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THE DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. A LECTURE BY EMMA HARDINGE.

I propose to speak of the power existing in the human organism for the discerning of spirits; and that not alone of the disembodied spirits who have passed from the vale of mortality—who, already in the pure and radiant atmosphere of the brighter and the better—the spiritual world, surrounding us as they do, are yet invisible to our eyes; but the power of discerning the spiritual part of all things, the attributes of the human soul, the great fore-glimmering of those vast and boundless powers to which we shall attain when we are no longer peering behind the prison bars of mortality, but behold cause and effect in creation, face to face, and realize that the cause is spiritual—the effect alone material. I ask you, therefore, to consider how many of the glimmering lines of phenomenal power that exist amongst us evince—not alone the outward and visible sign of God's workmanship in mere sensuous forms—but assure us of the spiritual part incarnate in matter, that which I call the Soul of Things.

That we may better comprehend the nature of the attribute which I propose to discuss, I shall attempt to classify the powers that exist in man in this direction, by first referring to the very smallest, the most familiar, but still the commonest evidences of the gift as known amongst us, in the form of clairvoyance—the power of beholding objects at a distance without the ordinary aids of the visual organs—the power of perceiving character and recognizing histories attached to substances by the touch, known amongst us as psychometry—the power of prophesying the future, the capacity of recalling what men call the "dead past." All these are attributes belonging to the human soul, and they exist independently of the agency or influence of an invisible disembodied spirit.

All these give us the assurance that our souls have powers which, though masked by the form of matter, when in the bright and glorious transfiguration of a spiritual life, shall make us indeed the image of the Creator, and grant to us some approach to those attributes—if I may so say—of omniscience and omnipotence which must belong to us by our relation to the great Creator. I shall next speak of the powers which enable us to commune by spiritual sight with the world beyond the grave. We are accustomed vaguely to suppose that the powers claimed by the gipsy, the fortune-teller of to-day, the astrologer and the magician of olden times all come under the category of impostures, or else of some peculiar and abnormal faculty, neither intellectual nor spiritual, which is not worth the investigation. In olden times, when Saul the son of Kish sought unto Samuel the seer to discover his father's ashes, this power was deemed quite sufficient to stamp upon him who possessed it the title of the "Man of God." It was the having such powers as these that distinguished men in olden times by the sublime name of prophets. To-day the power exists—we know it, we behold it exhibited around us amongst the humblest in society; we employ it either for the purpose of idle curiosity, or it may be, from the love of the marvelous, or from a desire to penetrate into the hidden things our souls give witness of, but which too often our tongues are ashamed to acknowledge. I repeat, the power exists now. Be pleased to consider the philosophy it involves. What is sight? What is this philosophy of optics which requires the camera obscura of the eye, which demands from the architect of the structure of man the beautiful and curious arrangement of lenses and reflecting apparatus, which, after all, when removed from the organism, forms a very curious but very beautiful model for some of our optical instruments, and has just as little power, when removed from the organism, as the senseless glass by which we detect microscopic or telescopic objects—no more? We know that, in order to use the human eye, and to obtain whatever knowledge it is capable of imparting to us, we require the sensuous object for perception—a radius of vision in which to perceive, an atmosphere to transmit the rays of light; and, after all, this radius of vision is just as limited as the conditions of matter require it to be. But in the perception which enabled the seers of old, and the fortune-teller of modern times to discover lost property, to find hidden things, to detect the absent, and to trace the wandering form of the distant, to recall the past, and to penetrate the future, what radius of vision is demanded there? The eye then perceives through all material obstacles—time is annihilated, the past is recalled, the future is grasped with, the present is dealt with, and become as an open page where the spirit traverses creation, and is enabled to penetrate any space, any distance, without any of the ordinary arrangements for perception. You will perceive from this that there is no analogy between spiritual and material sight. You will recognize, even in this simplest, this humblest form of discerning things, first, that there must be a spiritual power to see. For the clairvoyant does not perceive the outward and material form except by the outward and material eye. It is obvious, therefore, it is not the external form that is seen, and here is one revelation which the discerning of spirits brings us—all things have a spiritual form. These blossoms (referring to the flowers in her hand) shall never die out from the grand and universal totality of the universe. Not alone in the chemistry of their particles, but as they were created in the mind of the Infinite ages and ages before matter was so arranged as to produce them in their present form, as they were prophesied of when the foundations of this planet were laid, as they were pre-determined ere the laws of mineral life were so elaborated as to ne-

