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## Literary Department.

### VIOLET LEE'S VOW.

BY SARAH A. SOUTHWORTH.

A cool, pleasant room, with a gleam of blue and white, the fragrance of hay-fields drifting in at the open window, a slender form reclining upon a lounge, water-lilies, with their creamy petals and golden hearts, rosebuds, through whose parted lips sweet breathings issue, the melodious trill of a bird swinging in its gilded cage, the calm, saintly face of Evangeline looking down from the wall upon eyes and brow not unlike her own—this is the picture that rises before me as I take my pen on this quiet spring morning.

It is a well-formed head that lies there, stranded, as it were, upon the snowy pillow. The heavy masses of hair, smooth and glossy as a raven's wing, are brushed carelessly back from the white temples. The mouth wears a look of dreary, hopeless pain, that speaks of days and nights beneath deep waters, when the soul wearied itself with frantic struggles, and God alone heard the gasping cry. Suddenly the shadow, brooding so darkly over the wan, pale face, is lifted, the slender fingers cease their restless motion, and the lips grow beautiful with the magical touch of a smile, as the door gently opens and a flash of sunshine enters, in the shape of a young girl.

A slight, graceful form, a little below the medium height, a complexion of dazzling fairness, bright hair rippling away from a broad, truthful brow, and falling in thick, lustrous curls over neck and shoulders, dark blue eyes with heavily fringed lids, cheeks like the cleft heart of a pomegranate, and a mouth that in its crimson sweetness vies with yonder rosebuds—this is Violet Lee.

"Well, Helen! my dear, I have you been asleep as I commanded? and are you quite rested after your long ride over the hills?" inquired the new comer, twining her arms around the invalid's waist, and gazing with affectionate concern into her face.

"I found it impossible to obey your very peremptory order, my fair cousin; but I have answered, yes, to the last question," was the smiling reply.

"Is that so? Well, then, you shall have some dinner, and mind! I expect that you will do justice to it, if from no other reason than because, I prepared it, and with a light laugh, she stepped into the hall, returning almost immediately with a tray covered with a snowy napkin, on which reposed a tiny tea-service, a plate of broiled chicken, some dainty slices of toast, and berries melting in their own sweetness.

With quick, careful hands, she arranged a small table by the couch, and then drew back and surveyed her work with much satisfaction.

"There, Helen! now if you can't eat, I shall really—yes, I shall certainly think that you are a little bit ungrateful."

"Heaven forbid that you should ever have occasion to lay that sin to my charge; but really, Violet, it is a feast that might tempt a more fastidious appetite than mine, but you need not have been at the trouble of bringing it up to me. I am able to go down."

"All that may be; but between you and I, the kitchen of a farm-house is not apt to be a remarkably pleasant place in warm weather; besides, I have installed myself as your chief attendant, and was desirous of entering upon the duties of that station at once."

"I fear that the office will be no sinecure, if I allow you to follow out all your generous impulses. By the way, I believe that I have made a discovery, and I am not sure but that I shall scold if my suspicions are correct. Is not this the native soil of my Violet?"

"Why, Helen! blushing a little, "how did you ever happen to imagine such a thing?"

"Because the very atmosphere, to say nothing of the tasteful furnishings, breathes of my winsome cousin."

"You like it, then! I am so glad. You see aunt's best chamber is so staid and prim that I thought that somehow you would not feel at home in it, and then, in reality this is the pleasantest situation in the house. The prospect from the window is delightful. I am never tired of gazing at it, and you, who can draw so beautifully, will certainly enjoy it."

"But, my dear, it seems hardly fair that I should appropriate all these things, however gratifying to my artistic taste, to the exclusion of the rightful owner; and before I conclude, to do this, I must be informed in what manner you intend to dispose of yourself."

"Well, my very scrupulous cousin, I can settle that matter to your entire satisfaction, I think. At any rate, I have to my own, and that, begging your pardon, is much more essential. I shall sleep in this little room," opening a door at the foot of the lounge. "You see, I have always occupied two apartments, but now I have moved all my superfluous articles to the attic, and have had a cot-bed put in here. One trial has proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that my new quarters are very comfortable, so give yourself no more uneasiness on that score. My being so near you is quite an advantage, for if you want anything in the night, I can readily wait upon you. Sometimes, you may be restless and wakeful, and then I will read or sing to you with the greatest pleasure. Ah! to my mind, this arrangement is preferable to any other. Say! my dear, have I not convinced you, that it is? What! in tears, Helen? Surely I have said nothing to hurt your feelings."

"No, no! darling, indeed you have not. Let my weakness and your kindness explain my emotion. Care and attention are such strange guests, that I hardly know how to receive them."

I came here, expecting nothing but the common courtesies of life, and lo! I find a cousin, whose love and tenderness passeth speech, and my heart is full. I was growing cold and hard. You will infuse some of your own warmth into my veins; but, with a smile, "are you fearful that I shall become selfish and tyrannical if my every want is anticipated?"

Her companion's answer was a low, silvery laugh, that spoke volumes of unbelief, then passing her hand caressingly over the wan face, she said, "Helen, dear, I somehow feel that we have been defrauded of many happy hours in not meeting before; but we will not speak of that now; I was going to observe, that it seems to me that you would be very much refreshed, if you could only sleep for a while. Now, if I should darken the room a little more, and then take these dishes down, and leave you to yourself for a time, I think that you would soon slip away into the pleasant valley of dreams, forgetting in that enchanted realm, all your pain and fatigue. What is your opinion?"

"There is a possible chance that I might do so, Violet; but then, Morpheus is such a fastidious gentleman, and above all so capricious, that it may be that he will not favor me with a visit until the shades of night gather. At all events, I do not believe that your presence will make any difference in his coming; so carry down the tray, if you like, but return as quickly as you can, for there is that in your low, sweet voice, and bright, young face, that is better than any elixir that the art of man ever prepared for poor suffering mortality."

"Helen, I am afraid that you are addicted to flattery," rejoined her cousin, with a laugh. "Now, if there is anything that I particularly detest, it is that; however, as you are a stranger, I will excuse you this time, but, for pity's sake, don't ever give me another such a dose."

"I beg your pardon, Violet, but I shall protest against being numbered with that class of persons who utter pretty nothings just to see the dash of crimson in these cheeks, or perchance with the belief that that is the easiest way to the heart of Miss Lee, the heiress. When you learn to know me better, you will discover that I never flatter, but that the remark that I made a moment since was but the honest expression of my feelings. If your face comes like a beacon-light to one storm-tossed soul drifting over the sea of human life, then you have not lived in vain; but there, darling, I did not mean to summon the tears. Go down, and take a breath of fresh air, and we will have a nice chat when you return."

The young girl obeyed without a word, but the sun was more than an hour nearer its setting when she again made her appearance.

"You will scarcely be able to rely upon my promises if you take this for a specimen of my keeping them," she began, as she entered the room. "I did really intend to come back immediately when I went away, but a caller prevented."

"And a very pleasant one, I should judge by your brightened count, and the light in those blue eyes," said her cousin, mischievously.

"Appearances are deceitful," was answered gayly; but the conscious drooping of the white lids, and the smile, half shy, half happy, that played about the perfect lips, called up a troubled look into Helen Tracy's face, and taking her hand, she exclaimed:

"Violet, darling, what means this atmosphere of gladness? Is it possible that Love's nectarous cup is being held to your lips? You are young yet to taste its contents. Oh child, this world is full of change, and the draught, like heavenly dew now, may become a drink so deadly as to poison the very fountain of life."

Her words, so sad and earnest, and pulsating, as they did, with a warning of some vague terror, caused the crimson tide to surge back to the heart of the young girl, leaving a face awful in its pallor. The next instant, with a powerful effort, she shook off the horror that was creeping over her, saying hurriedly:

"Oh Helen, you mistake. Mr. Lang and myself are friends—how the roses again bloomed on her cheeks—" but nothing more. He has twice saved my life at the risk of his own, and of course I am grateful. Then he is agreeable and entertaining, and I like to have him call. Under the circumstances, is there anything strange in that? Why do you look at me so? Have I been guilty of an impropriety in acknowledging that his visits give me pleasure?"

"Oh no, my dear, provided that you did not remark as much to him," was the reply, accompanied by a laugh so wild and hollow that her listener shivered. "By the way," continued Helen, after a moment's silence, the scarlet blazoning on either cheek as she spoke, "I believe that you mentioned the name of this very pleasant acquaintance of yours, but I am not sure that I quite understood it. Will you be so kind as to do me the favor to repeat it?"

"Certainly. His name is Lang—Harvey Lang. I did hope that I should have the gratification of presenting you to each other; but imperative business summons him to the city this afternoon, and it may be that I shall not see him again until next winter, when I enter that charmed circle, 'society.'"

"Well, if I am not likely to meet him, at least give me the benefit of a description," returned her cousin, rising and walking with a quick step to the window. "I wish to learn if your hero has the advantage of beauty, as well as bravery. If such is the case, he cannot fail of being perfectly irresistible."

"Ah, you are laughing at me, I perceive. Well, I can pardon it, as long as you have never had the good fortune to behold him. He is not, I suppose, what would generally be called handsome, but he is what I consider a better phrase as applied to a gentleman—'able.' He has a finely developed form, tall and commanding, with hair about the color of yours. I believe he has set his mind on a seal upon his high, broad forehead, and he has kindled the own eyes with a pair of black eyes, that blaze or melt beneath straight brows of the same hue; but there, when I come to the deep, rich voice, and the smile so like a flash of sunshine that you feel its warmth, my powers fail me. After all, Helen, to have a true idea of Harvey Lang, you should see him yourself."

"I presume so; but as I am rather obtuse in some things, he might seem like a very ordinary person to me. There, don't frown, my dear, but tell me if your fascinating friend has a profession. If he is the possessor of such rare gifts as you have represented, he ought to have, certainly; but perhaps he is disinclined to exertion—a sort of drone, who prefers to loiter in stately drawing-rooms, indulging in small talk, to the intense admiration of ladies in general and my fair cousin in particular, instead of taking his place among the earnest, active workers in the world's great life."

"Now, Helen, you are really unkind," cried Violet, her blue eyes flashing like sapphires, while swift blushes came and went. "What do you know of the gentleman in question, that you should speak in that cynical tone? Nothing; for if you had ever seen him, you could hardly have talked in the manner that you did. Mr. Lang is a lawyer, and rapidly rising to eminence in his profession. With regard to your insinuation in reference to myself, one word is sufficient. Although I have always met my friend frankly and cordially, as it becomes me to welcome the preserver of my life, yet never have I been unmaidenly demonstrative, or displayed an undue partiality for his society, nor have I any authority, by word, glance or gesture, to declare that he cares especially for mine. There, I trust you are satisfied now, and will let the matter rest."

"I cannot do that while I know that my little cousin is angry with me. Forgive me, darling, if I probed you to the quick. 'Won't you kiss and be friends,' as the children say? There! Now we will change the subject, if you like. Have you ever heard any of the particulars of my life?"

"No, nothing definite, although I have wished to many times. Once I did venture to make some inquiries of Aunt Patience, but she turned me away with an evasive answer, and I never dared to introduce the topic again. If it will not pain you to narrate them, I should be glad to listen; but are you not weary now? Would it not be better to postpone the recital until to-morrow, or some other convenient season?"

"No; I prefer to speak now. Delays are dangerous, you know; besides, at this moment I have the courage, which may be wanting a week or even a day hence. Let me see. You will be eighteen in the fall, I believe? Well, I am six years your senior. At the age of twenty there was not a happier girl in the city of New York than myself. Life was one exquisite dream of delight, or like a poem set to music. Surrounded by every luxury that the magic wand of wealth could procure, the idol of my parents, the pet of my brother and sister, the darling of one whom I fondly imagined was perfection itself, my heart knew no want, and the world was right in its judgment when it pronounced Helen Tracy as blessed above her kind. Then the thunderbolt fell. No clouds heralded its approach, though, for the day was golden with sunshine, and fragrant with the breath of flowers, when the hope and pride of our house—the noble son and brother—went forth in the glory and strength of his manhood, and the night was full of beauty and holiness with the light of stars when they brought him in and laid him dead at our feet. By whose hand the crimson life-current was let forth, we never knew; but the wretched being, has the untimely rearing up of two souls to answer for, as the dagger that entered Gilman's side just as surely buried itself in the heart of my mother; at least, she never spoke again after the despairing wail that parted her lips when her eye first rested on his white, fixed face, and we—oh God! we followed two to Greenwood, instead of one. Ah, I thought that for bitterness that cup was without a parallel. I was yet to learn that I had but mistaken my lips in the chalice of woe. Ten days from that time, I awoke one night with a confused murmur in my ears, and a terrible sense of suffocation at my heart. The room was full of smoke. To spring from the bed and fling on a dressing-gown was the work of an instant. Then I opened the door leading into the front hall. The stairs were blazing, and with a horror that struck me motionless I saw that a huge wall of flame barred me from my father's chamber. Despairingly I called his name, and the fire lashed and crackled and shot its forked tongues at me in mockery, and the answer—if answer there was—was drowned in the exultant, shriek of the red demon. I have no distinct remembrance of what followed. I think that I must have resigned myself, with a sort of apathy, to the terrible fate that seemed so relentlessly sweeping down upon me. When next I opened my eyes, I was in my sister's house, with her face bending over me. Clasp her hand to be sure that she, at least, was safe, I again sank into the vale of unconsciousness. Brain fever ensued, and when reason once more resumed her sway, tree and shrub were robbed in the white mantle of December. Then I learned that of our once happy family Isabel and I were the only survivors. The fire originated in my father's room; and when the next day it was noised through the city that the firm of Tracy & Co. was insolvent, it was whispered that my dear parent, in a moment of madness, had himself applied the midnight torch. If such were the case, God knows; but I could never credit it. He perished in the flames; however, the servants all escaped, and I owed my life to a brave fireman. How worthless a thing he had given me I was yet to discover. Thus you see that in the short space of a fortnight Helen Tracy fell from her high estate. In the white-faced creature who tottered and moaned upon a sick bed, dependent upon her brother-in-law's bounty for the very medicine that was conquering the fever in her veins, you could hardly have recognized the proud, blooming heiress, to whom sorrow and care were names unknown."

At last, as I told you before, when the earth was calmly sleeping under the white shroud that December had spun for her, the rose-tint came back to my cheek. My lover had called several times during my illness, and now it was a quiet face, if not a happy one, that I turned to the future, saying, 'Life has something of sweetness left, even yet.' Still I was too proud not to offer to release the gentleman from an engagement that was entered into under circumstances so widely different; and accordingly that same afternoon I wrote him a line to that effect, and after I had despatched the note, I sat smilingly picturing to myself the indignation with which he would reject the proffered freedom. Oh, Violet! Violet! I cannot dwell upon that time. Suffice it to say, that my hero was formed only of common clay. He accepted his release, and thanked me for the thoughtfulness that had anticipated his wishes. In that hour, the last star was blotted from my horizon, and I sank down, down into blackest depths of woe. Oh, God! how much the heart can bear before it breaks. In those dark days I prayed, oh, so fervently, for the Death Angel to give me sleep; but he snatched a bud here, and a rose there, and the cypress lived on in its desolation. Nay, don't weep, Violet; I have drained my cup of agony to the last drop, and soon, very soon, I shall enter into that rest that is promised to the weary; and mind, that on that day you toll no dirge for me, but let the bells ring joyfully for the prisoned soul that is free. But to resume the thread of my story. After health crept back to my frame, I did not tarry long at my sister's, for one morning I overheard her husband say:

"Isabel, does not Helen intend to turn some of her numerous accomplishments to account? I cannot afford to support her because I married you; I have already settled Dr. Grey's bill, and a pretty decent sized one it was, too; and now I think that she had better go to work and depend upon herself. You had her brought here against my wishes, or at least without my knowledge, which amounts to much the same thing, and now you must contrive to get her away. No sniveling, madam! You and I can't help it, if she is a beggar. Zounds! who would ever have supposed that the old man would slump in that style."

