

BANNER LIGHT.



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Original Poetry.

A VISION.

The following inspirational Poem was given through Mrs. Cora Scott Daniels, on the evening of Dec. 19th, at the residence of Mr. George A. Bacon—where a Congressional caucus was held, which was attended principally by Senators and Representatives.

Under the control of Theodore Parker, Mrs. Daniels engaged in a deeply earnest and characteristic conversation for upwards of an hour, upon "The State of the Country—its Duties and Dangers," the various Members of Congress questioning, cross-examining and testing her in every possible way, but invariably eliciting the most satisfactory responses, and otherwise giving proof of superior power.

The poem purports to come from Shelley.

I see a marble column rise from out the ocean's foam;
I see the waves divide and break where Neptune's car has come;
I see them surge and dash around a bleak and rock-bound shore,
And part their snowy bosoms, to be blended never more;

Where the ocean wave
In each coral cave,
And the mermaids fair
Bound their amber hair,
And the sea-gods trod
In their deep abode,
And the crystal arch
Formed for those who march
In Death's long line,

I see the gleaming columns of a mighty temple shine;
Its corner-stones are laid on mountains of the sea;
A continent arises, framed for human liberty;
And as the pillared temple rears its form against the sky,
Broad pennons float on every breeze for Truth's great victory.

I see the continent of earth submerged beneath the sea;
And where the waters once have been, there no more shall they be;
The shores of Time shall meet the Ocean of God's Will,
And all its newer Governments His wisdom shall fulfill;

While the dark flood
Of human blood,
The scold and sneer,
The sigh and tear,
Shall no more curse the land which I behold,
Shall no more desolate mankind with woes untold,
For lo! the temple which I see is formed of living thought,

Its brightness from the Fount of Light in purity is caught,
And the bright continent is but a prophecy
Of all the world when Truth and Love shall make them free.

I see the towns and cities, reared in human shame and crime,
Pass from the sight of those who dwell upon the shores of Time;
Mountains and valleys, hills and plains engulfed beneath the sea;
And newer, better lands appear—the Islands of the Free—

Peopled by sun-bright beings, all radiant with youth,
Who in that marble temple bow before the shrine of Truth;

And children fair,
With shining hair,
And women sweet,
With bright smiles greet
The sun and flowers
Within their bowers;

And man no more, in pride and scorn and hate,
Robs from his fellow man his holy state,
Nor mocks Heaven's smiles. Peace dwains, though late,

Upon the world, and incense pure doth rise
From flowers and hearts of men to the bright skies,
And no more human souls are made the sacrifice!
O wondrous clime! O temple vast!
Whose sun its brightening ray doth cast
Over all worlds and souls and minds,
Like that which angel wisdom finds
Within the realm of Thought,
Whose essence aye is fraught
With majesty and peace,
The soul's perfect release!

This snow-white palace shall arise on earth
When man doth lay the corner-stone of worth,
When love of truth and wisdom shall control,
And in its light reveal the wealth of soul!
Each thought a gem shall be
Within the boundless sea
Of God's Eternity!

Written for the Banner of Light.
THE NEW ERA.

BY J. M. JACKSON.

[Lieutenant-Colonel Reed says of the colored troops, "They behaved splendidly under the gallant fire to which we were exposed; I did not see a man flinch."]—

They who bent the servile knee,
In conquering marches tread;
Beneath the stars of liberty,
The stain of earth has fled.

The vessel's chains are broken,
Justice now shall reign;
Enthroned by Northern men,
Who never fight in vain.

Triumphant over wrong,
Sweeps the tempest's roar,
With a wild, avenging cry—
Slavery exists no more.

The God of Hosts has won
The battle for the free;
Traitor hands can ne'er destroy
Our flag, or liberty.

No more sincere or bitter tears
Dropt for our martyr chief,
Than those which fell from eyes
Unnoticed in his grief.

The Lecture Room.

THE OLD YEAR.

A Discourse by Fred. L. H. Willis, M. D.,
Of New York, delivered in the Melodeon,
Boston, Dec. 31st, 1865.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

There is a belief among the superstitious portion of a certain class of people that the season between Christmas and New Year does not belong to time; that time ends at Christmas and begins at New Year; that there is a pause in the natural order of events—a silence of the revolving wheels of time—a hush in the music of the spheres. Something of this consciousness is perhaps felt by all. There is a sort of silence of the soul, a looking backward and forward, finding what has been and what is to be. Is not this retrospect natural to the spirit? We love to call up beautiful pictures in the chambers of memory, and hang them about with golden and rose-tinted drapery. And ah! how we linger about the shrouded shrines where we placed our dearest joys, and try to find the golden glow of a divine joy even there.

Yes, Memory, thou art the spirit's being; the life of what has been is with thee, and it is a part of what is now. I have seen enameled tablets, golden and black most beautifully wrought; the golden brightness in them twines about the black, and one is not perfect without the other. Life is just such a tablet: the golden setting encircles the dim shadows; the delicate, rich tracery of light is within and around all the darkness.

The heart turns backward to find what has been, and lingers over the past to make it significant of what is to be. Perhaps this is not wise. It is said to be wise to live in to-day; but living in to-day shuts us out from yesterday, for we have taken into ourselves what was the life of yesterday. The soul of the past has entered into our soul, and makes us what we are. Is it not so? Has not the past its certain record in the present?

The earth had revolved ages on its axis, and men had lived and thought for centuries before there was the first recognition of the great law of waste and supply; and science declared that no particle of matter was ever lost, but that the economy of Nature was perfect, and all that seemed lost was forever flowing back through some channel. This is recognized now as a fact not to be disputed; but it is only in this day that the workings of a similar law have been recognized in the world of thought.

The higher life evolved from matter, called electricity, has come to be considered as an element, but it is still too much regarded as a force in Nature, rather than an existent substance. The higher magnetic life is still less understood, and thought is considered as having no inherent power, and only existing through its expression. But as true as it is that no atom is without its perpetual significance in the world of matter, so true is it that in that higher world of existent life—the world of thought—nothing can be lost. Facts are rapidly accumulating to prove this. It has been tested again and again, that each individual is linked to all his past individual existence; that even through his hand writing can be traced each event of his life, not only up to the time when the writing was executed, but to any future period, proving that we give enough of our own individual self to a slight transcript to hold us forever chained to it. It is thus the past has its sure record in the present. One fact is sufficient to establish this great law. Yet Denton, in his "Soul of Things," presents us with a volume, and though we are not conscious just how the law operates, yet we are certain that it is universal. We do not understand just how all the exhalations of the earth return to it again, or how the gases rise and become the food of plants, insects and animals. But a law that has been declared and tested, we trust as universal. We know that the past bears its relation to the present through what we term memory, or consciousness, and we have been led to believe that that which memory did not retain could have no existence in the mind. But here again facts have enlightened us. I know a man who, in a moment of imminent peril at sea, remembered in one instant of time every event of his past life—the record of seemingly forgotten events existed somewhere; made perfectly clear and plain was all that which by no effort of memory could be possibly have brought to light. There have been many instances of this same wonderful psychological phenomenon.

Then there are two records: the one made constantly on all that receives of our life, and which holds its sure link to us let us be where we may, the other within our own selves, with which our own consciousness holds somehow a perpetual relation.

We know that the keen scent of a dog will detect his master's steps in a crowded thoroughfare, or bring back his lost garment, proving that there is a constant emanation, individual in its character, from every person. A clairvoyant will, from a shred of a garment, or a lock of hair, take hold of the mystic thread of life, and come into direct sympathy with the person to whom they belong. This also proves that there is an existing life, individual in its character, and which holds its certain connection with each one.

Written history is merely a record of the past; but the past is still living, and has its vital power in the present.

At this season, when we are about to commence a new external record, we incline to look back. By years we measure life. Events are designated by times and seasons—they are the milestones on the way. We commence with a sort of solemn earnestness the first steps. We recall the past, and estimate its good and ill. We bring up in memory its glowing pictures. Images of beauty sit before us. We feel a renewal of joy at the memory of all that has brought us gladness.

With fresh and unsoothed pain we live over again that which has brought us woe. Only the record of sorrow seems stern and unchanging.

It is well to let the past speak to us, and through our memory to take lessons from it. The dead past will never bury its dead. The living present holds also the living past. It is a solemn lesson to learn, that all that we have been lives in what we are. But oh! it is a glorious knowledge to gain, that we hold certain links to all our past individual existence, and to know, if memory fails us, the divine law of existence cannot fail us, and that by it is our means of redeeming the past.

We live in an age of activity and conquest. Great and stirring events mark the days and the years. If we review but one year, how full it is of import. Science, art and literature make their full and significant marks. We are constantly being taught some new truths. We take the gifts of all climes and hemispheres, and rightly esteem ourselves wiser for every enlarged view of men and things. We have come to consider a new discovery as quite a natural and to-be-looked-for event, and we read with perfect calmness of that which would have filled our forefathers with wondering admiration or with superstitious fear, and our only surprise is that the world had not known it before. The stupid past gets no credit for the marvelously brilliant present. But this living present is only a subject of the past, a recipient from it.

All the forces of Nature operate so harmoniously that we can scarcely detect the change from one form of life to another. Each distinctive type seems individual, but each higher holds all the lower. Decay and reproduction go on, and all mineral and vegetable and animal life, as it exists to-day, is the result of all the ages since life took creative form. We feed to-day on food whose elements antediluvian ages had stored for us. All that we touch and handle has on it the record of times that history can tell us nothing of. We are filled with wonder as we read of the grand old monuments of the past. We are filled with awe as men tell us of trees whose first shoot reached heaven's light before the dawn of the Christian era. But the little flower that springs and withers in a summer's day, has in it the life that is older than those years. In living transcript are all those ages recorded, and the to-day of Nature has all the yesterdays within it. To outwork, to reorganize, is the constant effort of Nature.

We have shown how thought fixes its indelible seal on all that it produces, and thus unites the individual to each individual expression. This thought was evolved from the spirit. The indwelling spirit of man gave its life to it, and thus individualized the record. Then there is a constant and unbroken chain of life that unites all spirit to that which it has produced. Behold how Nature operates here. The same unchanging law of life-force produces, from all that has been, what is. I am taking from all the centuries of thought and feeling that have preceded me. In each age there has been a life, up-springing and active, and though I realize it not, yet it is mine.

But the history of individuals is more wonderful and certain still. Each one is the constant producer of that life which represents himself, and makes the record with unvarying certainty upon all that he does. Is this a solemn lesson to learn at the close of an Old Year? So solemn as it is glorious; for not merely unto that which produced the thought is the record forever bound, but to all that shall henceforth spring therefrom. All that I have done I am closely linked unto. Then it must be through living bonds. All that lives is active. There must of necessity flow along these myriad threads the living present. Then if all that has my impress on it is bound to me, of necessity, it receives constantly of my life.

Suppose that one year ago a man lived a profligate and worthless life. The record of that life was made sure and undeniable. Through myriad links he connected himself with the testimonies of all he there individualized. But, within this year, he has come unto a nobler and better life, and to-day he stands up in the strength of his integrity. Yet he has lost no hold upon the past; the unbroken chains bind him to it. Is this pitiable to learn of? Yet see how his redemption is thus perfected: Flowing back through all the wrong and folly of his past is his present; its good bears the blessing with it. This truth may strike some as being visionary. Yet the facts of psychometry—the power of mind to read all that has been from any trifling connection with an individual—demonstrate the thing to a certainty. If I give to a slip of writing enough of my individual self to enable a person of acute sensibility to declare what I then was, and also, what I now am, the numberless acts of each day must make up my recorded history.

If we will recognize this as a law of spirit, we can readily understand how the spirit-world is linked unto this world, and that there is perpetually flowing unto us a blessing therefrom. As the spirit puts off more and more of its grossness, the links that bind it to mortality must grow less and less distinguishable to mortal consciousness; but with more certain blessing comes the living current.

This great and unchanging law of spirit-force is overlooked in the history of the world, and we can scarcely hope for its recognition yet. But it has been revealed to the Christian world in the record of the life that has studied as the grandest of all lives. The connection of the spirit of Jesus with all his past life is plainly declared. The blessing was to flow back even in greater measure. His friends could do even greater works than he did, because of the influence of that direct power upon them. Thus he became the redemption of those he had taught; his very life flowed back to them. There is no end to the prayers that are offered up for the redemption of the world. But let men learn this simple yet glorious law of existence, and they will learn that it is to be lived FOR, not prayed for merely.

Each soul that lifts itself above its low desires

and comes into a condition superior to the past, redeems that past up to the present condition. Each step of progress sends its redeeming influence back. We accustom ourselves to estimate life in to-day. The activities of the present engross thought and feeling; and this is all right, for the present is all of life. We look back to yesterday; we turn to the coming morrow; but we live in to-day.

Let us seek to review in a few words the active life of the present. Art has kept busy her magic hand. The past year has brought us new creations of beauty and grace. Active brains have created ideas, and willing hands have outworked them. Some men think lightly of a statue or a picture. But let such a one remember that the ideal—the thought of grace or beauty—thus sought to express itself; and men by such expressions, testify that in each son of God is the creative desire, and that each effort is an human attempt to perfect itself, to express in the external world the inner life. And he will find a significance in the fine arts that is infinitely beyond the mere admiration of the senses.

Bierstadt and Church, the greatest living landscape painters, are receiving in their own America the just tribute their genius so richly deserves, showing that it is appreciated even amidst the whirl of political strife and of business activity.

And women, too, are taking their position as artists, as physicians, as editors, as inventors, as scientists, as orators and preachers. Miss Hosmer sends from Rome her model of Thomas H. Benton, and Miss Stebbins hers of Horace Mann, to be molded in imperishable bronze and stand as monuments forever of womanly genius and manly excellence. Science, also, has stepped grandly forward. The past year has been fruitful in fresh discoveries. We know more of the principles of life. We understand better the controlling causes. In mechanics, too, the world has not stood still, and nerves and muscles yield their labor to wood and iron. In all that is achieved we find the daily increasing effort to control matter. Look at the splendid inventions of the day. Miracles of human ingenuity, by means of which what the tolling hands once achieved by weary drudgery, a little labor accomplishes now like magic.

And literature, too, has showered down her perpetual offerings. Broadcast over the land is spread the wealth of the human brain. When it combines also the wealth of the human heart, there results a life that cannot die. And the literature of the past year has in it more of the glowing life of spirit; it is not dead and formal, going back to the past; but it tells us of a spirit-power in the present. Scarcely a book that makes any mark upon the times, but has the vital faith of spiritual presence and spiritual power wrought as its brightest and most glowing figures. Yes, the faith that is so dear to us has infused itself into the literature of the day. We read it in all sermons of consolation. We know that it is preached from many of the so-called Evangelical pulpits—from Unitarian and Universalist pulpits. I do not know how much more popular it is to be called a Spiritualist to-day than it was a year ago; that matters nothing; it is a trifle of the supreme insignificance. But I do know that Spiritualism to-day is taking a tremendous hold upon the heart of humanity, and silently and secretly working everywhere, and making its power felt as never before. The external manifestations of Spiritualism, with the opposition they stir up, are of very little moment compared with its fundamental principles, which are eternally true, even as God is, and which are at work, even as God works—silently, secretly, but powerfully and ever triumphantly.

All these advances in politics, in religion, in art, science and literature have been accomplished through struggle and hard toil. The contest gives the victory. The march onward in every department of life is gloriously grand; and the sublime feature of the whole is the fact that the human mind will no longer be enslaved; it asserts its Godlike supremacy. This, I repeat, is the most glorious feature of the day. It is thought becoming the active force of matter.

But let us for a moment try to ascertain what thought is. Is it not the creation of spirit—that which is the inmost of our being becoming the outmost? We think from the activity of our highest life; thought is the necessity of life; it is the action of the spirit through the brain. Then if we find that the world is becoming daily more and more governed by its thought—if the effort is to subject all to thought, then the world is becoming more and more spiritualized. Spirit is getting the control. Call it human spirit, if you will; it is spirit nevertheless. Now we see in this great effort of the day, which evinces itself in all the arts, sciences and professions, wonderful significance. We recognize flowing back with its blessing through all that has been, the spirit force of the universe. The living threads, the wondrous links that bind life to life, bring back a freighted treasure. I will not claim that any individual thought is necessarily at work—any direct agency operating; but the general benediction from a life that is beyond the life of the external, quickens human thought, and expresses, through infinite channels, the higher force of spirit.

