire future.

The soul, or immortal part of man, is conscious of its immortality, fully conscious that it is destined to exist throughout all the future. It cannot be destroyed, for it is not compound in its nature, and that which is compound must be destroyed or resolved into other conditions. The soul is a principle; that cannot be compound in its nature; for if it was it would soon pass into some other form.

The human sense have ever been prone to weigh and measure all things by themselves, by their own inherent power. If a fact is presented to mortality instantly it is thrown into the balance of common sense and of reason, there to be weighed and tested. If found worthy of acceptance, it will be sure to be received, if not, you certainly have the privilege of rejecting it. But we are sorry to say that the mass of minds have not availed themselves of this great God-given gift, for here and there we find minds advancing certain and peculiar ideas of their own, and those minds have always had followers, those who believed on them, always had those following in their wake, who possess little individuality of their own. So they have blindly been led this way or that way, according to the dictum of their teachers.

In searching for proof of the immortality that rests within us, for that which is destined to outlive earthly conditions, we sometimes travel deep into the mineral kingdom. Yes, in order to obtain certain kinds of proof we are obliged to go there, to trace out effort from cause, to travel down, down into the past, and read her histories; for she ever writes her orations and leaves them for the clairvoyant eye to read. And though she covers up the creations of yesterday with the creations of to-day, yet we may descend into the past and read her sealed volumes. By virtue of this clairvoyance, we find that there is a species of immortality even in the mineral kingdom. In the lowest orders of life we are able to conceive of it. Although form is continually changing, yet we find a species of immortality, a portion of that which is so grand and beautiful in the human, that we cannot doubt its immortality, else how should we be able to gain any knowledge of the past? If our spirits could not penetrate into the mighty past, we should never be able to gain that proof positive, that nothing dies according to the accepted sense of the term.

Now, then, if immortality exists in lower life, should we not expect to find it in the higher or more intellectual life? Surely, surely we should. But we have still stronger proofs, stronger to some minds than any we have given. Those proofs are these: By clairvoyance we penetrate the future. We gather knowledge from souls that have lived, moved, and acted upon your earth thousands of years ago. They give us their history. They tell us of their helplessness to immortality; they preach to us of the glory, the happiness which is theirs forevermore. Everywhere immortality stares us in the face.

It has been said by certain friends that have visited you from time to time, that the desire that was found within the soul of man was one of the strongest proofs of the soul's immortality. We believe it. Again we reiterate it to be one of the strongest proofs, for we know that our God never gave us a desire that he did not also give us a corresponding response to the same. We know that every legitimate desire of the human soul must be gratified. All nature in the past, present, and as much as we have learned of the future, proves this to be so. And yet the human soul will ever speculate concerning its immortality. And yet with all its speculations and study, the human soul in mortal form can learn only a little of the future, can gather only a few rays of light compared with the knowledge, the light, that is clustered about the disembodied spirit.

So we know, we expect, that this great human mind will ever be liable to mistakes, while pursuing its spiritual investigations. We would to God that we could take you with us into the realm of spirit, and allow you to view scenes that we have viewed, allow you to read pages of human history that we have read, allow you to stand with us, in spirit, upon the shores of earth-life, and read the human record of human souls. Could you but stand by the soul-side—if we may be allowed the expression—of one who is professedly infidel, as he contemplates the insatiable form of some loved one, you would perceive the desire for immortality even there. "Is it dead?" he asks. "Is it gone forever from me? Shall I no more recognize my darling one in the hereafter? Oh, I hope I shall; perhaps I shall. I will hope for it, though I cannot believe such to be the case."

Oh mortal, do you believe that the Infinite would ever allow you to hope for a reunion with your lost one, if he did not intend to give you bright flowers in answer to that hope? Were it not to be realized or outwrought as you desire? Why this is so, you cannot realize, nor can we. We know, we do not believe, that every legitimate hope that is born of the human soul will be answered. Ask your own souls; the answer will come. Sept. 8.

Questions and Answers.

Ques.—Then the condition of spirit-life is indeed as you say, only a higher evidence of immortality?

Ans.—It is. But we take a stand a little higher. We have that in a more perfect and beautiful form. At every revolution of the wheel of progress, we have still higher proofs of immortality given us. If we have evidences of immortality while in the form, we certainly have them more perfect in the spirit-world.

Q.—Please give your ideas concerning the immortality of the Bahman? Hudson Tuttle says they are not immortal.

A.—As distinct individualities, they are not immortal, and you have many such even in your enlightened land. Allow us to illustrate. Here is a subject, we will suppose, who during their entire physical or material life, have leaned upon some power outside themselves. They have never thought, or had any power of their own, who have never seemed to develop thought, and who have lived, as it were, with a purpose in view. Having no aim to, plan, they live, move, see, hear and act in that way, and when they die, they are like automata, because they are not the soul; they are

far praisers because their neighbor does so; and then they live, as it were, but artificial lives. What is the consequence? Why, we find such persons taking a low stand in life. We find that there is so much of a shadow of individuality about them, that we cannot call them immortal or individuals. Yet we know that they must ever live true subjects to individual law. But their walk has been so slow, so very slow when compared with others in earth-life, that we do not wonder that many are at last involuntarily drawn into the knowledge that they are not immortal. The question was some time since discussed at this place, with regard to the immortality of idiots. It was likewise said by the intelligences that answered the question, that if the deformity existed alone in the physical, then the idiot was blessed with individual immortality; but if in spirit, then such an one must be again into the great workshop of mentality and again be outwrought through mortality, before it could hope to find its proper place in the spirit-world. Do you understand us?