Stung to the quick by the heartlessness of one who could so deliberately enter the room and stand before him.

"Mr. Hilton," I exclaimed—and my voice was full of a calm scorn—"I might remind you that you owe your present position to my father; and that that thought should have induced you to allow his daughter to remain under your roof until she was able to go forth to battle with the world—but I forbear. I trust that in the future your dreams will be pleasant; and in order to insure it, I will state that it is my intention to leave your house, not only to-day, but within this very hour. And now, if you will tell me the formidable sum which you have been obliged to pay for medical attendance, and also make out an exact account of what you have expended upon me since I have been an inmate of your family, not forgetting to include board and lodging, I will pledge myself to reimburse you at the earliest opportunity. Good-morning!" And that was the way I went out into the world, Violet.

Poor Isabel! I think the thought that her darling sister—so delicately reared and so lovingly shielded from every adverse wind—was buffeting the rude waves of life, while she rolled in wealth, broke her tender heart at last, for in a year from that time, with a tranquil smile on her dear face, she was laid under the willows.

I have little more to relate. I occupied the situation of governess in the family of a merchant, in Albany, until about eighteen months since, when I heard of the school in Hillsborough. My sad experience had robbed me of all faith and trust, and it was not until the kindly face of Aunt Patience had beamed upon me several times, that my heart went out to her, and I promised that when my strength failed, I would come to her for rest and love; and so here I am, my weary pilgrimage almost over, and God and the angels very near."

When she ceased speaking, Violet made no comment, but putting her arms about her neck, she laid her wet cheek to hers. The sorrow and anguish of the story to which she had listened, had struck below words, and she had none at command; but that mute caress was more grateful to the heart of her cousin, than the most elaborate expressions of consolation; and with a feeling of thankfulness that the remnant of her days was to be passed in this peaceful harbor, she closed her eyes in pained content. Suddenly the sound of her companion's voice aroused her from her dreaming.

"Oh, Helen!" she was exclaiming, in a quick, eager tone of entreaty, "will you not tell me the name of the cowardly wretch who deserted you in your extremity?"

At the unexpected question the invalid started up, the fire again burning on her cheeks, and her whole frame quivering with excitement.

"Oh, child! child!" she cried, vehemently, "have you not realized that he who proved but a broken reed in the hour of my sorest need, and the friend that you have been extolling this afternoon, are one and the same? Oh, that my hand should tear from your heart the beautiful flowers of faith and trust!"

For one moment Violet sat in perfect bewilderment, and then, as the first shock passed, and she began to comprehend her cousin's words, she sprang to her feet, with blazing eyes; but one glance at the sad, mournful face before her, and the fierce flame smoldered, while the hot, indignant denial that was rushing to her lips, paused upon the threshold, and the radiant bloom faded from cheek and mouth. Slowly she turned away, as though to grapple with the doubt that now assailed her, and then, coming back, she stretched out her hands in an agony of supplication, saying:

"Oh, Helen! unsay those words! You must be mistaken. It was not, it could not have been Harvey Lang!"

The sorrowful shake of her companion's head snatched the last straw to which Hope clung, and with one stifled wail she went down into fathomless depths, where the weeds of doubt and distrust trailed their slimy lengths over her, and the black waters of Despair surged above.

Ah! when the person to whom we have lifted our eyes in perfect faith and love, fondly regarding as the embodiment of truth, and the best gift with which God has enriched us, proves unworthy, and the grand heights on which we have enthroned them, not their rightful position, who shall picture the horrible abyss down which we are hurled, or the shuddering anguish that brims our souls? Life is never just the same to us again. The world calls us wiser; but we fancy that it is a wisdom bought at a fearful price, when we recall the tears of anguish that scorched our cheeks as we held our lonely vigil by the tomb of our dead idol. And this hour, in all its bitterness, was now upon Violet Lee. Would the heart thus ruthlessly entered by the plow of suffering blossom into a sweeter vegetation, or become a barren waste? Would she come up from those deep waters with a face transfigured by the remembrance of that infinite love and pity, which does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men? or would those sweet blue eyes grow hard with unbelief, and the ripe, red lips curve with sneering incredulity at the thought that honor and truth still dwell in this selfish world? Questions similar to these agitated the mind of Helen Tracy, as she went on establishing the identity of her recreant lover with the hero of her cousin, and marked the pained workings of the fair young face, as the conviction pressed home upon her with all its aid and force.

"Enough! you have said enough!" she at last exclaimed, as if no longer able to endure the torture. Then, as though feeling that her manner might have grieved her companion, she bent down and kissed her, saying:

"You will bear with me for a little while, will you not? My heart is very sore just now; and then, as if struck by a sudden thought, she added: "Helen, do you believe that Harvey Lang will ever seek me again?"

"I should think in all probability he might," replied the cousin, surprised at the question. "But you are the better judge of that, for you must know whether he really takes pleasure in your society. A man has a thousand and one ways of showing when a lady's presence is particularly agreeable. Yes, he will renew his acquaintance next winter, without doubt, provided that he is aware of the fact of your being an heiress," she continued, bitterly; and then watching her cousin with a look in which wonder and pain mingled, she laid her head back on the pillow.

"I am sure that he has been informed of that," remarked Violet, in a musing tone, "for Uncle Robert is so fond of proclaiming the great wealth of his niece, and the proud fact that he is joint guardian with Judge Harris, that he never lets an opportunity slip by unimproved; and I do believe that he told Mr. Lang the very first time that he ever saw him. But, Helen, is it not possible for me to win that person's love without money? The girls at school called me beautiful; and my education has not been superficial, but a wise blending of the solid and the ornamental. Answer me, then, have I not graces enough of mind and person to bring this proud man to my very feet?"

Thus adjured, Helen Tracy raised herself from the lounge, and deliberately surveyed her. An hour previous, a child had knelt at her side; but the creature now before her wore the crown of womanhood right royally. Those splendid eyes, in which a new and strangelight was kindled; the rich vine of health staining the snow-white skin; the rosebud lips parted eagerly; the soft glory of the hair, falling like a veil over her, and above all, the expression, so sad and tender, that lingered in the dimpled curves of the mouth, but mounting higher, wrote itself in stern characters on the broad, beautiful brow, thrilled her with admiration, and clasping her hands, she said, simply:

"Your schoolmates told you the truth, Violet. If a thing of beauty is a joy forever—and I am not inclined to dispute the declaration of the poet—then my fair cousin is a perpetual delight to those who have the privilege of gazing at her."

"There, that will do"—laughing a little, and blushing a great deal more; "I was not expecting quite such an unqualified admission of my charms. I shall not dare to ask you to measure my mental qualifications, even when you have an opportunity to judge of them."

"But, Violet," continued Helen, without heeding the girl's last remark, "you surely would not marry Harvey Lang?"

"Marry him!" oh the magnificent scorn that swept over the beautiful face! "No; not even to save his soul from destruction, I was about to say. Why, Helen, is it possible that you do not understand me better than that? Had he proved faithless to the least of my sex, he could never be anything to me; but when it is your heart that he has crushed, how much more does he excite my loathing. And is it strange, that, looking on your face, and knowing that his cruel fingers have plucked the roses from cheeks and lips, that a fierce desire to have justice administered should mingle with the feeling of contempt? I think not. And now, how can this be accomplished? I am fully convinced that there are depths in his nature which you and I have never fathomed; and there I would summon such a passion into life as he has never dreamed himself capable of experiencing—a love, that, in its strength and power, should slake the very centre of his being. Step by step I would lead him on, twining myself about his very heart-strings, until wealth, ambition, everything should be forgotten in the all-absorbing wish to call me wife. That would be my hour of triumph. Then I would dash the honeyed draught from his eager lips, and apply the lash until his



craven soul fairly writhed beneath the torture. By the very intensity of his own anguish and despair, should he come to the knowledge of the bitterness of the cup of which he so ruthlessly forced you to drink. This is all that I want of the honorable Harvey Lang, Helen; and, as true as I stand here, I will have it!

And with these emphatic words and a prouder lifting of the golden head, the young girl paced the floor like a very queen; and then and there the conviction crept into the heart of her cousin, that what this royal creature willed, would be, and with a shiver she exclaimed:

"Oh, Violet! Violet! I very much fear that you are playing with edge tools. Once, such a speech as that would have filled me with a keen delight; but now, as I listen to the break of the waves on the heavenly shore, and my thoughts go forward into the brightness of that land, memory loathes its sting; and, although I appreciate your affection, darling, I remember that 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' And I am contented, nay, willing, to leave all my wrongs in His hands."

"And how do you know but that I may be the humble instrument selected to execute that vengeance?" gravely returned her companion, pausing in her rapid walk. "God works by ways and means beyond our comprehension. But let the matter rest now; the vow is registered on my heart, and I firmly believe that it is my destiny to fulfill it; but, until the moment for action comes, I will thrust him forth from my life, as I now throw out these water-lilies—the gracious gentleman's last gift."

And stepping to the table, she took the creamy blossoms from the vase, and, with a gesture of supreme contempt, hurled them from the window; and Harvey Lang, passing at that moment on his way to the city, and revolving in his mind the expediency of pausing for an instant to hear another soft good-bye from those coral lips, was an unseen spectator of the—to him—strange action. Why, only that morning had the small, white hand shyly received the flowers, while the low, musical voice had translated the pleasure that beamed in the azure eyes. No wonder that now he looked on in surprise!

"Well, I must confess that I had cherished the hope that that sweet little Violet had the least bit of a liking for me; but it seems that I reckoned without my host, judging by the manner in which my gifts are valued. Well, good-bye, my bonny, fair one; happy am I that my heart is not at the mercy of those delicate fingers!"

And with these thoughts he dashed away down the dusty road, feeling that, somehow, the day had lost a little of its brightness since he started.

Twice has the quick, firm step of Winter paled the crimson cheek of Autumn, and filled her soul with a shuddering dread, since the glory of that golden summer afternoon was dimmed by the sad story of human agony and despair. But Time, the kind physician, who brings a balm of healing to every wounded heart, has closed the grieving eyes and placed his seal on the white lips; and, to-night, in a quiet nook near the old farm-house, the moonlight falls on a marble shaft bearing this simple inscription: "Helen"—and a little below—"He giveth His beloved sleep." And then this same, white radiance drifts in at the windows of a luxuriously furnished room in a distant city, revealing Violet Lee seated there with idly folded hands and a touch of sadness on her beautiful face scarcely in keeping with her pleasant surroundings. Ah! her thoughts are wandering to that peaceful grave under the snow, and to the hour when the weary spirit laid off its load and grasped the beckoning hands of the angels.

Suddenly there is a rustle outside the door, and then a low, quick tap, and the next instant a sort of joyous sparkle brims the room, in the person of a bright, dashing brunette, who, springing to the gas-burner, turns on a full jet, and then, dancing back to the silent occupant of the rocker, exclaims:

"Mercy, ma belle! how can you sit here in the dark? It would give me the mopes for a week if I spent the evening in this style. Now, what do you suppose I came up here for? What! aren't you curious, that you turn away with such an indifferent air? Well, you are the most tantalizing mortal that ever came within the sphere of my observation. Why, that's a most elegant sentence! I must remember it for my next composition. Well, as I was about to say, mamma sent me up to beg you to lay aside your melancholy for a while, and come down into the drawing-room and be happy. You see, this is not a party night by any means, but she is expecting a few friends to whom she is very desirous to introduce you. Now don't compel me to kneel to you, you perverse creature, for I shall really be obliged to if you do not grant my request, as I promised Brother Will to use my utmost powers of persuasion, and a striking attitude is often a more successful pleader than the tongue; at least, so Clementina Grey says; and she ought to know, I suppose, as she has had several offers. Well, what is your decision? Shall I make the house echo to a song of triumph, or go down with a face that I shall not be able to get into a laughing condition again to-night?"

"Oh, that last thought is too horrible!" rejoined her companion with a smile. "But, really, Lottie, I do not feel like making one of a gay company, be it small or large. Solitude is much more congenial, especially on this evening, when memories of the past are thronging upon my heart. But there, child, you do not understand that; so just thank your mother from me, and tell her that if it is not taxing her kindness too much, I would prefer to remain in quiet possession of my own room."

"Ha! ha! and so that means: 'Aunt Bertha, keep my mad-cap cousin below stairs.' Why, Violet Lee, your affrontery surpasses speech! and if it were not for the fear of punishing myself more than you, I would occupy yonder lounge for the next three hours; but not when such delightful people as the Mortons, Daceys and Sinciers, to say nothing of Lawyer Lang, are going to grace mamma's parlors, it is not my intention to withdraw into seclusion, and I cannot, for the life of me, see how you can do such a thing; but then you are not acquainted with them, and that makes all the difference in the world.—The gentlemen are all very agreeable, and don't disdain to talk with me, even if I am only a school-girl. But I like Mr. Lang better than any of the rest. He is perfectly splendid, and so talented! Papa says that there is no goal to which he may not aim. Oh, you would admire him, I know. He has been away on business for several months, and I believe that he only returned this morning; but he told Will that he should be sure and come. Then how can you sit here?"

"Ha! the maiden need not so busily engaged in practicing her last dancing lesson, she might have wondered what there was in her words to call such a soft bloom into the pale cheeks of her cousin, or to cause the sudden compression of the white lips; as it was, she started with delighted surprise when, after a moment's pause, Violet exclaimed in a low tone, but with a strange sparkle in her eyes and manner:

"Well, Lottie, you have drawn such a charming picture of your mother's proposed visitors, that I am quite unsettled, and now an eyeping spent up here alone does not present half as many attractions as an hour or two in the drawing-room; therefore you may rely upon my making my appearance."

"Oh, you darling! I am so glad!" and the merry girl executed an extra flourish by way of working off her glee at this unexpected and agreeable conquest.

"But, Lottie, I shall present myself just as I am," resumed her cousin. "I do not care to make any alterations in my dress."

"Well, nobody wants you to, that I know of. I am sure that you could not wear anything more becoming than what you have on, if you tried ever so hard. You need some flowers, though, for a finishing touch; but those you can get in the conservatory. Oh, there is a half-open bud, now! that is just the thing!" taking one from a superb bouquet that stood on the dressing-table. "There, put that in your belt. Now—kissing her—"you are perfect, and I am really proud of you, beautiful Violet Lee! But there, I must run and tell mamma and Will that my eloquence has at last prevailed," and away she dashed.