In the moral world, what changes has a year brought. Through the whirling movements of events, men have begun to comprehend that there is a public virtue called Justice; and when men learn this, the first step is taken toward its execution. As soon as a virtue raises its standard in the spirit, it becomes a part of the spirit, and it has gained a power that it can never wholly lose. Justice is not an unnatural attribute, to be gained by some miraculous process; it is a natural virtue of the soul.

Dr. Cheever tells New York that God hides his personal justice; but we know that he reveals it in man, just as soon as man becomes a power of good. It is hidden through the low standard of human morality, when men deny the equality of

their fellows, and their equal and inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; but it is hidden by man, and not by the divine.

Let us mark, then, an era of the world when justice is at least acknowledged as a political necessity, and a great nation comes up to a platform that has fewer broken timbers, and from which we can behold the firm foundations of a National Government that bases its strength on equal rights and the laws of a true republic.

I am no politician—I am not here to speak on political matters. But my subject were incomplete and my task but poorly executed without a few words in this direction.

The tide of events in our country is moving us on. With majestic sweep comes the future. What it shall unfold to us and for us, we know not. But do we not know this, that the Infinite God and Father of us all is supreme? And yet circumstances press upon us demanding self-reliance, as well as reliance upon God.

The events of the time have great import in them. It does no good to speculate about them—to theorize as to the future. The question put by the times is not a party question, nor can parties decide it. It seems to me as if the powers above us had lifted far above all party strife and bickerings the standard of human progress, and all true men are called upon to rally around it. The great question of our day is, of the Fatherhood of God. Are all men our brothers, in the sense of relationship to the Infinite God? Are we to accept as true that preeminent Declaration of Independence—all men are born free and equal, with inalienable rights?

If we settle the question of the Fatherhood of God, then the question of human rights, the golden rule, the gospel of good will to all, regardless of caste or color, comes before us. Shall we arise with our hearts imbued with the love of God and declare all men our brothers? And then shall we see to it, that, as individuals, we proclaim the doctrine of social and political freedom?

I say events demand that party strife shall be quenched, party feelings assuaged, party measures silenced, and that Humanity shall arise and unite—the true and earnest—in the one desire to advance the human family.

The year past has done much, it seems to me, to make this possible.

Many martyrs have fallen in the sacred cause of Liberty. But the year whose hours are now almost numbered with the past, has seen laid upon her altar the noblest and most glorious of them all. Unparalleled in the history of the world were the circumstances of that event that plunged a nation into the profoundest depths of sorrow. But the assassin's hand made Abraham Lincoln immortal in the hearts of his countrymen, and placed him by the side of Washington on the pedestal of Fame, to be associated with him forever—the one the Father, the other the Saviour of his land.

I have confidence in the man whom destiny made his successor. I trust in his clear head, his strong heart. I have faith in his loyal purpose. I rejoice in his determined will and untiring energy. I believe in Andrew Johnson, and though I could wish that he might take one step in advance of those he has already taken, yet I remember that God is never in a hurry, and if he can wait, I can. I have no sympathy with those who denounce Andrew Johnson as false to the principles of the party that put him in power, or as false to the great cause of Liberty. I believe that we owe to his reconstruction policy, the fact that we stand out to-day as the most glorious nation on the face of the earth; for under the workings of no other system could a sufficient number of the Southern States have been brought to accept the Constitutional Amendment Act, abolishing Slavery throughout the length and breadth of our beloved country.

The changes of the year are not for nothing. They seem to me to tend toward the great issue, viz: Shall we as a nation love and maintain true speech, free thought, free suffrage—freedom in every sense? Not love it as a Democratic sentiment; not love it as a Republican sentiment; but love it in, of, and for itself alone.

What think you the man who is seeking power—political power, political aggrandizement—cares for human rights? It is strange that men do not see that principle does not require party. The time is hastening when it will be country that shall become the rallying cry; when it shall not be deemed best to make a party answer for individual responsibilities. This throwing one's influence upon one side or the other, as policy demands, is not acting nobly or well. "Stand up! Be men," cries the voice of the highest. In our relations to the human family, we must not, cannot dwarf our ideas or cramp them. Everything that has God's life in it, progresses, marches on, presses forward. Are we to say that one form of legislation is for all time? That, for instance, a constitution framed by man, human and fallible, is to be the highest standard around which to rally forever? No! Human words cannot yet embody the noble, the glorious state of society which the future is to bring to us. As if moving before me, comes the record of the future. And what is the first promise? Man shall love his fellow man. The second? God shall be revealed in the love of human hearts.

But visions of the future bring not the work of to-day. I was to make for you a record of the Old Year. Perhaps one word will include the whole—Progress. Humanity moves forward and upward. But ever as truths arise comes the contest. "I come not to send peace, but a sword," is ever the voice of truth.

But I must hasten. To sum up the events of the year as relates to our country, is needless; you know them all, or those of most importance. Some are regretting the loss of power to their party; others are rejoicing in the gain of theirs; but oh, my friends, let us unite in the one desire

to help forward every reform, every good thing, and to destroy all that is hurtful as fast as we can. We cannot govern the world or others; but we can see to it that our own standard is a high one, and that we act up to it. We can see to it that we do not lose sight of principles, in parties; and that we look with earnest hope forward, trusting that if events are solemn, or of evil import, with the light of love in our hearts we shall be able to make them all as beacon lights to the world, showing how far Humanity is asserting its life, and how far we are able to become in the human family as instruments of God, doing his work, serving his will.

In the religious world freedom of thought has so extended itself, that Churches cannot hold it, or creeds bind it. Those who once trusted in what their fathers told them of penance and duty, have cut from their leading-strings, and hold themselves accountable to none but God. The general effect of this is a higher religious faith, and a more truthful obedience to the requirements of heaven. Its extremity is an infidelity to all that is most sacred. When the earth has been dry and parched with the drought of summer, the beneficent rain, that blesses and invigorates, sweeps down upon a tender plant of beauty; sometimes the ripened harvest is destroyed, and the loss and destruction seems sad and mournful. But see with what quickened life all Nature expresses the blessing. The trees lift up their grateful hands to heaven, the grass uplifts its praise on every spear, and the good triumphs a thousandfold over the ill.

It is thus in the world of thought and feeling. The storm-torrents come and go, but ever with healing on their wings. The march is onward. Not a tread of the years, or a beat of the ages but has in it the eternal significance of the Infinite. Sublime and full of wonder is each step, tending so surely to that which is beyond and above the present.

We need not revert again to the proofs of religious liberty that are constantly showing themselves. One light after another breaks out where least we expect. Thoughtful Germany, superstitious France, grim England—all send up their revolving beacon-lights. And in vain do Cardinals and Bishops and Priests strive to extinguish them, or to beguile the eyes of the people. Colenso, Renan, Maurice, Williams, and a host of others, are men of the times, doing the work of the age for religious liberty inside the ecclesiastical ranks, just as Lincoln, and Grant, and Sherman, and Farragut, and so on, have been doing it for political liberty during the last four years.

If we review any particular era in the world's history, we find it full of startling events. On its surface it bears the mark of contest. Men would seem to have been contending first for one esteemed good, and then for another. But if we look beneath the surface, do we not find a moving cause that is the inspiration of all effort? It is the one effort for freedom. In individuals its effect is often to repress and narrow; but in the multitude the cry is ever for greater light, more knowledge, a wider range. The conquest by mere brute force has this divine meaning in it—the effort to extend and enlarge not merely the activities, but all acquisitions. At the present day conquest means more than subjection by brute force.

The legions that swept over the old continents, are represented to-day by the armies of ideas and principles that troop forth from men's brains; they are strong, and mighty, and irresistible; they contend, and there are fields of defeat and victory, and the retreating vanquished.

Sometimes the battle is to the Right; sometimes Error gains the day, even as Monarchy and Despotism triumph over Republicanism and Democracy. But though Poland, Hungary, and Greece were swept away, and their noble martyrs perished, yet the general principles of freedom triumphed. France could not bear her day of triumphant independence, and many mourned over the blight that fell upon their awakened hopes when she again became a slave to power; but the indwelling life-force was not crushed, and the lesson was only one of patience. In those other struggles for freedom in all that concerns individual and personal thought and feeling the battle is not always to the truth-loving, earnest souls. There has been many a poor Hungary in the religious world, when Truth and Right seemed crushed, and all lost to intolerant Oppression; but it was only seeming; fresh champions sprang forth, and a diviner enthusiasm gave life for fresh struggle. Men are constantly fearing, lest, their effort failing, the universe shall go wrong, and God's great cause fall. There is fear and anxiety in the ranks of conservatism when the lever turns the wheel with a too sudden jerk, lest the whole beautifully-arranged and seemingly perfect structure should be overturned. And so, also, the radical free thinker repines when a spoke in his wheel gets loose, so that he has to lay by for repairs; but there stands the great mountain, firm and unmoved; still moves the world, uncheckered, unjarred. The sublime triumph of truth—the constant upspringing, through the life-force, of better and higher expressions of that truth—should satisfy us all of the indwelling God, who, in his infinity, holds all things.

We accustom ourselves to estimate the knowledge of others, and the world at large seems very benighted. There seems little room for an enlarged faith. We do not see how light can creep in; but behold how the sunlight penetrates the darkness; how through each little niche and crevice it brings the blessing of the day. The light that lighteth every man is from the Infinite light. None are without it; underneath all the bigotry of sect, all the conservatism of party, there lies the vital, energizing spirit-force. It is creating, producing, perfecting; its life is inherent. The natural desire of mankind is for freedom; they would not be cramped or confined; they reach forth to the gladness and beauty, to the joy and perfection of life. Not more does the child rejoice in the freedom of the field, and the gladness of the sunshine, than maturity rejoices in enlarged ideas, in an expanded selfhood.

The result of this love is not to make men indifferent to truth; it is to create an unbounded trust in it; it is to build up no theories, no plans, no schemes to save a world; it is to trust all plans and theories in the Infinite perfection.

Why do men seek to brand those who honestly differ from them with lack of faith? Why do we hear the cry of "Infidel" spread through the land, as some man, more free and fearless than the rest, steps forth and declares his honest convictions? It is not infidelity to truth that is the heresy; it is infidelity to popularity—it is infidelity to dogmatism, to slavery, to bigotry. It is the love of creed, of sect, of party, that makes men fear. It is not the love of God they are jealous of—it is the love of power. We halt every step toward an enlarged selfhood in the individual, and an enlarged faith in the community, with unspeakable joy. We need have no fears for the year that is coming. See how the divine love works in the hearts of men. All the efforts of bishops and priests cannot stay the voice of truth; it will be proclaimed, whether men hear or forbear.

the living inspiration will flow forth, energizing and blessing the world, and already men respect the fearless speaker far more than they do the timid one. The multitude listen. Men begin to think for themselves. It is less matter what men say, than that they speak the honest convictions of their souls. We can hear with patience absurd doctrines and false theories preached, if he who utters them feels in his heart he is declaring the truth, because we so respect sincerity; but the man who measures his word by the popular ear, who feels his way timidly along, who declares just so much as shall best satisfy the selfish pride of his hearers, needs no anathemas—his soul has not yet grown so that it can take in a large idea.

Let us bid adieu to the Old Year without regret. Ere we meet together again the New Year will have presented to us its clean white tablets. We need have no fears concerning it. Whether our particular form of faith shall seem to be more widely accepted, or rejected, matters little. Truth does not always appear on the surface. We must be careful how we claim that others receive what is truth to us. We must only pray for more freedom, that the shackles of fear may fall from the human heart, and that men may dare to lift their eyes and behold the wonder and beauty, the perfection and order of the universe, and exclaim, with instinctive devotion: Oh God, thou art the Infinite. I fear thee not; draw me nearer to thyself.

Every thought that reaches beyond the narrow bound of the present, is as a messenger to the courts of heaven. Every aspiration that seeks a wider and freer scope, is like the opening of a window to the free air of morning. Every prayer that goes forth for more truth, is like drawing back a curtain to let in the glorious light of noonday.

Let us commence the New Year without one fear. Let us trust all times as in the hands of God. God's year! Who can fear for it? Let us seek a wider charity. As we cannot fear, so we cannot despise. What seems to us false and perilous, lies within the Infinite power. Let us cease measuring truth, or estimating what others possess of it. Truth cannot die. You might as well try to stay the dawning of the morning, or draw a curtain to shut out the sun's splendor from the rejoicing earth, as to hope to prevent the shining of the divine light. Only be careful that you do not deem that you alone dwell in the sunlight, and that others must come to your day. The day of the Lord dawns not here or there, but perpetually in the universe. This wider charity must be cultivated as an individual means of progress, and as an associative one. The moment we attempt to sectionalize, or limit, then we narrow our faith. Questions of individual faith belong to the individual. As individuals, the wider our range of thought on all subjects, the wider is our associative influence. We wish to concentrate no power, but to extend it; not by means of any promulgated faith, but through our own freedom to help other men to be free. We do not call on a single individual to adopt our thought. All the effort we make is to awaken thought. This freedom of opinion is deemed heresy. It is the declaration of God's word written on every living thing. No form of life dictates to another. The spontaneous expression of each is from the indwelling life. The same sap, sun and dew nourishes each leaf on the tree; yet behold their diversity; each has its distinctive life. The same aspiration of being flows through all minds. The same God sheds divine light. The same blessings of grace descend. Yet behold men, each one created in the image of his Maker, yet each distinct and separate.

Let us commence the New Year with entire faith in its general blessing. It is God's time, and cannot fail of its good. What it has in store for us, we know not; but it must be good, and good only; the seeming disorder must tend to order. And yet as individuals, we must have something more to seek for than a general faith in the result of all that shall come. We must make that faith the inspiration of each effort and the triumph over each ill.

No moment is without its import, and each helps make up eternity; each has its gift unto us. As the breath of heaven comes bearing us the life that supplies our bodies, so the breath immortal feeds and nourishes our spirits. We have learned, also, that we give forth constantly of all that we are; that we stamp ourselves on all that we do; that we constantly bind our spirits to matter, and give to matter the life that reveals ourselves. Do we need to be told of a retribution more solemn than this? Is there a redemption more glorious than awaits the spirit that, through its own perfection, has perfected the past?

How reverently do we learn of that past which has brought no such blessings for the present. We seem allied to the good and wise of all ages. We take from all that has been. We are also giving to all that shall be. We cannot conceive of an eternity beyond that which the influences from ourselves flow unto. No wonder that Jesus, recognizing this law of spiritual life, sought to make his followers understand the everlasting reward and punishment, meaning the far-reaching influence of good and ill. The prophetic promise, "I will draw all men unto me," shows his recognition of the great spiritual law of sympathy that shall elevate and purify the world, drawing it into vital connection with the unseen, the spiritual and eternal; the world that floats like an atmosphere around this world of sense.

We believe the law underlying those words of Jesus. As he kept his link to his loved ones, after he went to the purely spiritual life, by sympathy, so are we kept by the loving and glorified ones of our hearts, who have entered that life. This past year what golden threads, that centered in our hearts, have drawn their linked glory out, and bound earth by new ties to heaven. There are bright, glowing threads, held by strong, ardent hearts; and their life, flowing back through all its past connections, is so much power of love and life for the redemption of the world. There are bright and luminous threads, delicate and tender, that it seems as if any circumstance could break; but they are strong as God himself; and on those tender threads of life go up the purest aspirations of the soul, and then descends the chapter of hope, though it may come wet with tears, and its breath of sweetness be a sign of pain. Yes; each such link bringeth nearer the day of redemption from all ignorance, error and wrong. To every soul thus united to the world of immortal life and love, the Redeemer cometh, even the spirit of love, purity, holiness.

As the sunlight blesses the day; as the dew blesses the night; as perpetual life flows through the air to all that lives; so the warmth of God's love, the benediction of God's tenderness, the inspiration of God's truth, flows to all mankind through the spirit of just men made perfect; through sanctified affection; through every channel of spirit-life.

Oh, let us take the gift with grateful souls; and as we receive, so let us give—Truth, Virtue, and Holiness.

Oh, ye to whom has come this glad new gospel—so speak the voices from the higher life—shine out as lights to the world this New Year. Ye are set for the light of the world; and he who, centuries ago, had no earthly treasure, nothing but persecution and death; he who has now found the true riches, and strength, and grandeur of life, will send his ministering angels to bless, comfort and strengthen you in every good and noble work.

