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DREAM-LIFE:

A STORY OF THE IDEAL AND THE ACTUAL.

Written expressly for the Banner of Light.

BY CORA WILBURN.

Author of "Agnes, the Step-Mother; or, The Castle of the Sea," "Daisy's Dream; or, Romance of Real Life," "Adolph; or, The Power of Conscience," "The Sella Vinea; or, Will and Destiny," "The Minister's Or, The Discipline of Life," "The Lucia Alamy; or, Crime and Retribution," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER III.

The History of Augusta Heath.

"It is the nature of the dead of God
To render finite things infinite,
Or to eternalize sin and death in fire?"

"I was one of many daughters belonging to a time-honored family, that once had been allied to some of the highest nobility in this, my native land. My father was a wealthy land-owner, strictly Orthodox and thoroughly conventional, holding on with might and main to the traditions of his ancestors, and sighing all his life-long for a title. My mother was a sensibly practical, thorough housekeeper, well versed in the accomplishments usual to ladies of those days. We lived in a small town, or, rather, outside of it, in an old-fashioned, turretted house, pompously styled, 'The Domain.' There, with the customary servants, the conformable routine of persons in our station, my childhood and youth were passed. My two elder sisters married in accordance with parental wishes, and the aims of their own ambition. I followed in due order, accepting the offered hand and fortune of Warder Sheldon, and I left the paternal mansion for the distant home of my husband. I was quite young, only seventeen, and I thought I loved the man chosen for me by my parents; for it was at their earnest request and persuasion, far more than through inclination of my own, that I accepted Mr. Sheldon. He was possessed of a handsome face and figure, an easy and pleasant address, elegant manners, and a religious turn of mind. I came into a well-appointed house in a beautiful part of the country, not far from the great metropolis. I had costly dresses; jewels in abundance; no one to hamper me in the full sway of my domestic rule. My husband's distant relatives were kind and unobtrusive. He had no near ties of kindred. The first year of my married life was spent in comparative happiness.

Certain eccentricities that I had heard lightly spoken of before, began to develop in my husband's character, until they assumed such formidable proportions as to deprive me of rest and hope for the future. He was a monomaniac on the subject of religion; all the time given to reading was devoted to controversial works on the subject. A full believer in what sectarianism miscalls Christian doctrine, he wavered between the different tenets of the 'varying sects'; and for this reason his days were either filled with gloom, or with an unhealthy exaltation, which he named 'influx' from on high! My first doubts and fears, and consequently, my first thoughts of investigation for myself on this momentous theme, were suggested by my husband's irrational conduct and erratic changes. I had hitherto blindly believed, as others had done before me, I could give no reason for my faith; I yielded an unquestioning tribute of formal word-prayers and outward observances, that never penetrated with religious joy or fervor the depths within. Like thousands, I was a worshiper of externals in every sense. I had never felt the quickening of the divine life within. I loved this life for its material uses. Upon the Saviour's merits I relied for the blessedness of the Hereafter. I knew nothing of *self-growth*; of preparation, by effort and aspiration, and cultivation of the faculties, for the commencement of a heaven-life upon the earth. I prided myself upon being practical with regard to everyday concerns, while I neglected my own interior realm, and doing my duty solely in the accepted conventional form, deemed myself a follower of Jesus.

I thank God that I was awakened from the torpor of mental and spiritual indolence; that with bleeding heart I was led over solitary wastes, and through immeasurably deep waters of affliction! I have learnt to sympathize with, as for all suffering. I have gained a philosophy of life which will brighten my pathway to the grave. Did I say to the grave? That is one of the forms of speech that cling to us from educational prejudice; there is no grave-rest for the soul; there is no death, my child. Ignorance of natural law, perversion of the appetites, unregulated passions, have brought disease, and unnatural and premature release of the spirit from the body. Natural death is beautiful, as is the change of seasons; it is birth into a higher life; it is transition; it is ascension; it is blessed relief, and divinely awarded compensation!

Oh, my grandmother! so blest, so crowned, so youthfully resplendent in thy spiritual beauty! Enthroned by the decree of God, the necropolis of angels, for thy sacred ministry of forgiving love on earth!

Forgive me. I have shed a few remissive tears over that old paper. Once again the longing of my solitary youth has seized me to feel her hand, to sit at her dear feet, to weep out all my sorrow and my joy upon her faithful breast!

Ungratefully! Oh! so late, and yet so timely blest with love; with the fruition of all the heart's matured desires! Give thanks unto the Giver of all Good, commune with thy own soul, and be still in thankfulness!

I will continue the narrative of that commission-

ed life. When my first child saw the light, it was welcomed by no joy of human and fatherly love; religious fanaticism shed over the innocent being its lurid doubts of eternal happiness. While my heart leaped with its maternal joyousness, Warder Sheldon groaned in anguish of spirit for the addition to this world of another sinful soul, predestined, mayhap, to all the horrors of everlasting punishment. This fatal condition was impressed upon the character of my child, my pretty, first-born boy, my Arthur! What knew I then, what know our women now of antipathetic tendencies that embitter or embellish life, as the parents direct? Religion, then, for me had but one meaning: the observance of forms, the implicit obedience to instructions of the past. Now I have learnt to reverence physical laws, to believe in the expansion of the reason, the intuitions of the soul. All of life is holy in my sight; not its set Sabbath days and festival seasons appointed of men. I once looked with a fastidious repugnance on the bodily functions; I reverence them now as beautiful evidences of diviner uses. Where I once beheld God, boxed into a narrow compass by the foolish imaginings of men, I see the ever-present Deity, the inexhaustible reservoir of unending progress. Progress? Yes; I mean by that an education not derived from books or school routine. The symbolic ladder seen in Jacob's vision is a divine reality. From every human heart ascends the steps that lead to heaven, where on the ministering angels of our Father descend to guide and bless us. Not only the beatific host, but the innumerable aids broadcast over the earth by the lavish bounty of the Lord, come to bless us. There are angels of consolation in the flowers; in the shining wayside pebbles; in the singular gladness of the streams and winds; in the summer sunlight and the moonday depths of calm; in the bracing inspirations of the frost; the falling of the virgin snow; the gathering together of the stary numbers; in labor and in rest; in music, and in gentle words and deeds; in minerals, and plants, and animals; in all the varied bountiful creation; and grandest, noblest of all, in man and woman, dwells the essential aids to Progress. And to all these is added the invisible help of those beyond the veil.

These thoughts, that may seem strange and fantastical to you now, but which one day will surely form the belief of the world, came to me slowly, by degrees, as, with tortured heart and mind ill at rest, I sat beside the bedside of my children watching their fitful, uneasy slumbers; for parental inadaptation, the conflicts of my spirit, and the unfortunate bias of their father's mind was reacting through the pliable spirits of my little ones, on their frail bodily organizations. My little precocious Arthur died at the age of five, an unnaturally silent and serious child; never seeking the amusements of his age; nor acting with the playfulness of other children during his short and melancholy existence.

I should probably have given way to an excess of frantic grief for his loss had not another treasure remained to me, my baby James. He lived to delight me with his prattle, to cheer me with his smiles, then he too passed away; quick, suddenly, in the night; before the sad and premature old expression that had marked my Arthur's countenance was as fully impressed on his. Then I was ill of grief for many weeks, and my husband wrung his hands and talked about God's judgments, and raked up all the long-forgotten sins of his ancestry, and quoted daily in my ear 'that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children.'

They were visited upon our offspring; not the decrees of an arbitrary punishment, but the inevitable consequences of physiological transgression and perverted mental states; and thus in ignorance and lack of true conjugal love, six children were born to us, all boys; your father, Oliver, my dear son Louis, the only surviving one of all; and he, I think, with the exception of one or two peculiarities, is happily exempt from the fatal influences that crushed the rest. I had become emancipated from my worldly and religious fetters 'half-way,' at least, by the time he was born. He never saw his father's face; for before his first baby wall was heard, Warder Sheldon had found a grave for his weary, worn-out body, in distant Palestine.

He had never offered personal abuse, nor used harsh language to me; but he half broke my heart by indifference and cold neglect; by the atmosphere of gloom and hopelessness with which he enveloped me; by the denunciatory, horribly threatening texts he thundered at me. And thus fifteen years of my life were spent; my strength exhausted in maternal cares and nightly watching by sick beds; in daily, silent resistance to the dominant will that clutched me as with a grasp of iron. Friends and neighbors kept aloof, for the gloomy master of 'The Heights,' our beautiful residence, made himself repellant to every one; and lastly he forbade my mingling with 'the silly and frivolous world,' as he termed it. Surrounded by one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, I longed to flee from it; with all the appointments of wealth and luxury at my command, I was restricted as to the number and quality of my dresses; my very food was ordered for me, by the imperious command of him whose slave I was in very fact and deed. The envied mistress of one of the finest country-seats in England was to be most sincerely pitied; for she had no freedom, and could gain no relief of the law.