Half an hour later, when Mrs. Harris presented her niece to her guests, she felt a thrill of pleasure as she marked the sensation that she created. To some she seemed like the embodiment of an artist's dream, a rare painting stepped forth from its frame; but to Harvey Lang she brought a remembrance of cool stretches of wood, emerald valleys, and her fragrant namesakes purpling the mountain slopes. Ah! to him she was that rich wine such as they press from tender grapes over the seas. One touch of her hand, one glance of her eye, and his soul filled with rapture. Ah! he did not realize that that little, golden-haired girl had wound herself so closely about his heart until to-night. As she, the half-open bud, had burst into full flower, so beneath the warmth of her smile and the tenderness of her voice, the seeds sown in the rides and rambles of two years ago, were being quickened into vigorous life. And on that evening, wherever the slight, graceful form, in its black dress, moved, his eyes followed it, and the face that looked out from the golden cloud was to him the most beautiful that his glance had ever rested on. Truly, Violet Lee's vow was likely to see its fulfillment.

Months passed. Summer came, with its passionate days and the calm radiance of its azure nights; and then Violet fled to the old brown farm-house under the hills, where Aunt Patience met her with the kindly smile of yore, and Nature, with an infinite tenderness, pressed her sorrowful face to her heart.

Mrs. Harris, however, who had been delightedly picturing the sensation which her beautiful and accomplished niece would create at some fashionable watering-place, did not fancy this flitting. But, to Violet, to whom the remembrance of that lowly, green grave beneath the willows was ever present, Cape May, Saratoga and the White Mountains possessed no charms; and so the lady was forced to submit, making the stipulation, though, that that summer should witness the last of her strange seclusion, and that the next winter she would take that position in society which her wealth and beauty entitled her to occupy; to all of which the girl smilingly assented. Harvey Lang made it convenient to call at the farm-house several times; but Violet was always reluctant to see never greeted him.

Thus the months, with echoes tread, vanished over the silent hills, and soot autumn threaded the forest aisles, flinging her scarlet banner to the breeze; and then, in a few short weeks, that room, with the vine-draped window, no longer brimmed with the sound of a clear, sweet voice, or the rich, musical laugh; and poor Aunt Patience moved about her work with tear-dimmed eyes, vaguely feeling that a frost had penetrated her heart, more cruel than that which had killed her flowers.

In the meantime, the fashionable world in New York was catching occasional glimpses of our lovely woodland blossom, and the belle of three winters was waking to the sad consciousness that the crown, which she had worn so triumphantly, was slipping from her head, to deck the golden hair of the beautiful stranger; and, worse than all, her most devoted cavaliers no longer obeyed the glance of her eye, but, with gracious smiles on their fawning lips, offered their adoration at the shrine of the new queen.

Mrs. Harris was in her element. Never, within her remembrance, had a beauty like that of Violet dawned upon the aristocratic throng. It carried all hearts by storm; and while her face charmed, the sweet, silvery voice, whether lifted in wit or repartee, or gravely discoursing—stirring their souls to mirth or earnestness—ever bound them willing captives at her side; and thus the nights passed like a dream, and the days were full of music, while she, who ruled with such an absolute sway, and beneath whose smile the hours blossomed, was powerless to conquer the strong yearnings and passionate pain of her own heart. Oh, gladly would she have flung wealth and beauty to those who envied her her possession, if, by so doing, she could have recalled her lost faith and trust. Alas! life held no such bliss.

Meanwhile, Harvey Lang became her constant attendant, and it was evident to all that in his presence she was ever the most brilliant. Already Judge Harris and his lady began to speculate upon the probability of an early marriage, while Willard declared that none of his acquaintances were so deserving of his pretty cousin as Harvey Lang. And Violet rode on in her triumphal char, entirely unconscious that her destiny was thus being satisfactorily decided in family conclave.

Thus the winter passed, and it was not the young lawyer's fault that spring found him with his love still undeclared. The opportunity was ever wanting. If Violet had known the keen torture that he endured, while she alternately warmed him with her sunny smile, and froze him with a chilling glance, causing hope to plume its wings one instant, and then to fold them in despair the next, I think her thirst for justice would have been appeased, and she would have ended his suspense. At last he called one evening and found her alone; but her manner was so repellent, so different from the genial warmth which had characterized her the night before, that his courage failed him; but mentally apostrophizing himself as an unmitigated coward, he determined to learn his fate ere he left the room. Accident favored him somewhat. In turning the leaves of a book of engravings, a piece of paper fluttered to the floor. Both sprang for it, but Harvey reached it first, perceiving, with a thrill of exultation, that it bore a very good likeness of himself. His happiness was short lived, however, for the next instant Violet snatched it from his hand and flung it into the glowing grate; but as she did so, one curl of perfume gold swept his cheek. Impetuously he pressed it to his lips. She drew back immediately, the warm color mantling her face, and stern displeasure visible in her eyes. But that magnetic touch had fired his very soul. He was no longer weak and trembling, but strong

in the power and majesty of his love. In a few simple words he told her of that best gift, which he had already laid at her feet, and besought her to take it up and go through life with him as his fondly cherished wife.

When he first began to speak, she strove to stem the torrent, but finding herself powerless to do so, she sat listening, with averted head. Now she said:

"I suppose that you have heard that the National Bank has failed; but perhaps you did not know that my funds were nearly all invested there?"

"No, I was not aware of that fact, neither do I care. It is Violet Lee who possesses my heart—not the heiress! I have never given that person a thought."

"Then you are sure that I, alone, can crown your life? It is a very pretty thought, Mr. Lang, but have you never intimated to another that she had a like power?"

"How jealous you women are of each other," he rejoined, with a smile; "but you, least of all, need never have had such a feeling, for who could have eyes for any one else, when once they had looked upon you? Oh, no, darling, with the exception of your peerless self, I have never, by word or glance, given any lady to understand that she was particularly dear to me. The fact is, that when you lay faint and helpless in these arms, on the day that you took that terrible ride, a feeling awoke in my heart, that since that time has never slumbered—a love, that, in its strength and power, is capable of any sacrifice for your dear sake. Oh, Violet, you can never realize the depth and fervor of this passion. I am like a reed at the mercy of a mighty wind. Say, shall I go forth with the blissful assurance that I am leaving my bride that is to be, or will those beautiful lips part to utter a sentence that will cause this burning lava-tide to flow back upon my own soul, destroying every green and living thing?"

"Do take a chair, Mr. Lang; you must really be exhausted after that interesting speech, to say nothing of being heated. Won't you have a fan, or shall I ring for water? Perhaps if you should drink a quantity of the cooling beverage, you might feel better. Dear me! it must be very unpleasant to have a fire raging within one."

"Oh, Violet! Violet! how can you mock me so?" he cried, vehemently. "Have you no pity for my sufferings? Do you not see that each moment prolongs my torture?"

"Oh, it is pity, then, that you want! I beg your pardon. I was laboring under the ridiculous idea all the time that it was my love you desired. Oh, yes, I pity you; indeed I do."

"Girl, do you mean to drive me mad? Your tone expressed anything but the tender element of compassion. I would almost liken you to a cat with a mouse in her claws."

"Why, Mr. Lang, you are certainly growing complimentary; but the smile can end, if you please. There is the door, and puss is very willing to let the small animal go."

"Violet! will you not be serious? I hardly know you in this strange mood. I have asked you a solemn question, and it is not womanly for you to keep me thus in suspense."

"Oh that I should be taught my duty by Harvey Lang! Wonders never will cease. You desire an answer, do you? Well, I will give it; and that it may prove gall and wormwood to your proud spirit, I earnestly pray. As you have had mercy on others, so will I have pity on you. You say that I am your first and only love. By the way, I should like to know in what manner than you stood before—Heaven knows that that was unnecessary. Thus, by your own confession, a few years ago you acted the basest liar; that, it seems to me, mortal man could conceive. How dare you, after practicing such deception upon one of my sex, look me in the face? I have waited for this hour. Indeed, I may say that I have plotted and planned to bring it about; and now it fills my soul with joy. Do you feel the barbed arrows penetrating your heart? Do you suppose that they are like those that you shot into hers? Farewell! and may you rise from this agony a wiser, if not a better, man. With regard to my property, that was only a little ruse of mine to test the quality of your love, and to know whether I was really measuring back the pain that you had so ruthlessly meted to another. I am satisfied with the experiment, and as it is really getting late, I must bid you good-night."

"Stop, Miss Lee!" cried her companion, his face white with pain or anger. "I demand an explanation of your singular words. I fully understand the part of coquette that you have played, and I must admit that the character becomes you admirably; but with regard to your insinuation in respect to myself, I defy you to bring forward the man, woman or child whom I have ever willfully wronged or deceived. You must prove this strange charge."

"Must!" She drew herself up haughtily. "Remember, if you please, that you are speaking to Violet Lee, and that this assumption of dignity does not blind her. You know, as well as I, that the grave yields up no witnesses, and that the record is on high. Again I say, good-night." And the next instant she was gone.

A minute later, she was in her own room, pacing the floor with hurried step, the bloom and sparkle all vanished, and only a suffering woman left. "Cousin Helen, you are at last avenged, and I am miserable!" she murmured. "And then she turned the light off, and darkness reigned both without and within."

Three days from that time, as the family of Judge Harris were seated at the breakfast table one morning, Willard exclaimed, with a keen glance at his cousin:

"I heard a strange bit of news last evening, and could hardly credit it at first; but I learned afterwards that it was really true. Harvey Lang has enlisted."

This announcement made the sensation that he expected, but not in the direction that he hoped; for while his father and mother started in unbounded surprise, and Lottie uttered an exclamation of dismay, Violet, who had not been in society six months for nothing, simply smiled, and said, quietly:

"Well, what is there so very singular in that, that you should not be able to believe it? Is it not the duty of every young man, who has health and strength, to go to the relief of his country?" And this time it was blue eyes that shot a penetrating glance over the table.

"Yes, I suppose it is," coloring a little; "but then to think that a fastidious gentleman like him should leave a good profession, just as he is growing famous, too, and go out as a private. It is really beyond my comprehension. Now, if he had accepted the colonel's commission that was offered him a month ago, it would not have seemed so strange, for then he would have received an equivalent, in position at least, for what he has now given up for nothing. But there, I don't suppose that it is of any use to talk to you—"

"With another fervent look," her sex all have the pathetic fever, and I have no doubt that you encouraged, and perhaps even urged him, to take this step."

"I should have a very poor opinion of that

man, if he were the dearest thing in the world, for the honor of a woman's name would hardly be the reason for the significant reply." And the smile that lay on the soft, coral lips told no secrets. And banded in the attempt to read her heart, the young man left the room.

When June, with lavish hand, scattered her odorous colors over the green earth, Violet declared that, with the country ringing with the moans of the dying and the wail of the bereaved, she had not the heart to flash and sparkle with the idle throng at some fashionable resort; and so, much to Mrs. Harris's dismay, who could not but lament at this manifestation of her niece's low taste, away she went to bless Aunt Patience with a sight of her beautiful face, and to be a child once more.

I cannot narrate the history of that summer. What lessons of strength and endurance the wild waves taught her, as they beat against the rocky shore; what hymns of God's love and power the mighty hills, chanted in her listening ear; what sweet faith and heavenly patience the flowers inculcated, as they lifted their tiny heads to meet the smile of the sun; what soul-satisfying promises she read in the bow that spanned the sky after the tempest; and what holy peace stilled her throbbing heart when night kindled her beacon fires on high, are known only to those who, like her, have watched the clouds drift over their life-path, and for one instant have turned away in dumb despair.

October came, and then Violet went back to the city, with the freshness and bloom of the country upon cheek and lip; and the faded, weary, bellies of Saratoga and Cape May looked at her, and then at their own white faces, and wondered what Miss Lee had done, that velvety softness and carnation hues should please the eyes when it rested upon her.

Months passed; and somehow this winter was not so full of mirth and pleasure as many that had preceded it—at least, not in the circle in which Violet moved—for noble forms, that had once threaded the maze dance, now lay still and cold, with Southern soil resting on their brave hearts, or perchance languished in those fearful tombs, rebel prisons; and thus many a heart-felt tear, grew wild and strange under the heavy touch of grief. But some there were who came back with proud faces, minus a limb perhaps, but rich in the thought, that not only that, but life itself, had been freely offered in the service of Liberty; and then their eager, anxious friends crowded around to congratulate them on their safe return; and once more red lips were wreathed with smiles, and happy hearts kept time to the glad feet that bounded away at the music call; and thus the hours throbbed and vanished in triumphant song.

It was on an evening like one of these, that Violet stood in the elegant drawing-room of a Fifth Avenue mansion, listening to the conversation of a returned hero, and occasionally watching the gay, joyous crowd that surged through the splendid rooms. Suddenly she perceived her hostess approaching, leaning upon the arm of a gentleman, whom, at the first glance, she thought must be Harvey Lang, from the striking resemblance that he bore that individual; but as he drew near, she saw that, although the complexion was the same, there the likeness ended, for this face bore unmistakable signs of disfigurement; but what was her surprise, when the lady paused before her, and, with a smile, presented her companion by the very name that was then nagging through her mind. Astonished, she acknowledged the introduction with a bow, and perhaps a warmer color in her cheeks, and then a gentleman came up and claimed her hand for that dance, and so she turned away; but her thoughts would wander to the stranger, and when the music ceased, she watched her opportunity, and soon succeeded in gaining the conservatory, where she seated herself to muse upon this wonderful likeness to Harvey, and the singularity of their possessing the same name. Suddenly she was aroused from her confused meditations by voices at a little distance, and presently these words fell upon her ear:

"By heavens, Fred, that Miss Lee is a beauty—a regular stunner! and as she has the rhino, upon my word I have half a mind to put in my oar with the rest of you."

"Better not, Lang," with a laugh, "for report says that your cousin is interested there; and if you step on his toes, you will be made mincemeat of in short order."

"Fudge! it will take more than him to frighten me away from any prize that I am bound to win; besides, if he is down South fighting the rebels, he will receive his quietus very soon; or if he don't, as long as he has retired and left the field to me, he needn't complain if he should return and find his bird in my cage."

"You seem to be very confident of your ability to capture her," rejoined his friend, in a tone that indicated that other feet than Harvey Lang's were in danger of being trod upon; "but I wouldn't give much for your chance of calling her yours, if she should happen to hear of that little affair with regard to Miss Tracy."

"Oh, that was forgotten long ago. Poor Helen! I did love her, though; but then I was a lazy dog, and life in a cottage wasn't to my taste. I wonder where she is now. Dead, perhaps; but there, old fellow, what do you mean by raking up the past? Neither you nor I can afford to look back much. Come, let us return to the parlors," and then the train walked away, leaving Violet, like one groping in thick darkness, and feeling that God's light would never more shine in upon her desolation.