And ye who have treasure on earth, will ye not remember whose stewards ye are? Oh, listen as the spirit-voice speaks to your inner ear: Work for us; sacrifice for us; yield up your treasure for us, and tenfold shall ye receive in the kingdom of the eternal and infinite.

And oh ye who have forgotten to love much, will ye not hear the voices of love calling to you and bidding you fulfill the work of God by the warm, life-giving currents that shall flow through you to the earth, too cold and chill to put on the beautiful garment of the eternal spring?

Ah! this New Year, we, ye, from the angel-home, bless you, and promise with solemn word, that if you will fulfill the highest mission to truth, love and justice, the life of heaven shall descend upon you; angel hands shall help you, and you shall receive the wishes of your hearts in spiritual blessings manifold.

Original Essay.

THE AGE OF VIRTUE.

BY GEORGE STEARNS.

SIXTEENTH PAPER.

TEMPORAL OBSTRUCTIONS TO ITS EVOLUTION; AND HOW TO REMOVE THEM.

THE MISSION OF REFORMERS.

FOURTH SECTION CONTINUED.

The Moral Precedence of Woman.

To all who clearly see what I have been endeavoring to show, that Man and Woman resemble each other in respect to all the essential attributes of Human Nature, it must be evident that they differ from each other in regard to the same attributes; just as any person of either sex differs from another of the same sex. It is a trite observation that no two men are precisely alike, nor any two women; but it is not always and immediately apparent that one person is in all respects superior to another. In fact, the contrary is very commonly obvious; that in special points of comparison unlike characters diversely excel each other. Now, if we will compare Man and Woman in the same way, and estimate their relative endowments with the same fairness with which we do those of any two persons of either sex, it will be to a like result, and we shall clearly see

II. That Man and Woman are contradistinguished by equivalent excellences and defects.

Regarded superficially in their mere physical aspect, Man is seen to be personally larger than Woman, and Woman handsomer than Man. This is true only of an aggregate comparison of the sexes; for some women are ugly, and some men are dwarfed in stature. But the average weight of men is some thirty pounds apace more than that of women, while most women are fairer than most men.

Now this relative beauty of Woman is more than skin-deep. It belongs as much to her psychology as to her physical nature, and implies not only that her organism is made of a finer material than Man's, but that her very soul is more ethereal and sprightly than his. Since form, though not the creator of life or other principle of being, is yet its representative—since the special body of everything in Nature inevitably corresponds to its abiding essence, the personal comeliness of Woman becomes in Reason's sight an infallible expression of her inherent loveliness—the natural phasis of an amiable spirit.

But, recurring to their extrinsic characteristics for a more appreciable footing of argument, it is evident that Man, in keeping with his brawny proclivity, excels also in strength; while Woman, in keeping with her excellence of form and feature, excels also in agility. And this second contradistinction, though rooted in the physical, projects like the first into the mental constitution of each. Man is stronger than Woman, and Woman quicker than Man, in mind as well as body. For Man's greater muscular power and Woman's greater nervous energy are both due to the ultra-physiological truth that mental action is the spring of bodily motion. And since cerebral confirmation is the mode of mentality, every contradistinction of male and female character consists with a corresponding diversity in the shape of the masculine and feminine heads. It is therefore immaterial whether we compare the phrenological developments, or the actual lives, of men and women, for a discovery of the personal equivalence of their respective excellences and defects. But a combination of both these methods, by alternate recourse to the two sources of information by which the contradistinctions of sex are doubly authenticated, may be advisable for their ready discernment by inquiring minds. To the end of perspicuity also, the induction is properly prefaced with a succinct statement of masculine and feminine attributes, in juxtaposition with their partial negations, in this wise:

1. Man is stout, but homely; Woman, though slender, is fair.
2. Man is strong, but clumsy; Woman, though weak, is agile.
3. Man is brave, but harsh; Woman, though timid, is gentle. He has more courage than fortitude; she has more fortitude than courage.
4. Man is self-reliant, but selfish; Woman, though dependent, is confiding. He is more provident than generous; she is more generous than provident.
5. Man is mechanical, Woman esthetic. He is the better artisan; she would be the better artist. He has more ingenuity than taste; she has more taste than ingenuity.
6. Man is a nascent philosopher; Woman is a nascent poet. He is more cognoscentive than sensitive; she is more sensitive than cognoscentive.
7. Man is more rational than moral; Woman is more moral than rational. He is less ignorant than depraved; she is less depraved than ignorant. Man is Woman's preacher; Woman is Man's exemplar.

Here then are seven traits of character, each an essential attribute of Ideal Human Nature, (I do not pretend to name them all,) wherein Man excels Woman; and as many equivalent though unlike endowments wherein Woman also excels Man. It is only the last-named, however, that I wish to set forth as being especially relevant to the present attitude and object of my pen.

That Man is intellectually superior to Woman, and Woman morally superior to Man, is evinced by proper comparison of their respective phrenological endowments. "In form," says O. S. Fowler, "the female head is higher and longer than that of the male, but less developed at the apex, or in the animal and selfish range." This statement is literally true, though partial, and not explicit enough to insure most readers against erroneous inference. No well-read phrenologist will fail to look through its fallacious implication as

due to the indifferent wording of a significant fact. But a mere phrenological scollist would be very apt to stumble over it into the same misconception that frustrated the pen of Mrs. Farnham when, in attempting to contrast the cranial structures of the human male and female, she reduced her notion of a man to that of an excellent animal. The following quotation is a clear statement of her heretical thought:

"The masculine type gives breadth, volume, in the middle and basilar regions, and is narrowed at the top. The natus is toward animal development. The feminine type reverses these proportions: slender base, long antero-posterior and vertical diameters, expanded top. Natus toward the super-animal life. It is the crown of her head which is the autocrat of her intellectual and physical powers: it is the base of man's."—*Woman and her Era*, page 75, Vol. I.

Reader, if you are a man, can you swallow that, and yet respect yourself as a human being? Or, if a woman, conscious of superior worth, do you accept such a description of manhood as fitting your ideal of conjugal want? Who, then, knoweth the spirit of a man as going upward from that of a beast that goeth downward to the earth? If the natural tendency of the masculine conformation of brain be thus toward mere animal development, then, verily, as one of Mrs. Farnham's disciples has added to her scandalizing thought, "the more there is of a man the worse it is for him," and therefore the less he can make of himself, even to annihilation, the better—better for him and Woman too, with all their intimate relations. What a motive to self-culture is here! or rather, what a forbidding conclusion, and how it flouts the premises of this pretended phrenological induction.

But, from this unwitting libel, as I am constrained to call it, since it occurs in the process of a woman's argument which concludes with a like-unwitting retraction, I appeal to the significant works of Man to prove that he is something more than an animal. I refer to the archives of human progress, as containing the better credentials of his human nature. I bring out thence the entire catalogue of human arts and sciences, and challenge the defenders of the masculine side of humanity to say which, if any of them, originated in either the top of Woman's head or the base of Man's. These are intellectual achievements, (not moral nor animalistic,) and almost exclusively those of men; there being no historic connection between the name of any woman and any considerable discovery, or any important invention, in either department of rational investigation. The superiority of Man in the masculine sphere of capability is thus indisputably manifest. But while insisting upon the acknowledgment of this truth, I confess that my respect for the male representative of human nature is a good deal lowered by the fact of his moral inferiority. Men do not always behave as well as they know how, and not so generally as women. I need not now repeat what I have written in a former section touching the perpetrations of depravity, for proof that Man, in the present stage of human development, is as capable in the spheres of vice and crime as in the laboratories of art and science; and as much more at home than Woman in those as in these. Therefore, taking another look at their respective phrenological characteristics, who should wonder that Man's head is perceptibly wider and somewhat lower than woman's, in proportion to their unequal size? these distinctions signifying—but before saying what they signify, it is proper to remark parenthetically that they alone suffice to make Woman's head apparently higher and longer than Man's; though it is not absolutely either. Yet in this instance one is practically right in judging according to the appearance; because Woman's head is really as large in proportion to the size of her own body as Man's; while the relative smallness of her brain is counterbalanced by its finer texture, as the basis of a more vivacious temperament. Hence the manifestations of mind depend less on bulk of brain than on its structure, or the relative fullness of its organic convolutions. It is only force of character that is indicated by that, and not its estimable qualities, the different combinations of which, both in degree and kind, constitute all varieties of mentality; and therefore these are deducible respectively from given capacities of skill, only with due regard to the cranial figure. That of manhood is remarkably consonant with the actual lives of men, the above distinctions signifying, as I was about to say at the intervention of this parenthesis, that the lateral organs of mentality are more expanded in the masculine brain than in the feminine; whereas the coronal are more fairly developed in the feminine than in the masculine; in other words, that Man has more Alimentiveness, Acquisitiveness, Destructiveness, Combativeness, etc., than Woman, at the same time that she is more largely endowed with the moral impulses to Benevolence, Reverence, Hope, Conscientiousness, etc. The effect of this contrast is unduly disparaging to the masculine side, of humanity inasmuch as it is made under the vulgar impression that the tendency of animal endowments is necessarily sub-humanish. But I would have it made with the understanding that every faculty is useful to its possessor in proportion to one's grade of development, or position in the scale of intelligence; because no endowment, either of body or mind, is available in an isolated capacity, but only by its correlation with all the proper constituents of mentality; for which reason muscular powers and physical appetites are serviceable to mankind in ways which quite transcend the nature and discernment of brutes. And let it be distinctly understood that human character is never degraded by the natural tendency of what are sometimes improperly styled the selfish propensities; nor does it ever seem to be except in cases wherein there is an evident lack of moral endowments, to which in well-balanced minds the physical appetites are properly subject. Indeed, a fair development of both the lateral and coronal organs is essential to a normal constitution of mind; and to lack the forces of either is to be less endowed as a human being than one whose evenly expanded brain embraces both. Thus it appears that Woman is not exalted by her comparative deficiency of those attributes of mentality which are common to men and brutes, but is rather inferior to Man in respect of this deficiency. Neither is she so much superior to him in a moral aspect as she would be with as large an income of the intellectual faculties as he possesses. But this assertion involves the very fact which I have been thus far only preparing to demonstrate.

Before coming to that, however, there is one other thought to be uttered here, as tending to palliate the vulgar disparagement of a wide head; and that is, that breadth of brain denotes a fuller development not only of the lowest, selfly organs named above, but also, often than otherwise, of the superposed, medio-lateral range of executive faculties, including Constructiveness, Ideality, Sublimity and Caution; each of which is mentally exalting, and the combined effect of which, being greater in Man than in Woman, renders him by so much her superior. But this is not their cardinal contradistinction.

The careless saying that "the female head is proportionally longer than the male," which would

seem to be only another way of saying that it is much narrower, is of no certain consequence without a further affirmation as to whether the fact consists with an equal or un-equal expansion of the anterior and posterior portions of the brain. A closer observation assures us that the group of affectional organs in the region of the occiput are better developed in Woman's head than in Man's; whereas the opposite group of the perceptive are larger and more effective in Man's forehead than in Woman's. This double phrenological contradistinction is fully sustained by the diverse conduct of the sexes—on the one hand, by Man's grander achievements in natural science and the mechanic arts, and on the other by Woman's greater interest in the social sphere; in human manners, domestic affairs, and all personal relations. Thus the claim of Woman to a longer head than Man's, when it is duly penetrated, results as unfavorably to her intellectuality as her claim to a higher head does to her morality. But the reader will probably demur at this point, and fancy there is something unfair in the comparison of skulls from which this induction follows. If so, I shall only contend that it is as fair in the present case as in that canvassed above—the very contrast of heads from which Mrs. Farnham deduced the mental superiority of Woman. I shall rather insist on a comparison of homogeneous endowments, or of male and female capacities for representing given departments of mind, as the only method of measuring human character, and as serving best to elucidate my conception that the intellectual faculties shape the career of Man, whereas the moral faculties shape the mind of Woman.

This postulate is directly in the face of Mrs. Farnham's assertion of "the Supreme Self-Love of Man," whose "ruling activities," according to her showing, are

1. Ambition—Love of Power,
2. Acquisitiveness—Love of Gain,
3. Sensuality—Love of Pleasure.

This was true of Man in the earlier ages, and is true of many men to-day; but not of all men. Why should the undeveloped boy-man of antiquity be made to represent the more manly Man of advancing centuries? There are some men in every community who are better characterized by

1. Love of Science,
2. Love of Art,
3. Love of Progress.

Why are not men of this class as much entitled to representation in the impartial estimate of manly qualities, as their inferiors in development? Surely, there can be no worthy reason for rejecting the claims of Mr. Emerson's "Representative Men" to personate Manhood, and selecting instead of them the worst men that have ever lived—"the Xeros, Domitians, Vitellines, Louis Elevens, Philip Seconds, and Henry Eighths," with "their hosts of imitators in private life," as Mrs. Farnham has done. It is remarkable, moreover, that she has pursued the very opposite course in commending her conception of Womanhood. Beside making no account of the extant Woman as represented by the sex's notorious loves of Fashion, Frivolity and Filtration, and not being satisfied with the best living examples of feminine excellence, of whom she has cited several names as illustrating Woman's claim to preëminence in certain departments of mental activity, she has put the ideal for the actual by pertinaciously insisting that Woman shall be known and her capabilities estimated from first to last, not by what she is or has been, but solely by what she is to be; of which conception she says rather presumptuously:

"Reader, the Ideal Woman sketched in these pages exists, though you may not find her in your family, your circle, or your community. I draw from Nature, who has kindly sat to my poor skill, for want of a better to employ. I have put in the lines and shades that are visible to me; they seem extravagant, perhaps, to you; but they will be faint and cold to your grand-daughters; and the women of the fifth generation hence will wonder how their fathers and grandfathers could ever have been questioned. For a positive, clear, intelligent, purposeful development of Womanhood will bear date from about these years of inquiry and agitation in regard to its capacities and offices."—*Woman and her Era*, Vol. II, page 469.

Very true and well said of a quite monocular vision. But I can't help asking whether the advent of this Ideal Woman is to be expected in the character of an old maid, or as the wife of that same old boy that Mrs. Farnham spited. Certainly neither; for Mrs. Farnham herself believed in Harmonical Marriage as prerequisite to "Artistic Maternity;" a future attainment of Woman which is practicable only in the atmosphere and sunshine of Conjugal Love. Where, then, is the Ideal Man? Mrs. Farnham, if she ever thought of him, has taken no pains to describe him. She seems to have determined to know nothing but "Woman and her Era"—nothing of the Masculine but the mere *historical man*: a character for whom she signified her small esteem by writing his name without a capital, over against that of her own sex promoted thus:—"the grossness of man and the purity of Woman—the selfishness of man and the goodness of Woman." Man, by her way of thinking, is a dog that has nearly had his day. She is quite sure that Woman is greater than the best of women in all ages have verified; and this mainly because they, in their subordination to men, have never been allowed to show themselves; whereas Man, with nobody to hinder him, has done his best and completely made his mark. There is no more to be expected of him. This is the drift of her whole labored argument, and her only show of reason for comparing, as she has insidiously done, the *Actual Man* with the *Ideal Woman*; and these comparisons really could ever have been questioned. For a positive, clear, intelligent, purposeful development of Womanhood will bear date from about these years of inquiry and agitation in regard to its capacities and offices."—*Woman and her Era*, Vol. II, page 469.

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SPIRITUALISM DONEDREARY.

BY SOTHERN, ALIAS STUART.

The letter which Mr. Sothern some time since addressed to the *Universal Citizen*, is going the rounds of the secular press of this country. Intriguingly, it is of little or no consequence, inasmuch as its improbable, crude and contradictory affirmations can have little influence in the minds of those who possess even a moderate share of discrimination. Nor does it derive its chief importance either from the character or the ability of its author; but rather from the fact that respectable journals have given it a wide publicity. It is on this account that I propose to review this poor effort to damage the just claims of Spiritualism, and to defame the characters of its honest disciples.

Conceding, for the present, that whatever occurred in the so-called "The Miracle Circle," was produced by the conscious and voluntary agency of its members, I will consider the contents of Mr. Sothern's letter. I will do him justice. He shall have the full benefit of his own statements—by his words and deeds he shall be fairly tried, and his case left to the public judgment. The ostensible purpose of the gentleman who organized the circle, of which Mr. Sothern was a prominent member, is thus expressed in his letter:

"Two or three men of high position in their respective professions, associated by a common curiosity and interest, joined in a series of experiments and exhaustive investigations of the phenomena of Spiritualism. We were quite ready to reject the results of our efforts, if it were true, to reject if false; and in the latter case, at least, resolved, in due time, to expose it."