So I pondered on the question of our sex's rights, as some tried souls have done before me, many brave and noble ones will do after I shall have gone from earth. And recalling in my heart that not one link of affection bound me to the man whom the unjust laws human framed declared my master, I set up in my own soul a loftier moral code than that yet owned by the world. In the future, men inspired of truth, and women rendered eloquent of sorrow, shall give to the world my thought; and that thought shall

eventuate in action; and the laws of force shall no more bind, but only the sacred law of love.

One by one I followed my children to the grave; I became a prematurely faded, a sorrow-stricken woman; at thirty years of age I looked old; since then, my spirit has lived in magic waters and I have renewed my youth, by admitting the return of all its aspirations. One draught of divinely freighted earthly love was awarded to me; I have not drained its cup of sweetness; it awaits my coming, held in an angel's hand, who stands upon the margin of the eternal shores.

I believe in continued inspiration; in the visits of heavenly dwellers under various forms such as our mortal sense can bear. One night, soon after the birth of Louis, I had a dream, that I believe was granted, by God's mercy, to cheer and sustain me thenceforth. (I was in the first months of my widowhood.) Methought that I wandered sadly, as I had often done, through the silent halls and chambers of my deserted home, and as I walked I wept aloud and called upon my lost ones—Arthur, James, Warder, Edward, and Charles. Then I passed out of the house and sped over the fields and past the forest to the burial-ground. And there by the five little graves I cast myself down in all a mother's agony of bereavement, and cried unto God in heaven to restore to me my children.

And then I saw, lifting up my face all wet with tears, a white rose blooming on the grave of Arthur; a tuft of violets upspringing from the sod that covered James; sweet honeysuckle trailing over the little mound, my Edward's resting spot; a cluster of blue-eyed forget-me-nots waiting perfume from Warder's bed of earth; and the grad-galling place of Charles heaped with the abundant magnolias. And these flowers were unlike the many I had culled before in flower gardens; they were vivid with coloring, and bathed in a sunlight that seemed the reflection of another and a better world. Low music thrilled my heart-strings; it was borne upon the breeze, that gently fanned the heavenly flowers, and it shaped itself into words, that calmed me as the written promises of the Book had never done:

Rest, mother, rest thy loved ones are not sleeping
Beneath this sod:
They live in realms where angel hands are reaping
The fruits of God.

Where the beloved, in holy recognition—
A household band—
Behold the haven of the soul's fruition,
In spirit-land.

Sing, mother, sing thy children, mid the angels,
Shall bring to thee
Tidings of faith, the beautiful evangel
Of Liberty.

From the drear stupor of thy earthly sorrow
We bid thee rise,
And to the dawning of the glorious morrow
Uplift thy eyes.

All that thy soul is learning in the valley
Of grief and tears,
Shall teach thy spirit's inmost host to rally
Gainst worldly fears,
And on the mountain heights thine own shall
greet thee;

The goal divine,
The ministry of holiness and beauty,
Forever thine.

Look upwards, mother, to the sunlit heaven,
The home of all;
List to the prayer-songs of the souls forgiven,
The angels' call;
Thy treasured heart-flowers safely are transplanted
To realms above,
Freed from the terrors that earth souls have
haunted.

For God is love.

Then, as I hope to win eternal blessedness, I saw my children in shining garments of a silvery whiteness, wearing on their brows wreaths of the emblematic flowers that bloomed, not over their graves, but on the resting places of the caskets that once held their arisen souls. And all five pointed upward, and I saw mountains towering heavenward, and stretches of soft, green, shady valleys between, and flowing rivers, and seas that mirrored the calm, blue skies; and on the highest, most verdurously beautiful mountain, whose summit was enveloped in silver gleaming and azure clouds, I saw a sort of altar, around which was grouped a multitude. Oh child, I saw thy vestments, luminous as if woven of the living light. And the staffs they held—no monarch's jeweled sceptre can dispense such rainbow gleams of splendor! I looked on the coronets they wore—brilliant flowers with the hearts of gems. But I veiled my mortal sight from the resplendent glory of their faces; and when I awoke in my lone room at 'The Heights,' it was to find my pillow wet with tears, and my heart filled with the justest consolation I had ever received. I said not a word to my servants, to any living being, but I was strengthened thenceforth for all coming trial. I grew resigned in spirit as in utterance, and devoted myself to the care of little Louis without any of those sad forebodings with which I had looked upon the infant faces of my other children. I wrote down the beautiful words that had impressed themselves indelibly on my memory. I thought with calmness of my husband's distant and solitary grave. I could not conscientiously grieve, and I put on no mocking outward show of sorrow. I began to breathe freely and hopefully, and the old, light-hearted spirit of my girlhood returned. I renewed my youth, as it were, and with a calmer frame of mind came the restoration of health and strength.

My mother had died some years before my husband. I was enabled to soothe and cheer the last moments of my father, by virtue of the power that precious dream or vision endowed me with. He said I did better for him than all the ministers of the Church of England could have done.

I was forty years of age when I met with Russell Heath, and then, strange as it may seem, and contrary to all the usages of the story books and dramas, I loved, truly and deeply, and for the first time. The difference between the girlish fancy and the soul-deep affection of the matured woman was revealed to me. I knew the significance of life in its fullness. The compensation awarded me was such that it effaced all the pain-marks from my life, as it did their evidence from my brow. I had suffered from my first husband's inordinate family pride, as much almost as from his aberration of mind upon religion.

I chose a man of the people—one of Nature's noblemen—who, of humble origin, and a wearisome struggle with circumstances, had attained a modest competency. Of course, I shocked the aristocratic neighborhood by such a descent from the pedestal of their fancied caste; but I ensured my own happiness; and the years that I lived with my own true and noble husband, afforded me fullest compensation for the trials of my past days. I gave birth to no more children, but Russell Heath was a father to my boy, and he gave him that title of his own free will. When it pleased the angels to call him home, the grief of Louis far exceeded mine; for I had a faith to sustain me which he had not learned. All the hidden poetry of my nature, so long repressed, was called forth by my husband's love. I developed late in life all the latent graces of my womanhood; I learned to idealize the common things of life; to keep free from that hard, cold matter-of-fact, that looks upon the beautiful as an innovation out of place in the domain of Uses. I learned to *arise extremes*; to measure the meaning of that true romance that is for all ages and time; and the difference between it, and that sickly, weak, sentimentalism that passes current in its name.

Many years my beloved Russell has been an inhabitant of the world, he poetically denominated 'the Italy of Souls.' Call it superstition, fancy, imagination, what you will, I feel his presence, though I do not realize it through the sense of sight.

We did not live at 'The Heights.' By some of the never-to-be explained quibbles of the law—in which there is no justice—it passed into the hands of some very distant branch of the Sheldon family. In a far less imposing, but much happier home—at 'Roseleath,' in—shire—I spent the happiest years of my life. The dearest spot on earth to me, is that which marks his grave; not because I think that aught of Russell Heath's soul-life is there, but because I love and venerate the cast-off garment that once held the kingly spirit. See how, in the years long past, the evidences now broadcast over all lands, come in consolation unto wounded souls. The encircling spirit-worlds send forth their ministry of blessed communion to the longing human heart.

CHAPTER IV.

Travel Life.

"A voice, a flute, a dreamy lay,
Such as the Southern breeze
Might waft, at golden fall of day,
O'er blue transparent seas!"

FEELICIA HEMANS.

I traveled with my parents through many portions of the English Isle, filling my heart with pictures of its home beauties; its rural charms; its striking contrasts of wealth and poverty in the great cities. Thence over to beautiful France; through the legendary parts of Germany, through her mystic forests, and over her haunted mountain passes; over the storied Rhine, to earth's dreamland—Italy. What a fund of glorious recollections are mine! Amid the winter's waste of snow, out on the far Western prairie, surrounded by all the appliances of the actual work-day world, how my spirit rises upon the contemplation of its poetic treasures, early gained in life! Some parts of the changing panorama are invested with dim misty hues of dreamy uncertainty; others stand forth in bold relief.

The moonlight flooding the wide expanse before me, with its low range of encircling hills, recalls the golden nights of song and reverie on the blue bosom of the Mediterranean; the walks amid the orange bowers and olive groves; the fairy bay of Naples; the mariner's song in the still harbor of Livorno. The canal boats on the river, laden with the produce of the fertile Western soil, recall my Egyptian pinnaces, with her oriental accommodations for comfort, though there is not the remotest resemblance in the shape or outfit of the Sully Ann of *Stagnationville*, and the white-winged skimmer of the Nile. And in place of wagons picturesquely laden with fragrant oranges and figs, half hidden in the wealth of emerald leaves, my eyes rest upon unwieldy lumber carts, filled with the black splendor of undeveloped diamonds, the plenteous yield of the abounding mines of coal.