"My vow has receded upon myself," she thought, as she crouched there in her utter wretchedness, "and it is just, for what right had I to take the sword of vengeance into my puny hands? Oh! the draught that I forced him to drink, wells up to my own lips, now, until my very soul grows faint and sick within me. Ah! at this moment, I realize through every fibre of my being, that it is better, oh, much better, to be the wronged than the wronger; but the knowledge comes too late, too late, for in my pride and self-will, I have set the seal upon my own fate, and now, neither tears, nor groans, nor a raising of the hands to heaven can change it; and then suddenly remembering that she had been gone from the company some time, and fearing that she would be missed, and some one coming, in search of her might find her thus, she hushed her wail of despair, and went back to the drawing-room, with a step from which all lightness had fled, and a face like the driven snow. Five minutes later, you would hardly have known her, as she stood in the centre of an admiring crowd, her laugh ringing out in soft, silvery echoes, her keen wit flashing hither and yon, flitting like stars across other cheeks; eyes, that glowed like stars within the shadow of her white lips, and lips, that, wreathed with smiles, gave no sign of the agony that had stamped them with a deadly pallor, only a little while before. Ah! the heart may ache and even break, and still the face be radiant. At last she moved, and the friendly silence of her own chamber, and then the strong will that had sustained her gave way, and the dazzling vision

of the drawing-room, the magnificent golden-dressed queen, that had once reigned and robes of royalty, and became a wretched, half-dressed woman, drinking in bitter agony of the cup whose contents she had herself prepared; but the draught was more than she could bear, and morning found her writhing under the burning hand of fever.

Oh! the sad, dreary watches that the mansion now knew! The servants crept about with hushed voices. Lottie, restless and unhappy, wandered from room to room. Mrs. Harris forgot fashion and pleasure, as she ministered to the sufferer; and at last, to the general joy, Aunt Patience came up to nurse her darling. Weeks passed, and then the physicians held long consultations, and gravely shook their heads, for her feet seemed trampling upon the verge of the shadowy valley. Could nothing save her? So young, so beautiful, so beloved, must she be clasped in the chilling embrace of Death? Thoughts similar to these were passing through Lottie's mind one afternoon, as she sat watching her cousin and crying softly to herself, as she marked the change in the once blooming face. Suddenly, the great eyes opened with something of their old light in them, and a smile fluttered in the curves of the month. The girl clasped her hands in ecstasy, and then bent to catch the words that the trembling lips seemed striving to frame. Presently, the voice came, strong and calm. "Lottie!" it said, "I have been waiting for you. I wish to do something, and you alone can help me. Fasten the door, and then bring my desk to the bed."

"But, Violet! darling, you are very weak, you know, and the doctors forbid the least exertion. Can you not let this matter be until next week?" "Next week may not be mine. Do not oppose me any more, dear cousin. Remember that this may be the very last request that you can ever grant me."

Thus urged, Lottie did as she was desired; besides, there was something in this idea of going contrary to orders that just suited her frolicsome nature. The desk was soon prepared, and then she surrounded the sick girl with pillows, and placed the pen in the thin white hand. It wrote as follows:

"DEAR HARVEY—Oh! what a flood of tender-ness sweeps over my soul as I write these words. I can call you thus, now, for if ever your eyes rest upon these lines, I shall be where no blush of shame or confusion can mantle my cheek. Yes! Harvey, darling, I am dying, but I cannot go down into the cold and silent grave, feeling that I shall have no place in your memory save that of a heartless coquette. Oh, no; the horror of that thought quickens the current, and gives me strength to hold the pen. In one word, Harvey, the explanation of all that has been mysterious in my conduct, lies in the fact, that, until recently, I was not aware that you had a name-sake. Thus I ascribed his sins to you; and when as sweet and lovable a girl as the earth ever knew, laid her tearful face upon my shoulder, and told me that it was Harvey Lang's cruel hand that had snapped her heart-strings, do you wonder that I vowed to make him suffer all that she had undergone? Ah! at that moment—in my thirst for vengeance—I called it justice; I forgot that it was assuming the prerogative of a Higher Power; and now God has turned my instruments of torture back upon myself, and I am wounded unto death. Oh! my own! my darling! when I learned how I had wronged you, mingled with the pain that that knowledge brought me, was a feeling of joy that you all were worthy of the love which, in spite of all I could do, had crept into my heart and refused to be dislodged. Oh! Harvey! forgive me my scorn and contempt. Remember that this is my dying wish. And now, that the Father may crown your life with every blessing, is the prayer of

VIOLET LEE."

And then the pen fell from the nervous hand, and white and panting, she lay back upon the pillow. Her cousin sprang to her side, exclaiming, in a tone of terror,

"Oh, dear, you are worse, are you not? All this comes of my letting you have your own way. What do you suppose mamma and the doctors would say if they could see you now?"

"I don't intend that they shall have the opportunity," came from the parted lips, accompanied by a faint smile. "There, I am better already. Raise me a little, please, and then listen to what I am going to tell you. The note that I have written I wish you to place in an envelope, and then if I should die, send it to Harvey Lang. Remember, it is not to go on any other condition. Now take the things away, and mind and keep the whole affair a secret. I know that I can trust you, darling. Now leave me alone. I wish to sleep."

And so Lottie took the desk and passed from the room, first bending to kiss the face that gleamed like chiselled marble through the golden hair.

Half an hour later, the wild, impulsive child was on her way to the post office, with an envelope containing her cousin's note, and the following additional lines:

"MR. LANG—or Capt. Lang, I suppose I ought to say—Violet wrote the enclosed letter this afternoon, and then requested me not to forward it until after she was dead. I have taken the liberty to disregard her wish, however, as I think she must have been slightly delirious, for what possible good could the note do you then?"

CHARLOTTE HARRIS.

A fortnight dragged its slow length wearily by, and then the star of Hope once more lifted its brightness above the clouds, and the trembling hearts that had expected daily, and even hourly, to hear the wing of the Death-Angel stir the air, sang a new song of gladness as the shadow receded from the sick-room without folding the loved one in its dark embrace. Yes, strange to say, from the hour that Violet Lee penned her confession, she seemed to receive new life into her veins; and ere a month had flown she was able to spend a part of each day down stairs.

One morning, as she was seated below, Lottie entered the room, and after walking around her several times with a most satisfied expression upon her face, and calling a blush into the pale cheek by informing her that she was really the prettiest picture that it was ever her good fortune to see, she came and knelt by her side, and smoothing back the ring of shining hair from the white face, said, with the glad light in her eyes making her almost beautiful:

"Oh, Violet, darling, I am so happy that I actually feel I shall be obliged to commit some sort of an extravagance before the day is through. By the way, do you remember that note you wrote? How frightened I was then! If you had not have got well, I should have felt all my life long as if I had somehow been the means of your death."

"I believe you would have killed me if you had prevented my writing; but now, my dear child, the letter is no longer of use," sighing faintly. "Will you not bring it and lay it on the fire?"

"But suppose that it is no longer in my possession? Oh, Violet, don't look at me so. Should you really care if the person to whom you wished it sent had received it?"

"Oh, Lottie, what have you done?" springing to her feet with clasped hands and shame-painted cheeks. "In case I died, I said, 'Oh, I trusted you.'"

"And can you not trust me, my darling?" cried a deep, rich voice at her side; and turning, right away, she looked and almost chiding, she met the tender, loving glance of Harvey Lang. The next instant the fluttering hands were caught in a strong grasp, and the shy, blushing face laid in its rightful resting place.

Reader, shall we imitate the politeness of the neighbors, Lottie, and leave the reunited lovers to themselves?



## Widened the Banner of Light.

## SUMMER NOON.

BY S. B. KRAACH.

In silent noon of June,  
When earth is hushed,  
And singing birds  
And lowing herds  
Are mute,  
Only the bee's low tune,  
Whose humming wing has brushed  
The dusty gold  
The flower-leaves hold,  
And, like a lute,  
The whistling of the breeze,  
Low murmuring by,  
Seeming to say,  
Sighing among the trees:  
"Let passion rest  
In every breast!"  
Thus, like a hymn—  
The singers, all unseen  
And far away—  
These sounds at noon,  
In leafy June,  
Alone are heard;  
And o'er the heart, serene  
And tranquil as the day,  
Intrudes no care;  
But thoughts of prayer  
Within are stirred.  
And so, at summer noon,  
When earth is still,  
With singing birds  
And lowing herds  
At rest,  
Life's heavy cares unknown,  
Calm thoughts and feelings fill—  
Like birds that throng  
Green trees among—  
The quiet breast.

## Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS,  
192 WEST 27TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

"We think not that we daily see  
About our hearts, angels that are to be,  
Or say as if they will, and we prepare  
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air."  
—LILIAN HOLT.

(Original.)

## THE WAY TO BUILD CASTLES.

"I think when I am a big man," said Charlie Baker, "that I shall have a fine house, with stables attached, where I can have a plenty of horses, and let my friends have them to ride when they choose. I'll have a buggy, and a chaise, and a phaeton, and a rockaway, and ever so many saddles and bridles. And I'll have in my house all kinds of books, that I'll lend to the boys; and I'll have a lake made to sail upon in summer, and to skate on in winter; and I'll not keep any shut-up gardens and parks, but we'll have plenty of fruit for our supper, and our lunches, and we'll catch fish for breakfast."

"Who do you mean by we?" said Uncle Robert, who chanced to hear the plan of Charlie's future residence.

"Oh, all the boys. Anybody that wants to ride, can have a horse; and anybody that wants strawberries, can pick them."

"Very wise, and very generous," said Uncle Robert; and he unfolded his paper and began to read; but there was a quick twinkle in his eye, as if he knew something that it was not best to tell.

"Halloo, Charlie," said Ned Cross, breaking in abruptly. "Give us your sled a minute or two, won't you? We want to hitch horses, and go down the hill one after the other."

"Reckon I won't," said Charlie. "You youngsters must look out for your own sleds; I want mine myself."

"Oh, do, Charlie, that's a clever fellow," said Ned. "I can't stop to run home after mine, it's so far; and then, I'm sure you are not going to use yours—you never come till evening. I'll be real careful; please, now do, Charlie."

"But I tell you I won't," said Charlie. "You little boys do nothing but tease; and I hate it. I won't, and that's enough."

"How many years since you were little?" said Ned. "But who cares? I'll take a board instead; and it would have been capital fun, if I could have had a sled; and away he ran to hunt for a board."

Uncle Robert looked up from his paper.

"Who did I understand you to say we meant, Charlie?"

"Well, I did mean I'd let any of the boys have horses, when we got to be men together. But then—"

"Now, Charlie, let me tell you something," said Uncle Robert. "We all make pretty much the same sort of men that we start to be when boys; and I propose to give you an example that came under my observation. I will instance two boys that I knew when I was young. One was always building castles, just as you were but now. He was always telling what he should do, but he never did what came before him to do. He always intended, when he got to be rich, to make fine presents, and help everybody. He was sure he should spend a great deal of money to aid the poor; and then he should so greatly enjoy making others happy. I remember, especially, that he intended to always have a plenty of flour and sugar to give out to any one who would call for it. Very many such castles he built for the future, but he never did an unselfish act; he was always thinking what he should do after a while. If any of us went to him for a favor, he would never grant it if it interfered with his plans. If he had a treat of maple sugar, he never divided it among his friends. If he knew a fine place to catch fish, he would never tell any one, or share his sport, but keep everything for himself. The consequence, of course, was, that his selfishness grew so strong that when he became a man, he had no desire to do the things he used to talk of doing. He never had money enough, but kept hoarding more and more."

"Another of my mates used also to tell what he would do when he was a man, and he built very much such castles as the other boy. They would together talk over their plans; but Peter was not like Jacob, for Peter would always do every kind deed that was possible. He always shared his pleasures with his young companions. He divided his apples and candy, and told where the freshest berries were to be gathered. He was willing to lend his ball or his hoop at any time. He could always find time to assist younger boys, and many were the 'Willow whistles he made in the spring, and many the water-wheel that he helped arrange."

When these two boys became men they were rich. By industry and perseverance they had both gained great fortunes, but how differently did they use them. Jacob cared for nothing but to accumulate more and more. He was never content, and he never thought of doing any good with his wealth. He could always find some ex-

cuse for his building the castles of the suffering. But Peter was never weary of doing good. The castle he had built: when a boy, he had to live in when he was a man; for every generous wish was gratified. He established schools for young men and women who were not able to educate themselves. He never sent the needy away from him without aid. He cared for his money only that he might bless others with it and improve himself.

Now, Charlie, when I heard you express such good wishes this morning, I thought of Peter; when I heard your rough reply to Ned, I thought of Jacob. It is very well to build castles, but if you don't begin to lay stones for a firm foundation you'll never have anything but an air-castle, for if you do chance to get money you'll get none of its blessings. Now, Charlie, I advise you to begin to build your house on the foundation of present goodness, and to go out and offer your aid to Ned."

Charlie looked rather sober, for he felt really ashamed of his conduct; but he also felt unwilling to take any steps to show to the boys that he had been mean. Finally he concluded he would go out and have a little slide himself, and then it would be easy to pass over the sled to the other boys. This he did quite quickly, and began to roll a huge ball of snow that it might accumulate the fresh flakes that had been falling.

"I think Uncle Robert's idea of goodness is like this ball," said he. "You keep it in motion, and it increases; the more I roll it, the larger it grows. But if I let it lie still, it does not become a bit larger. So I expect, if I let my benevolence lie still, I shall have no more when I'm a man than I have now. I'll not forget Uncle Jacob's plan for castle-building."

Charlie's effort to remember the castle he expected to build, made him quite careful to do kind acts, and very soon it was so natural to him to do good deeds that he enjoyed, more than anything else, showing kindness to others. Uncle Jacob thought he could see his castle growing, day by day, on a firm foundation that could not be swept away.

(Original.)

## MY NEIGHBORS IN THE CITY.

NUMBER TWO.

I never intend to intrude, even by a glance, into any place that is meant to be kept sacred; so I never pry into my neighbors' affairs. But day after day, as I go to my window—the blinds of which are always open—I see whatever meets my eye. On the opposite side of the street from which I live, is a long brick block. A dull sight are those brick walls to one who has loved to look on the forests and mountains; but after a time, as one begins to think of those houses as homes, and as containing the best and dearest for many hearts, then they begin to look quite agreeable.

Through all the long November I had paid my many visits to the front window, and watched the little bit of sky to be seen between the houses, and had wondered if the very same light fell on those dull walls as fell on the frosted mountains and the dark forests. I wondered if people all loved to be shut up from the light, and if they never wished to see the sunshine, that they kept their blinds closed so closely.

But one day, as I came to the same spot, expecting to see the very same sights—the dull walls, the closed blinds—what was my delight to find a window with its blinds wide open, and a green plant sitting there, looking as fresh as a May morning. "Bless my kindly neighbors," said I; and I fancied I saw the green leaves rustle and glisten, and my own hanging ivy immediately seemed to me to assume a most friendly air. How many things were to be seen in that window besides that one plant. Immediately I began to think of some dear little friends that used to bring me the first green leaves of spring; and of the fair flowers that loving hands used to tend for me. Then I seemed to see myrtle trees that grew years ago, when I was only a little girl; and I began to see the dear faces that smiled on me then. Wonderful window of my neighbor! what magic it had! There were dear little hands, all full of spring beauties; and there again were great bunches of arbutus, and hemlock boughs, and pine cones, that grew by a beautiful lake far away.