Now I find no evidence whatever in Mr. Sothern's communication that he ever investigated Spiritualism at all, except it may be found in his assertion that he once paid some fifteen shillings sterling, more or less, to see the Davenport. Was this the "thorough, practical, and exhaustive investigation" which was either to establish Spiritualism on an enduring basis, or to result in a fearless exposure of its fallacies and its falsehoods? If this was not all, by what other means did he pursue the alleged investigation? We find the only proper answer to this question in the following description of his own peculiar method:

"By practice we had succeeded in producing not only all the wonderful manifestations of the professional medium, but other effects still more startling. We single tried to reject the appearance and the results which we had heard of, and read of, and seen, and we succeeded. . . . I do not hesitate to say that we could have easily, even attempted, or accomplished, by the use of the Davenport, or any of the other more notorious spiritual exhibits. Not the least of our discoveries was, that the whole thing was a myth."

I may remark in passing, that a myth is a fabulous narrative, having an analogy, more or less obvious, to some remote event or actual occurrence, the history of which has been obscured by time, or otherwise. Pray what and where is the reality to which Spiritualism sustains this relation? But if it be true that Spiritualism really consists in the present practice of such jugglery as Mr. Sothern affirms that he was engaged in, how did he make the important discovery "that the whole thing was a myth," or, in other words, a fictitious story which vaguely presents the shadows of distant objects and events?

It is sufficiently obvious that the "exhaustive investigation of Spiritualism" that we read of (we cannot see it), consisted in practicing tricks of jugglery, which he and his associates succeeded in making their visitors believe were the manifestations of human beings who had "put on immortality." This was the "exposure" to which Mr. Sothern refers. To be sure it was practiced at the expense of truth; it required the operators to sacrifice their integrity—who, unlike common jugglers, never intimated that they were deceiving, or attempting to deceive their visitors. However, in this aspect of the case, the expense may not have been so heavy, after all, as to be particularly oppressive to those who were pleased to subject themselves to this voluntary taxation. But whatever sacrifice of veracity and humanity may be required to practice such jugglery, it does not admit of any extenuation from the force of ordinary circumstances. The vagabond cheats who amuse idle boys, for a few pence, at the corners of the streets, practice their vulgar tricks that they may procure bread; but, according to Mr. Sothern, the "twelve gentlemen of high position in their respective professions" had no such plausible excuse for their conduct—they practiced their profane and cruel deception merely for their own amusement. This man would have us believe that twelve distinguished gentlemen spent much of their time for years in amusing themselves by deceiving other people. While he never exhibited his powers in public, he yet claims to have carried on the business of deception on a larger scale "than any of the professional exhibitors." Others may have been honestly deluded, or subject to some foreign and irresistible power; but this is a case of unblushing imposture—the result of deliberate design and elaborate preparation.

Mr. Sothern presumes there are no swindlers but those who are paid for deceiving their fellow-men. I entertain a different opinion, and strongly suspect that among the most distinguished examples of that class are those who are willing to serve their master without pay. The great philosophical and dramatic poet makes one of his characters regard his purse as "trash" when compared with the wealth of a good name; and I believe there are several things, in heaven and on earth, more valuable than money. They, surely, are the most incorrigible deceivers who are ready and anxious to work for nothing. The professional telegrapher who entertains a promiscuous crowd for a few shillings an hour, but frankly tells the spectators that he is all the while practicing a deception, is a paragon of moral excellence compared with the man who invites his friends and neighbors to visit him—ostensibly at the request of "Ben. Johnson"—to witness a private spiritual exhibition, and yet permits them to go away without so much as intimating to any one that he has only exhibited his counterfeit appearances of the most sacred realities. The profane trifle who thus purposely, and for his own amusement, leads the sincere inquirer astray from the truth; who artfully deceives others—inspiring delusive hopes, and deepening convictions that lay hold of the noblest faculties of the mind; who tantalizes his visitors with phantom shapes and mystical voices of the loved and lost, only that he may ridicule their credulity, and mock like a senseless jester when at last the crushing disappointment comes home to his victims—surely, of all swindlers such an one is most to be dreaded. If one is constitutionally prone to select so base an occupation, he should go to Hindoostan and experiment on the wandering pariah that people the deserts. Let those, at least, be spared whose sensibilities have been refined by the better forms of civilization and religion.

If we may credit the statements of Mr. Sothern, he practiced this heartless deception for years, making "some of the most intelligent men in America believe" that they were really holding intercourse with spirits. And yet, strange to say, he now considers himself "free from the imputation of having . . . encouraged idle superstitions or perpetrated blasphemous burlesques of sacred things"! Civilized communities have enacted laws to punish all the ordinary forms of swindling, and also against torturing the animal crea-

tion; and if our legislators have hitherto made no provision for the suppression of such wanton and criminal cruelty as I have described, it is doubtless because the iniquity is of so monstrous a character that no humane lawgiver could have anticipated the necessity for such legislation.

Mr. Sothern says: "The things that these people do, are not done by spiritual or supernatural means. I know that—I have proved it—I have done all that they can do, and more." Evidently he neither knows nor has proved anything of the kind. Assuming to have produced all the essential phenomena of Spiritualism, and others of a still more extraordinary nature, he abruptly concludes that there are no genuine spiritual phenomena. Were we to admit the antecedent propositions, we should certainly question the shape of his conclusion. A limited acquaintance with the principles of logic will not enable us to perceive their relations. If we grant that Sothern, with the aid of his confederates, produced such appearances, by methods which he does not choose to disclose, it by no means follows that true Spiritualists produce all the phenomena that occur in their presence by voluntary effort, and in the same fraudulent way. The huckster who pretends to straddle an ass and ride to market, may as logically infer that neither post coaches nor railroad conveyances have any real existence, and that all the better informed and well behaved people whom he meets must have come to town by his own conveyance.

Mr. Sothern's description of Spiritualism is indeed a very dreary affair. It requires no genius to execute such a picture. When no lights are admitted, no objects are revealed that are worth seeing, and only darkness is visible. Viewing the whole subject through the confusion and degradation of his own mental and moral constitution, he thus sums up its European and American history: "On the one hand a chronicle of imbecility, cowardly terror of the supernatural, wilful self-delusion and irreligion; and on the other, of fraud, impudent chicanery, and blasphemous indecency."

After "such a practical investigation" as few other men have made," he of course felt authorized to denounce the species of Spiritualism with which alone he was familiar—which he had practiced "for more than two years"—as "a mockery, a delusion, a snare and a swindle." If the shadows preponderate here, it is because this doleful picture was executed in the absence of light, by one whose "exhaustive investigation" of Spiritualism consisted in the tricks whereby he deceived many sincere and earnest inquirers after truth. Spiritualists believe in reform and acknowledge the necessity for a work of grace and practical improvement among themselves. But it is respectfully suggested, that if they are to enjoy the labors of a missionary, to redeem them from their irreligious character and indecent blasphemies, they may have a right to express their preference in the selection of a suitable person. We cannot expect to find the most acceptable preacher of righteousness in one whom common fame and his own profession have declared to be most at home in the character of a cockney or a juggler, and whose boast is, that he has achieved high distinction in the art of deception.

The author of *Spiritualism done dreary* speaks of the believers generally in terms of unmeasured contempt. The shadows in his picture deepen, and the darkness becomes palpable as his charcoal delineation approaches completion. By implication he compares the conductors of the London *Spiritual Magazine* to "pickpockets." Again he says, "I look upon any Spiritualist as either an impostor or an idiot"; and when he visited the Davenport, he "came away powerfully impressed with the conviction that . . . their supporters and believers were mad." If Sothern's tricks "made some of the most intelligent men in America believe" that they were really holding intercourse with spirits, and that every Spiritualist is either an impostor or an idiot," it inevitably follows that he has exerted a most mischievous and desolating influence on the minds and morals of the community. In other words, and according to his own showing, he has multiplied the knaves and fools when there were enough already; and it will require a new and skillful illustration of his jugglery to evade this responsibility. For these melancholy results of his efforts he should be held to a rigid accountability by the conservators of the public welfare.

But Mr. Sothern is convinced that the believers in Spiritualism are "mad." Among the indications of madness, which first and chiefly attract the attention of the ordinary observer, are a want of coherency of language and consistency of conduct. The individual talks at random and exerts himself without a rational motive for action. It will be perceived that Mr. Sothern answers the description very well, though it may be admitted that he exhibits less "method in his madness" than ordinary lunatics. We search in vain for any plausible pretext for his conduct. He devotes himself to a most thankless task without the least hope of reward. He is not prompted by his necessities; nor can he so much as offer the poor excuse for his conduct which avarice might suggest. With no rational purpose in view, he labored for years, with untiring zeal—worked for nothing and found himself. And this was not all. He even assures us "that the evening invariably wound up with a jolly little supper, provided solely at his own expense." This is surely more than could rationally have been expected of human nature in its normal condition. If we set aside those whom Providence designs to crown with martyrdom, it must be apparent that such utter self-abnegation is wholly incompatible with the natural instincts of a sound mind.

What I have written involves the implied admission of the truth of Mr. Sothern's present claim, namely, that he was not a spiritual medium, but only a mere trifler, who amused himself by jesting about things which possess a sacred significance; and in making (as he virtually assumes) knaves and idiots of "some of the most intelligent men in America." And yet I am reminded, that many things occurred in the "miracle circle" which do not favor the supposition that they originated with Mr. Sothern and his confederates. Among other things I refer to the stern reproofs and earnest moral lessons that were often expressed and forcibly inculcated; to say nothing of the threats of a public exposure of the secret conduct of a number of those "gentlemen of high standing in their several professions." It is not usual for men, whatever may be their moral condition, to threaten and denounce themselves; much less would they be inclined to do this in the presence of strangers. And yet such threats—purporting to have emanated from a spiritual source—were made in my presence. The writer was an invited guest at the Miracle Circle, (courtesy of "Ben. Johnson"), but went away with an empty stomach. A fair opportunity for personal observation leads to the conclusion, that the "jolly little supper," with which "the evening invariably wound up," may have been "a myth." A generous hospitality requires but a small sacrifice, so long as it is chiefly manifested on paper. Some of the "distinguished gentlemen" were thus brought to a severe reckoning for alleged secret practices that could not be reconciled with the "Ten Command-

ments." The subject might be edifying to the reader, but as it is not altogether pleasant to the writer, and may not be agreeable to the parties most concerned, a special reference to a single example must suffice.

The persons forming the circle, being properly seated around the table, with their hands on the table, and of necessity visible to all, one of the parties was directed to hold one hand under the table, whereupon a sealed package was placed in the hand. On breaking the seal it was found that the envelope contained an open confession that the several parties whose names were underlined had been guilty of violating the Seventh Commandment. This confession was expressed in humble and penitent language, and seven men who were present—a majority being among the alleged authors of that "expensive sell"—found the names by which they were respectively known attached to the confessions, each in his own peculiar handwriting. This paper was carefully inspected by every member of the company, and I have not forgotten the sensation it occasioned. Now I submit that whilst men of depraved morals may converse with each other respecting their illicitious practices, they are not likely to invite strangers to listen to such a confession. If this was not the work of those who managed the affairs of the circle, whose are we to look for the author or authors of that humiliating confession? If, on the contrary, it was dictated by themselves, is it not manifest that they were hardened enough to glory in their own shame? If this was one of Mr. Sothern's practical jokes, he is entitled to the writer's thanks for having graciously omitted to place his name on the roll of infamy. Moreover, such a confession, voluntarily made, in the absence of religious convictions, and of any and every circumstance requiring such an indecent revelation, would naturally be regarded as conclusive evidence, that its author was as ungodly in his mind as he professed to be in his morals.

It is alleged to have been the original intention of Mr. Sothern to expose the falsehood of Spiritualism had his investigation of the subject resulted in such a discovery. Now if he really ascertained that it had no foundation in truth, why did he not admonish the public at once by a speedy and fearless exposure? It appears that his sluggish sense of duty permitted a period of several years to elapse without one word of condemnation, publicly expressed. It is a suggestive circumstance that his exposition only comes to us, at least, when a contributor to a foreign journal had taken the liberty to openly identify his name with the subject. However, had Mr. Sothern been satisfied with a simple denial of the spiritual origin of the facts observed in his presence, I should not have taken up my pen, and his communication would probably have elicited no reply. But when he makes his denial the occasion for an unmeasured assault on the characters of a large and respectable portion of the people of both Europe and America, he deserves to be sharply rebuked.

Spiritualism has nothing to fear from the childish passion and opposition of its enemies; nor can it suffer from any ordeal which the progress of civilization and the developments of science can possibly institute with a view to test its claims. Old falsehoods must die and be buried; materialism returns to the dust from which it sprang; the theories of popular skepticism change like the shifting sands beneath the waves; the deceivers go their way and the searers to their own place; they doubtless perish and disappear; those who mock become silent, and darkness covers their memory. All infidel philosophies and soulless systems are left to decompose together. No light shines above their common sepulchre, save the pale, phosphorescent illumination that reveals the scenes of corruption and defines the empire of the dead.

But Spiritualism has the inherent elements of an indestructible life. It rests on the fundamental laws and relations of the human mind; the Religions of all periods and countries are based upon its positive facts and eternal principles, while its illustrations are found alike in the sacred books of Pagans, Jews and Christians, and in all history. The illuminated seers and spiritual heroes of other times are not dead—such men never die. The hour of their martyrdom is the hour of their resurrection. They ascend to the conditions of a more exalted life and yet remain with us in spirit to strengthen the weak, and to rebuke the unworthy. The effigies of the Apostles are still in the temples of our religion; Jesus is risen from the dead; and every great inspired teacher also rises in spirit and in power as the world advances to the comprehension of his teachings. Confucius, Pythagoras, John and Swedenborg are living teachers of to-day; and, in some sense, every saint stands before us a vital and inspiring presence. Great souls shine out like stars in the firmament to light our pathway, and the common faith of mankind is a prophetic revelation of their sublime estate. Here and there, even now, the light breaks through the clouds of time and sense. Strains of broken but divine music float down to us through the still atmosphere of our spirit; and forever "beautiful upon the mountain summits of human life, are the white feet of those who bring good news."

S. B. BRITTON.

To the Spiritualists of Massachusetts.

Brothers and Sisters—The Call for a Convention, which you have seen in the *Banner of Light* for some weeks past, has been responded to, and the result is before you in the report of said Convention. The object of this appeal is to invite your careful attention to the affirmation of principles there made, the Constitution adopted, and the practical measures proposed to spread the new Gospel everywhere in our State, and also to solicit your cooperation in the good work. What we wish and hope to secure is from one to three thousand names appended to this Constitution within the next four weeks, together with the dollar, or more, as the expression of our determination that the work shall go forward. But if any one objects to signing the Constitution, they can still aid in sending the Agent through the State on his mission of good. If every place will equal Worcester, we shall have more than that sum very soon. We have no idea that we have made our plan perfect at first, but we have made a beginning, and you can perfect, in the future, what is defective in the present. The old organizations are making the most gigantic efforts to maintain the supremacy of falsehood, and the mental slavery, and spiritual degradation of man. The world looks to us, and rightly too, for light and help. We ask you, not to dispense your worldly means by the hundreds of thousands, and even millions, as do the Churches; but we do urge that the Spiritualists of the Old Bay State expend a few hundred, the present year, in the way proposed in our Constitution. Brothers and Sisters, let us do one practical thing. Send in your dollars to the Corresponding Secretary, care of the *Banner of Light*, Office, and they will be promptly acknowledged through that paper, and paid over to the Treasurer.

In places where any of the officers reside, it may be more convenient to pay over to them, and they forward it. In any way you please to send your name and money, will be acceptable to the Association, and we doubt not to the angel-world, which has marked this movement.

For the Executive Committee,
J. S. LOVELAND, Cor. Secretary.

J. BURNS, PROGRESSIVE LIBRARY, 1 WELLINGTON ROAD, CAMBERWELL LONDON, ENGLAND.
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LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

Real and Rational.