The lazzarotti and the fruit vendors of Italy are still fit subjects for the artist's pencil; the native loafer of these regions is simply a repellent animal. The Western farmer is not a poetic object; but better than that, he is devoted to an honest calling, and without his aid the prairie soil, from which thousands derive their sustenance, would remain a desert.

Here is no music-voiced vesper bell, but the hoarse clamor of our village—I beg a thousand pardons, I meant to say *city*—bells, calls the faithful to prayer-meeting in truly accredited Orthodox style, despite of wind and weather.

Every country has its institutions. Just now, prayer-meetings and dances are in vogue; of course on opposite sides. Danvers carry his superstitions; the Italians worship the Madonna, the Americans the Dollar.

My father delighted in this roving life; he seemed to enjoy intensely the vast and diversified aspects of Nature; but the sight of the ocean saddened him; I never could find out why. I have seen great tear-drops standing in his tender gray eyes, while gazing wistfully upon the flowing waves; and yet he said their murmur was the

sweetest music to his ear. I overheard him one night, as he was looking out upon the phosphorescent waters, say, in tones of such utter sadness as I never remembered from his lips before:

"Oh, treacherous sea! Oh, beautiful and false! thou hast deprived me of my joy, my life!"

I pondered over these words, and yet I dared not ask their explanation, of my ever indulgent parent. An undefined dread kept me silent on this point. But I asked my grandmother, and she replied, gravely:

"Every heart has its sorrow. You are too young yet to be taken into your father's confidence; some day, no doubt, he will tell you, when the right time arrives."

"Have you or father ever lost a dear friend at sea?" I queried; for the desire to know was strong within me.

"Yes, Olive; the dearest friend your father ever had, and of course dear to me on his account; died on the ocean. But ask me no more questions now. Have you learned the verses I gave you the other day?"

"Yes, Grandmamma. But I was born at sea, was I not?"

"I have told you so a number of times. Why urge the repetition?"

"Because you are all so queer about it. When I ask papa, he says he was away at the time; and mother says she would rather talk about something else; and you, too, are always putting me off. How can I help wanting to know what belongs to me?"

"You ask me many questions, Olive, which were I to answer would not satisfy you, for the replies would be beyond your comprehension, my child. The time of your birth was one of great suffering—to all of us. Now I know my little girl would not willfully distress me; so do not ask again until you are some years older. And now go and fetch the poem."

And with a bright smile and a kiss she dismissed me, and left my all devouring curiosity unsatisfied.

The term, "worship," would not have been misapplied to the soul-homage with which my beautiful mother regarded the husband whose thoughts so often seemed to wander far away, even when she was by his side, and her musical voice was speaking low and caressingly in her own Spanish tongue, or the broken English so becoming from her lips. The wife of many years was still, as ever, the adoring worshiper; the ideal of her first love had not been lost; nor did the wondrous beauty seem to wane with the advancing years. Whether from the results of our travel-life, or of some spiritually renovating springs within, her eye lost not its brilliancy; her cheek retained its ripe, rich hues; her glossy, raven hair its rare abundance. The expression of her face grew, perhaps, more matronly, and the melancholy grace overcast it oftener; but she was ever to my sight and heart the "Wonder," my beloved and most beautiful!

Blest with a robust English constitution, with a power of mind that exerted a healthful influence over the body, my grandmother lost nothing of the majestic carriage that was her natural gift. Her face neither paled nor wrinkled; enough of coloring was there to evince good health, but hers was not the tropical luxuriance that, sun-like, endowed my mother. She was a northern star that shone steadily, but never dazzled.

Whom did I resemble? A difficult question to answer. I ought to have been a handsome child, but I was not. I had not inherited my mother's glowing loveliness, nor my father's features and manner, nor yet my loved grandmother's blue eyes and whilom golden hair. My complexion and my eyes were dark, but the pomegranate hues on lip and cheek were wanting, as was the flashing brilliancy, the bewildering softness of my mother's eyes. My mouth was wide, and showed white but most irregular teeth; while her lips were sculptured after Cupid's bow, and a symmetrical grace had fashioned the pearl rows that glistened when she smiled, an ever renewed source of admiration to me, her chief admirer. My hair waved, it is true, but not in my mother's graceful fashion; I always looked unkempt, and there were several shades to my tresses, from a rather lightish brown with reddish gleams, up to an almost black; heavy eyebrows, an irregular nose, indicative, perhaps, of strength of character, but decidedly at variance with all established rules of beauty; unlike my mother's Arab foot, mine was a useful machine for long marches; my hands were small, but not cast in a shapey mold. They lacked the flesh and dimples, the tapering fingers, the velvet softness that made my mother's hand a marvel; not a trace of her willowy, gliding motions. I was awkward and a tumble-about. I stumbled over every object in my way; I invariably sat down upon the cat, and trod upon the dog's foot or tail. I tore my dresses by an unfortunate propensity I had of hanging on to nails and brushes and door-knobs. I was most at home on the sea; there I felt the freest, and there I lost a portion of that awkwardness that everywhere else formed my torment.

As I was when a child I am now with my forty years. I still crouch in the doors or by some other portion of the household wares, especially since the advent of hoops. About once a week I cause an inundation by the upstart of the wash-stand pitcher; my utmost care does not prevent me from forming ten-lands on the table-cloth. I dab my fingers with molasses; and since I joined the sisterhood of the pen, I have been compelled to use lemon juice and borax, bran and various preparations, to remove the toll-tale ink stains from my fingers. I love order and neatness dearly, but I get into great hurries and forget the practical and personal application. Only yesterday Mrs. Ryan called me back from the porch into the house, saying:

"Mrs. Willoughby, ma'am, you've got a big streak of black ink right across your nose. Looks as if you'd been blacking stoves. Do wash it off,

It was a delightfully refreshing season to the soul, and many persons participated who had heretofore shrank from such gatherings as unpopular, or harmful in their influence. So the good seed sown will spring up sooner or later.

Mrs. A. C. SPALDING, Sec'y.

Why Spiritualists are Dissatisfied.
It was stated in the papers some time ago that Lutz, probably the most thorough planist in the world, being unable to make his instrument express all that he mentally felt, had become dissatisfied as to renounce playing for a while, and had turned his attention to the manufacturing of a new instrument which he was determined should not be open to this objection.

It is easy to complain, difficult not to, when and where there is just cause.

Whoever has intelligently and critically watched the spoken and published words of the most earnest and ablest thinkers, the foremost minds and souls known to the spiritualistic public; been treated in private to their own unreserved estimate of their respective public efforts and the probable effect produced upon their audiences; had them explain as best they could, the various phases of thought and feeling through which they had passed; heard their enumeration of the causes which produced these successive mental states, and saw how in the course of their spiritual unfoldment, as they obtained better perception and clearer insight of their own requirements, they had ready power to compass the needs of those to whom they ministered; whoever has been either thus watchful, or thus privately and publicly favored, cannot fail to have noticed in looking back over a few years, a constantly increasing discontent with respect to the unsatisfactory spiritual status of Spiritualism. This dissatisfaction is becoming as general and wide-spread, as it is deep and heartfelt.

That such is the fact, no discerning mind will successfully seek to ignore or deny. Every issue of the Banner bears witness to this truth. A limited interchange of thought and private commingling with the advocates and acceptors of the Spiritual Philosophy confirms it; and proportionately as one makes a more extended and public acquaintance will be convinced beyond peradventure. The question however is not as to the existence of the fact, but to ascertain if possible why it exists. The reason for this growing dissatisfaction on the part of exponent and attendant, speaker and hearer, must be in every instance independent, yet analogous; though the special processes by which the same result has been attained, vary as do the individuals.

Now why is it that Spiritualism to-day, fails to meet or to fully satisfy the heart yearnings, the soul longings of Spiritualists? What is the meaning or cause of this? and to what does it inevitably tend? How comes it that in the midst of seeming plenty they are not filled? There must be an answer somewhere to these queries. 'Tis not enough to affirm that spiritual teachings generally are too diffuse; that our lecturers are insufficiently and disproportionately paid; that Spiritualists are not sufficiently practical, charitable or harmonious. Granted that all this is painfully true; but were it otherwise, 't would not suffice—the questions still remain unanswered. 'Tis not enough to accuse, however just the accusation, the mass of Spiritualists with evident lack of even an approximate comprehension of the scheme, scope and spirit, of this New Dispensation, this new-born system of the skies. Nor what is readily conceded, that more active faith and consistent cooperation is required, on the part of the so-called embodied with the disembodied. The multiplying of mediums with new and increased powers—however desirable in itself and for the cause—will not remove the difficulty; and it is not unlikely, but rather probable, that they themselves, sooner or later, will experience the same dissatisfaction. Neither local nor national Organization, however increasingly and imperatively demanded—will give the satisfaction sought.