cessitate the production of vegetable life; and all this may have been millions of years ago. These blossoms have existed in the divine mind in the eternity from whence they have come. So when the particles of matter have passed away, clairvoyants of distant ages shall behold them where-soever the links of association can recall the train of causation, which enables them to penetrate back to this place and time. Experiments in clairvoyance have proved that whatsoever has existed can always be reproduced to the mind of the clairvoyant. You may say that this requires the action of the mind of the magnetizer, the operator; but in half the cases of lucidity or good clairvoyance there is no operator present. In many of the cases of clairvoyance, the person who inquires has not the previous knowledge of what to find, or even how fully to describe the person or the thing sought for; and when information is thus rendered, by what means is it given? Have we never considered that the clairvoyant must perceive something? We find a vague though beautiful philosophy extant, that all things are daguerreotypes in the air, and that the vast laboratory of air around us receives the impress of all we say and all we do, and of all forms that exist; and that in this a clairvoyant can recall all that has been done. Do they mean to tell us that the clairvoyant can recall a nothing? Something must be there ere the clairvoyant perceives the object; therefore we believe that, investigated in its philosophical rather than its mere phenomenal character, even the humblest manifestation of clairvoyance—the power of discovering hidden things, searching out lost property, recalling the past, and telling, as it is called, the history of the "Long Ago," all is evidence—ay! and evidence conclusive—that histories and things, and acts and deeds have all left an indelible record upon creation. Somewhere they exist, and the power of discerning this something is that which we call "clair-sight," or "clairvoyance."

We next point to the manifestation called psychometry. We ask you to remember if you have ever beheld any exhibitions of this phenomenal power, and do not now dismiss the subject with "It is very strange or curious," but be pleased to recollect the philosophy here involved. We discover character by the touch, but not alone character. It is well understood now that to the good psychometrist, the touch of any substance will recall, not alone the human character with which it has been connected, but will recall, if it be a fossil, the scene, the time, and the circumstances under which that fossil was deposited. Experiments of this kind have been practiced in lands where modern Spiritualism is not deemed merely a gratification of the hour, not sought after merely for the amusement of the time or the personal information on some subject or point gratifying to the inquirer, but where it is sought and studied as a science of soul. It is recognized by numerous experiments, that by the touch a susceptible psychometrist can discover the history of all things with which that touch comes in contact. Experiments of this kind have proved that of a hundred various substances, a good psychometrist, with a very few failures, each one of which proves a part of the philosophy, can recall the mystery of the life of that object, the persons connected with it, and the history through which it has passed.

Pause here and consider what this power of discerning spirit involves. First, I repeat, it involves the necessity of a spiritual part of all things, of a spiritual life in all things—because it is not by the mere touch of matter that you can discern more of the substance than the quality of matter. Place this in the hands of such a psychometrist, and what hidden things shall not be revealed? The mask of humanity shall drop; the secret thought, the hidden purpose, the mystery of character, are all impressed on the substance and revealed by the touch. Oh! pause before it. Supposing this power to become universal—supposing that these experiments in psychometry should be as they have proved, susceptible of cultivation by practice, and humanity to deem it worthy of study—by practice to acquire this power, what will be the result? The very stones will prate of our whereabouts. We enter the house of guilt now, and we feel the impress of wrong and evil upon us. We enter the presence of a hypocrite, and all his smooth speech and wiles fall utterly to mask the dark heart that is prompting him. We enter the presence of the humble and good—those who pass through life unnoticed and unknown—and we feel the aroma of an angel entertained unawares. We enter into the dwelling where some saint presides in human form, and we know not why, repose and a holy tranquility steal over us. In all our dealings with one another these positions are perpetually present, and they pass by us unheeded as the familiar routine of daily life. Investigate them, and you discover a portion of the power of the soul for the discerning of spirits, the extreme action of which is what I have spoken of as psychometry, or the power of discerning spirits by the touch.