It appears to have become a positive need with certain preachers to bring the claims of Spiritualism before their congregations, at stated intervals. Some do it from one motive, and some from another. On one side, there is an admitted necessity for discussing this matter, on account of its growing influence over the minds of their flocks. On the other, there are, here and there, men who are willing to study the matter in the light of growth, and an inward desire for more light, and one of the phenomena of human progress. We have little or no sympathy with the former class, while with the latter we should have far more if it were not so patent beforehand that they were to all practical purposes prejudiced as to the result at which they mean to have their discussions arrive.

The Rev. Mr. Frothingham, of New York—certainly one of the most advanced among liberal Christians, who styles himself a Unitarian, and has been thought by many to be the man worthy to be named before others for the place left uncoccupied by the death of Mr. Parker—Mr. Frothingham, we say, is at present engaged in delivering a series of what are called "eloquent discourses" on Spiritualism before his congregation; the burden of which is, we are glad to say for once, not the old stock objections to Spiritualism on the score of prejudice or hatred, for of that he shows none—but the fact that spirit communion is no new thing, nor modern fact, no recently developed faith, but has rather been an inspiration for the mind of man for centuries, and would really be of practical value to the race now if it were fairly laid by the side of reason, and demonstrated to be sound and reliable by the patent process of Rationalism. Mr. Frothingham insists that this is the age distinctively of Rationalism to which all things must be rightly referred, and by which their value must be proved.

He makes a show of candor, in fact, in his approach toward his subject, that he may gain advantage for coming to his insufficient conclusion with the more apparent fairness and force. While he admits the antiquity of the belief in the presence and personal communications of spirits, and quotes Milton and Longfellow in favor of that universal belief, and refers to literature as being a complete treasury of allusions to the fact and subscriptions to it also—he nevertheless is resolutely unwilling to put any credence in any of the theories or philosophies that are erected on the countless evidences of spirit-communion, until much more time as they shall have first fully commended themselves to his reason. In this conclusion of his, he is simply inconsistent with himself. He does not deny facts at all, and yet he insists that reason shall dominate over them. This is in order to make it appear that the present is the age of reason indeed. The inductive method teaches us to first collect our facts, then classify them according to their natural relations, and then proceed to the conclusions to which they manifestly point us. But Mr. Frothingham wants the facts to give way to the reason. How this can be, he does not pretend to make plain to us, nor even to touch upon at all. In his zeal for Rationalism, he becomes just as irrational as possible.

He admits the full reality of Spiritualism, therefore, but demands to be satisfied of its rationality. If the former, then the latter follows as a matter of course. But to make the facts of Spiritualism insufficient and comparatively unimportant, he speaks of them in one passage as being the same with the delusions, trances, oracles, and other manifestations to which he obviously attaches no rational importance. But in another place he comes back again to the truth, and admits, because there is no other way left open for him, quite all that we could ask of him. And he frankly confesses that it will not do to exercise positive disbelief—respecting these manifestations. They are matters, he says, on which human judgments are to be suspended; men are neither to believe nor disbelieve. "We neither accept nor scout; we suspend judgment"—is his language.

And thence he passes to a word of praise for the good, and true, and pure men and women who do believe, and profess their belief, in these well ascertained facts of Spiritualism. In spite of their character, he refuses to accept their hypotheses. His mistake is in supposing there is any hypothesis about it. Had he personally investigated it, as many another man of at least equal capacities has done before him, he would not speak now of hypotheses; he would be stating the facts, and upon them building the philosophy which is their merited superstructure and crown. If Mr. F. would for once let his own preconceived theories go, particularly on the single subject of Rationalism, and open his mind to the reception of facts wherever he found them, he would find that he had come nearer to a truly spiritual faith than ever before.

The Rescue from Shipwreck.

Boston has scarcely recovered from the excitement caused by the appearance of nearly three hundred shipwrecked emigrants in our midst, two Sundays ago. The incident was excellently adapted to work just the results it did work. Our people showed that the instincts of humanity were stronger, after all, than selfishness, by pouring most bountifully of what they had into the laps of the sufferers. The whole scene was calculated to move the hardest heart. It is not often that the popular sympathies are so powerfully appealed to. It never does them any harm, but, rather, good. We all need to be told, now and then, that we are brothers by birth, and that blessed charity is as blessed for those who give as those who receive.

Dr. Willis's Lecture.

Our readers this week will find a mental feast in perusing Dr. Willis's able lecture delivered in this city before the Lyceum Society of Spiritualists. All will be interested in it.

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

This life-long champion of human rights and human liberty went out of editorial service on the 1st of January, at which time the *Liberator* went out of existence. He said that, inasmuch as slavery was overthrown in the United States, his special work was done. For thirty-five years he has wrought with untiring zeal and energy for the cause nearest his heart, and feels that he has received his blessing in advance by reason of having lived to see the consummation of his wishes and the perfect realization of his hopes. Human slavery does not exist as an institution in the United States. This single fact is the crown to his long-continued labors.

The *Liberator* had numerous enemies during its historic career, as was naturally to have been expected of so distinct an enterprise. Slowly but surely it grew to be a power, and a great political party at length came up to the plane on which it had originally taken its position. The name of Mr. Garrison is known wherever the word slavery is spoken over, the face of the civilized globe. He will be remembered by friend and foe alike; and it is but a proof of the soundness of his principles, that those who began with bitterly opposing him, now freely accept the conclusions to which they inevitably lead. Some of the strongest abolitionists are to-day to be found in the Southern States themselves.

Suicide of a Clergyman.

On Thanksgiving Day, Mr. Reuben Townsend, residing in Wilton, Me., committed suicide by hanging himself in his barn. He was a preacher of the Calvinist Baptist denomination, and was one of the most respected citizens of the town. He was in good circumstances.—*Boston Herald.*

Wonder if *Spiritualism* was the cause that induced Mr. Townsend to commit suicide? Being a "Calvinist Baptist" preacher, we think not.

Seeing that the theological and secular press are strenuously endeavoring to fasten murders, suicides, and the whole catalogue of human crimes, upon the backs of Spiritualists, by the circulation of the grossest falsehoods ever invented by man, we have been requested by several friends to chronicle everything that the Church has really been guilty of from time to time, and what sins are daily occurring in their midst; but we shall not do so, for the reason that the catalogue would occupy more room in our columns than we could possibly spare.

It is about time this mean, contemptible business of people who call themselves *Christians*, cease. Spiritualists are just as respectable as any other class of people in the community, and their Scientific Religion has more backbone in it than anything of the kind that was ever vouchsafed to mankind.

Chelsea.

The Spiritualists of Chelsea are in a very flourishing condition. They have had, some of the finest speakers in the land to address them, and of every variety. Whilst Lizzie Doten and Mrs. Smith held the audience spell-bound by their beautiful and transcendent eloquence, Todd, the fearless pioneer, blazed forth like the rays of a rough diamond, his native and powerful eloquence, which penetrated the thick gloom of the old school of Theology, and showed it forth in all its deformities, contrasting it with the new and glorious light of Spiritualism. Like unto the oak which sprung from the acorn, in his own words, so has he grown up from the Old Theology; and it would be as possible, so he says, to crowd him back to his starting point, as it would be to push back the sturdy oak into the acorn.

The Children's Lyceum is thriving well. Next Wednesday evening, some of the friends of the Lyceum will give an entertainment of Tableaux, &c., for the benefit of the Lyceum. We hope that a goodly sum will be the result, for a little material aid is needed to help this new and glorious institution along.

Adin Ballou, the good old solid veteran in the cause, lectured to a full and appreciative audience a week ago last Sunday night.

F. L. H. Willis next Sunday.

We are pleased to announce that arrangements have been completed whereby F. L. H. Willis, M. D., of New York, is to speak before the Lyceum Society of Spiritualists in this city, next Sunday. He will repeat the two splendid discourses he gave here in December, on a very stormy Sunday, which discourses many have asked to have repeated, viz., "The Gospel of Spiritualism," and "The Experiences of Theodore Parker on entering Spirit-Life." Two more interesting discourses are rarely heard even from spiritual platforms. We hope he will be able to speak here the Sundays during the month. The public are invited free to attend these meetings, and no doubt those who feel any interest in the spiritual philosophy, will take this opportunity to attend. We know they will hear something that will interest, and, if they so desire, benefit them.

The Indians as Voters.

A bill has been introduced into Congress by Mr. Raymond, of New York, making provision for what its author supposes to be equal suffrage, by allowing almost every class of males in the country to vote, under certain qualifications, except the Indians. These are not to be entrusted with the elective franchise on any terms. The Constitution prescribed that those Indians who were taxed should be counted in with the representative part of the general population; which is as far as it had authority to go; but modern legislation travels out of its way to brand Indians as unfit, under any circumstances, to exercise the elective franchise. We protest against the grossly cruel character of such an assumption. Let the Indian be treated at least as fairly as the black, if not the white, man.

The Anti-Slavery Societies.

The American Anti-Slavery Society held a session in this city last week. The question of dissolving the Organization was freely discussed and defeated by a large majority. The Society will continue to work for what its members consider the unattained rights of the colored race.

The Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society also met in this city last week. It also resolved to continue its organization, and engage more zealously in the work of securing to the colored race their entire freedom and equal rights. John T. Sargent was elected President and Charles K. Whipple Corresponding Secretary.

Meetings in the Melodeon.

Fifteen hundred people were crowded into the Melodeon on Sunday, Jan. 21st, to hear each lecture given by Mrs. Cora Daniels, and many more went away for want of room. Education was the subject spoken upon in the afternoon. In the evening, the controlling influence purported to be that of Mrs. Eliza Farnham, who spoke with great ability upon the Position of Woman.

DEATH OF A WRITER.—The late foreign papers announce the death of Frederica Bremer, at Stockholm.

Message Department.

Each Message in this Department of the BANNER was spoken by the Spirit who gave it, and is a direct communication from the Spirit of God to the human mind. The Messages were given in the presence of the Spirit of God, and are a direct communication from the Spirit of God to the human mind. The Messages were given in the presence of the Spirit of God, and are a direct communication from the Spirit of God to the human mind.

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.

Mass. COAST gives no private sittings, and receives no visitors on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, until after six o'clock P. M.

Invocation.

Oh God, from the deepest vales of human sorrow and disgrace, from the loftiest mountains of human joy and wisdom, from all places and all things there goes out to thee an ever deepening melody of praise, until all Nature seems one grand, harmonious rhythm of perpetual joy. The artist, when he transfers his glowing thoughts to canvas, praises thee, oh God. The sculptor, when he chisels beauty from the rude block of marble, praises thee. The new-born babe looks the joy it cannot speak. The little child, as it lisps its first mouthed utterances at the mother's knee, praises thee. The midnight assassin who slays his victim in the public streets, does but open the door through which an angel enters with flaming sword, becomes physician to his soul and teaches of thee. Oh God, teach us to understand thy ways, that all thy manifestations are perfect and holy, are in time and in place. But, whether we know this or not, we shall be true to our divine natures, and ever utter praises unto thee.

Nov. 30.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—If you have inquiries from the audience or correspondents we are ready to answer them.

QUEST.—By S. Simons, of Williamstown, Vt.: Which is the most to be relied upon, the History of Jesus, as given by Paul and Judas through the mediumship of Alexander Smyth, or the History of the same Jesus, as we find it in the New Testament?

ANS.—These two records—for such they are—of the human life of the man Jesus, are both good in themselves, and to a certain extent, are both reliable. Mistakes seem to be everywhere. Nature perfects herself through them, not only in the physical, in the external, but in the mental world, also. We do not believe that there ever was, in the absolute, a perfect record of anything or anybody. All historians, or all writers, give but their own highest inspirations, founded upon their observations and the observations of others. All these several things are liable to err. Your observations may be perfect, and they may not be. Your inspiration may be perfect, and it may be somewhat stained by the crudities of human life; but because a thing is not absolutely perfect, not the highest of the kind, you should not reject it. On the contrary, you should weigh and carefully criticize all that is handed you from a higher life for your own inspection. If you do not weigh and measure all things in the great scale of human reason, you lose something, and by your loss all Nature suffers. So receive all, weigh and measure all carefully and well. Seek to understand what there is of truth in both records spoken of. It is not for us to say which is the most perfect, which the most reliable. They are both as much so as they can possibly be, considering the conditions under which they were written. The old Biblical record has been handed down through a long line of sources. It has become marred, and has lost much of its original beauty, but it has lost nothing of its truth. That remains just the same, for truth can never be destroyed. The record of later times bears much of truth in its heart and upon its surface. It brings the man Jesus upon a more rational plane, and causes you to look toward him in his humanity, and divinity also. It tells you, as far as it can appeal to your human senses, that this man was divine and human as well.

Q.—Will you explain the passage of Scripture found in the third chapter of Acts, forty-first verse: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. And the same day there were added about three thousand souls." Is this Scripture been fulfilled in the past, or is it to come?

A.—The spirit and the letter thereof, in our opinion, have already been fulfilled.

Q.—Will the intelligence controlling the medium please to give us an opinion on the subject of fate, considered in relation to free will, as applied to the acts of human beings?

A.—It is useless to deny that you are in the hands of inexorable fate. Call it fate, call it God, Jehovah, Brahma, or whatsoever you will, the principle remains the same under all names and circumstances. You had no voice in the way and manner of your birth, and whether you think so or not, you have had no voice in anything that has occurred to you since that time. If there is a Supreme Intelligence overruling all things, he never forgets his duty; he does not leave his work to the hands of others to perform, for that would be a libel on his omnipotence. We do not believe, as we have ever declared, in a second ruling Power. We believe in one Supreme, Intelligent God; we believe that Intelligence governs everywhere, under all circumstances. There never was a time when you were not controlled by this Supreme Intelligence, and there never will be a time when you will cease to be controlled by that Power. This has ever been our belief, and we certainly, if true to ourselves, can hold no other to our souls and call it good. But this belief by no means robs you of your free agency, neither does it divert you of your divine accountability. You—each one of you—judge yourselves, hold yourselves responsible to your inner self. This is the agent of the great Intelligence, God. It has been given for your especial benefit, for the benefit of no one else. It is to become your guide to Heaven, or your highest ideas of perfect life. It can guide no one else. It is to this you are accountable, and this very accountability is part in the great plan of fatality. Do you shudder at the word? It belongs to God. You should not; it means God. It is God. You should not fear it. It takes in all, and never loses anything. Shall you believe? No. When once humanity learns to understand that, as humanity, they are in the hands of an all-wise and ever watchful Intelligence, guiding them in wisdom and love through life, then their aspirations will be grander, loftier, diviner. Nature will shine forth more gloriously in human life.

But to-day there are many thousands that mourn, who are in fear; tortured day and night with the thought that God has forsaken them; that, although he may remember others in mercy, he will perhaps forget them; that they are suffered to go this way and that way without any Power or intelligence to guide, to lead them on. When in coming ages much of this will be swept away, humanity will learn its relation to its God. Oh, then the wildernesses of these human hearts will bloom like the rose, and the stagnant places of life will be filled with activity and joy, because they will feel God is with them, and because he is, he will be their Saviour.

Q.—By J. B.: Will the spirits inform me why the hand did not appear last night at the window of the cabinet of the Elder Brothers, at the Melodion, when it was called for by the audience, while one of the Committee was in the cabinet?

A.—It is very possible that the physical sphere, or emanations of the human life of that individual, interfered somewhat with the process of producing the hand. We say this is possible; we believe, furthermore, this was the case. We cannot always tell what bodies are best adapted to the giving of these manifestations, until we try them.

Nov. 30.

Olive Watson.

It is fourteen years since, in the city of New Orleans, I passed through death. I had been separated three years from the friends of my childhood. Circumstances of which I care not to speak here, took me from my home and sent me out to battle with the stern waves of life. Sometimes I was happy, but often I was unhappy. My mother, my sisters and brother never learned anything concerning me after the first four months of my leaving them; and I have learned, since my death, that they have sorrowed much because of this, and they, even now, are hoping, in some way and at some time, to hear from me, that I may come home, for they do not know that I have passed through death to spirit-life.

There are many things of which I would speak were they here, or I alone with them. My purpose in coming here to-day is simply to announce to them that I am no more on the earth; also to tell them where I died, under what circumstances; also to point out a way by which they may corroborate this my letter from the land of shadows.

I died of consumption following fever, on the 19th day of February. It will be fourteen years next February.

Many times during the first part of my sickness I had a thought of writing to my friends, for I felt as though I should die. But I failed in this, and so no wish of mine ever reached them.