Is there anything in the realm and nature of Spiritualism that will? Most emphatically there is. As the African Sibyl phrases it: "Ye, child, are a God lived!" Ye, only by and through the laws which find truer exposition in Spiritualism than in any other system now known to man—is the relief to be sought, the satisfaction to be found.

Observation and experience testify to a commonly felt necessity—often deeper felt than can be expressed—of a lack of the divinely religious phase of Spiritualism. There is need and will in due season be furnished, corresponding to the fervor, the sincerity and receptivity of the soul-nature upborne on the wings of Aspiration—a quickening within of Celestial life, a far deeper, intenser and diviner experience in the love element of the Infinite God of Love, Wisdom and Truth.

What is measurably true of Spiritualism in this respect, is immeasurably true of the popular religions of the day. While the Churches of Christendom claim to possess all the virtue there is in Christianity, the majority of members thereof are apparently satisfied with worshipping according to Saint Custom, the crystallized forms and ceremonies of the dead past. The nineteenth century finds Ichabod—the glory hath departed—written all over the walls of the Modern Church, and no amount of galvanic effort can erase the everlasting inscription. If there is not an actual necessity for a new religion, there is absolute need of a better and universal manifestation of the old. The world has not had its religious nature specifically and profoundly moved these many years. People, Society, Governments have grown cold, callous, materialistic. The nature of things forbid that this should continue. Never as now have the innermost depths of our nature such need of being stirred. A change is absolute; and while this is to be in greater part the work of the angelic hosts of heaven, a joint effort is necessary on our part. In virtue of such copartnership or union, 'tis not too much to expect a mighty upheaval or down-pouring of the Spirit of God.

The living world to-day craves a fresh and vitalizing influx of divine grace, commensurate with the larger needs of the New Age. By some, this demand is peculiarly felt and made. The supply must be forthcoming. Before Spiritualists as a body, become an effective, shaping, directing power, as is their destiny, they are to be subjected from without, investigated from within, inspired and inspired by a divine magnetism which shall individually and collectively permeate their inmost centres.

The dawn of this New Day illumines the horizon. Let the faithful of every name and clime and station—those who have patiently labored and watched for its coming, be prepared to receive its heavenly effulgence; be like those who on a certain occasion were found both ready and deservingly of their Pentecostal baptism.

Does the reader experience this need? If so, is he or she in the way of doing the best to usher it in?

G. A. B.
Washington, D. C., Sept. 15, 1865.

The editor of the "Southport Visitor" notes the account we lately reprinted from the "Banner of Light," of the physical manifestations of the "Edley Brothers," and says: "If true, they go far toward proving that Ferguson, Say and the Davison Brothers are not the humbugs which they have been generally accounted."—London Spiritual Times.

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LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

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

"The Valley of Dry Bones."

When we have occasion to remark—as we often do of late—that there is a shaking and a quaking among the life-bound formalists, pharisees, and bigots of Ecclesiasticism, the penetrating and intelligent reader, whose spiritual faculties are fully awakened by surrounding influences, of course understands that it is no material and visible tremor, like an earthquake or an explosion, but an interior, silent, unseen operation, that takes hold on the springs and life of things, throwing back the individual on the resources of his own thought and experience again, and thereby refashioning what we all style the institutions and laws of social life.

That is exactly the change which is proceeding to-day. It is in its nature a thorough and wide-spread revolution—one of those very rare revolutions which do not "go backwards." It is an interior and spiritual reformation, reforming man and his institutions together. And although it is heralded by none of the voices that announce what are called great events among men, and accompanied by none of the sensational manifestations which are such sources of excitement to the imagination, it is not one whit the less effective and real, going to the very root and core of modern life, setting up a constant inquisition on what is passing all around us, searching out what is effete and worthless only to throw it away, and what is valuable and lasting for its conservation, and challenging all customs which have nothing but their age to recommend them. This is the spirit and soul of the revolution that is to-day going on. Whatever is able to pass muster before its searching sight may be allowed to stand until its day of usefulness is over.

And yet it would be a disclosure of mere recklessness of spirit and confusion of purpose to advocate a revolution of this sort just from a morbid love of excitement, or a habit of dissatisfaction, or an empty notion that it was according to the divine order to be all the while tearing down with violence and making havoc where existing circumstances fail to comply with our desires. We need to guard carefully against such a temper as that. That is not reform, whether we agree to style it revolution, or the work of genuine reformation, the creative faculty is active as well as the destructive. It is a process of bursting old bonds merely to get larger room; but that room is wanted for more growth only. The annular history of the forest tree illustrates the case as exactly as any physical fact can do it. The divine law at all points suggests and enjoins economy—economy of means and of power. In Nature's mysterious operations nothing is wasted. Every element and quality, and each shred and fibre of every element and quality is put to service where its true place is. There are no chips lying around. Loose work is not the sort of work which is done. And hence the vague desire which some unbalanced and ill-furnished natures feel within them to riot in the work of destroying what is old and useless and in the way of progress, is to be sternly challenged by the question whether they would lead themselves to this work of destruction in the hopes that something far better than what has yet been shall be evolved. Else frenzy will be permitted to unseat reason itself, and men will come at last to have reform worse than they ever did the institutions requiring reformation.

The "dry bones," however, need to be clothed with a new and living covering. In our worship we have lapsed by too easy a surrender of our spiritual independence, if not our spiritual life itself, into ceremonialisms, and formalities, and repetitions, and acquiescences and paritismanship, so that it is going to require an almost herculean effort on our part to rouse up from the semi-defunct state in which we find ourselves, and shake off the torpor-giving influences which bind us more potently than Circean spells or bands of Cyclopean forging. Upon that particular state the ecclesiastic, whether of design or by force of habit, relies for success in his appointed work. Being more or less spiritually numb himself from non-education of his faculties to the extent and in the direction allowed by Nature, he would find all others, of course, in a similar frame of mind; and when he meets with an occasional surprise in learning that here and there an exception exists, he falls to calling hard names, such as "Atheists," "Infidels," and the like, instead of borrowing the very hint he chiefly needs and lengthening the tether whose extent was so arbitrarily limited for him at the seminary where he learned to become a mere ecclesiastical advocate. Here is where revolution is visibly setting in, overthrowing the assumptions and conceits of religious dogmatists and theorizing bigots, and opening a way for fearlessness of thought, largeness of conception, and the unlimited and natural growth which has been hindered by conventional rules now destitute of power or meaning. The "dry bones" are shaking in this field, and a new race of living men will soon start up from the valley where they have lain so long in oblivion.

The Bible, for instance, is positively made of no vital meaning to multitudes, because those who seek to expound it pretend to an authority which tyrannically permits no question to be raised which will be likely to bear hard on their special prerogative and office. Now there are numerous things contained in the Bible which are calculated to feed and stimulate and inspire the soul of man; but those are the very things which, for a purpose, are deprived of their real spiritual meaning, and made husks for mocking men's hunger. That book will do the work it is capable of doing not until it is unlocked from the keeping of ecclesiasticism and allowed a true and natural, and therefore a spiritual, interpretation.

For these greatly desired changes in popular sentiment and opinion it is incumbent on every advanced and progressive man and woman to work with the full measure of his or her zeal; but to be most effective, let it be a zeal with knowledge, and by no means without. That is as bad as bigotry itself. Either extreme is vicious and wrong. And though we may not have very much that is visible or tangible to encourage us in our efforts; taking one day along with another, we may certainly repose in the faith that the great work of reformation is going on, and that it is proceeding, too, through our own labors, directed by the wisdom that comes down continually from above.

Mysterious Sounds in a Church—Investigation by the Police.
Considerable excitement has arisen in Jersey City in consequence of groans, yells and unearthly sounds said to emanate from a church in the upper part of the city, for some nights past, says the New York Herald. The first known of these mysterious sounds was some ten days since, when the pastor had occasion to return to the church after evening services to procure some manuscript which he had forgotten and had occasion to make use of. The edifice had been closed for the night and was in total darkness. On entering he lit a match to guide him along the aisle, and when approaching the altar, at the rear, his attention was attracted by a low moaning sound, which gradually increased and at the same time drew nearer. To this he at first paid but little heed, presuming it to be the antics of mischievous boys; but presently the sounds changed to seemingly unearthly yells, shrieks and groans from innumerable invisible beings clustering around in close proximity to his person, until finally his feelings were so wrought upon that he felt impelled to leave the building with all possible haste.