Sometimes, when on dull days I looked to see the little plant, it grew so light that I fancied the sunlight had broken through the clouds; for, after a little, I saw beautiful fields, and clover blossoms, and buttercups, and then when I saw so much, it was easy to hear the birds, and the locusts, and the humming bee. There was a whole summer in that neighbor's window; yes, a great many summers. One beautiful thought always brings another, and so there came trooping past those window panes, many a smiling face, till the whole world seemed full of goodness and love.

What a little thing it was to put that plant in the window! and yet how much pleasure it gave. I wish I knew just what other people saw in my neighbor's window, after the plant stood there, and then I could write some delightful stories. I think little children must have seen over again all the beautiful sights of the country, and so kept fresh in their hearts the good times they had gathered chestnuts in the autumn; and violets in the spring, and strawberries in the summer; for I hope every child in the street has some dear grandfather, or uncle, that lives on a great farm, and wants them to come and get the fresh air.

I think the tired men and women must have felt rested as they looked at my neighbor's window, and thought of the charming days gone by; but whether others were glad or not, I was very thankful. And now do not you believe those neighbors to be very kindly, loving people? I am quite sure they must be, though I never saw them watering the plant, or tending it. I don't think it needed much care, for its dark green leaves looked strong, and very much as if they were determined to make the best of everything, and not grow pale and puny because they had not everything their own way. I fancy the plant said: "I'll do the best I can, under the circumstances. If I can manage to overcome the difficulties of my situation, so much the better. Here's a plenty of coal-ust, for one thing; that is a great difficulty; but I guess I'll breathe, for all that, through some of my pores. Here's this horrid odor of gas. I think it very disagreeable; but for all that, I think I'll manage to keep on a fresh look. And what a short day of sunlight there is, for there's a great corner for the sun to creep past in the morning before it reaches me, and another to the west out of the little rays; but I'll enjoy what I do get, and if I don't continue to put out a few new leaves, I must be a poor fellow. I dislike, also, the noise and confusion, but I'll try to keep calm myself, and then it will not matter much."

I think my neighbor's plant must have had many such resolves; for it surely kept itself very fresh and green until spring came, and then open came the window one day, and all the leaves seemed to be laughing together.

At I said before, what a little thing it was to put that plant there, and yet what a blessing it was. "What is there that could not do as much to make the world a better place to live in?" Many things in this world seem very wrong, and some-

times we feel greatly discouraged because we cannot set matters right; but if everybody would do a little, we should soon have quite a heaven on earth. It does not always require a great deal of money to do a great deal of good; but it does always require a spirit of unselfishness and of love. I do not imagine that my neighbors thought anything about benefiting the world with a little plant, but I cannot think but in that home there is a gentle spirit of love, and that it opens the way for many other true feelings. At any rate, they made the street very bright to me, and I feel very thankful to them.

## To Correspondents.

ANDRE L. B., EAST PRINCETON, MASS.—Your letter had a double fragrance: the sweetness of the flowers was not more pleasing than the breath of love. I am very glad to hear from you again, and to know of all you tell me. I wish I could fly, these sunny days, to the beautiful spots you tell of; but I have to visit them in spirit, and imagine the sweetness of the flowers, and the freshness of the air. I hope you will daily be laying up stores of beauty, so that you can never be without, wherever you may be.

Your friend, truly, LOVE M. WILLIS.

## Transposition.

I went with my little brother to buy a *tuinling* moph. "Oh," said he, "I want that *loze nag biley*, because it will make such a *zwighlin*." So I bought that one, and the dear little fellow trudged home *gethella*.

For the Banner of Light.

## LINES.

Oh! unseen one, whose strain is filling

With melody the charmed air,

And through my heart is strangely thrilling,

Enrapturing each pulsation there—

Art thou a creature of this Earth,

Or hast in Fancy's realm thy birth?

Thy voice, with wealth of gentle tones,

Falls so sweetly on my ear,

Like spirit-whisperings, to me comes

Responsive from some far-off sphere.

Oh! Echo, Myth—what'er thou art—

Ne'er from my darkness way depart!

Thy rippling music charms away

The deepening shades of gloom's black night,

And spans the sky of life's long day,

With true Hope's rainbow-arches bright.

Thou art my comfort, strength and pride;

I know thee now—my ANGEL GUIDE!

Philadelphia, 1885, A. H.

## Original Essay.

## ANCIENT AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

BY C. B. P.

Says Dr. Mackey—"Though the mysteries of Egypt and Rome were molested after those of Greece, those last undoubtedly derived their existence from the East, where the priests first began to conceal their doctrines under the form of mysterious rites, and to reveal them only to those who underwent a course of initiation. The western philosophers derived much if not all their learning from the Gymnosophists, or Sages of India, who were not more celebrated for the extent of their knowledge than for the simplicity of their lives. They inculcated a belief in the triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; the first being the Supreme, eternal, consecrated God. It was from the Gymnosophists that the philosophers of other nations acquired their idea of the existence of the Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul. Their instructions were oral and secret, communicated only after a process of initiation, which is said to have been extremely severe in its trials."

One of the "incessant occupations" of the Indian initiate was "the study of Astronomy," where the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. In the mysteries, or Freemasonry, after an invocation to the Sun, the aspirant was instructed to keep his face toward the East, and to utter the Word of the ineffable name, alike in physiology as in astronomy. Ezekiel saw Israel's God in the same glory from the way of the East, and John saw his angel standing in the Sun. After initiation, Neophytes were sprinkled with holy water, and divested of shoes to stand upon holy ground. Then followed the progress of the "seven ranges," through dismal sounds and horrid phantoms in horror and great darkness to the mystic Abram, the dreadful voice of Job, and the voice of the Lord, and the gate of heaven, whose upward course, by the mystical ladder, included the six troubles of Job, reaching to the heaven of light and beauty in the season of rest, or the Sabbath, the seven ranges from Hades to the Elysian fields. The Indian Paradise, or Garden of Eden, was "filled with dazzling light," as with the glory of the God of Israel. In this garden, "scented with the most fragrant perfumes," the candidate was supposed to be regenerated, redeemed, and cleansed, and a word, a Freemason, who was to build as wisely as he had learnt. Invested by the Hierophant, or Lord, with the white robe and tunic, the pure linen, clean and white in the righteousness of the saints; a cross was marked upon his forehead, and on other parts the signs and seals of the New Jerusalem. But before arriving to this happy estate, the aspirants, through all the mysteries, had to encounter many buffetings of Satan, who appeared in malignant aspect of St. John, the dreadful voice of Job, and the voice of the Lord, and the gate of heaven, whose upward course, by the mystical ladder, included the six troubles of Job, reaching to the heaven of light and beauty in the season of rest, or the Sabbath, the seven ranges from Hades to the Elysian fields. The Indian Paradise, or Garden of Eden, was "filled with dazzling light," as with the glory of the God of Israel. In this garden, "scented with the most fragrant perfumes," the candidate was supposed to be regenerated, redeemed, and cleansed, and a word, a Freemason, who was to build as wisely as he had learnt. 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## Correspondence in Brief.

## Spiritualism in New Hampshire.

As the remark is often made that Spiritualism is dead-going down—I feel prompted to exclaim, "It is not so. Spiritualism lives, and is now unfolding more beauties, from day to day, than ever before." Never, since I have been a laborer in the field, have I beheld such growth in Spiritualism as is witnessed to-day. I find the spirit of inquiry has spread among all classes, high and low alike. The very atmosphere of society is filled with the spirit of the New Era.

On my recent visit to Candia, N. H., I found there a few earnest souls who have been steadfast in their faith, watching eagerly each week for the Banner of Light, feeling that, without it, there would be a vacuum in their homes. As there were not many Spiritualists there, but a good deal of prejudice against them, they had but few public lectures; yet, in one part of the town, regular circles have been held for some time past, and some very good mediums are being developed. There are several others here who are endowed with good mediumistic powers. Brother Dearborn's wife is a very good test medium. I gave a lecture in the Methodist Church to a large audience. I am under obligations to a prominent member of the Society for gentlemanly kindness in conducting the meeting with much ease and candor; it shows that he is a true investigator, and not afraid of what our opponents may say. I cannot refrain from saying to him: "Go on, brother, for I see the work in your soul has begun."

Most of those who attended my lectures had previously been reluctant attenders even a circle. Close attention was paid to every word, by the audience, who felt that there was much truth in the utterances. Thus agitation of thought seems to have commenced with many. Trusting a few seeds have been sown by the way-side, which will in time spring up and bear fruit that shall nourish the good people of Candia, in the prayer of a laborer for humanity. FRANCES T. YOUNG.

Candia, N. H., 1885.

## A. E. Simmons in Vermont.

We desire to have you notice two meetings for us. Mr. A. E. Simmons is to be with us on Sunday, June 14th, and July 10th. We are having quite a revival, and indeed, our cause is flourishing everywhere in Vermont. The war has killed our churches apparently, while Spiritualism has moved on with colossal strides.

Mr. Austin E. Simmons has canvassed the State until but few towns remain to be visited by him. We trust that the angel-world will reward him; we certainly have not. And we fear some of our sister States may send him away from us. His gift is truly wonderful; his classical lectures and eloquence astonishing. He has made thousands of converts, for the combined and irrefragable character of his bold advocacy of our blessed Gospel.

He always meets his appointments; no storms deter him. He has now limited his labors to stated places during the most of the coming year. We almost blame him for so doing. We speak of Brother S. thus warmly because he deserves just such appreciation; and, indeed, it must strengthen you to hear of such real workers. THOS. M. CLARK.

Rochester, Vt., May 29th.

## To Dr. Newton.

DEAR BANNER—Being a subscriber and a firm believer in our sacred philosophy, I have a request to make, which I hope may be granted as soon as your columns will permit. Having been an eye witness to several very important cases of healing by the laying on of hands, by the distinguished Dr. J. R. Newton, at Toledo, Ohio, I wish to ask the Doctor why it is that he has pronounced a good many diseases healed, or that they would be healed in a given number of days, that are such signal failures. Although I am well satisfied in my own mind, as a Spiritualist and Psychologist, of the reason of such a result, yet, inasmuch as there are many well meaning honest men and women, in our immediate vicinity, who behold these (to them) glaring contradictions, I wish, for the sake of truth, the vindication of the Doctor's character, and our comfort as advocates of this good cause, that he give us an explanation that will, to some extent, at least, give them some kind of satisfaction. R. C. BARRITT.

Ottawa, O., June 2d, 1885.

## Letter from Moses Hull.

DEAR BANNER—Now that the AGE-PROGRESSIVE is passing through its "second birth," I have time to enter your "sanctum" (in spirit) and hold a kind of a social chat with your numerous readers. May you "live forever."

Whatever may be done by the "Religio," or any other Publishing Association, it is important that you should continue to wave in the breezes from the summer-land; yet the cause demands something of the kind in the West. When I think of the great amount of capital and talent that there is in Spiritualism, I feel to say that not only the BANNER should have ten times the amount of support it now gets, but we ought, at least, to sustain one more first-class Spiritual paper.

The truth is, Spiritualism is a tremendous big thing, and never increased so rapidly as within the last year. I do not mean that it never gained converts faster. I mean that a spirit of determination has been aroused among old Spiritualists, so that they are determined to sustain their cause. They are forming local business organizations all over the land, and an effort is being made to get outsiders in, which, in many instances, is proving successful. Persons who, a few years ago, could not have been hired to enter a Spiritualistic congregation, are now earnestly inquiring after these things. Spiritualists, themselves, are interested in a different way to what many of them have been in the past; they are learning that everything is not coming through their own organism. Hence they are getting more interested in reading-matter for themselves and neighbors. How many times have I been asked, in the past year, "What work shall I put into the hands of an unbelieving friend?" Also, at first, while all excited with the phenomenal manifestations of Spiritualism, many almost entirely forgot their children. Now a deep, and, I trust, lasting interest is awakened in behalf of children. Sunday Schools and Lyceums are being organized, and a work is being done for the rising generation, which will tell loudly for good when they arrive at manhood and womanhood.

Again, persons are from necessity looking at the adaptation of Spiritualism to the wants of humanity. It is no longer a matter of curiosity whether spirits commune or not. The war has parted so many parents and children, husbands and wives, and brothers and sisters, that there are but few but that want consolation; and that which they get from the pulpit is so indefinite and unsatisfactory, that they almost involuntarily fly to Spiritualism for the needed help.

It comes. Spiritualism does, under such circumstances, what all other religions combined fail to accomplish. Then why not flee to it? How natural for the thirsty man to go to the cooling spring to quench his thirst! How much more so for the poor wanderer, who thirsts for evidence of an hereafter, to go to the true source to find it. How there creeds enough in Christendom to keep him from it? No. As well try to stop the sun in its course.

But I close, hoping that Spiritualism will grow bolder with age during the life of the Banner. MOSES HULL.

Quite an interesting negro school celebration took place in Richmond on June 5th. The exercises consisted of singing, prayer, addresses by local Baptist ministers present, and an exhortation of the people, who were in high spirits.

J. BURNS, PROGRESSIVE LIBRARY, 1 WELLINGTON ROAD, CAMBERWELL, LONDON, ENGLAND.  
KEEPS FOR SALE THE BANNER OF LIGHT AND OTHER SPIRITUAL PUBLICATIONS.

This Paper is issued to subscribers and sold by Periodical Dealers every Monday Morning, six days in advance of date.

## Banner of Light.

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OFFICE, 158 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM NO. 3, UP STAIRS.

WILLIAM WHITE &amp; CO., PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

SPIRITUALISM is based on the cardinal fact of spirit communion and influx. It is the effort to discover all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, relations, duties, welfare and destiny, and its application to a regenerate life. It recognizes a continuous Divine inspiration in man; it aims through a careful, reverent study of facts, at a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe; of the relations of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the spiritual world. It is thus catholic and progressive, leading to true religion as at one with the highest philosophy.—London Spiritual Magazine.

## The Good Cause.

The Spiritualists' Convention held in this city on Anniversary Week was a pleasant and profitable gathering in all respects. The men and women who participated in it came from various parts of the country, to compare views on the progress and promise of that cause which is so dear to their hearts. The debates and conversations took a wide range, and still all came back very naturally to the one point which is of chief interest—the popular growth and development of the belief in the communion of spirits, and in the nearness of the unseen world to man. We were struck with the clear, deliberate and forcible manner in which the speakers stated and urged their opinions and views, because we drew from it the welcome influence that the noble faith professed by us has a direct tendency to clarify and improve the mental faculties as well as the spiritual, and establish the character on a solid foundation. The speeches were surpassed, in point of intellectual ability and force, or of spiritual energy and beauty, by none which were listened to at any one of the anniversary meetings held in Boston.

On a review of the field, there is found to be everything for encouragement. In point of fact, our faith itself is its own great reward. We need nothing like worldly flatteries to make that more acceptable. Nor is there such an element among believers in spirit-communion and the Spiritual Philosophy as the desire of proselyting. Where all rests with the soul of the believer, there is no room for need for ambitious meddlesomeness. This great work is a silent one, and one to be performed by and through the believer alone. No form of profession, no cogency of reasoning, no felicity of illustration can avail to make an unbeliever believe. That result comes of personal and prayerful investigation; of tranquility of soul; of a receptive and truly obedient state of the whole nature. The conditions are certainly simple, and within the reach of all.