I was ever haunted with my mother's face. When I said to her the last time we met, "I am going away and perhaps I shall never come back," she says, "Olive, my child, consider well what you're doing. I beg of you to take back those words. Stay with me, for I cannot live without you."

But I went, and was haunted by those words and that face even to the last moment of my life. And to-day it is as fresh in my memory as ever.

I had made arrangements with the Captain of a sailing vessel to come from our place, from Halifax, to these shores, hoping to find peace and employment, intending to return if I did well, but determined never to return again should I do ill. And so I never did. I wandered from place to place, until at last I pitched my tent in New Orleans.

Now, if my mother would know of the circumstances attending my death, and would be assured of my death, and that I do return speaking to her, let her send to J. Thomas Doyle, of New Orleans, informing him that she is my mother and desires to know concerning my death. Farewell, sir. Olive Watson, of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Nov. 30.

Lieut. William Hudson.

Lieutenant William Hudson, from Fort Laramie.

As return seems to be the order of the day, I thought I would try my hand at it, and report myself as well off on the other side.

I was out on duty during the last struggles of this Southern rebellion, and was surrounded by the enemy, in the shape of Indians, who handled me pretty rough, so rough that I was obliged to travel across.

But I do not for one moment cast all the blame upon the Indians, for I well know they have been, in one direction or another, forced to defend themselves from the injustice of your Government.

It was but a few days before my death that I told Colonel Connor that I really believed that the Indian Agents in that vicinity were all to blame, and if I had my way I would string up every one of them; then I would substitute men in their places whose hearts were large enough to take in all God's family, black, white and red. Despite my sympathy for the red men, I suffered death at their hands, because they distrusted me, as they do others. To them the Indian Agents were as vice-regents of the Great Spirit, to be obeyed and followed, until they find they have lured them on to murder them, to take away their lands, and leave them homeless and to starve.

They go out there for the express purpose of filling their own pockets. They do this. I know it; others know it. Not one of them will give up the chase until they are sure of having made one hundred thousand dollars.

Then blame the Indians! No; I charge my murder upon the Indian Agents. I know many others who do the same.

I thought I'd like to come back here to tell the folks I can come home and speak in this way. I've a brother I'd like to speak with, if there is a way open. I hear there is free communication with the South now. The last time I heard from him he was shut up on Southern soil. I never heard he was in the Southern army, so I presume he was not. I don't think he's dead, for if he was I should have been likely to have seen him on the other side. I should be very glad to open correspondence with my brother if I could, and through him I should like to meet all the rest.

Now, as to being a good deal better than when here, I claim to be just as good, and no better. And if my friends did not fear me when I was in the body, they need not fear me now I've lost it, for with it I've lost many of my rough points; that is to say, I don't wish to take anything that makes the brain reel, and I don't smoke or chew. So in those respects I am a better man, and they should not fear me.

My brother's name, perhaps I'd better give it. David Hudson. [Do you remember where he was when you last heard from him?] He was, at last accounts, located near or at Prattville, Alabama. I never heard he went into the army, don't think he did, but it's very possible he did. Good-day, sir.

Nov. 30.

Miles Thompson.

Miles Thompson my name, from Galena, Georgia. I'm not one of the sort that would please you, anyhow. I know you're Abolitionists here at the North, and I know you're mighty afraid of

folks that ain't of the same sort. [Where not afraid.] Well, you don't like us Southerners, I know. [Do you see any feeling here of that kind?] I haint looked, stranger, to see anything of the sort.

I got two boys I come to see about to-day. I was engaged, before I went away from my body, in nigger selling. You sell white folks; I sold niggers. [There's a difference.] Yes, there is; one's white, t'other's black. But I'm come about my two boys.

I made something when here. I was smart enough to take care of it. I turned it all into gold, and I took care of it. But my boys don't know what I did with it. They've not done well. They have a chance—somehow they did not understand how to get along. I wanted 'em to rough it as long as they could themselves, before I helped 'em.

Now they're hard to do, can't do what I did, and don't know what to do, because they've got no money. They don't know that I can come back and talk. I want 'em to know it, too. I want them to let me come back and talk with them, and I'll tell 'em what I did with the money, so they can get it, so they can have it.

I'm not one of the sort that would please you, I know. Well, will you do that for me? [Certainly.] Old Miles-Thompson, everybody knows him. [Do you think your sons will get your letter?] Yes, because somebody there will get it to 'em. [Are they educated?] Not much; they can read.

Nov. 30.

Invocation.

Our Father, through the mists and shadows of human life, through sickness, through sorrow and crime, through all places and at all times, thy love beams in upon us, thy blessing is with us. Where'er we turn, there thou art to bless, to guide, to strengthen, to uphold and to assure us by thy presence that we are safe. Eternal Power, we hear thy voice in the palace and in the hovel, in places where sin abounds. Everywhere we hear thee, everywhere the soul perceives thou art there. There is no place, no condition of time, from which thou art exempt. Oh, Holy Spirit of Life, for this consciousness more than all else, we thank thee. Through this consciousness we are made to feel that wherever we go, even through the shades of death, that thou art with us, and thy strength subdues our weakness, thy wisdom our ignorance, thy love banishes all our hate, thy mercy overcomes all our sin, and makes us pure and holy as when we first came from thy bosom. Oh God, for all that thou hast bestowed upon us, we praise thee. For everything that is around us, we praise thee. For those bright pictures that are foreshadowed to us of a divine and holy existence, we praise thee. We praise thee for all the sorrows and crimes of life. For all those darker tints that serve to make bright and glorious all life's pictures, we praise thee. Amen.

Dec. 4.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—Mr. Chairman, we are ready to answer inquiries, either from correspondents or the audience.

QUEST.—By P. C. of Hewanee: Is not Jesus Christ a material man, as he was on this earth?

ANS.—Form presupposes a something material. Everything that has form is material, else it could have no form; could occupy no space. All individualities have form, therefore are material. An aggregation of thoughts possessing form is material. In this sense, then, this Jesus the Christ is material.

CHAIRMAN.—J. E., of Philadelphia, sends the two following questions:

1st Q.—I see it stated in the Banner of Dec. 24, "that Jesus should be worshipped;" this implies that he was a God. How does this theory of a plurality of Gods accord with reason, or the "Harmonical Philosophy?"

A.—It should be understood that there are as many Gods as there are minds needing Gods to worship; not only one, two, or three, but many. As regards the Harmonical Philosophy, much might be said. That which is in itself perfect, as related to all other forms in existence, is beyond the law of progress. We contend that all things, all minds, all spirits, all souls, ever live within the bounds of the law of progress. This being true, then the theory of the Harmonicalists amounts to but little. There ever will be these varied imperfections among humanity. Every conceivable grade of thought will be exhibited in every age.

Nature, in the outer world, demonstrates this to you. This same variety of thought is to be found in all the experiences of your inner lives. You have need of this vast diversity of form, and because you have need of it, you will always have it, in our opinion. You should worship all things in life that are beautiful, for it is right. The flower should be worshipped for its beauty. The grand piece of workmanship, that is the result of brain labor, is worthy your worship. The noble forest tree, sun, moon and stars, all things are Gods to you, for they minister unto the needs of your soul. It is vain to suppose you can all bow down to, and truly serve one God. You cannot. You each have Gods of your own, and those Gods you will serve. Whether you think it right or not, in the external you will all bow down to your own God.

2nd Q.—If we have two Gods, why not include the Holy Ghost, and thus adore the Trinity, in compliance with the old creeds?

A.—That I have answered.

Q.—Explain what is meant by the "unpardonable sin?" or if there are sins committed in this world not to be forgiven here or in the spirit-world, and how we may best live in order to avoid that sin?

A.—All sins are unpardonable. You are called upon to pay for every sin committed, always. Nature never pardons you, if you commit a so-called sin against your physical form. That form suffers, and through suffering you go beyond the sin. All sins are unpardonable; no one more than another.

CHAIRMAN.—I have two questions from O. C. of Amesbury:

1st Q.—Does the use of tobacco prolong physical life? It has been stated by an eminent physician that this is the fact. I doubt it; hence I propound the above question.

A.—You have positive proof that tobacco is inimical to physical life; and because it is, it can by no means prolong it.

2nd Q.—Tobacco allays nervous irritability. From this fact it is argued that it has a tendency to prolong the physical life. Is this allegation true?

A.—No, it is not true. It holds the nervous forces, while it is in the ascendency, in control. But as soon as its power is withdrawn, then those forces fall below the proper standard. Then, of course, you are made worse, instead of better.

CHAIRMAN.—With your permission, I will read an extract from a late editorial in the World's Crisis, handed to me by a friend, who requests your views as to "Where will this thing end?" The Crisis says: "When speaking of the religion of Jesus Christ, a spirit says, as reported in the Banner of Light for Sept. 30th, 1865, 'It is not fit

for the developed mind of the nineteenth century.' Twenty years since, who would have believed that thousands and thousands of intelligent men and women, in this enlightened age, so-called, would have so far departed from the teachings of Jesus as to claim that 'It is not fit for the developed mind of the nineteenth century?' Yet such mad expressions have become so common, as hardly to attract attention, and men who make or believe them are among the honored members of society, who hold the first positions of office in our nation. Where will this thing end?"

A.—In a glorious harvest. We predict a harvest of great thoughts. It will culminate in great good to humanity. Your correspondent has accepted the letter and forgotten the spirit, as is usually the case with all Church members. He has ever been looking to the body, blood and bone of Jesus Christ, rather than the spirit. We accept all the spiritual teachings of this Jesus. We fully endorse them all. But the cold, dead letter of Christianity, we trample under our feet. And we again tell you this is unfit for the present age. But the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of Truth, is fit for all times, for all people in every age. That is undying. It changes its form, but in principle it is ever the same. Truth, as spoken through a Jesus Christ or a Theodore Parker, is the same. You should not seek to deny this, for when you do, you deny him whom you try in your weakness to love and serve. This Spirit of Truth that lives to-day, has ever lived. Why, you might as well declare that it will be annihilated, because a few minds rise up and say it is wrong; the human mind is depraved, and ever has been, the Churchman tells you, but this doctrine is a fallacy, as you will all sooner or later learn. Dec. 4.

Evelyn Sawyer.

A little less than one year ago, I was living and acting through my own human body. When I was here I had hoped, if these things were true, I should know it. But I never was convinced of their truth, until I saw for myself, and realized for myself beyond death.

I was the daughter of James K. Sawyer, of Savannah. My name, Evelyn; my age, nineteen. [Savannah, Georgia?] Yes.

In reply to a question that may be asked, what I died of? I can only say, I cannot tell. I was never in perfect health. At any rate, I have no remembrance of feeling strong and well, as I supposed others felt. I am just told that a sickness in infancy produced my physical weakness in after life, and was the real cause of my death.

I am very anxious to be able to speak with my friends, very anxious. They are thinking, some of them, that I might have been saved; that had a different course been pursued with me, I might have lived many years longer. This is not so, and my friends should not distress themselves about it; for my own part, I am not sorry for the change, and would not come back to earth to live again, if I could. I am getting more and more reconciled to my new condition, new life, more and more happy. Some persons on our own side of life tell me that their former life seems like a dream. They see it so indistinctly that they never sigh for the scenes of earth. It was not so with me; for the scenes of my earth-life seemed very clear to me, and there was a time when I felt as though I would rather come back. But now I wouldn't come if I could.

My mother, pure spirit that she is, sends kind greetings to all her friends. She was from the North. Her name was Wheeler, Evelyn Wheeler. She'll be glad to talk to friends as I would, and will do so, if conditions are only offered.

My father should not mourn, because of the change that has come over his affairs. He should rather rejoice that he has been liberated from the meaningless monotony of slave life. For my part, I rejoice for him. Good-day. Dec. 4.

James Smith.

I am not much accustomed to public speeches, but I thought, like all the rest, I should like to say something that would show my folks that I am very comfortably off on this side.

I was James Smith; an Irishman by birth. The most of my life was passed in this country. I was a tailor by trade; but when the war came on, old as I was in years—for I was between sixty and seventy years of age—I put on my uniform, and went into the ranks to serve my country. It was mine, made such by my love for it. I was ashamed, many a time, to see young men born under the old flag of the United States, shirking their duty as soldiers, doing anything to get away from a soldier's life.

It was said by some of the folks that I enlisted when I was drunk. It's a mistake; I was sober. I know very well that I was in the habit of taking too much here, for which I'm very sorry. I was sorry then, but I could not seem to break off from it, and every once in so long a time, I must go on a spree. The folks think if I was drunk, I must have regretted that I went to war. It's a mistake. I was sober at the time, and I enlisted not because I was hired to go, not because I was obliged to go, for I wasn't.

I have a wife here, who is a firm believer in this thing, and is hoping to hear from me. I'm very well, Isabel, very well off on the other side of life. There's no more stitching, no more pressing to be done now. My children are helping me along on the other side. There's my Lizzie, who was a medium, and did well for the great company of spirits that used to come to her here, is a medium now, and helps me to come here to-day. I'm now in the ranks for doing all I can for everybody. I never talked much about Spiritualism here. It was not known that I believed in it at all. I heard a good deal said about it. I heard of it in my childhood, and always believed in it. There is a tradition among the Irish that corresponds so nearly to Spiritualism, that an Irishman can stick the two together just as easy as you can eat an apple. I be bound to say there is not a priest in the land but what is a Spiritualist at heart.

I was no Catholic at all, but a Protestant Irish. I had no interest in the Church, was entirely out of favor with it. It's generally supposed every Irishman must be a Catholic, but I know a good many who are very far from it. Dec. 4.

Aunt Ruth.

Some of 'em, some of the fathers in my town, are consoling themselves with the belief that Aunt Ruth is silenced. I'm the Aunt Ruth who used to come to you. They're thinking, because I have not been for a good while, that their will has silenced me, crushed me.

I'm alive, alive now. I'm alive as much as I ever was, and I'm happy to inform them of the fact. They are more dead than I am. Thank God! I am rich and they are poor, miserably poor, more so than I ever was when I was in the Poor House. Aunt Ruth's alive, alive and happy. Good-bye. Dec. 4.

Tim Bridges.

Humph! ha! that old duck rode over me nicely. Let a woman alone for carrying her

point, whether on this side or the other. Yes, she's a whole team, and a span to let besides. Well, if the old lady's got anything agin' em, I rather think they had better pay up. She's one of the kind that won't be put off. Talk about shelling down to such an individual as she is! If she wants to be round, I rather think she will be. I am, or was, Tim Bridges, of Albany. [New York?] Yes. If you wanted any advice in horse flesh, I could give it to you as well as any man; but if you wanted a coat cut, or your hair frizzled, I don't think I could do so well. Or, in other words, I was a horse jockey—didn't deal in niggers, but in horses; that, I take it, is most honorable.

I died in a fit, they say, but I rather think it's a pretty good fit; at any rate, I've been pretty well satisfied with myself ever since.

I've a good many friends round on this whirling ball of yours, that I suppose think I'm rather bad off. I'd just like to inform them—oh, I'm pretty well satisfied with myself—that's about as any of 'em get.

To those folks that are more liberal minded I would say, accept my thanks for your good wishes and hopes of me. They hope I've gone to heaven. Tell them I rather think to a little bit of a distance their hopes are realized. I don't think I'm wholly in, but I am in a fair way to see as much of heaven as any other chap; yes, sir.

I lived here upwards of forty-three—between forty-three and forty-four—years. I never see anything to make me believe I was going to live here just a little while, then go on the other side, and because you happen to have made some mistakes, be chucked into a pit of brimstone and fire. When the tract distributors used to come into my place to sell their religion, as I called it, I used to ask them how much there was to pay. If it was five or ten dollars, I was willing to pay it; but I didn't want their tracts. So, you know, I kind of got a bad name. I wasn't up to the mark of some people, you see.

There's one man among the crowd out there, who thinks I've swindled him outrageously. Now that isn't so. He swindled himself. Because he would try to make a good thing out of a bad thing, I just let him, that's all; I just let him. Now he turns round and blames me, and says because he's lost all his property, I got him into the scrape; that he's miserable, and he's this, that and the other; and it's all on my account, all charged to me. Well, tell him to keep cool, and I'll pay him when he gets on the other side. [You had better give his name.] Judkins.