The above are substantially the facts of the case, as stated by the pastor of the church to Chief of Police McMannus, after reports were beginning to be circulated in the neighborhood that the church was haunted, and requesting that the matter might be kept as quiet as possible, believing that in a few days at furthest he would be able to unravel the mystery and satisfactorily explain the cause of the sounds. Since that time the church edifice has been thoroughly examined, inside and out, but without unraveling the mystery; and meantime these dismal and unearthly yells and cries are heard almost every night. A couple of night spies, Chief of Police McMannus, accompanied by Aid Doyle and Detective E. L. McWilliams, determined to pay a visit to the reported haunted church. They accordingly procured the keys and entered the edifice shortly after midnight. Taking their position in the centre of the church, in total darkness, they had remained there but a short time when they heard a low, moaning sound apparently proceeding from the vicinity of the pulpit, which gradually grew louder; came nearer, until it finally culminated around their heads in howls, yells, groans, &c., and then gradually died away as it came. After a few moments of perfect silence, Chief McMannus drew from his pocket a revolver loaded with blank cartridge and fired one charge, when almost instantly the edifice seemed filled with thousands of infuriated demons, making the most hideous noises, and apparently bent on tearing them to pieces. The officers describe having experienced a very peculiar sensation in the head, and finally the noises became so hideous and unearthly that they made a hasty retreat, apparently pursued by the infuriated demons to the door, which they closed and locked. The officers then crossed the street to the opposite walk and remained there until daylight, when they returned to the church and made a discovery which would tend to explain the mystery. The people residing in the immediate neighborhood claim to have been disturbed at all hours of the night by these demoniac sounds, and a number of them have determined to leave the neighborhood.

The church folk have always insisted that "the devil" dwelt among the Spiritualists, and nowhere else. The above statement, however, goes conclusively to show that "his majesty" has taken possession of a church, and a great "scare" has been the result. Self-righteous people are always fearful that something devilish will overtake them, and consequently attract "disorderly spirits."

The European Visitors.

A party of distinguished European gentlemen of large capital are traveling in the country at the present time, to look after some heavy investments which were made by them in the railway interest not very long ago, and to see further where there may be opportunities for additional investments. They are welcome in our midst, and will be likely to find a great many objects to interest and surprise them. Not only will they behold what our needs are, and are to be, for railway communication between the distant points of the continent, but their wonder will be excited at the sight of our stupendous coal, iron, copper, gold and silver fields, as well as our oil wells, all of which, covering millions of acres as they do, will suggest very forcibly to them the wealth that lies hidden for nothing but the capital and skill to develop it for the common benefit. It is thought the visit of these gentlemen will lead to important results to ourselves as well as to them.

South America.

The conflict between Brazil and its allies on the one side, and the little State of Paraguay on the other, continues without any signs of abatement. Preparations are now going on for a resumption of war on a larger scale than ever before. The allies count from twenty to thirty thousand troops all together, and the Paraguayan army, though of course considerably smaller, shows no signs of trepidation or doubt. The resolution on both sides to fight it out is without abatement. The Paraguayan navy was pretty nearly used up, in the late battle on the Parana river; but Lopez, the Paraguayan President, has constructed some batteries along the banks of the river, which are thought sufficient to protect the vessels that remain to him. He is at present engaged in marching an army Southward, and a column under Flores is moving up to oppose him. It will not be long before operations in the field will be resumed by the contending parties.

Mexican Matters.

Affairs in Mexico are in very much of a muddle still. Now the Liberal party gets the upper hand, and now it is the turn of the Imperialists. There are not many States in Mexico, in fact, where Maximilian has yet obtained a secure hold. There was a rumor that his wife, the Empress so called, was going home to her father in Belgium; but as the story also said that it was only a pretext for him to follow her and get safely out of the country, it has been thought best to give up the plan, which did include a visit of Maximilian to one of the Southern States. The Liberals, on the whole, may be said to be defiant, though their means of resistance are limited. They will be very hard to conquer, for although they may care but little for constitutional liberty they are unused to being subdued by any force, at home or abroad.

The Odd Fellows.

This body of men is doing a good work for humanity, in providing for the sick, the poor, the widow, and educating the orphan, besides tenderly performing the last rites in "burying the dead." Such an association is a blessing to the nation, not merely for the good it does in disbursing its charities and educating the fatherless children, but for the social and brotherly feeling it engenders all over the land. These facts have recently become quite prominent.

On the assembling of the United States Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows, in Baltimore, on the 20th of September, the occasion was selected to perform the ceremony of unveiling the splendid statue of CHANTRY, in that city, erected by the Order. The various divisions of Odd Fellows in Baltimore and other places, marched in procession through the streets in large numbers, occupying one hour in passing a given point. Most of the Lodges appeared in regalia, making an imposing appearance with their elegant banners and bands of music.

But the most striking feature of the procession was the appearance of half a dozen large vehicles, handsomely decorated and crowded with young orphan children, mostly girls, who bore numerous decorated shields variously inscribed with the names of States, Territories, mottoes, etc. Following these cars came a large number of orphan boys, who, like the children in the cars, are being educated at the expense of the Order. There were also many other orphan children accompanying the several Lodges.

What a noble work is this education of the orphan! The deed will prove a blessing to all engaged in it, and an imperishable advantage to the rising generation who are to step in and take our places in molding and guiding the destiny of our glorious nation. Success attend all such humanitarian efforts.

In the rear of the procession came the Grand Encampments in their costly regalia. Conspicuous in this portion of the procession was the tent of the Grand Encampment, in which was seated the Chief Officer, arrayed in his vestments, with two guardians on either side of the door, clad in black velvet. Then came the members of the Grand Lodge of the United States, in carriages.

When the head of the procession reached the monument, the line halted and formed in open order, while the Grand Lodge marched from the extreme left to the stand erected near the base of the monument, where the ceremony of unveiling the statue of Chantry took place. After prayer by Rev. Mr. Williams, the report of the Wilsey Monument Committee was read. Past Grand Sir Nicholson then formally presented the monument to the Grand Lodge of the United States, which was received on their part by Past Grand Sir Vetch in an eloquent address.

The scene at the moment was one of surpassing interest, as, forming a complete circle around the monument, the agitated mass of humanity extended to a distance not only far beyond hearing, but even beyond seeing distance. The following letter was read by Grand Sir Nicholson:

"GENTLEMEN—I had hoped to be able to accept your kind invitation for to-morrow, but I have found upon careful survey that it would be incompatible with existing arrangements. I pray you to believe that I rejoice in the reunion of your Order throughout the United States as an auspicious presage of the restoration of order and complete political harmony throughout the Union. I need hardly say that, in my judgment, this is at the present moment the proper aim of true patriots. I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
ANDREW JOHNSON."

Addresses were delivered by Lieut. Governor Cox, of Maryland, Mr. Andrews, of Texas, Mr. Fisk, of Kentucky, Mr. Fitzhugh, of Virginia, and Col. Duncan, of Missouri. The tenor of their remarks was congratulatory on the reunion of the Order and the return of peace, and presaging a happy future for the country.

California.

J. A. T., writing from Grass Valley, under recent date, says: "There is scarcely a place in the country where a good test medium could do more good or be better supported than here." He estimates the amount of gold daily taken from the mines in Grass Valley at a thousand pounds. He has recently become a subscriber to the Banner, and says his constant regret now is, that so much time has been passed without it, and that he cannot induce everybody to subscribe for it. In allusion to our Message Department, he remarks that "the verification of a spirit-message from Lewis Fling, Sacramento, has done more good than volumes of argument;" and then asks: "Why can't we have more?" The reason is simply because those who have it in their power to furnish us with the verifications, are, in many instances, afraid to do so for fear they will be considered as alders in spreading Spiritualism, little considering how much more important is the service they would be doing for the world, by offering their testimony in confirmation of so great a truth. We have, however, received and published many verifications of spirit-messages, and hope to many more, if friends will only take the trouble to send us such facts as come to their knowledge.

The Naval Fete.

France and England have been doing the best they can at hobnobbing on the water. The iron-clad fleet of one has been over to pay a formal visit to the iron-clad fleet of the other, and vice versa. These ceremonies comprised a naval display of both fleets at Cherbourg and Brest, and then at Portsmouth. The London papers seem to think the millennium is come. Perhaps so. We hope it has, at any rate. Napoleon has managed generally to carry his point where Great Britain is concerned, and it would not surprise us to find that he had done her now. What it really is, will soon appear. It is far pleasanter to think of these peaceful exhibitions, however, than of the bloody and destructive wars of the First Napoleon's time. If they are an actual inauguration of a reign of peace and tranquility, when justice and fraternity are to rule on the earth, then they are many, many times welcome.

The Cholera.