I again remind you that this power is growing, that it is susceptible of cultivation in practice, and that if it should become as He in whom some of you believe has promised, the power by which all that is hidden shall be made manifest, and all that is secret shall come abroad; oh, what a revelation will be amongst us! Farewell to the mask of seeming. Mankind will be transformed when we all possess the power of discerning spirits. We are growing to this; and I believe that this power, whilst it is an inevitable attribute of the human soul, is beginning in this day of the science of mind, to become triumphant over matter. I call it now to your attention to show that it is an attribute of the human soul, and that it proves that which some of you men of science have yet failed to discover—the soul of things.

You say that this substance is held together by

what you call attraction—that when the atoms become old they decay, crumble apart, and the thing is dead. It is not so. The spiritual part once born into matter lives forever; it is the spiritual part of all things in the past that forms the houses, the dwellings, the scenery, the landscape of the spirit-world, the spheres that interpenetrate this earth, and it is this that the clairvoyant perceives. It is by this that nothing is really hidden, and that those who have the power of discovering spirits can track your whereabouts. You ask wherefore this power is not more manifest, and if it be possessed, as I have said, amongst Spiritualists and mediums, why the great, good God has not bestowed it universally upon all mankind, as a protection against crime, as a revealer of guilt, as the transfigurator of the hypocrite? I answer you, we have been groping through the sciences of matter; we have been struggling upwards through the rudimentary ages, merely with the knowledge of the external and the proven. We are to-day standing in the dawn of the science of mind, and the first way by which we shall grasp at the knowledge of spiritual things is through the study of the science of magnetism, which is the connecting link between body and spirit, the clothing of the spirit, the innermost part of the body, the spiritual part of St. Paul, the mystic substance that passes from out of everything, that leaves its impress on every substance that man touches, and that preserves the form of everything intact in a spiritual existence when the material has passed away.

I pass on to other attributes of the human soul. I propose now to speak of the gift of second sight—so the term is used; we had better call it by the generic title of clear sight. What is the phenomenon which distinguishes what is called the power of second sight? It is usually that of perceiving by a pictorial representation in the atmosphere some scene transpiring at a distance, or some scene prophetic of that which is to come. It is a mere phenomenon, it is something very strange, says the man of science, always provided that it is proved as a fact. We cannot go over the ground and the facts of history to prove them; we prove them when they occur; they are facts in the experience of those who are credible witnesses; if they are not, they are never handed down from one generation to another as facts. I give credit to the Architect—Creation for disposing of falsehood, dissipating error, and paying the wages of sin or imperfection, by death in all forms. I believe that the same wise Providence has ordained that the beautiful shall never die, that the true is immortal, that the good is eternal, and never perishes. When I find a succession of facts permeating the ages and reproduced in every part of the known world, without possible chance of collusion amongst nations, and times, and peoples, I give more credit to the universal attribute of truth in their nature than to require to substantiate the facts of the ages again and again for the satisfaction of those who are not philosophers enough to understand that truth forms the silver thread upon which history is strung.