Now to all the folks just say a good, kind word from me. Inform them that I'm very well off. By-and-bye I expect to be clear up the ladder. I don't follow the same business as I did here. I go there quite often, and enjoy myself in looking round. I'll pay up when you come over. Dec. 4.

Annie Goodwin.

I am Annie Goodwin. I was deformed in body, and died of consumption, which was a result of an imperfect circulation.

It is most a year since I left my parents. Tell them all my dreams, all my wildest expectations are more than realized. I am surrounded by beauty, by everything that makes the soul feel that it is in heaven.

Oh, I was so rejoiced, when I found I was free from the body through which I had suffered so much, that I think I spent some time in praising God.

When Mr. Moulton, who was with my father, visited a medium, which he did a short time since, I was there, and tried very hard to make myself known, to send some word to my father. And my father thought if Spiritualism was true, he thought I would have sent some word.

It is true, I do live, I do turn, and I am happy. [Where does your father reside?] Here in Boston. My father is a grocer. Dec. 4.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

Tuesday, Dec. 5.—Invocation: Leander C. Stinson, 6th Maine Vols., to his mother, in Oldtown, Me.; Louisa Grey, who died in Baltimore, Md., to her mother, Elizabeth, in Providence, R. I.; Patrick J. McMahon, 9th Mass. Reg., to Mary and James McDonough, of this city; James Laurie to friends in Georgetown, D. C.

Monday, Dec. 11.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Theo. L. Smith, who lost his life on board the Cumberland, to friends in Brooklyn, N. Y.; James Murdoch, an actor; Sarah Taylor, wife of Col. John Taylor, to his parents; John charge of her children, near Montgomery, Ala.; Giles Greer, an actor, at Fort Darling, desires to communicate with friends at home; James Murray, to his cousin, Ellen Murray.

Tuesday, Dec. 12.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Carlos Robinson, wife of John Robinson, to her mother, Tyler, 2d Virginia Infantry, to Wm. Tyler, in Richmond, Va.; Charles Deane, 3d Mass. Vols., to friends; James Martin, drummer boy, 3d Mass. Vols., to Gen. Robert Gould, and relatives in New York.

Thursday, Dec. 14.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Edward Burrows, a lawyer of New Orleans, La., to his friends; Charles Deane, of Charleston, S. C., to his parents; Shannon, of the 3d New Hampshire Vols., Co. C; Joseph Thompson, of Boston, to his friends.

Monday, Dec. 18.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Caroline L. Wiseman, to Samuel Wiseman, of Portsmouth, N. H.; Major Wm. H. Dixon, of Georgia, to his brother Augustus; James W. Webb, who resided in High Street, Boston, to his wife Mary; Arabella Stearns, whose father keeps a store in Canal street, to her mother, New York City.

Friday, Dec. 15.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Osgood Eaton, of this city, to friends; John O'Leary, to his mother-in-law; Ebenezer Francis, to some of his distant relatives residing in Boston.

Thursday, Dec. 21.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Lieut. Allen Davis, to his father, in New Orleans, La.; Thos. Williams, colored, to his mother, in New York City; Mary, to her mother, in New York City; Annie Blaine, of Thompsonville, O., to her mother; Harry Marston, of Pittsburgh, Pa., to his father, in New York City; Walter Frost, of Hiram (N.H.), to his grandfather, in California.

Thursday, Dec. 28.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Frank Williams, son of John Williams, who died in 1861, to his sister Sarah Ann, and friends; Charlotte Taylor, of Warrenton, Va., to Major Henry Taylor, and friends; Anthony Burns, to friends in Scotland and America.

Monday, Jan. 1.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Mrs. Colburn, to her mother, in New York City; Horace Taylor, to friends.

Friday, Jan. 5.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Seth Hinchey, of Greenboro, Ind.; Agnes Leach, to her sister, in New York City; Maggie, a slave, to Alice, a slave, and her former master, Major Henry Gleye.

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Banner of Light.

WESTERN DEPARTMENT:
CINCINNATI, OHIO.

J. M. PEEBLES,.....RESIDENT EDITOR.

The Child Murderess of Battle Creek.

Only because pressed by private letters of inquiry and slips cut from secular prints, do we pen this article. It is no pleasant task to refer to the vices and errors of a common humanity. The instincts of our nature rather prompt us to see the good than the ill—the sunshine than the dark shadows of civic life. Nevertheless, facts are stubborn things, and often quite hideous enough without the malicious exaggerations of a secular press that almost uniformly caters to the popular opinion, without the least regard to the principles of truth and justice. Such was the case with the "Chicago Tribune," "Detroit Free Press," and other periodicals of less influence, relative to the late Battle Creek tragedy.

Though we had resided in that city the past nine years, (our family still living there,) lecturing six of them every alternate Sunday to a highly intelligent congregation of Spiritualists, the parties involved, with one exception, were entire strangers to us—newcomers, in fact, into the city. Mrs. Haviland we have no recollection of seeing but once; then at a picnic. She impressed us as a poor, ignorant, uncultivated woman—a monomaniac, ambitious to become what she was entirely unfitted for—a public speaker.

The lawyer of Ypsilanti that, as counsel, obtained her divorce, told me that "Leonard, the husband, was a quarrelling, drunken Irishman." This, with other troubles, anxiety, poverty, and a psychological infatuation of one Dr. Baker, no doubt drove her into insanity, ultimately in the poisoning and death of the three children. She confessed the whole matter, with inducing causes, which were not spiritual. Certainly, no mother, aglow with a mother's love—a mother's tender affections—could in a calm, sane state of mind, poison and destroy her own dear children! The whole sad affair had just about as much to do with genuine Spiritualism as the rebellion had to do with the glorious "Republic of Heaven." True, she had professed to be a Spiritualist; so the Rev. J. S. Hadden, Methodist clergyman, of Belvidere, N. J., professed to be a Christian, yet was hung for poisoning and murdering his wife, giving her said poison in an apple, while she was tenderly caressing him. Also Rev. Mr. Brockenridge, of the Baptist Church, Lafayette; Rev. T. Abbott, Baptist clergyman, of Blue Point, Ill.; Rev. P. S. Turley, of Kanawha, Va.; Revs. O. Jordan, Van Zandt, Barrett, Pomeroy, Littlejohn, Mullis, Morse, Dally, E. K. Avery, C. G. Barnes ("Marshall Expositor" being authority in the last case,) with very many other of the clergy, even, have, within a few years, been tried; some convicted of wife-whipping and drunkenness; others, of lechery, adultery and murder. The "Kanawha Star" gave the full confession of the Rev. Mr. Turley, before he was hung. The Governor of Toronto Jail, Canada, furnished, awhile since, the following facts in reference to the "religious opinions of about two thousand inmates." This official says there are one thousand nine hundred and ten criminals under his care, and one thousand nine hundred and five are professors of religion, or Church members. They are divided among the denominations of Christian worship thus: Catholics, nine hundred and eighteen; Episcopalians (Church of England), seven hundred and sixty-five; Presbyterians, one hundred and fifty-two; Methodists, sixty-four; some Baptists, with eight Unitarians. No Spiritualist reported. If possible, Spiritualism is more unpopular in Jails and Penitentiaries than in the most bigoted of Secular Churches.

Suppose we moralize upon the facts and figures, as stated above, relative to the terrible crimes of clergymen and Church members, as is customary with secular and sectarian journalists concerning Spiritualism. Oh! the demoralizing tendency of Orthodox theology! It opens the flood-gates of vice, and is ruining the morals of the country. Prisons and jails are filled with theological "dupes." Though "revivals prosper" crime is on the "increase." Preachers insist that Christians have a hard and burdensome cross to bear; that religion is an up-hill business; while sinners trip off fiery robes of ease. They also—referring to the "thief on the cross"—promise the most incorrigible criminal and murderer eternal salvation, if, upon the gallows even, he will repent and apply the atoning blood; for they believe the pious couplet,

"Betwixt the stirrup and the ground
Mercy was sought, and mercy found."

And when wishing to reclaim "backsliders," they often join in singing the following hymn:

"While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

Oh! the danger of modern Presbyterianism! This modern Methodism, &c. they are VERY "modern" when compared with the old Mother Church of All-Roman Catholicism! Why did not the secular and religious papers mention that, at the time of Mrs. Haviland's crime, a *deacon* of the Presbyterian Church in Battle Creek, was under arrest for stealing "Government Bonds," and lay it to the influence of modern Presbyterianism? Why not have lifted the curtain and revealed a number of other Church matters as yet partially unexposed, one of which a "Chicago agent" can give the details, and charge them to the debasing influences of Orthodox Theology? Such matters at least "point a moral." And then this "Strong divorce case," yet unsettled, happening in the so-called "first society," and professedly pious, too, revealing the treachery of a brother, the terrible guilt of a wife and adultery of a husband—why not lay it all at the door of Sectarianism? Oh! when will journalists, when will Churchmen discriminate between use and abuse? when will they appreciate justice, learn and practice charity, understanding that crimes are not always the legitimate results of religious doctrines, but, rather, of organization, circumstances, psychology influences and human weaknesses?

We know sectarism who are honest and good, in spite of the baleful influences of their creeds; and, also, believers in Spiritualism who are depraved and fragmentary, notwithstanding the healing and holy influences that a belief in the ministry of spirits and angels should naturally produce. We have no honeyed words to pen over the *vice, follies, sinfulness and impurities* practiced under the blessed name of Spiritualism. Let justice be done. The late murderous rebellion argues nothing against the value and beneficence of the American Government. Jesus was not responsible for the treachery of Judas, nor the profanity of Peter. The fifth chapter of First Corinthians commends the Ionian and Aegæan seas, should not be judged by those guilty Corinthian Christians.

Justice and charity with the wise beautifully

blend. Faith and hope are upliftings; but an apostle declared that "Charity is the greatest of all." Brins and berries, chaff and wheat, flowers and weeds abound in close proximity on earthly grounds; and, in eradicating the weeds, let the reformer be careful not to trample down even one tender, half-hidden plant that is struggling to get up into the clear sunlight. All hearts must be touched, all souls reached and saved. The greater the criminal, the longer should be the arm and the more earnest the effort to redeem. The Gentle apostle says to the Romans, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak;" and, referring to one overtaken in a fault, he says, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens." Blessed are those who have been instruments in the hands of angels for the salvation of souls. Great is their reward now.

Congratulatory Letters.

We have received letters of congratulation, relative to our position with the "Banner of Light," from Hudson Tuttle, Cora Willburn, Moses Hull, and many, very many other authors, lecturers and prominent laymen in the ranks of Spiritualism, with some officiating clergymen, all of which we not only appreciate, but derive strength and courage therefrom. Thanks, THANKS, dear friends! Your hearts speak to ours, and your pleasant words of encouragement inspire us to labor faithfully for the practical interests of the Spiritual Philosophy, thus building up and beautifying humanity.

Dr. J. H. Rutledge.

This celebrated Magnetic Physician opens rooms in this city, Feb. 5th, for the healing of the sick by the "laying on of hands." See his advertisement in another column.

Cincinnati Meetings.

The Religious Society of Progressive Spiritualists of Cincinnati held their annual election for officers Sunday morning, Dec. 31st, 1865, and the following persons were elected to serve as the Executive Board of the Society during the year 1866: President, Hon. A. G. W. Carter; Vice-President, M. W. Cary; Secretary, A. W. Pugh; Treasurer, Joseph H. Taylor; Trustees, A. Huntington, Henry Beck, H. T. Ogden; Collector, J. B. Taylor.

The last report we sent you of our meetings was up to the first of October. During October E. V. Wilson occupied the desk, eliciting the usual amount of interest in lecturing and delineating character. Bro. Wilson is doing a good and "big" work amongst the Ohio labor, having been here, within the past few months, of starting several new organizations.

Rev. J. G. Fish spoke during the month of November, and was received with the usual appreciation due him as an earnest worker in the cause of humanity. Nellie L. Wiltse, in December, created such a lively interest it might be termed a "revival." She brought out notes that do not often frequent our hall. As a speaker she ranks among the best. Her voice is clear, distinct, and well toned, and fills every part of the hall; periods well rounded, and no confusion of sentences. The subject matter of the lectures, selected by the intelligence controlling her, is a continuous analysis of the soul's experience in search of happiness and unobscured by the mystic seal that leads thereto. She will be with us again in May and June, to be warmly welcomed by many glad hearts that drank at the fount of her inspirations.

Rev. J. M. Peebles is with us now, for this and next month. His manly bearing, and true, noble qualities insure for him success, and no doubt the audiences that frequent our hall will feel more than glad to have sat under his ministrations. The old board ran the meetings through the whole year without any vacation, paying all speakers one hundred dollars per month, and making their total expenditures for the year about twenty-three hundred dollars, including a debt of some two hundred dollars due by the Society when they came to power.

We have not been able yet to institute a "Children's Progressive Lyceum," because we cannot procure the hall at the proper time to hold the Lyceum; but we hope that Cincinnati ere long will not be behind in this God-given movement. The hearts of the people and the officers of the Society are in the work, and fully appreciate its practicality.

Yours fraternally,
A. W. PUGH, Sec'y.

Cincinnati, O., Jan. 16, 1866.

Proceedings of the Massachusetts State Convention.

HELD IN HORTICULTURAL HALL, WORCESTER, JANUARY 18TH AND 19TH, 1866.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

SECOND DAY.

We closed our report of last week with the afternoon of the first day. It was then thought that the Committee on Permanent Organization would be able to report a plan during the evening session; but as they could not perfect their report the time was devoted to speeches and discussions. The regular half-hour speech in the afternoon was made by Mrs. M. S. Townsend; and in the evening, J. S. Loveland and B. Todd were the first speakers. They were followed by several others, all of whom urged immediate, practical action.

On Friday morning, the Committee on Permanent Organization reported a Preamble, Platform of Principles, and a Constitution. The report called out quite an animated discussion. The Declaration of Principles was subjected, article by article, to a most critical examination, and with a few verbal alterations, unanimously adopted, as were, also, the articles of the Constitution and the Preamble.

As soon as the instrument, as a whole, had been adopted, the members of the Convention commenced the practical work of giving their names, and also their dollars, thus proving that they were in earnest, and had assembled for a purpose higher than mere talk. They had not appointed an agent in name merely, but one for work, and their part of the contract was to see him sustained. Considering the smallness of the number present, a handsome sum was paid over on the spot; and if other places equal Worcester in the liberality of their offerings, the Executive Committee will be able to put two agents in the field instead of one. Friends from out of the State were present with words of hope, and dollars of help. Maine, Connecticut, New York, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island were represented by glorious souls, who are workers in the field of spiritual reform. We thank them for their presence, sympathy and assistance.

Everything passed off in the most perfect harmony. All those elements, which have heretofore made our Conventions scenes of strife and disgraceful wranglings, were either absent, or held in subjection by the strong spirit of concord and earnest consecration to the saving principles of the New Dispensation. Indeed, so great was the desire for harmony, that it is somewhat probable that in a few minor items it might have been of advantage to have had a little opposition.

The Spiritualists of Worcester have set an example worthy of imitation for other places where conventions may be invited. They not only furnished a hall, but it was done freely. Those who attended the Convention were not obliged to pay a fee for each session, or a dollar for the whole. No fee, no collection, but all free as their own free hearts. And, to crown the whole, on Friday, December 29th, the Convention met in one of the ante-rooms in the Horticultural building, for all who chose to partake. This afforded a rare chance for mutual acquaintance. And this interblending of the social feelings around the festive board, does more to make souls one, than very many fine speeches. The Oriental is the fast friend of the one at whose table he has eaten salt, and there is something more than the question in this fact. There is some occult influence connected with eating together, which we, as yet, fail to comprehend, but which, nevertheless, utilizes the eaters. The Christian world takes advantage of this fact in its sacred Supper, and in its love-feasts. Our love-feast, at Worcester, was decided-

edly an improvement on theirs, both in the manner and the result. We were free from the restraint of priestly forms and priestly pretence, and, therefore, there was no impediment to the full flow of genial soul life. We shall long remember the pleasant hour passed with those noble and devoted ones, who worked for the up-building of Truth and Justice.

The plan of organization, as adopted, is as follows:

PREAMBLE.