The last accounts make out this terrible scourge to be on the retreat, having fallen back from Valencia and Marseilles, and it being reported that it is going back to Asia, where it came from. Thus far it has confined itself to the great Mediterranean basin, not yet presuming to strike across the European Continent and assail the people that crowd the heart of that vast stretch of country. The mystery of the progress of this pestilence has not yet been discovered any more clearly than before. It is a source of gratitude that it has kept away from the great centre and live of population this season as it has, it having being principally confined to Alexandria, in Egypt, and Constantinople, in Turkey. Whether it will experience a revival another year, and attempt to complete the work remaining this year unfinished, may well excite the popular apprehension at home as well as abroad.

Dr. J. H. Newton.

The Portland Daily Evening Star of Sept. 12th, contains the following significant remarks in regard to the wonderful cures he has been performing in that city during the last three weeks. The editor says: "By a notice in to-night's paper it will be seen that Dr. Newton's stay is limited to a few more days. We can only say that the ministrations of this man have been scarcely less than miraculous. Hundreds have been raised from sickness to apparent health at a touch of his hand. We do not write this as a puff, at all. We are as much at fault in regard to this wonderful man as any member of the community. But through some agency—Spiritualism, he claims—he has done cures never performed, to our knowledge, by any other living man."

The Doctor has closed his office in Portland, and is to open one in Columbus, Ohio, Oct. 10th. On his way home, he called at our office, where he met a "blind man," who had been treated by many of the most noted physicians and opticians in the country without benefit. Having heard of Dr. Newton, he went to him before the Doctor visited Portland, as he says, "because other people did, but he had no faith that he would be cured." The Doctor put his hands on his eyes, and told him his sight would be restored, and immediately he saw quite distinctly. The Doctor further told him that in a certain number of days he would be able to read coarse print. The man said that promise came true. On learning that the Doctor was to be in this city last week, the patient, whose faith had now grown strong, desired to meet him again, and so came to our office for that purpose. The Doctor put his hands upon his eyes again, and his sight immediately became much clearer, and the Doctor assured him that in ten days he would be able to read very fine print. The man went on his way rejoicing, in full faith that the prediction will be fulfilled.

The angel-world, through the instrumentality of Dr. Newton, is truly blessing suffering humanity. The skeptical world should hide its head in shame for reviling this man because he sometimes fails in curing an incurable case. If but one cure in a thousand was effected, of the many thousands who come to him, even then he would be doing a holy work. But he does cure the majority of invalids who visit him, and therefore he is one of the noblest of public benefactors.

English Harvest Prospects.

The expectations of large harvests in England this year are likely to be disappointed. The wheat crop everywhere is short, so that they will be obliged to look to foreign aid for their supply; which will be no bad thing for us of the United States, although our own crop falls short of the magnificent series of crops which have been made since the year 1853. We have large quantities of grain, however, left over from last year's production, which, added to our yield of the present year, ought to answer all purposes. Still, we have not much doubt that this story of a scant yield in Great Britain will send up prices as fast and far as they will go, or ought to go. The speculative spirit is not such an easy ruler to put down, after it has once had the reins in its hand. What with the meagre harvest and the cattle murrain in England, their condition in an agricultural point of view is by no means flattering. But we hope they will weather it without suffering.

Petroleum.

It is providential, that is to say, it was intended and predetermined, that the discovery of petroleum at this stage of civilization should be so helpful to the human race by taking the place of other agencies which were rapidly being supplanted. It came just when the stock of whales was about exhausted, thus supplying us with the means of illumination; and now it has just been discovered that it can be used in a crude state, or before refining, as fuel. This, among other things, will enable steamships to make long voyages without carrying such enormous weights and bulks of coal. Petroleum will make as hot and safe fires under boilers as anything else that can be burned. We are having it offered already for cooking, heating and illuminating, in stoves specially designed for that purpose; and it is not unlikely that it will make a cheap and efficient fuel which may successfully compete with coal, and be a great deal more handy, portable, and cleanly. This is verily the day of wonders and marvels.

Equinoctial.

We thought we had the "line storm" on us sure, at the beginning of last week, but it was a "false alarm." There came a terrible blow on Sunday night, and the easterly rain set in strong on the following morning; but after a day's visit it left almost as abruptly as it came, the sun shining out brightly on Tuesday morning again. The fall of rain, and in large quantities, is badly needed. The springs are very low in these parts. It is the old rule that winter never sets in until after the springs are full from the fall rains. So we need have no fears of winter yet awhile. The summer has been hot and dry, and a moister season for autumn would not be unwelcome. But it is not permitted us to chronicle its approach yet.

Spirit Sympathy.

The end of duty is never seen. When it begins we know; but when it ends who can tell? It goes with us beyond the grave, binding our spirits in one everlasting bond of union, through the laws of sympathy. The gratitude of the spirit that has passed out of the form; is intense; to those who aid it to rise higher in the scale of wisdom and happiness. We have in the past and are still aiding undeveloped ones to the best of our ability; and we feel repaid tenfold for our labor, by their return to us to-day breathing forth "blessings" in our behalf.

Camden, N. Y.

J. A. Woodin has a large hall in Camden, Oneida County, N. Y., in connection with his hotel, the use of which he offers, free, to any good speaker or test medium. Ada L. Hoyt was there a short time since, and created quite a sensation among the good people by her remarkable tests of spirit presence. Mr. Woodin expresses a desire to have Warren Chase pay them a visit, and thinks he will do much good there.

Illness of Moses Hull.

We regret to learn that Moses Hull, editor of the Deceatur Clarion, and lecturer, has been quite ill of late, from a severe attack of rheumatism. We trust ere long his limbs and joints will be able to perform their accustomed functions as smoothly and effectively as his tongue and pen can do their work.

Miss Hardinge.

We learn that this estimable lady is still in Manchester, Eng., suffering from the effects of her voyage across the Atlantic. We too hope with our brethren of the Spiritual Times, that she may speedily recover, and add herself welcomed on the platform of her native country.

From the worn casket did she pass away;
Surrounded by a bright angelic band,
Her spirit parted from its useless clay,
The clouds rolled back; the farther shore appeared,
Its banks all blooming with celestial flowers.
She crossed, she landed; all that she had feared
Fled like the shadows after summer showers.

Original Poetry.

COUNSEL.

BY CORA WILKINSON.

Would you scale the spirit heights of beauty?
Soul-on-ear the Paradisean gate?
Learn of loftiest and sublimest duty,
Meditating on the heavenly state?

Kneeling with angels in the Holy Presence,
Filled with the silent wonderment of awe,
From thought-research, and innermost life-essence,
Learn of the great fulfillment of His law?

Wouldst know of God? Look on the human spirit;
Abroad, on Nature's bountiful domain;
See heart and soul Love's Eden light inherit;
Behold the spirit in its kingly reign!

Look deep within! 'mid darkening imperfection,
See how the fullness of the Love Divine
Floods with supernal glory of reflection
God's chosen, holy, and illumined shrine!

And 't is ascension when the spirit reaches
Above the mists of error, fog of sense;
And from the soul-heights of Experience teaches
The Mother-Wisdom of Omnipotence!

The hand of Love unbars the crystal portal,
Leading to Eden, earth-home's peaceful rest;
There, the commissioned angels, crowned immortal,
Bring consolation to the weary breast.

There dwell eternal symbols pure of beauty,
There Meditation, Harmony abides;
There learn ye lowliest, sublimest duty,
Embracing treasures on Life's flowing tides.

We kneel with angels there, at morn and evening,
Beside the holiest shrine within the land;
And know that from the great enfolding heaven,
The spirit has to go with us hand in hand.

Our life ideal claims us; angel-guarded,
We seek and find the Beautiful below;
All love and light, and music-joy awarded,
Even as the spirit strives to be, and know.

Dream not too long, be up and upward striving!
By the fulfillment of each duty here;
That only is true, human, righteous living,
That unakes of heart and home an Eden sphere.

Tonica, Illinois, Sept. 6th, 1865.

Correspondence in Brief.

A National Organization.

The Male and Female Industrial College at Vineland, N. J., has already set a stake of national organization, chosen officers, and purchased land for buildings, gardening, etc., and is now awaiting further contributions and cooperation of those who sympathize with its objects, which are, mainly, to unite labor and study in education, and grant equal opportunity to all, and to teach the science of life, and leave theology of all kinds out, by substituting practical prayer, or labor, for worldly ceremonies and useless dogmas. There are supposed, by good judges, to be four or five millions of Spiritualists in the United States, and there are at least as many others who are unfettered by creeds, and in favor of excluding theology from our schools, and of giving equal rights to females. Out of this whole number, are there not two millions who can and one million who will give fifty cents each to put this school in working operation, and by so doing have their names registered and preserved as members of and contributors to the first great practical movement of this kind in our country? This last and least arrangement would give us a working capital of five hundred thousand dollars, and enable us immediately to put the institution into practical and self-supporting operation. Or are there not five hundred thousand men and women in this nation who can contribute one dollar each to an enterprise of this magnitude and importance? It seems to me that a People's Working Men and Women's College like this, ought not to depend on or wait for subscriptions, donations or bequests from the rich to start, and yet all we yet have are two subscriptions of five thousand dollars each, and both from men recently from Illinois. I have all my life shared the labors, burdens, privations, sympathies and charities of the poor; and as their miles swell enormously the sums of missionary societies and tract societies, etc., I do not see why we cannot have an object of some practical utility at home, and for the benefit of the poor among us, on which we can expend the collections and contributions of the working classes. The design is to have labor suitable to enable any student, male or female, to pay board and tuition while obtaining a thorough practical and scientific education. We shall before long put this subject before the people, and appeal to the Spiritualists and reformers generally, and see if they will not make this their institution.