The power of beholding visions, allegorical, representative, and prophetic visions, has existed in all times, and is one of the gifts or attributes of the power of discerning spirits. It involves, indeed, another set of causes, and carries us up from the attributes of the soul unaided—from the powers of the mind peering through the veil of matter, but standing alone, to the agency of the disembodied spirit. When we behold a prophetic or allegorical picture full of intelligence, where is the painter? The air does not group itself into the form; the mind of the seer does not originate it. Whatsoever object is presented, if it be an allegorical picture of a fact or prophetic of a truth, is then recorded, not else; and these records prove the facts, and prove also that a painter has been at work somewhere. This picture involves the inevitable agency of a disembodied spirit. Were there but one testimony in the history of mankind, and that well accredited, of second sight—were there but one manifestation of the power of the human eye to behold, painted in the invisible air, or on the canvas of ether, any allegorical scene that should represent a fact, or any prophetic picture that was realized—that alone would be sufficient to prove that an intelligent mind had produced the vision, and that some power exists in the human mind to perceive spiritually rather than materially; we, therefore, now rise from the earth, wherein our souls possess certain attributes of clear sight, to the dawning of another world. We make a footstep on the boundary of another world, and we stand in the presence of an intelligent, controlling, though invisible artist, who, whether by psychological power impressing our minds, or actually daguerreotyping on the air the picture or vision presented, is at work, and is the agent for the production of that vision. Here is another revelation which the power of discerning spirits produces. I need not remind the Bible student, that this was one of the most marked attributes of the prophets and seers of old.

We now come to modern days, and when we find the same attribute existing, and existing generally under special conditions, such as the clear air of high mountains, the rarefied atmosphere of cold wintry regions—when we realize that the persons who behold these visions or appearances are generally peculiarly sensitive, even somnambule, and often giving manifestations of those peculiarities which we now call spirit mediumship, we perceive a line of philosophy in the whole of these manifestations extending from the earth onward to the world beyond, and proving the links between our souls and the mysterious beings who are agents in presenting us these pictures. They tell us that by the aid of the solar spectrum we can discover minerals in the atmosphere of the sun, by experiments precisely similar to those which tell the quality of minerals of our own earth. Oh, what a grand leap science has here made! how many thousands and mil-

lions of miles have we climbed into the vast infinity of space, until we stand in the presence of the solar chemists, and can tell them as much of the composition of their vast and wonderful luminary almost as we can of our own earth. By the same set of analogies here, with all our wonderful faculties climbing hither and thither through the crust of matter, and manifesting powers of which they scarcely dream as attributes of the human soul, connecting with these the powers brought from the spirit-world, we first perceive how strictly human are the ministering spirits who are about us and who control us; and next, how strictly spiritual are the powers within us; the motive powers which we so vaguely call life and soul. This is another revelation of the power of discerning spirits.