Q.—Do spirits that once lived on the earth ever progress so high in spirit-life as to be unable to return to earth again?

A.—We are told that there are many who have progressed or outlived their earthly tendencies to so great an extent that they are unable to enter the sphere of your earth again, except through some intermediate mind—except by employing mediums such as are found in the spirit-world.

Q.—Is that condition of spirits dependent upon the time they have been in the other sphere?

A.—No, it does not depend upon years, upon time, by any means, but on the conditions of spirit. Some spirits who have passed from your earth recently have become so fully, clearly unfolded, spiritually, prior to leaving your earth, that they are not able to return into the atmosphere of your earth, any more than those that have dwelt with us as thousands of years. Sept. 8.

John Smith.

I've been induced to come here for two reasons. One is, because I should like to open communication with my folks; another, because I feel I ought to do what I may be able to toward warning others toward doing just as I did.

I should not have known anything about coming here to-day, if it had not been for one of our old friends that was shot at Antietam. He told me he thought I'd better come, for I'd feel better after it, and that he'd show me the way to help me what he could. I've nothing to say in defense of the cause I took when here. Perhaps it may be well for me to state that I came here to speak of my death, and to let my folks know what led to it. The fact was, I'd been pretty hard worked, and was so infernally tired of this war business that I'd about made up my mind that I'd just as lief stand up and be shot as a deserter, as to stand up and be shot by a rebel musket. I believed I should get rid of some hard service in the field if I deserted and did suffer the extreme penalty of the law.

Some of my acquaintances thought I'd get a pardon, but I did not think any such thing, and I did not care whether I did or not, and to me just the words I said to one of my comrades, I did not care a damn how soon the war ended, nor which way it ended. Beg pardon for such language, but I've got a purpose for using it. I want to be known, if I can, for myself. But I would not advise any of the boys to do as I did, for the folks on the other side—new side, for it's new to me—are apt to call you a coward, no matter how much you've done for your country previous to your deserting. That's all counted for nothing, if you do not happen to do just right way, through to the end. So, according to my ideas, I should say, "it's best to hold on, boys." For there's two of them that think of taking the same course as I did. Now I know something about this matter myself, and I want to say to them, "hold on! if you desert, you'll be shot, sure; and then when you come to go to the spirit-world, if you do not, you won't be branded with shame and called a coward. You better fight it out, boys, and if the Constitution and the Union goes to the devil, so be it. If it recovers its equilibrium, so much the better. It seems to me that I do not deserve the name of coward, for I had deserted from cowardice, I should not have exposed myself in the way I did. The fact was, I did not care, I was tired of life, such as was before me, and I thought there could be no harm in my trying some other. About being shot, I felt as if I'd just as lief run the risk of it as not. I do not blame Uncle Sam for enforcing his laws. Laws are made for folks to obey and respect, and if folks do not obey them, they ought to suffer. I've no fault to find.

If any of the boys would like to talk with me in this way, I'd be glad to meet them. I do not know any thing about any other way of coming than this. I got assistance and help to come here, and I suppose I can get the same again if any of the boys, or my friends, would like to talk with me. They tell us here, that's a fair chance to wipe out all wrong, and that after I wipe out the stain of cowardice, I shall feel much better. Oh, my name. I used to go by the name of Smith—John Smith. I belonged to the 2nd Company of the 2nd Maine Sharpshooters. If you know anything about that Company, you know it's seen pretty tough service. Good-day. Sept. 8.

Marjotta Coggs.

If you please, sir, I want to send a letter to my father at Fort Delaware. [You can.] I used to live in Atlanta, Georgia. My father is a Confederate officer. He is a prisoner at Fort Delaware. I—I want to tell him first that mother's dead. Mother's here with me. She's been sick since he went away, and she died. Aunt Lucy's got the care, and there's nobody to see to Tommy and Jane. They've got nobody now father's away and mother's away. And mother says, "Ask your father to take the oath of allegiance and go home, if he can." And if he should send one of those persons, I want to speak, and mother does, too.

My father was 1st Lieutenant in the 22nd Georgia He was taken prisoner by the Yankees. He's at Fort Delaware. My name is Coggs, Marjotta Coggs. I was nine years old, and I've been gone two years. My father's name is Abram, not Sam. Do you send letters to prisoners? [Sometimes.] You going to send mine? [We will.] My father did not fight for Uncle Lincoln. [That makes no difference.] Is that the North? [Yes, you are in Boston now.] I'm going. Sept. 8.

Isaac Poole.

I died as a soldier, and I came back as a soldier. I was in the 6th Massachusetts Company D. My name was Poole, Isaac Poole. I came from New York, and enlisted, because I felt as though I ought to, and went to do. I was killed in our first engagement. I know, sir, I was colored, black, but I was a citizen of the United States. I fought for liberty, not for my skin, for I had it, but for those of my brethren who were in slavery. I fought as a soldier for Abraham Lincoln. I was killed, and I ask for the privilege of coming back here to send word to my friends. One I have left. [Certainly.] I have a mother and two sisters in New York. They do not have anything about this idea of coming back, although my mother is one of the kind that will hear, need to shut her eyes and see things and tell what's going to happen. Now I do not know what you'd call her, but she seems to be one of the kind that has no mind. [Certainly.] But she'll tell me what she knows about this. [Certainly.] I want her to know that I'm here, and that I'm well off here; that this spirit-world

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