Vermont, Sept. 14, 1865.

WARREN CHASE.

Claim-Bake among Spiritualists.
Often had I heard of New England Claim-Bakes, in imitation of the Indian tribes that originally roamed along this coast; but never was I able to witness till Wednesday of last week. The day was delightful—the breeze fresh—Lee's river rolled in sight, while a fine mass of grove contributed its cooling shade. Every motion conformed with the "bake" was to me new and novel, giving me more threads to weave into the web of life's experience. Though richly relishing the claims, I derived while swallowing them no inspiration in demonstration of the extreme theory that man "developed" from animal, plant, or mineral, or anything below the human. Stern induction will have it that claims propagate claims, humans the human, and while qualities may be improved by cultivation, types doubtless remain eternal fixtures.

Several mediums were controlled by Indian spirits, the most prominent spirit being "Santee Oka," long in spirit-life, yet all aglow with that ninth, grace, perception and integrity that ever characterized the Indians prior to those wicked attempts to "civilize" and "acculturate" them. Obedience to nature, law being the standard, it is questionable whose civilization was highest, the Indians or ours.

There was excellent speaking by Mrs. M. R. H. Stebbins, the well-known test and healing medium; M. S. Robinson, whose whole soul is in the work; M. McKelvey, of Fall River; Mrs. Anthony, and the writer. I was physically too well fed to speak with power—lean hounds run the best races. Then came the dancing and other harmless amusements, manifesting an ease and freedom truly refreshing. Not only the "bake" style, but everything passed off, to use apostolic language, "decently and in good order." Harmony and harmony were the two controlling spirits of the day. Beautiful are these social gatherings, and profitable unto salvation.

J. M. PRELDES.

Providence, R. I., Sept. 15th, 1865.

Indisposition of Miss Beckwith.

DEAR BANNER—Please once more allow me a little space in the Banner, that I may speak to all my friends, and that concerning my feeble self. I am still an invalid—although my slow improvement has led me to hope that I might ere long resume my labors, (and I have lately made some new engagements.) I now feel, with the coming fall months, my perfect inability, and I withdraw my engagements from among those in the list of lecturers, and retire from the field, assuring myself of one thing only: I can work no more, and of thought on my mind regarding the work that is to be done by somebody, by all of us, and of which I had hoped to do my share, keeps me constantly trembling between hope and fear, and as perforce I resign my position, for—here I am as a loss: I have no plans for the future in which I may not share a part, and it may be I am

to again be among you reapers in the glorious harvest field, either in my accustomed way, or in some other, which, if needed, will be made, as my previous labor, a part of myself. I make no content on my part, and dear ones from Maine to Maryland, (inclusive) you all read our Banner, and through it, please receive the blessing which I send you, as I am removed materially from the field of working; remember in spirit I am with you now and ever. You, dear Banner, will still gather your folds about every heart which having known must prize, and through your agency I shall still feel the quivering of the harp-strings, even though my trembling hand strike them no longer.

To those who may feel to address me, I would say, send all letters for the present to New Haven, Conn.

Thine in earnestness of feeling,

M. L. BECKWITH.

New Haven, Conn.

A Powerful Healing Medium.

Bro. Neal, of whom I wrote you, Mr. Editor, once or twice, is soon to visit Boston to minister to the needs of the afflicted, and permit me to commend him to the friends as a medium of great powers, as exhibited since he has been in Providence. He came to this city in the latter part of May, an entire stranger. He took no special pains to herald his advent, but quietly awaited events, gradually making acquaintances, till at length cases came to him—those who had lost hope, but still clung to life; as a last resort they, in their desperation, sought the powers of the angel-world, and were relieved. Their joy was unbounded, and they proclaimed what great things the Lord had done for them through Bro. Neal. Others came, many from the sects and churches, who went away made whole, marveling at a despised Spiritualist about, by the laying on of hands, accomplishing cures which had defied the best skill of the medical profession. Many of his cases have been desperate ones, chronic and deep-seated. With scarcely an exception they yielded readily to his manipulations. His mediumship has been most thoroughly tested here, as it has been exercised on nearly all the ill-flesh is heir to. Under these circumstances I have deemed it expedient to commend him to the friends, through the Banner, in hopes he may find an opening in Boston to heal and bless suffering humanity.

Fraternalty thine,

W. FOSTER, JR.

Providence, R. I., Sept. 18, 1865.

By a notice in another column it will be seen that Dr. Neal has arrived in town and taken rooms at the Adams House, where he can be consulted by the afflicted.

Vermont—Labors of Mrs. Wolcott.

I have nothing of thrilling interest to communicate. Mrs. Wolcott, yet thought to inform the readers of the Banner that Spiritualism still lives in some parts of Northern Vermont, a bright and shining light to some, a stumbling stone and rock of offense to others. Its adherents have not been able to make it fire as they would wish, neither have they been able to make it make a fire. Receiving nothing from credulity, but rather from a "bitter invective"; yet from the more liberal portion of community it has received that degree of support that has enabled it to live and make some headway.

The cause in this place received much benefit by the ministrations of the invisible, through the organism of Mrs. E. M. Wolcott, an inspirational speaker, who labored in this place a part of the time during June and July last. Mrs. W. is young in the field, but her discourses abounded in solid argument and sound sense, which caused them to be permanent in their effect, exerting, apparently, a stronger influence on the minds of her hearers to-day, than at the time of their delivery. We opine that if Mrs. W. meets with sufficient encouragement to enable her to keep the field, she will be instrumental of great good to humanity.

Yours for Truth,

H. C. QUINCY.

Lovell, Vt., Sept. 18th, 1865.

Criticism on A. B. Child.

I was interested in reading the original remarks, by Dr. A. B. Child, printed in the Banner some time since, and also with his answer to Mr. Garrison in explanation of some few sentences, only I think he has used the word *justice* where he should have used the word *revenge* or *hate*, or some other similar word. For instance, he says, "the rule of Charity 'or love' is the people's security; the justice of a people is the people's destruction." Now I think it is the want of justice which is the people's destruction; while it is the spirit of *revenge* or *hate* which is the cause. Again he says justice makes enemies. Now as I understand the word, justice asks for nothing but what is right. And I do not think that right is generally calculated to make enemies, any more than mercy, for that asks for nothing that is wrong.

I like the Doctor's articles first-rate, only I think he has confounded justice with revenge, anger or hatred.

WM. K. COVING.

Lisbon Falls, Sept. 18th, 1865.

Delegates to the Convention.

The following delegates were elected Sunday evening, Sept. 10th, to represent the Religious Society of Progressive Spiritualists of Cincinnati at the Second National Convention of Spiritualists to be held at Philadelphia, Pa., Oct. 17th, and the herewith annexed resolutions were duly passed.

DELEGATES NOMINATED.

Judge Carter, Mrs. Judge Carter, Mr. I. H. Taylor, Mrs. I. H. Taylor, Mr. Wm. Ward, Mrs. Wm. Ward, Mr. Henry Beck, Mrs. Henry Beck.

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That in case of any vacancy in the delegation, the vacancy be filled by the remaining delegates.

Resolved, That we advocate the Spiritualists of the United States for business or financial purposes, but not for the establishment of any creeds, dogmas or doctrines.

A. W. POOT, Sec'y.

Cincinnati, O., Sept. 18, 1865.

The Sentence of Colchester.

I have just returned from the U. S. Court Room, and from hearing Judge Hall pronounce sentence on Mr. C. J. Colchester, which was a fine of \$800.00, and costs \$50.00, making a total of \$850.00. The money was paid promptly by a good friend of the cause, and it is proposed to the Spiritualists of the country to refund him by contributions; of which, more anon.

The authorities have further insisted that Mr. Colchester, or any other medium, must take out a juggler's license, thus forcing them to tell a deliberate lie, or cease to give the public the benefit of their manifestations. How long is such a state of things to continue?

Yours truly,

J. FORSYTH.

Buffalo, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1865.

Query—To J. M. P.

You have shown, in the Banner of the 23d, that a spirit-body, whose particles have become displaced, cannot be restored. Why does not the door share the same fate, after its particles have become displaced by the passage of a spirit?