And this being so, and everything like interested endeavor from without being discarded, it gives us all the more profound satisfaction to realize that there has for a long time been going forward in the Churches and various religious organizations a work of conversion to our beautiful faith, whose final and not distant result will be the leaving of the entire lump. The pastors and clergy may affect to know nothing about it, and indeed may know nothing about it; but the fact is not less indisputable, that there is a powerful and very widely spread element of personal belief in spirit-intercourse and the spiritual philosophy in almost every Church in the land. It may not publish itself by any really distinct profession or subscription, but it exists nevertheless, and is active and influential, and remains to regenerate the Church in due time.

Considered with reference to this actual state of things, it was not a matter of wonder at all, what ever certain newspapers may have thought it necessary to say about it, that the old theology and its prospects should have received so large a share of attention from the late Convention of Spiritualists in this city. It was more evident than ever to the members of that Convention, as they reviewed the field, that the day for old theology was come, and that its downfall, or supplanting, was to be brought about by its former friends rather than from outside. When once the faith in Spiritualism has made its way into the strongholds of that theology, and won over its former defenders and friends, it had nothing more to do; the rest would surely be done by those who held the fortress themselves. And that is just the way this thing is working to-day in the Churches to the speedy and complete overthrow of the old theology whose bulwark they so long have been. We must of course practice patience; but if we are strong in faith, and our own belief is able to stand the test of time and circumstance, it will be well in the end, and we shall see the complete triumph of truth over falsehood, of positive knowledge over shadowy and destroying superstition.

We have read over again the letter addressed to the late Unitarian Convention held in New York by Mr. Willis and others, relative to the character, aims and prospects of the Spiritual Philosophy, and the claim which is naturally made upon Unitarians and all who profess liberal Christianity that they shall proffer "a recognition of the fundamental principles of our faith." Those principles are set forth in the body of the letter with great clearness and succinctness. Since we cannot so well give their real meaning and expression as by quotation, we proceed to do as follows: "Our faith lies in this truth: That God, the Infinite Father, is closely allied to every child of earth by the unchanging laws of his being; that his love is continually active through all the experiences of life; through trials of faith, from joy and sorrow, and that this love is the great magnet that shall finally draw to purity and goodness each soul." "We recognize, in one age, no special law operating between the Fatherhood of God and the child-heart, that is not continually unfolding itself in all ages." "As by the law of their being, men communicated with angels, or spirits, in the olden times, so we believe that through the same laws those angels now hold close communion with the human family, and are the instruments through which all receive of spiritual gifts according to the measure of spiritual attainment, or, by the harmony of the natural and spiritual man which has ever constituted the mediative power." And again: "On this great truth—the intimate relation by perfect and unchanging laws of the spirit-world to the natural—we build up a faith in human progress that is not limited by creeds or forms, but only by the purity and sincerity of each individual's aspirations."

These statements are easily understood of all. They constitute a sort of synopsis of spiritual faith. It is not necessary to say that the letter embodying them was not received by the Convention, calling itself a liberal body of religious men. But that

makes no difference. The great facts of the case remain. Their Convention was not of itself particularly harmonious, nor were its results anything to make special mention of. But it could not hinder the progress of spiritual belief in the minds of men; nor keep men and women from investigating, by refusing to have this respectful letter read in its presence. No single body of men can shut up the truth within their own fold. We have every reason to rejoice that it is always living and active, and will find its way where its persecutors and secret enemies cannot penetrate.

To close with an apt sentence from one of Mr. Willis's discourses in Hope Chapel: "Short of its Spiritualism, Christianity is short of its vital power. But when we turn from any special declaration of doctrines to the general feeling, and find what the best and most intelligent minds dwell in, both in doctrines and in literature generally, we cannot help seeing that forms of belief are dropping away before the growing of the inner life; that a great power is at work enlightening, purifying and elevating humanity. It is the power of God's angels; we have but to put our trust in it, and we are safe from all doubts and fears."

## Going South.

There is a loud call in the Southern papers, and particularly in those of Richmond, for Northern immigrants. People of energy and industrious habits are sadly needed in Virginia. Implements of agricultural labor are likewise needed. And men to show the people how to take hold of their condition just as they find it, and work out of untoward circumstances into prosperity and power. The Richmond Republic says there is more unemployed land in Virginia to-day than in any other State of the Union. The farms are four or five times as large as their owners require. And the labor to be had is only sufficient to cultivate, in a slovenly way, not the whole, but a fractional part of the soil. The climate and soil of Virginia are all that one could ask; probably there is no more beautiful spot on earth than the Shenandoah Valley, up and down which the opposing armies have so many times run after one another. A general sale of half the lands by their owners is thoroughly urged, and a large immigration of farmers and laborers is cordially invited from the North. Virginia will yet be renovated, but the work will be performed by intelligent labor, owning itself, and interested directly in the results it works out.

## Back to Specie.

There is really a movement making toward specie. We heartily welcome it. When no other specie taken remained to us, we felt thankful that we had the little nickel left. That was the single line which was to grow at length to noble size and transport us over this deep and varying gulf of paper currency. It is now proposed to call in all the currency issues under the denomination of twenty-five cents, and pay out only small silver change in their place. Once let it be understood that this dirty little rag currency of the denominations of ten, five, and three cents will not be in circulation after the government gets hold of it, and silver change would be plenty right off. How we shall hail the day when we can plunge our hand into our pocket and fish it up full of dimes and half-dimes, all bright as fish-scales, and good honest silver! If, after the movement begins, people will only pass along their change instead of holding on to it, there will be no scarcity or trouble whatever.

## Paying off the Debt.

Nothing surprises us in these times, especially in connection with the plans of our countrymen. There is a proposal on foot to pay off the national debt, or certainly two-thirds of it, by a popular subscription; and the matter has been taken up with such general earnestness and enthusiasm, that it would not surprise us at all to find that it could really be done. If even two of the three thousand millions could be paid, the other thousand would not be much more than would be required by the people of the nation for investment, for banking securities, and for various other purposes. If such a plan should be carried out, what a commentary it would furnish the world on our institutions! We have incurred a great debt by a great war, and now we propose to pay off our debt, and leave the country free from the burdens of annual taxation.

## Extending the Suffrage.

There has, for some time, been much discussion in England over the extension of the suffrage. It is now enjoyed by those who hold a household lease yielding ten pounds per year, and it is proposed to make it include all who hold leases worth six pounds. This would let into the list of voters a great multitude of working men. The liberals do not go into the question with a great deal of enthusiasm, but appear to be using their professions as much for political effect as anything else. The conservatives are ready to grant an extended suffrage, but are not willing to go the length of making it democratic. In all England, out of a population of thirty-one millions, there are but a little over a million and a quarter voters; with an equal population, in 1880, this country had more than four and a half million voters.

## Bored.

There are a class of writers for the press, who have such an exalted opinion of their own productions that they not only tenaciously bore editors with the request that they publish them—no matter how lengthy, to the exclusion of more interesting matter—but continually find fault, when their articles do appear, if the slightest alteration is made, which is often absolutely necessary to make them readable. The editor of the Investigator seems to have been troubled a good deal by this class of writers, of late, and, after showing one up, in a recent number, most effectively, concludes his remarks in the following sensible language:

"While we are disposed to be obliging and to treat all men courteously, we have no idea of laboring in our perplexing business for the trivial purpose of gratifying any man's vanity or submitting to any man's dictation."

## A Little Trouble.

They are having some trouble in New York between the Episcopal and the Orthodox churches, about the pastoral letter recently issued by the Episcopal Bishop Potter to the clergy of his diocese, instructing them not to give way to the innovation of alluring pastors of other churches, to officiate in their pulpits. The ministers of the other denominations have had a meeting about it in the Tabernacle, and some very emphatic comments were made upon it. The New York Herald has taken up the matter, and is disposed to regard the Bishop's letter as one of the most blundering of the present day. The Bishop himself used none but gentle language, for we read his letter through; but no one could reasonably expect it was going to suit the temper and faith of these times.

## Excursion into the Country.

Out in the glory of woodland once more, I find myself with a merry band, That sooths the senses so passing well, Out where the flowers are white and low, And the breezy zephyr is so cool, Away from haunts of daily life, Where beautiful ideas bend over all.

June is the finest month of the whole year in which to visit the country. Nature, at this season, dons her choicest robes, and the air is delicious with the aura of flowers. Such were our convictions on arriving at the romantic town of Milford, N. H., on Saturday, June 3d, with our office associates.

On the Sabbath afternoon we attended the Spiritual meeting, held in the town hall, under the management of Bro. James Blood, where we listened to an excellent discourse, given inspirationally by Mrs. Nellie Temple Brigham. The subject, "Aspiration and Inspiration," was handled with great skill by the speaker, and the discourse throughout was listened to with the closest attention, by a very intelligent and appreciative audience. Mrs. B. speaks there during June.

Just before sundown, the party, by invitation, visited Mount Vernon, quite a place of resort during the summer months. This town is four miles from Milford, and forty-eight from Boston. There is a spacious hotel here, called the "Mount Vernon House," which is under the management of Mr. R. A. Upton, late of Boston. The prospect from the eminence is indeed delightful. As far as the human vision can extend may be seen in all directions, towns and villages, hills and valleys, streams and woodlands.

As an episode to our drive, on returning from Mount Vernon we were greeted with a severe thunder-storm, which subjected us to a thorough shower-bath, gratuitously—at least those who rode in open carriages—among whom we may mention one of our noted daily newspaper editors. But the obliging landlord of the Milford Hotel, Mr. Bradford Williams—who sets a better table than any other landlord in New Hampshire, our word for it—soon made matters all right, by furnishing us an ample supply of dry clothing.

And here we would take occasion to hint to pleasure-seekers or invalids who intend to locate in the country during the hot season, that they cannot find a more romantic or healthier locality than Milford or Mount Vernon.

## A Foggy Soul.

Bro. Grant, of the "World's Crisis," is shaking in his shoes. He is fearful that Spiritualism is destined to upset "old theology," and hopes that the new movement of the Spiritualists—cooperative action for educational purposes—"may open the eyes" of some of his "orthodox friends." Well, we hope so, too. Their eyes need opening. They have been closed by the dogmas of the Church long enough. Let the light shine in upon them, say we.

Again, Bro. Grant says: "They [his orthodox friends] may be assured that a storm is rising of no ordinary magnitude, that is well calculated to scatter moral desolation in all directions," etc. The Elder should have italicized the word "scatter," instead of the ones he has, and then his paragraph would have been all right, for it is indeed the object of good Spiritualists to "scatter moral desolation," which noxious weed has been overrunning our fair land so many years, under the teachings of "old theology"—and by the blessings of God, we have no doubt but that we shall accomplish this end; that, instead of war, desolation, and the numerous evils we have endured, we may enjoy fraternal love, and peace, and plenty; and finally, that we may pass to the immortal world with the full consciousness that we have performed well and acceptably the work assigned us in the Father's vineyard.

## A. J. Davis in Lyceum Hall.

Mr. Davis being in this city for the purpose of attending the late Convention of Spiritualists for the organizing Sunday School Lyceums for Children, was invited to speak before the Society of Spiritualists, on Sunday, June 4th. He complied with the request, and, in the afternoon, gave the audience a brief but logical treatise on the standard of thought and action, and our duty as Spiritualists at the present day, taking for a text: "An honest God is the noblest work of man." Every word was listened to with earnest attention and evident satisfaction by the audience.

In the evening Mr. Davis bore upon the importance of instructing the youth of our country in something more important and valuable than theology can teach them; and urged the necessity of Sunday Schools or Lyceums, as a necessary means to accomplish this important end. The entire discourse was excellent.

Mrs. Davis spoke with regard to the Lyceum and the manner of teaching the children, relating many very interesting incidents which occurred among the children in the New York Lyceum; and endeavored to impress upon the audience the great help such an institution is in developing the minds of children; and earnestly expressed the hope that one would be established here at once.

## Meetings in Taunton.

In March last, Mrs. Laura Cuppy spoke before the Society of Spiritualists in the city of Taunton, and was so well appreciated as to be re-engaged for the two last Sundays in this month, and the three last in July. Mr. Wm. J. Sweet, of that city, writes as follows, in regard to her previous labors there: "The Spiritualists of this place, and many others who are not sympathizers with us in our glorious belief, have had the pleasure of listening to Mrs. Laura Cuppy, who is one of the most able of all our advocates—elegant in reasoning, eloquent, yet so plain in her arguments as to be fully understood by all her hearers. Her subject—'The objections raised against Spiritualism'—was treated in a manner highly creditable to both speaker and the controlling intelligence, and was listened to by a large audience, among whom were many orthodox friends, who appeared to relish what the speaker said. At the close of the address, a fine poem was given by the inspiration of Achsa W. Sprague."

## The Chicago Sanitary Fair.

The Committee of Spiritualists of this City, appointed to cooperate with Mrs. J. S. Fuller, to raise donations for the Spiritual Department, in the North Western Sanitary Commission and Soldiers' Home Fair, now being held in Chicago, Ill., have forwarded to the care of Mrs. Fuller one thousand dollars worth, in goods and money, and more was to follow soon, as all the promised donations had not at that time, been handed in to the Committee.

Charles Partridge, Chairman of the New York Committee of the First Society of Spiritualists, who hold their meetings in Hope Chapel, New York, reported to the Society, on Sunday, June 14th, that the sum contributed by them, in money and goods, amounted to two thousand four hundred and sixty-six dollars, which had been forwarded to the Fair, to the care of Mrs. Fuller, for the Spiritual Department.

## Address to the Spiritualist Public.

The undersigned, was chosen Secretary and General Agent of the New England Convention of Spiritualists, recently assembled in Boston. The Convention, as will be seen, by the report in the Banner, organized itself as a working body and adopted a Constitution, chose its officers, and resolved that something, in the way of progress, should be done. The members of the Executive Committee, who were present, unanimously resolved that the principal work for the year ensuing, should be the establishment of Children's Progressive Lyceums. And in this work they hope to employ the Agent's time mainly for the year.

To begin this work, they resolved to make an appeal to Spiritualists at once, for the needed means; and I was directed to present their plea as soon as practicable. The amount is a trifle for New England to pay, but it is necessary; and the Committee hope it will be immediately pledged. If every lecturer, favorable to the plan will take up a collection, and pledges, in the several places where they are speaking, the Sunday after reading this, the work will be nearly done.

In the meantime, let those who have long waited for some plan, whereby we could act organically, lend a helping hand at the outset. I am at the call of the friends, and hope to be kept busy, yet, even hurried in the good work. If our friends, in different places, will give me a call to attend their Conventions and other public meetings, to present this question, I shall be most happy to respond, as well as to all Sunday appointments. One gentleman has pledged fifty dollars, and if we can have a few more such, we shall be all safe.

But what is of greatest interest, it is hoped that Lyceums will be started in every place, whereby any considerable number of Spiritualists live. If you have no Sunday meetings, the Lyceum will soon enable you to have one, and if you have one, will make it easier to support it. But, while we may make the Lyceum system a specialty, let us by no means intermit in any of those means by which we may promote our general work of spreading the true light. Read our Constitution carefully, and see if its methods do not commend themselves to your judgement, and if so, let us go with new zeal into the work. All communications, and remittances may be addressed to me, at the Banner of Light, for the present. Or, money may be sent to the Treasurer, John Wetherbee, Jr., Boston. J. S. LOVELAND, General Agent.