I now pass on to those still higher revelations by which we are enabled to discern the forms of the angels, the blessed departed, the power of beholding what we call the spectre or apparition of the deceased. Amongst those powers is one which I must not omit to name, that enables us to behold the spectre or apparition of the living. We know that by the same array of facts we have grouped round spiritual phenomena in every age, the spirit of the living is beheld on earth. Various attempts have been made to account for the mystery of the double-goes. It has even been hinted that a duplicate of ourselves exists somewhere in the surrounding air—that in the regions of space some mysterious familiar, something analogous perhaps to the *daimon* of Socrates—some re-duplication of ourselves, partly intelligent, and partly dependent upon mind from without, appears from time to time, and manifests itself now in the form of the wraith, and more lately in that of the living spirit. I offer you that which I believe to be the truth on this point—you must compare it with your own experience ere you accept it as a judgment worthy of being accredited. I have already pointed to the fact that by psychometry you discover character. You must therefore infer that there is passing from out yourselves every moment an aroma imperceptible, but still an aroma charged with your character; that this aroma is vaguely called the sphere by which you mysteriously recognize and understand each other, by which attractions, repulsions, affections, antipathies, group society together in kindreds—that all this mysterious emanation passing from out of yourselves, and proved in psychometry to be charged with your character, is something of a substance, is in fact material, although you do not behold it, and though it is not sensitive to the touch or to any of the outward sensations, but only appeals to the spiritual nature of the psychometrist. Here is one step again; it is proved that a portion of yourself, and of your character, does pass from out of you. We have spoken before of the philosophy of the haunted house, and we conceive that this is a place where we may remind you again of that which we claim to be the explanation of the singular phenomena of hauntings. We mention it because it is applicable to this point of our subject. We find that in nearly every well-attested case of a spiritual manifestation attaching to a place, some violent death has either taken place there, or some evil mind has poured out the strong magnetism of its affection upon some objects or scene in that place. For instance, the miser, although life may be extended for him to extreme old age, has day by day and night by night given off of his love, his dearest affections, to the heap of shining metal which he treasures up in some secret corner. If our character, our affections, wishes and proclivities attach involuntarily to every substance we touch, when we project them with all the strong and passionate mind which any great vice or strong purpose of the soul induces—when we concentrate them, as in the case I have quoted, in one particular direction, does not a larger charge of the magnetism, and a stronger force of the will propel magnetism in that direction? I would pause here and remind the man of crime, or the man of worldly loves or material affections—the sensualist or the gambler, the drunkard or the miser—any soul that binds itself in the chains of its own vices in strong attraction to the earth—that he is forging and hammering chains to bind his spirit to the place and thing he loves. He becomes as a spirit enclosed in the prison-house of his own crime; he is compelled by the spiritual and magnetic attraction back to the place, as surely as the needle is drawn to the loadstone. He has poured out the oil of magnetism either on the objects of his vice, or the place of his love, or the things of his affection, and that forms an attractive point that drags back the fettered spirit until the magnetism is worn out, and the spirit soars away by the attraction of newer and higher objects from the scene of its earthly tendencies. In the case of violent death—a still more marked evidence of magnetic attraction presents itself. In those who are violently deprived of life, the magnetic principle is poured out with the life-blood. The broken casket is still full of the precious fountain of life, and this, distributed around, as inevitably attaches to the place where it is wasted, as our magnetism in part attaches to substances; it is still a part of the psychometry which I have spoken of. The large charge of the life-principle thus poured out becomes an attractive bond to the spirit. Here it not only returns, but even if distant, its thought is there, and its thought and its magnetism help to make the manifestations that are produced in that place, and always repeat the dark tragedy—the tale of crime. As that was the last thought of the dying, as it was the one strong psychological point which closed up the gates of life, so it is the one strong psychological point through which the returning spirit enters again. Therefore it is that the dire tragedy, the loss of life, which is generally enacted, or the repetition of the miser's love, or of the sensualist's voice, or tone, or habits or whatsoever man has loved and thought of most strongly; the last great and mighty act of life imprinted, as in the case of murder or violent death,

on the departing soul, becomes inevitably re-enacted in the place which is charged with the magnetism of the departed. This philosophy we might bring to bear even upon the living spirit, and its manifestation or apparition, of which I have spoken. Wherever such manifestations are made, the subject of them invariably gives off that magnetic force which constitutes him a medium. I do not realize that there is any separate existence perceived; it is but the magnetism which is represented in the form of a person—that form is not intelligent, it is not a separate existence from the person, it is merely a portion of his magnetism, which departs in moments of abstraction, of sleep, of dream, of some condition of mind when the whole spirit does not fully possess and use the magnetism; then, and then only, is the living spirit seen. The manifestation is not a strange one when we remember the philosophy of psychometry, and that wherever we pass, our magnetism is attaching to all substances and things around us. It would not be difficult for the eye of the seer to behold in this chamber the forms of those who have been present, and the receptions, through their magnetism, still attaching to the place, even of their life and character. The whole of these manifestations require for their elucidation the study of that magnetism which I have so often commended to the philosophers who have grouped together here, as the true foundation of psychological science.