F. T. L.

The following anecdote is told of Daniel O'Connell. Meeting a profligate pamphleteer, whose productions generally found their way to the butterman, he said, "I saw something very good in your pamphlet this morning." "Ah," replied the gratified writer, "what was it?" "A pound of butter!" was the reply.

"THEY SAY."—"They" will say anything and everything. "They" have said everything mean and despicable. "They" say things that break up families, crush hearts, blight hopes, and smother worthy aspirations. Whenever a man circulates a slander, and gives "They" as his authority, turn your back upon him.

A lawyer in Ireland, who was pleading the cause of an infant, took him up in his arms and held him up to the jury suffused in tears. This had a great effect, until the opposite lawyer asked the child, "What makes you cry?" "He's pinching me," answered the child. The Court roared with laughter.

"Sallie," said a fellow to a girl who had red hair, "keep away from me—you'll set me on fire." "No danger of that," said Sallie, "you are too green to burn."

AGGIE, A SPIRIT.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

In the Banner of some six months ago might be noted an obituary. That short paragraph related an event which overwhelmed us, and gave us to drink of the bitterest cup of grief.

Aggie, a sister, adopted into our family circle as our child, and under our care matured into the fulfillment of the brightest destiny, went from us a perfect representation of health. We answered the telegram that said she could not live; but too late. Even the poor consolation of a parting word was denied us. Her beautiful features still showed marks of terrible pain—that was all. She was frozen to marble.

I had thought that the Spiritual Philosophy would sustain one in this trial; that knowing the spirit existed, the keen edge of our grief would be taken off. For the time this was not so. We are accustomed to form our judgment by the senses.

As we stand before the corpse of our departed friend, grief overwhelms our intuitions, and darkness our spiritual perceptions. When we cry in our agony, the waves of feeling deafen our ears to the sound of spirit-voices. Our eyes meet the physical wreck of the beautiful, inanimate, still, cold dead, and with the heartlessness of materiality tell us there is nothing beyond. Soon will the elements claim their own from the sleeping; and a year shall suffice to dissolve the being which for a time cheered us by her winning ways, and scatter her ashes to the winds.

Thus materialism, stifling, dark and dreadful, took the place of Spiritualism, and was sustained by the senses, and unopposed by spiritual perceptions, too lacerated to feel. The days came and went, as slowly our minds assumed their normal condition, and the desire to communicate with the departed might be answered.

It was then began the most complete and satisfactory series of communications I have ever witnessed. They were free from any collusion on the part of any one outside of ourselves, as Mrs. Tuttle and myself were usually the only persons at the table or in the room.

We often endeavored to have the table tip, but had failed. Now, however, we had a spirit in the shadow, in unison with ourselves, and the gateway of communication was opened.

I had previously seen her, clairvoyantly, but so dimly, so shadowy, I doubted whether it was not a conjuration of a disturbed mind. Those doubts have been removed. It was before her funeral, and the attractions to earth remained unimpaired. She was sad, and unable to speak. Her spirit-mother was with her, and, in thought, I asked her if she intended to remain and witness the painful ceremony of the morrow; and she answered, "I would not have my child see it. We go away now, not to return until all is over."

We held a seance nearly every evening, and she was always present, and gave us some word of assurance. Sometimes she failed to answer correctly, the table being uncontrollable. At other times all her answers were perfectly correct for an hour's questioning. We soon learned to discriminate; and so far from supposing that undeveloped spirits came at those disturbed seances, we knew the fault lay in our own organizations. The detail of these seances is very interesting to us, but would not be to the public. I shall relate but one incident, as it illustrates the spirit's power of prophecy.

Shortly after her departure, and at our first seance, she informed us that her father, who was slightly ill, could not recover. This was against our reason, for his sickness was not considered serious. Two weeks afterwards she fixed the day of his death at nearly three months ahead. About two weeks previous to the time she had fixed for that event, she came, and by the tedious process of spelling by the alphabet, gave the following communication to her sister:

"Emma, prepare to go to Bracoville. Father has dictated a letter to-day, wishing you to come. He is not yet ready to die; but if you do not go, you will never have an opportunity to enjoy his society on earth again. The letter will reach you on Thursday, and on Friday you must go."

The letter came, and the spirit voice was obeyed; and if conferring happiness on those who are dear, during the last days of their mortal life, be a lifelong comfort to us, we are thankful for that thoughtful admonition.

Her father lived twelve hours past the time she had appointed; but at the very time he sank away so completely that all thought he had breathed his last, when he recovered, and exclaimed:

"What a beautiful scene! I saw—"

He could not complete the sentence. He struggled through the night, and just as the sun arose in the east, and the birds awoke the earth with song, his spirit arose into heaven and awoke to the song of angels.

I often asked her to go to the Banner Circle Room and communicate, but she said that she could not approach on account of the immense crowd of strange spirits congregated there. She said that she could do so, however, if I went with her.

At length the opportunity offered. I met Mrs. Conant several times, but I did not urge a seance. I too well understand the laws of spirit-communication to think satisfactory results can be commanded; they must flow voluntarily. I had almost become assured not to expect anything through Mrs. C., when one evening as we were engaged in conversation, she suddenly became entranced. Her hand glided over my shoulder, and she burst into tears. Her manner, her tears, identified the controlling spirit. Aggie, in broken accents, said that this first direct contact with earth completely overpowered her, and she could only say how much she loved us all, how sad our grief made her, and that we must not mourn for her any more.

To a skeptic there was furnished no test; but that is to come. She remarked that she had found a medium through whom she could write all she desired, and said I must meet her at Miss Nellie Starkweather's, at eleven o'clock on the next day.

I met the engagement punctually. I had never seen the medium before, and did not give her my name. I simply told her I had called for a seance. We sat down on opposite sides of a table, and she told me that I could write whatever questions I desired, and after folding the paper tightly, lay it on the table. I wrote: "Will the spirit who made this engagement write her name?"

I rolled the paper closely, and laid it on the table. Immediately the medium wrote—"Maggie." This was written, as is all she writes, reversed, so that it must be held before a mirror to be read. I wrote, "That is wrong." Instantly the medium's hand was again influenced, and the "M" was stricken off, leaving the name correctly spelled, "Aggie." Then I wrote, "I do not want to ask questions; write whatever you please."

To this the following was the reply; and, considering that to the medium I was a total stranger, the accuracy with which the names were given is astonishing. Aggie's guitar had been left at a friend's, and had not been touched by any one, remaining exactly as she left it, leaning against

the wall. She alludes to it, as well as to the favorite horse, "Bill," and both allusions are tests of identity.

"Dear Hudson and Emma—I am with you, as I promised last evening, but I cannot control this medium as readily as I supposed I should be able to. But I shall improve, and shall be able to control myself so perfectly that you will be compelled to acknowledge my presence. I have the same affection for you as when on earth. I shall never change. I am with you in spirit, always, and I will control Emma so perfectly that I can fulfill my imperfectly performed mission on earth. I am very happy; do not grieve for me."

Dear Emma! dear Emma! I am ever near you. How I do want to give you proof of my identity. Bring my guitar home and lay it on the table; perhaps I can play on it.

Do you remember—I loved to see Emma ride; but I was always afraid of "Bill."

Dear little Rosa and Carl, you miss me, don't you; but I am still with you, and will lead you to truth and right, if you will be patient and unwavering.

I received other answers equally correct, but of too personal a character to insert here. There was no failure. Every question written and rolled into a ball, and placed on the table, was answered in less time than I have occupied in writing this. But here let me insert a word of caution, for I would not convey a wrong impression that such is invariably the result; for the next day I called for a seance, and did not receive a single answer to my written questions.

By our daily converse with this beloved spirit are we strengthened in our knowledge of spirit-life. We know that she exists as a bright immortal in the spirit-land; and with this knowledge the inscription on her monument in the village churchyard has a deep warmth of meaning.

AGGIE.

Wait, darling wait!
You have reached the heavenly strand,
But show you love are telling.
To the heights of a better land!
All pause at the shining gates of pearl—
Look down the narrow way,
And lead us by your angel hand
Unto the perfect day."

Boston, Mass.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

Religious SEANCE, with vocal and instrumental sacred music, held at Dr. U. Clark's Health Institute, 18 Chancery street, Boston, at 10 A. M. Free.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS hold meetings every Sunday in the City Hall, at 10 A. M. and 8 P. M. Free.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS hold meetings every Sunday at 10 A. M. and 8 P. M. Free.

CHARLESTOWN.—The Spiritualists of Charlestown have commenced a series of free meetings, to be held at Mechanics' Hall, corner of Chatham street and City square, every Sunday afternoon, at 2 P. M. Free.

CHILMARK.—The Spiritualists of Chilmark have commenced a series of free meetings, to be held at the City Hall, every Sunday afternoon, at 2 P. M. Free.

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