## Returning Soldiers.

Our streets are pretty well sprinkled with the brown faces and weather-beaten lineaments of brave veterans just returned from the war. They receive the respect and gratitude of all. Although we have had as yet no general welcome of returned regiments, on account probably of the scattered manner in which they make their appearance among us, yet we are all none the less glad to see and greet them, to look into their expressive eyes, at their bronzed faces, their muscular and hardy appearance. We feel that they have saved our country whole, and deserve all the glory, that their commanders themselves are but too ready to allow. How glad these men will be to reach their homes and the dear ones there. What a proud satisfaction will ever be theirs, to reflect that they took a part in this war for human rights and liberty.

## The Spiritualists' Picnic.

The picnic, announced in our last paper, will take place to-morrow, Tuesday, June 13th, instead of the 20th, at Island Grove, Abington. This notice of the change of time will not reach all our readers in this vicinity in season, and thus, we fear, many who desire to attend will be disappointed. But those who do attend will, no doubt, be well paid; for, aside from the accommodations in the grove for various kinds of amusements, there will be some excellent speeches from some of the best mediums in our midst at the present time. Cars will leave the Old Colony depot at half past eight and half past eleven o'clock. Fare from Boston, to and from the grove: seventy-five cents for adults and forty cents for children. From way-stations, passengers will take the regular train, at one-half the usual fare.

## Better Acquaintance.

One good effect of the war will be seen in the freer interchange of visits, both of business and pleasure, between the people of the North and the South. Thousands of Southern men will come North, who never would have thought seriously of it before. In fact, necessity will compel them to do so. And, more than all, they want to efface the horrors of the past four years from their minds as soon as they can. They would like to look at life out of their old eyes. They begin to feel that they have sinned full on hate and revenge, and the humanities are coming in to assert their place and power. The emigration into the South, also, will be immense. With a complete change of sentiments there need be no fears of disunion.

## A Friendly Call.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Davis, of New York, during their late visit to our city, called at this office, and also attended one of our free circles. They were quite interested in the manifestations, putting several questions to the controlling intelligence. Mrs. Davis asked if a Children's Lyceum would be established in this city, and received the agreeable assurance that such would be the case. Mr. and Mrs. D. have the interest of the rising generation at heart, and we trust they may long enjoy health and strength to labor in such a noble cause. Their visit to our city was doubtless a pleasant one. Such friendly relations serve to harmonize the discordant elements that non-intercourse too often engender.

## Laura De Force Gordon.

Mrs. Gordon has returned from New Orleans, and proposes to remain in New England for a short time before she again returns to the South. During her stay among us she will answer calls to lecture. She is already engaged to lecture in Lowell for the next two Sundays. Mrs. G. arrived just in season to be present at the late Spiritualists' Convention in this city, and took part in the discussions. Although she has long been a favorite in the lecturing field, her improvement in style and substance of language, compactness of thought and logical reasoning, is so marked, that it would be difficult to find a more acceptable female speaker.

## Westfield, N. Y.

Mrs. M. Eason writes from Westfield, Chautauque County, N. Y., requesting lectures, or test mediums, to call at that place, as they have been long and anxiously waiting for some one to dispense to their hungry souls the bread of life.

## New York City.

Mrs. Emma Barlange is engaged to speak at a meeting for the First Society of Spiritualists, meeting in Hope Chapel, New York City, on







## Message Department.

Each Message in this Department of the BANNER was spoken by the Spirit whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of

Mrs. J. H. Conant.

while in an abnormal condition called the trance. The Messages with no names attached, were given, as per dates, by the Spirit-guides of the circle—all reported verbatim.

These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earth-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.

### The Circle Room.

Our Free Circles are held at No. 158 WASHINGTON STREET, Room No. 4, (up stairs), on MONDAY, TUESDAY and THURSDAY AFTERNOONS. The circle room will be open for visitors at two o'clock; services commence at precisely three o'clock, after which time no one will be admitted. Donations solicited.

### Invocation.

Father, Spirit, thou who art our life, our strength, our everlasting hope, thou whose ways are not our ways, whose law controls and governs all things, we would bow down before the splendor of thy demonstrated law, and, like little children, ask thy protection. Father, Spirit, we behold thy radiance in the sunbeam, and in the mild beauty of the moonlight rays. We see thee springing up in flowers, and hear thy voice in the waves of ocean, and yet we cannot name thee, nor understand thee. But we can praise thee, we can love thee. We thank thee that thy ways are not our ways, that thy wisdom is not our wisdom, that thy great soul is greater than ours; for we know that thou wilt mold out to us according to our several necessities. In our blindness and ignorance, we sometimes fail to see this. Great Soul of Life, we sometimes feel thy presence is withdrawn from us, that the glorious tide of thy inspirations is stayed, so far as we are concerned. But when we turn within the inner sanctuary of soul, we know thou art with us. We know, though tempests arise and dark clouds obscure the sun's fair face, though night follows day, and sorrow follows joy, yet thou art with us; still thy strong hand is leading us, thy wise heart is sustaining us. Oh Father, Spirit, teach these thy mortal children, in all their ways, to worship thee in Spirit and in Truth. Teach them to love, and love supremely. Teach them that they are all of one family, and are bound to one heaven. Teach them that they have come from one great source, and again must go back to it. Oh, let them know, Great Spirit, that thou art dealing with them always in love; that mercy is one of thy divine attributes; that all forms of life are forever sounding forth thy divine mercy. Oh Father, Spirit, though darkness have fallen upon this great nation, though darkness has swept over the land like a furnace fire, though hearts have been called to bleed, though the red hand of war has desolated the homes of thy children, yet, oh Father, Spirit, thou lovest them still. And so sure as there is enough of good to be found among them, so sure will they rise triumphant over their sorrows, and plant the banner of peace and eternal justice again upon their shores. So sure as there is strength in their midst, so sure they will be purged from their sins—so sure they will come out shining lights. Oh Father, we commend them to thee. Thou knowest their needs; thou considerest all their demands; thou hearest all their wishes, and answerest all their desires. So we will trust thee, and adore thee, forever. Amen.

May 8.

### Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—We are now ready to receive questions, either from correspondents or from the audience.

CHAIRMAN.—W. L. H., of Camp Barry, Portland, Me., writes thus:

QUEST.—In the Banner of April 29th, this question is asked: "How can it be a question with spirits as to whether the infant spirit attains the full stature of man or womanhood?" The answer given is: "That all souls, spirits or human bodies, are aggregated differently; all see and understand differently upon different subjects." If spirits can see and recognize each other in the spirit-world, it appears to me, as a simple matter of fact, it must be apparent to all who have been for any length of time in the spirit-land, that spirits should all agree. Why not as well as man in regard to the growth of the infant here? The treatment of the above question is very unsatisfactory to me, and I doubt not others must feel as I do in regard to it; and I suggest that further light be requested from the spirits.

ANS.—It should be remembered that forms are not measured by their size in the spirit-world, but by the number of conditions, or thoughts, that they possess. The spirit, in its strictest sense, is but an aggregation of thought. Now if you, as an individual, possess a large amount of thought—spiritual life—why, we might call you a fully developed spirit, a full grown intelligence. But if you are dwarfed—are limited in thought—we should say that you were very small in size, that as a spirit you were as a child. It is very hard for the disembodied spirit to convey to you who are still within the confines of human life, any just conception of our condition as freed spirits. You cannot understand the realities of the spirit-world until you shall have entered upon it. It is also utterly impossible for us to give you any adequate idea of our true condition as spirits. We might tell you from now until you had numbered many more years in time, of our condition, all that pertains to ourselves, and you would still fail to comprehend our true condition, from the fact that we are totally unable to project the knowledge of that condition through human senses to you.

Q.—[From the audience.] Is a friend of mine living or dead?

A.—That is a question that could better be answered elsewhere. Questions of so personal a nature we shall always decline to answer at this place.

### George M. Jackson.

I'm here, kind friends, to thank you for your noble expressions of sympathy and benevolence that reached me from time to time, during my sickness. I assure you I was deeply grateful for your kindness; sensible that the angels had not forgotten me, and that Spiritualists had hearts that could be moved.

There were times, during my sickness, particularly, when I was first taken sick, when I was almost compelled to believe that Spiritualists, as a body, had forsaken me. They knew me well in my happier days, when I was able to care for myself; but when sickness and want came, it often seemed to me that they were not found, perhaps, just where I had been wishing to find them.

But the angels always told me that it was only a fault of the eyes that they would be just if they only knew enough to be so; I would surely receive my reward. So I waited patiently, until at

last the reward came, and then I was constantly cared for, and my pathway to the tomb made comfortable; for which, kind friends, I thank you—all you who bestowed kind wishes upon me, and those of you who gave their mite to aid me physically.

I would like to portray to you the beauties of the home I have entered, would like to depict to your minds the glory that awaits you, as disembodied spirits, but I have no language with which to portray such a brilliant picture. I am unable, wholly unable to give those dear friends to whom I promised to return, a faithful picture of the spirit-world; for oh, it is so much beyond human comprehension and human conception, so much more glorious, so much more real, more natural, more spiritual, too, that I cannot give you anything like a perfect representation of it.

That I am free, and happy, and well, and satisfied to the fullest extent, is a truth. That I have realized the truth of modern Spiritualism, I here declare to you; that I am here, George M. Jackson, speaking to you, is also a truth; that I expect to live to all eternity, and throughout all ages that same George M. Jackson, so far as my individuality is concerned, I believe to be true.

I send kind greetings to my dear parents, who will soon join me. To all others whom I have promised to return to, if Spiritualism were true, I would say, it is all right and all true, friends. Now all you have to do is to earnestly pursue your investigations, and you will soon be rewarded.

I would stay longer, but I am exceedingly weak in spirit, and that prevents my running this physical machine any longer. Farewell, sir. May 8.

### Archibald Lewis.

I told my friends that I would certainly come back after death; so here I am. Archibald Lewis, from Amesbury. I'm glad to meet you, sir. I've just gone home; and tell the folks I'm ready to talk with them from over the river. I promised to come, but I can't say much to-day. Good-by, good-by, sir. May 8.

[The above is true. Mr. Lewis promised several friends before his death that he would return, as being a Spiritualist, he had faith he could. And he has kept that promise.—EDITOR BANNER.]

### John Barnes.

John Barnes, sir, from Michigan. I did not know much about this Spiritualism before I died; but I said if there was anything in Spiritualism, I'd come back as soon as I died.

I was wounded and taken prisoner, and—well, was put through a good many strange places, until I found myself in the spirit-world; and I've made my way back here about as soon as I could, considering the crowd.

I do not know what to say about this business, it's so different from what I expected to find it. I'm dead, stranger, that's sure; and I'm here to announce myself as dead, through this new telegraphic process. The folks at home have heard of my being taken prisoner, but supposed I was on the tape of coming home, being exchanged. Tell the folks I've concluded to take another train.

If you'll be kind enough to say to Joseph Cranford—he's the kind of this way inclined—that his spiritual faith is about right, I'll be very much obliged to you. And then again, I'd like to say a word or two to my mother. She's a Calvinist. [Baptist?] Yes, yes; one of the hard-shell kind, and I do not know as I can crack the shell so as to get in. She knew very well that I was a pretty rough sort of a fellow, and she used to pray pretty hard for me, and told me there was one thing I ought to get, and that was religion. Well, religion I could not get, somehow or other; I tried pretty hard to coax it along, but could not get it; that's so, stranger. I would commence to pray, and the first thing I knew I'd go to singing some irreligious tune. I tried to learn the Lord's Prayer, but I did not succeed. Well, you see, I was kind of unsupervised, and I took it naturally, I suppose, from the old man, for he was—well, he was not an infidel, or anything of that sort, but he was one of these 'ere folks that used to indulge in free thought, and did not pay much attention to going to meeting. I suppose I took my lack of religion from my father, for it's certain I did not from my mother, for she's just the other way; and she's just as sure that the old man, my father, is in hell, as that she's alive. I do not know what you call hell, but one thing's certain: if he's in hell, I've seen him, and he's pretty well off; and he wants me to give this message to her in his own words; for he says my mother'll understand it better: "That he's a damned sight better off than Parson Corney." I did not want to use his expression, but he wanted me to, so I had to stick it in. Well, I'll tell you what Parson Corney was: He was the fellow that baptized my mother—took her into the Church. Oh, well, she worshiped him more than his religion. He's dead—gone up long time ago; and he's not so well off as I am. I ain't going to preach against religion here, but at any rate, I'm quite comfortable.

Well, sir, rebeldom is about played out. So I thought, the last time I saw Jeff Davis. [Then you have seen him?] Seen him! Yes, I have seen him. He was bunged up in one eye, and something ailed one of his hands. He was a sorry looking cuss, anyway; and unless he gets over his troubles before you nab him, he won't be good for much.

Give my very best regards to the boys of the 11th Michigan, will you? Say that I'm just as happy as the next one. And as for living in expectation of being sent below, I'm not a-going to do it; but shall live in expectation of being sent aloft—that's it. I tell you what it is, this thinking of hell all the time, is very apt to breed it within ourselves, in my opinion. Oh, I was happy when I was on the earth, and I'm happy on the other side, too. Well, stranger, my time's out. [Your age?] Thirty-one. Good-day, sir. May 8.

### Edith Hardee.

I was born in Charleston, South Carolina, March, 1849. I passed to the spirit-world on the 11th day of last month. At the time of my death I was in Paris, France.

Edith Hardee was my name. I was the niece and ward of General Hardee, who was my father's brother. Early in the breaking out of the rebellion, myself, together with other friends, were sent to Paris to escape the ill of war. I was never strong, but was not considered sick when I left. I suppose I myself was a medium for spiritual manifestations, although I never attempted to produce manifestations except a few times. Then I was urged to give way to the power by friends, and it was said that manifestations were given.

When I found that I was entirely free from my body, that I was really dead, really a disembodied spirit, I said I will go back to earth and report myself as dead to my uncle and friends at the South. As yet they do not know that I've passed on, nor did they hear that I was sick.

All that property which was mine when on earth, if I can be permitted to dispose of it according to my own desire, I shall say, give it to those who were my father's slaves, who are now freed

or soon will be, who have no homes, nor any means of sustaining themselves. Divide all that was mine among them. That is my wish. I am well aware that I can now have in this world no voice in these things, but if I can only impress those friends whom I have left, spiritually, as regards my wishes in the matter, I'm sure they can't refuse.

I am obliged to you, sir, for your kindness. I hope that my uncle will get my letter. I expect he will. [Does he have charge of your property?] Yes, sir. He wrote to me that he had turned all of my property, so far as he was able, into ready cash. Now, if he has done so, it will be very easy to divide what I have left among those poor souls. I'm glad, for one, that they have got freedom. If I had had my way, they should have had it long ago. But now that they are free, they need something to begin life with. My uncle must remember that they have been kept for years in servitude, and now it is but just and right to give them enough to start them well in their new condition in life. Farewell, sir. May 8.

### Captain Faunce.

Captain Faunce, sir, of the 21st Georgia, Company A.