I now pass to the consideration of the apparition of the disembodied. The spectre which appeared at the moment when the soul departed from the body, was, in former times, deemed one of the most common manifestations of this kind. Innumerable instances of these manifestations have occurred, and still occur, to those who have not been favored with a vision of spiritual life. At such a moment, to the soul that is not informed of spiritual life, the transition into the world of spirits is often strange and startling. We do not enter the golden heaven of theology at the onset; we are not at once launched into the presence of rejoicing saints and triumphant archangels, according to the pictorial fancies of the theologian, but we are in a living, real and practical sphere of existence, where life is continued from the point at which we drop it here. Now, this being the case, the first thought of many and many an awakened spirit is astonishment to find their life so real, so earnest, so tangible, so thoroughly in accordance with the life from which they have departed; and in this manifestation, the memory of earth being strong and themselves not yet risen to the Father—by which I mean not fully entered into the spiritual sphere—their apparition, strongly charged with that magnetic life that is departed, may readily be seen. It is not always seen by those to whom they would willingly present themselves. It is frequently questioned why strangers have beheld the forms of the departed rather than those who best loved them. Men have asked, "Should not the love of my heart present itself to me, rather than to those unsympathetic strangers?" We need but remind you that the spirit or apparition of the departed can only manifest itself where the power of seership exists, and that with those who love best, with all the tenderness of affection and all the longing yearning once more to behold the form of the beloved—if the physical magnetic and spiritual gift of discerning spirit is not there, God's laws are never transcended; it is the seer alone that beholds the spirit under any circumstances.

We next consider by what means your eyes—spirit mediums—behold the forms of the departed. And in this respect we remind you again that your material eye can only behold sensuous objects; that the entire capacity of the beautiful and curious structure of the human eye can never take cognizance of aught that is not in material form. What you behold is not matter, and, therefore, you see not with the outer eye. Your outer eye, the window of the soul, may be opened, but the soul looks not through it. The spiritual eye alone can behold the spiritual form, however it be presented. That is the first proposition I make concerning the power of observing the forms of the departed; the next is as to the process by which the spirit actually presents itself to the eye of the seer. There are many processes, but in almost all cases such manifestations are made by the act of psychology. The spirit wills the manifestation; the psychologist knows that his subject perceives through his sense, beholds through his will; the psychologist wills his subject to behold whatsoever form his mind conceives, and the subject perceives it. Even so, the form perceived by the spiritual subject or medium is nothing but a psychological presentation. Ay, and this explains, says the man of science, all the hallucinations which men call apparitions. Not quite. Where is the psychologist? There must be some one, some mind, some intelligence to present the psychological picture—some intelligence that knows that the psychological picture will be recognized—some intelligence to fashion it, some one to represent the garments of earth, the living gait, the dull ear, the blind eye, the crippled form, the specialities of those who have long since passed away; the representation of which forms such conclusive evidence of identity, and has brought so many joyful recognitions of the immortality of the soul to thousands who have heard of the spectre and apparition with scoff and ridicule, until the form of the long-ago dead to be hidden in the grave, crumbling in the dust, or sleeping until the judgment-day, has been represented before the eye of the seer, and all the psychological memories of it reproduced. This is the means by which garments that clothe the spirit are reproduced—by which the old forms that have perished out of all material existence are shown again. We have heard the question asked with sneer and scoff within this very chamber, From whence do the spirits procure these garments? Were we inhabitants of another planet we might question where the inhabitants of this procured their garments. We should find that they are adaptations.