Whereas, the so-called Christianity of the world, known in modern times as Popular Theology, has, after many years of constant effort, failed to meet the present religious demands of mankind; and instead of bringing about a state of harmony between man and God, has, on the contrary, taught that there is an eternal enmity existing between them; and still further, has sought to close up all means of communion between humanity and the spirit-life; it therefore becomes us as Spiritualists, enjoying, as we claim to be, the light of a superior, more adequate and daily revelation, to make to the world a clear and definite declaration of what Spiritualism teaches, and the benefits which flow therefrom. And furthermore, we feel that the time has fully come when, as a body of Reformers, we should put forth a stronger and more united effort to disseminate the principles of our heaven-born philosophy among the people. We feel that hitherto much of our power for usefulness has been frittered away in individual effort, on account of an unwise fear of organization, or associated action. But having learned from experience the positive necessity of combined effort, in order to bring all our strength to bear against the monstrous errors of Christendom, we present to the Spiritualists of Massachusetts the following Declaration of Principles, and plan for a State Organization.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

I. We affirm the *Dignity of Man* and the *Harmony of God*; that there is no antagonism between God and Man, but that in interest and destiny they are linked in indissoluble union.

II. We affirm the absolute oneness, or Brotherhood of Humanity, both in the earthly and spiritual life; that between the seen and the unseen exist the same sympathies, interests and fraternal converse, (as far as conditions admit) as between the either of those departments of human existence.

III. We affirm that true freedom consists only in the complete disenfranchisement of the human soul from all the *Creeds, Institutions and Customs* of the world, which imply in any degree the spirit of *Caste*, or selfish partiality; or, in any way subjugate the individual man to the will, or caprice of one or many; and includes the unrestricted, untrammelled exercise of every faculty of his nature in accordance with the spontaneous, normal promptings of the same; and any interference therewith is the very essence of tyranny, which we will steadfastly and forever resist.

IV. We further affirm that this Freedom is in entire harmony with the most perfect order, and the most absolute justice, so far as personal, social, or political life is concerned.

V. We affirm that the *eternal* of Spiritualism, embodying as it does the most perfect phenomena—the grandest philosophy—the most complete, wide-spread inspiration;—the most powerful system ever presented to man, is worthy of all acceptance, and justly demands the earnest attention of all, as the only possible way for man's salvation.

VI. We affirm that in arraying ourselves against the Popular Theology of the so-called Christian world, we do not assail the *adherents* of its creeds, but only the demoralizing dogmas which enslave them.

VII. We affirm that the happiness, or misery of all men is necessarily so linked in a common fate, that we must labor for the good of all in order to secure the welfare of any.

VIII. We affirm that all happiness or suffering is the natural consequence of moral and other conditions, existing in the constitution of things, and not the result of any special enactment of Deity; consequently the only way of salvation is through a correct knowledge of that constitution, and harmony with its principles.

IX. We acknowledge that the only true method of testing any system of principles is by the practice thereof; and upon the holding of such principles; therefore we, as Spiritualists, propose to submit ourselves to such test by instituting the following method of practical effort, as embodied in the following

CONSTITUTION.

ART. I. This Convention shall be known as the Massachusetts Convention of Spiritualists, and shall hold annual and quarterly meetings at such times and places as the Executive Committee shall determine.

ART. II. The officers of this Convention shall consist of a President, Vice President, a Corresponding and Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Committee, which shall be composed of the above named officers and three other persons, all of whom shall be elected at the annual meeting.

ART. III. The Executive Committee shall constitute a Board of Trustees to hold all moneys, funds or property of or kind which may come into possession of the Convention, and shall be empowered to make such rules or by-laws for their own action as they may deem best, provided they are in accordance with the will of the Convention.

ART. IV. It shall be the duty of the President of this Convention to preside at its public meetings, and also at the meetings of the Executive Committee, to exercise a general oversight of the interests of the Convention, and see that its will is executed.

ART. V. It shall be the duty of the Vice President to act as the assistant and proxy of the President, and in case of his disability or refusal to act, to assume and discharge his duties.

ART. VI. It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to conduct all the correspondence of the Convention, to initiate and maintain a fraternal correspondence with all similar organizations, to issue all calls for meetings, at the order of the President, and be present at such meetings and keep a record of its doings and hand them over to the Recording Secretary, whose duty it shall be to make and keep a permanent record of all the doings of the Convention and its agents.

ART. VII. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive, hold, and pay out all moneys for current expenses, according to the direction of the Executive Committee; but he shall pay out no funds without a written order from the President, countersigned by the Secretary. He shall also keep a true and just account of all moneys received or paid out, and make annual and quarterly reports of the same to the Convention.

ART. VIII. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee, in the interim of Convention's sittings, to carry out its purposes to the utmost of their ability.

ART. IX. The General Agent shall make monthly reports to the Corresponding Secretary of all his labors, and also the amount of money paid in the places which he visited.

ART. X. Any person may become a member of this Convention by subscribing this constitution and paying the sum of one dollar annually.

ART. XII. This constitution may be altered or amended at any annual meeting of the Convention.

The officers elected for the ensuing year are the following:

President—J. G. Fish.

Vice President—Mrs. N. J. Willis, Boston.

Recording Secretary—Miss Sarah Smith, Worcester.

Corresponding Secretary—J. S. Loveland, Boston.

Treasurer—A. H. Richardson, Charlestown.

Executive Committee—A. O. Robinson, Salem; Geo. W. Walker, Lowell; W. E. Richards, Worcester.

Lysander S. Richards, Quincy, Alternate Secretary.

B. Todd, Agent.

The following are the Resolutions adopted by the Convention:

Resolved, That the necessity of Spiritualism imperatively demands that an agent be appointed and sent forth to form Children's Lyceums, and Local Associations auxiliary to the Organization, and further the interests of the cause in which we are engaged.

Resolved, That such an agent demands means should be provided to sustain it, and that the best means will be to the necessary fund.

Resolved, That all the lecturers before Spiritualists do-

clerics in Massachusetts be requested to present the claims of this Convention, and take up collections in its behalf, for the support of its agent.

Resolved, That when the Executive Committee shall have the sum of five hundred dollars secured, and not till then, they shall notify the Agent of the fact, and send him on to the field.

Resolved, That we, as a convention of Spiritualists and truth seekers, dare to meet and define the term Free Love, which has been cast upon us as a stigma; that we proclaim ourselves ready to discriminate between Free Love and Free Lust.

Resolved, That the sincere and heartfelt thanks of this Convention be tendered to the Spiritualists of Worcester for their generous hospitality in tendering the free use of their hall, beautiful entertainment, and harmonious influences.

As it was desired that what the Convention did, rather than what its members said, should appear before the readers of the Banner, I have given the above for that purpose. It contains the summing up of all the speeches made at the Convention.

J. S. LOVELAND, Secretary.

NEW YORK MATTERS.

(From our Regular Correspondent.)

MISS DOTEN'S LECTURES.

Last Sunday morning another remarkable discourse was delivered by Miss Lizzie Doten, at Ebbitt Hall. The subject was "Mecanism and Psychology," and, as many thought, promising but little, for it had been a theme frequently attempted, and as frequently made a dry, uninteresting reiteration of facts and rules, or characterized by an unwarrantable display of dogmatism, learning and mystery. But all were agreeably disappointed in this lecture, and for once there has been a redeeming feature given to the subject. This hitherto ungainly looking claimant as a chapter in philosophy appeared to assume a merited position and bore it well.

This discourse was a decidedly philosophical exposition and treatment of the subject, redeeming it from that objectionable case which the scientific world has endeavored to assign to it, and from which the scientific world itself will one day graduate to a diviner republic of opinion.

Savants have hitherto failed to secure for this subject that respect and consideration due to it, and which, the unpretending speaker really did secure in this inspirational lecture. A breathless attention pervaded the large assembly throughout the eloquent discourse. It was well sustained to the end, systematically coherent, but involving too many laws, deductions and hearings, to attempt even a synopsis in this hasty letter.

In the evening the subject was the "Children of the Summer-Land," and although many of its points in regard to the geographical localities were opposed to my views, I patiently investigated and await a harmonious conviction. Aside from this it was a hopeful, elevating and gratifying discourse, and I will venture that not one of that large assembly returned home, even if it were once made desolate by the departure of a little dear one, who did not feel consoled, happier, and more drawn to that diviner home, where now they dwell, whose well-being and reality she so beautifully proved.

REV. DR. FROTHINGHAM.

The interest was well sustained at the Fortieth street Church, also, in another admirable discourse by the Rev. Dr. Frothingham, on the "Character and Tendencies of Modern Spiritualism." The New York Tribune very justly says: "His reputation as a thinker, his undoubted oratorical powers, and his broad and liberal views of Christianity combine to attract to his audiences many studious and progressive minds of both sexes. According to the lecturer, beliefs are not true because they are old, nor yet because they are found in the Bible, nor even if received from spirits. The truth of all belief is to be tested by its rationale. We believe Christ's words because they are true, not as true because he taught them. The central idea of Modern Spiritualism, by opening the way between this and the after world, banished purgatory, judgment and hell; and if there be no hell there is no damnation, no laws to enforce, no abstract evil, no original sin. Admit this door open, and the Divine Scheme of Redemption, the Fall of Man, the Atonement, the Cross, Vicarious Sacrifice, and the whole dogma of Evangelical Churches is swept away as useless lumber and superstition. Spiritualism gives us instead, to believe: First, that God is a spirit, whose sensible shadow is the Universe, and whose essence is Truth and Love; second, man is a spirit whose sphere ever encircles him; third, he is continually progressing always to the better, inspired with hope; fourth, he is related to all who are his side or beyond death by an unbroken chain. I am thankful for this uprooting of old superstitions, even while I see something to deplore, to warn against, and faults to avoid. It has done what logic and learning have failed to do in getting rid of the pernicious dogma of the Fall of Man. If it were only for this, we should be grateful."

Who could ask for a better expression of the Spiritual Philosophy than this. True, it was cautiously handled, but there it is, the patent expression of an independent thinker, one who intuitively receives and enunciates, not the husks of acknowledged authorities, but living Truths and Ideas, that begin to assume definite and diviner forms in the growing light of fearless investigation.

New York, Jan. 22, 1866.

THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

At the Conference in Hope Chapel, on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 14th, Rev. Mr. Benning spoke of a picture he had witnessed, that represented an angel with wings. He thought that there were no angels but what had once inhabited the world of materialism, and if they had no wings here, they would have none in the spirit-world.

H. B. Storor thought the wings might only represent a symbol, showing swiftness in flight (more ethereal); and he did not know why they might not have wings, as well as arms and legs. He said he only threw out these remarks as suggestions.

Dr. Hallock related a remarkable incident of a lady (a professional writer) who has commenced a story, and it proved so true, and parties were so well represented in the plot, that they have been to the editor and requested him not to publish it, as it implicated many who are in good standing in society. The plot was a "murder," and it represents a case that occurred in a village on the Hudson River, some six years ago. The lady writing (not a Spiritualist) not knowing any of the incidents or parties connected with the murder, went on in the story, and described parties (with but few exceptions) as correct as though she were witnessing the whole affair at the time of writing—even stated where the knife that the deed was done with was found, &c. Dr. H. thinks it cannot be accounted for on any other theory than that of spirit impression or power. The parties have forbidden any further publication of the story.

Afterwards, Mrs. Spence took the floor, and talked quite spiritedly upon different subjects. She spoke upon the Children's Lyceum in the "Summer-Land." She said if the lady that murdered her children at Battle Creek, Mich., was destitute, and had no means or way of placing them in a condition where they could receive material aid and schooling, and if there was a free Lyceum, with no care or responsibility resting

upon the mother, situated in the Summer-Land, she then no doubt acted from her standpoint, and sent her children to that home and Lyceum, thinking she had done her highest duty. She did not believe in teaching that there was such a beautiful spot there, but that we are required to stop on the earth as long as we can, and work out our destiny here. To prove it, she cited the healing art as natural, and would not have been required if it were better to go to the Summer-Land in infancy. She gave the audience the impression that such teaching as is taught the children at the Lyceums was bad in its results in many cases. Weak-minded persons would get the impression that life in the material was worthless, so try and get to a better life as soon as they get tired of this. Her remarks were received with great applause. She also spoke of the Spiritualists organizing, and thought it impossible while each one held his own idea of God; but if they would lay aside God altogether, they might get nearer in unity, &c., &c.

Dr. Young and others spoke, and the debates created quite a lively interest amongst the listeners.

SHAWMUT.

Quarterly Meeting.

The next Quarterly Meeting of the "Northern Wisconsin Spiritualist Association," will be held in the village of Omro, in the brick school-house, on the first Saturday and Sunday, being the 3d and 4th days of February next. N. Frank White and Mrs. S. E. Warner are expected.

J. P. GALLUP, Sec.

Oshkosh, Wis., Jan. 8, 1866.

LECTURERS' APPOINTMENTS AND ADDRESSES.

PUBLISHED GRATUITOUSLY EVERY WEEK IN THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

(To be useful, this list should be reliable. It therefore behooves Societies and Lecturers to promptly notify us of appointments, or changes of appointments, whenever they occur. Should any name appear in this list of a party known not to be a lecturer, we desire to be so informed, as this column is intended for Lecturers only.)

MISS LIZZIE DOTEN will lecture in St. Louis during February. She will not make any other engagements to lecture until further notice. Address, Pavilion, 37 Tremont street, Boston, Mass.

N. FRANK WHITE will speak in Omro, Wis., Feb. 3 and 4; in Berlin, Feb. 11; in Battle Creek, Mich., during May and June. Address as above.

A. B. WHITE will lecture in Louisville, Ky., during February. Will answer calls to lecture week evenings in that vicinity. Address (all March) 1st, 189 Madison street, Louisville, Ky.

ALBERT E. SIMMONS will speak in Woodstock, Vt., on the first and fourth Sunday, and in Bridgewater on the second Sunday of every month during the coming year. Address, Woodstock, Vt.

CHARLES A. HAYDEN will speak in Chicago, Ill., during February; in Sturgis, Mich., during April. Will make engagements to lecture week-evenings on the route or in the vicinity of Sunday engagements. Address as above.

N. S. GREENLEAF will speak in Plymouth, Feb. 11 and 12. Address as above, or Lowell, Mass.

WARREN CHASE will speak in Wilmington, Del., Feb. 4; in Vineland, N. J., Feb. 11; in New York City, Feb. 18; in Philadelphia, during March. In April will go to Ohio, via New York Central route, and lecture there Sundays where most needed. He will receive subscriptions for the Banner of Light.

Mrs. FANNIE B. FLETCHER will speak in Haverhill during February; in Taunton during March. Address, South Malden, Mass.

Mrs. E. A. BISS, of Springfield, Mass., will speak in Haverhill during March. Address as above.

Mrs. LAURA DE FORCE GORDON will lecture in Houlton, Me., during February—address care of C. E. Gilman, Esq.; in Boston, Mass., during March; in Washington, D. C., during April and May; in Cleveland, O., during July and August.

BENJAMIN TODD, normal speaker, will lecture in Worcester, Mass., Feb. 4 and 11; in Lowell, Feb. 18 and 25. Address, care Banner of Light.

A. T. FOSS will speak in New York City, Feb. 4 and 11. Will receive calls to speak on other days in the vicinity. Address, 24 Broadway, New York.

Mrs. S. A. HORTON will speak in Ludlow, Vt., Feb. 4; in Rutland, Feb. 11; in Troy, N. Y., during April. Address as above, or Brandon, Vt.

Mrs. R. G. QUINN will speak in Portsmouth, N. H., Feb. 4 and 11; in Stoneham, Mass., Feb. 18 and 25. Is ready to make further engagements anywhere in New England for the season. Address as above, or care of Mrs. J. B. Bacon, 219 O. O. box 205; in Cleveland, O., during July and August.

Mrs. MARY M. WOOD will speak in Worcester during March; in Plymouth the last two Sundays in April. Address, 11 Dewey street, Worcester, Mass.

Mrs. M. S. TOWNSEND will speak in Chelsea, Feb. 4 and 11; in Worcester, Feb. 18 and 25; in New York, N. Y., during March; in Philadelphia, Pa., during April.

Mrs. SARAH HELEN MATTHEWS will speak in Quincy, Mass., Feb. 4 and 11.

Mrs. HENRY HORTON will lecture in North Wrentham, Mass., every Sunday until April. Will answer calls to lecture in any of the Eastern or Middle States the remainder of the year. Will receive calls to lecture on week-evenings, and the attending of funerals will be happily received and speedily answered. Address as above, or West Park, Me.

J. M. FRENCH will lecture in Cincinnati, O., during February. Address