I was shot in the last battle before Winchester. I find my friends are mourning my loss very deeply. I have searched the South over, and I have been unable to find a way of reaching them, other than from here. And as I have been informed that you stand upon neutral ground, of course I considered I had a right to expect kind treatment at your hands. It is so very hard, in these times of misfortune, to tell who is one's friend, and who is not, that we are obliged to look very sharply in order to know which way to move, and move right. I know many things are laid at the door of the South, that, in my opinion, do not belong there; while, on the other hand, many things are laid at the door of the North, that, in my opinion, belong more to the South. And so there seems to be a general misunderstanding between North and South, causing our towns, cities and by-places to flow with blood. This want of knowledge concerning our neighbors, is to me a very great oversight. There has been a gulf, almost impassable, between the North and South ever since the period of our colonization, and I'm sure I do not see any immediate prospect of a real, spiritual, permanent peace until you're enlightened the people. Now I know of thousands in my section of the country who really believe you to be the greatest set of wretches, here at the North, God ever gave birth to; that you do not possess the slightest degree of mercy and justice. Now they have been so taught; and, on the contrary, you have been taught to look upon us as a depraved and ignorant class of beings.

Well, they say there is a power governing this war, and if so, I, for one, hope it's for good.

I have left a wife and family of three little ones, sir, whom I would be glad to talk with. I have also many other dear friends at the South, that I should be glad to meet this way. But most of all, I want to let my wife know that I live; that in many respects I have power to aid her still; that I've not forgotten my duty to her and my children; and although no longer a dweller upon the earth, I would have her feel that death has separated me from them only so far as the body is concerned. I want them to know, also, that I can come back and speak. I cannot promise my family happiness here, for I know very well their lot is very hard, and especially to those who have been used to better things. But I can assure them of a brighter home in the spirit-world, and a place, too, that is just as real, just as tangible, and far more beautiful than anything this world can boast of. I should be glad to meet my dear ones face to face, if I knew of any way to do so. But I know not of any person at the South through whom I could speak; but if they can find me a medium, I shall be very glad of the opportunity to come.

Many thanks, sir, for your kindness. May 8.

### Emily Cooke.

Emily Cooke, sir, from Baltimore. I was eight years old, and I've been away from my mother since February.

My father was in the 9th Maryland Reserve Corps. He's not with my mother. She's all the time crying because I have gone, and she says she has nobody now to love, and she wants to die. But I want to be loved now just as much as I was when I lived here, and I—I don't feel happy when I see my mother so sad. I feel—I feel homesick then, and I—I want to go home where she can see me, so she can love me.

She wishes she was a Christian, so she could feel reconciled to God's will; but my Aunt Mary in the spirit-land says that even Christians are not always reconciled; that they don't always give up their friends with—a sure hope of meeting them again, any more than anybody else does; and she thinks that nothing will do my mother so much good as for me to come myself. So I have.

I want to sick only about four or five days. I did not know I was going to die; did not think I was dead. I'm going now. May 8.

### Invocation.

Infinite Jehovah, thou Spirit of Eternal Goodness, to whom nations and individuals ever turn; thou fountain of everlasting strength, from which the soul gains its strength, from which we have come and to which we are going; thou to whom we bring our praises and complaints, and all our songs of joy, prayers, sighs and tears, all that which ever has been, or can be; this hour, through Nature's falling tears, we praise thee. There is darkness in the moral and mental as well as in the physical world. Still we praise thee for this darkness, for well we know thou hast all love for us. Thou art justice, mercy, goodness, everlasting truth; and so surely as we have been born of thee, so surely we must return to thee; so surely we shall ever find sustenance in thee; so sure as the lilies of the field are cared for, so sure we, too, shall be remembered and cared for. Though kingdoms fall, though thrones crumble into dust, and kings lose their crowns, yet thou art always the same. Thy love is eternal. Thou art marching on through the ages, calling all things higher, still higher. So, oh Father, we praise thee. We sing unto thee a new song of thanksgiving, yet it is as old as eternity. The hills have echoed it from all time. The sun's rays flash forth thy beauty; the moon tells of thy glory; the morning stars chant songs of praise; and we, with all other things in life, unite in singing glad hallelujahs to thy name. Oh Father, for the great furnace-fire through which these American children are passing, we adore thee. Oh, we praise thee for the heat that is being thrust upon them; for we know, oh Father, that out of this furnace-fire, thy children shall come forth purified from their sins, and more fitted to shine among thy gems in the eternal hereafter. Oh, our Father, may we be able to give to every child that forms a member of this great republic, a more perfect understanding of thy holy law, so they shall know more of light and less of darkness; more of truth and less of

error; more of all thy highest and holiest attributes, and less of human life. Teach them to reach out after thy better gifts. Teach them to rely upon the right, instead of relying upon the might of mortality. Oh, teach them that forms fade away; that the conditions of Time fall into nothingness; that thy eternal law endureth forever. Father, accept our praises, register the thoughts and petitions of these thy children, and bless them according to thine own way. Amen. May 9.

### Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—We are now ready to give an opinion concerning the inquiries of correspondents, or from persons in the audience.

QUEST.—How are we to understand the account of the three worthies, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, whom it is said Nebuchadnezzar cast into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than usual? and also the wonderful escape of Daniel in the lion's den?

ANS.—In the first place, be it understood that we ignore the existence of miracles altogether. All things that are done at all, are done by virtue of God's law. A miracle, properly defined, is a something that has taken place outside of law. Now, to us, this cannot be. So all those things which you term miracles, are to us but simply legitimate effects of legitimate causes. The record says that the three worthies referred to were cast into a furnace that was heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be, and that they came out from thence without even the smell of fire upon their garments. The atmosphere holds within it keeping all the elements that are requisite to the combination of physical life. Everything that you have in your physical world has been brought into form, into outward existence, from the atmosphere. So, then, that atmosphere holds within its power all elements required in the producing of chemical changes. It should be understood that there are many spirits in the spirit-world who are exceedingly well versed in chemistry; not merely that chemistry that belongs to physical life, but also in that which lays hold of the spirit, goes beyond the chemistry of human life. Yours is of the crude external, the form, while that which is known to the disembodied spirit is the spirit, the real, the most tangible, the most effective form of chemistry. Now to perform what you term a miracle, the disembodied must certainly understand how to extract from the atmosphere all the elements that are needed in their chemical demonstrations, or spiritual manifestations, as you term such phenomena. We were not present on the occasion mentioned, and cannot say whether the event spoken of in the record did actually occur; but if it really did take place, we consider it to be, in the strictest sense, a spiritual manifestation, or what is called by you a miracle through physical agency. If these three worthies, spoken of in your Bible, were so upright, if they were indeed such goodly men as we are told they were, it is to be supposed that their attendant spirits knew well how to care of them, and to protect them from all material danger, until the proper time had come for them to be separated from their physical bodies. Now, then, if these spirit guides understood chemistry, and by which understanding they could extract from the atmosphere certain elements that were inimical to the action of fire, they could say to the fire, I do not fear you, for you cannot burn me; why, then, if these worthies were cast into the furnace under such circumstances, it were easy to suppose they would come out from thence unharmed. Why, verily, we tell you it is as easy to produce such a manifestation as it is to untie the Davenport Brothers in their little cabinet. The same law that governs one, governs the other manifestation, only the action of law is a little different. One preserves from fire, the other is an exhibition of physical power.

Q.—Will you explain, also, the wonderful escape of Daniel from the lion's den?

A.—In regard to this "wonderful escape" of Daniel from the lion's den, we should say it was—if it occurred. Now, mark us, we do not say that it actually did occur, but, if it really did, we believe it to have been a direct interposition of spiritual power; and, as all spiritual power is the result of divine law, so then it may be justly called an interposition of Divine Providence. Why, it is just as easy to close a lion's mouth as for me to speak through this foreign organism. All these things are easy, when once you understand divine law. Law is your servant in all cases, when you understand it; but, in all cases, your master when you do not understand it.

Q.—Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the Valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed, etc., etc. How shall this record be understood? Was there a literal standing still, or is the language clearly impious? Please explain.

A.—Yes, certainly; but not in the sense that it is generally theologically understood. It should be known that the ancients had portrayed upon their banners the image of the sun and moon, and he who was the standard-bearer would stand still at the sound of the trumpet, for the suspension of hostilities. Now, from this simple circumstance, has arisen the absurd idea that the sun was arrested in his course, that God suspended his law to gratify mankind. Oh Humanity, learn more of God's internal law, more of the spirit and less of the letter; and you will not stumble over such a small thing as this.

Q.—Interpret, also, the kindred passage in II. Kings, of the shadow going back ten degrees in the dial of Ahaz?

A.—That, to us, is one of those visionary, unstable records that is totally unworthy of credence. Pardon us, you asked for a clear expression of our ideas, and it is our duty to give them.

Q.—In the account of the passage of the Red Sea, by the Israelites, it is said: "The waters were as a wall unto them; on their right hand and on their left." If this record is true, what is the explanation of the phenomenon?

A.—If it is true, there are many ways in accounting for it, and it may justly be called an interposition of Divine Providence, from the fact that Divine Providence governs every manifestation of life. Now, it is an historical fact that the waters of the Red Sea are, at times, greatly affected by atmospheric changes, some of these changes taking place generally once during a century. May it not so happen that this was one of the atmospheric changes that took place, as regards the waters of the Red Sea, at the time spoken of by your record, instead of a direct interposition of Providence upon the part of the Israelites? To us it is but a simple manifestation of Nature.

Q.—The ten plagues of Egypt—were they truly brought to pass, as given in the record? If so, were they the effects of natural or preternatural causes?

A.—Again we affirm that we have no belief in preternatural things, so far as your human life is concerned. All the manifestations that are exhibited to your external senses; that you term preternatural, may be attributed to natural law. If these afflictions, mentioned in your Biblical record should come upon you, if you, as a nation, should be visited by famine, plague, by pestilence

and the thousand evils that follow closely upon the footsteps of war; would you say that it was an interposition of Divine Providence, because you had sinned? You might, perhaps, say so with some degree of truth, because you have sinned, but still, after all, it would be a result of natural law.

Q.—Is there such a thing as unselfish benevolence?

A.—No, there is not, in our opinion; for he who is most benevolent knows full well that he will surely receive a very large reward. You cannot give even a cup of cold water without receiving your reward. The soul expects it. To do good, is to say to the Great Eternal, I have obeyed thy law; reward me accordingly. It is said that a mother's love is the most unselfish of all loves. The mother loves her offspring, which is to love herself. "Where is the unselfishness there?" You cannot prove there is any. True, the mother will follow her offspring, even through hell, in all its magnitude, and yet, after all, it is a love of self, for the child is part of the mother—it has been coiled in the mother's own being; so, if the child suffers, the mother suffers, and it is very natural that the mother should try to avert suffering from her offspring, in order that she herself may not become a sharer in it. Pardon us, if we have wounded any mother's feelings here; we certainly did not intend so to do. We have only given that which we believe to be truth, and we appeal to your own souls if it is not true to you.

Q.—Can anything capable of producing an effect, do so simply by its presence, without being itself affected?

A.—Every effect is, in itself, a cause, and every cause is, in itself, an effect. Motion is as constant as rest; and motion is with everything. Motion produces all effects, all causes, and they are constantly acting and re-acting upon each other.

Q.—What properties doth the soul have in common with the body?

A.—Justly speaking, none. It is distinct and separate from the body; just as much so as the musician is distinctly separate from the musical instrument.

Q.—Are not the passions—such as rage, joy, &c., associated with the body, as well as the soul?

A.—The manifestation—so far as human senses are concerned—is, or rests, with the body; but the power, the propelling force, is a distinct part of life itself. So far as the manifestations are concerned; the passions are associated with the human body, but, in reality, they are distinctly separated.

Q.—Does each individual soul have substance and form?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do those forms vary in magnitude?

A.—Yes; there are large souls and very small souls. You have very large evidence of that in human life.

Q.—Is the selfishness of a person a criterion of his smallness?

A.—No, we think not. A man may be exceedingly selfish, and yet possess a large soul. No, the stature of soul is not measured by selfishness.

Q.—What is it measured by?

A.—By all its own abilities combined, not one alone.

Q.—Does the form of the soul correspond with its body?

A.—Externally speaking, yes; but judging from the internal, we should answer, no. You recognize all thought by the form it takes. Your human senses demand this. A thought that has no form is 'no thought at all to human senses.' But, of those enfranchised, free spirits, those that are entirely free from the thralldom of human life, we cannot say that their forms correspond to the forms of human life. Do not be afraid, dear friends, that you shall not recognize those dear ones who have gone before, when you go to the spirit-world. Verily, we tell you, you will have no difficulty in recognizing them, even if they are without form. They are eternal individualities, and, as such, you will know and recognize them. If they love you and you love them, there is no fear but that you will recognize them. The recognition does not depend upon form with the disembodied spirit, but upon attraction.

May 9.

### George W. Saunders.

I promised, if there was any truth in modern Spiritualism; that I would return after death and report from the invisible side. George W. Saunders is my name. I was twenty-three years old. I was born in Warren, Massachusetts, and died in Virginia. When this war commenced, I was in Western New York. I came down to New York City, and enlisted in the 161st New York, Company E. I was, in all, in eight battles—smart ones—besides being in a good many little brushes with the Johnnies. I was unfortunate enough to get wounded in the foot; so I could not do much toward getting away; so, in the last battle, I was taken prisoner, and died in one of their hospitals. I believe they called it a hospital. While I was there I met with a chap that hailed from Georgia, who seemed to be very well informed upon these spiritual matters; and who brought me one of your papers; but it was so—well, it had been through so many hands, that I could hardly read it. But I managed to pick out enough to tell me where to come in case I should never get a chance to come in body.

Well, I told him—his name was Merritt, Stephen Merritt—I told him it was just so, I'd come back. Then, too, I've got some folks out in New York State whom I'm inclined to think would like to hear from me. They kind of believe this way, I know they believe this way. But I promised Merritt if Spiritualism was true, I'd come back. "Well," said he, "you come to that place and I'll run the risk of it, reaching me at the South." He used to tell me that he had a powerful spirit guide who watched over and aided him, and he guessed if I got acquainted with him he'd see that my message came through all straight.

Well, it is not so easy to find people in the spirit-world as he thinks for, so I haven't made the acquaintance of that gentleman yet; thought I'd come back here, and if he knows about it, and can put my message through, I'll be obliged to him. This Merritt belonged to a pretty smart family down in Georgia, I should judge, and he says that his folks are all of them believers in Spiritualism; that he had a sister that was a medium. He seemed to know all about this thing, any way, and was in the hospital. I do not know what he was there; was a kind of—well, I rather guess he was an assistant to the surgeon. At any rate, he always followed in the wake of the surgeon, with lint and bandages, to help bind up broken heads and necks and so forth, so I supposed him to be a kind of helper, upon the surgeon. Any how, he took a shine to me. It was him that brought me the Banner of Light.

Well, I told him, well, no, that ain't exactly the sort of word that ought to be used. I changed circumstances and conditions, consequently am in a different place. I'll promise to find Merritt, if I can find him. Well, I've been in the spirit-world what month is this, April or May? [May.] Well, if that's so, then I've been pretty high



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