*In evidence of this see Prof. Denton's book—*The Soul of Things*—some account of which will be found in No. 9, Vol. v. of the *Spiritual Magazine*.—Editor.

from the world around us; that they are material; of the same component parts that clothe our viewless spirit, formed of the atoms of the planet on which we live, the chemistry of which is as much found in this substance (of dress) as in this land. Both originate, perhaps, from the combination of hydrogen and oxygen gas; both these combinations are sufficient to produce a world, and the chemist knows it; and all the varieties we behold around us are but modifications of the atoms of matter. Do we suppose that this, our planet, is the only existence in creation—the only world, the only form of substance, or the only subject of the great chemistry of the universe? Be assured that whosoever we live, whatsoever atmosphere surrounds us, the world in which we live, the elements that are about us, are as much under God's providential care there as here, and that we shall as surely realize all the attributes that are necessary for our existence there as here. Do we fall out of the hands of God by passing from this sphere, or must we leave it to fall into them? If His majesty and His power, and His laws and His presence, and His wisdom are sufficient for us here, by analogy, they are sufficient for us there. We traverse worlds, suns, systems—the roads and bye-ways of eternity. He is everywhere, and so He clothes His spirits with the substances of the world around them. But the powers of spiritual existences are so much larger, so much wider and grander than those of this world, that we dwell fondly upon the power of mind to rehabilitate itself, even in the garments of thought. This psychological power, which we merely regard as an experiment to amuse the hour—this biological power by which the mind of the operator can compel the mind of the subject to behold any actual, tangible form, accompanies the spirit, and by this same biological power the spirit wills to be represented in that form and habit, that custom and appearance that will best recall the identities of earth. That is one mode by which the spirit presents itself again to man.

There are yet others; and the next that we shall notice is the more tangible form that appeals to the touch. We all know that there are manifestations amongst us, far too well and credibly witnessed to be questioned now, by which substances are produced—by which for some temporary purpose substances, seemingly of the human form, of garments and other material objects, are produced and become manifest to the touch. We ask by what possible power can an invisible spirit thus reproduce the atoms of matter? Permit me to ask if you have ever beheld in some of the laboratories of chemistry vast arrangements made for containing what the vulgar would call nothing? The chemist will tell you that this vessel contains some substance, and that another. You behold nothing but the clear ether; yet these jars, or receptacles, are full of gaseous substances, invisible to your eyes. Let sparks of electricity be passed through these, and you behold them at once in the shape of substances, in the shape of drops of water, and yet further, of crystallized atoms. From the viewless air, the chemist can produce the solid, hard mass known as crystal. Not the lack of knowledge, but the lack of power—of man's capacity to grasp the elemental keys that open all space to him; merely from such a lack of power as this we fail to be able to recompose a world by chemistry. We can produce in the laboratory of the chemist all the various phenomena which carry matter from the most sublimated gas up to the hardest form of the solid. Perhaps the chemistry of the cold marble sarcophagus crushes out this knowledge! Perhaps man is less wise in the world beyond the grave than he is here! Perhaps the great Architect of creation can only reveal Himself and His laws upon this world, and not in spirit-land! If we reverse this picture, and assume that God's laws are eternal here and everywhere, that the knowledge we obtain here is but a preparation for the broader vistas of perception hereafter—if we understand that the soul and spirit is the man and not the dead form—that the spirit sleeps not in the ground—that the spirit goes not down into the grave—that the spirit still lives, though the form perishes, we shall understand that all the attributes of the spirit pass with it to the life beyond the grave, and that spiritual chemists and spiritual philosophers, sages, seers, master minds of every age in the grand, broad liberty of the land of light, and the land of causes, are better chemists and better philosophers than they were here, and that it is by the aid of such knowledge, by the power to accomplish results in immeasurably short periods of time, by the power to realize, as it were by magic (because invisible to you), the same chemical processes which they perform on earth, that spirits can form round the hand, or about the spirit form, such substances as will, for a short space of time, appear to be solid and substantial. That they cannot continue these substances, or their life, that they are not permanent, is merely a deficiency of their chemistry. Perhaps it will never be given to the will of man so to organize the atoms of matter round a spiritual form as to produce a living envelope. There is a mystery in it which the spirit has not yet entered—a seal which he has not yet broken, and that is the mystery of life. Unlike Prometheus, we cannot steal the fire of life from heaven and animate it. We are but poor, fragmentary, finite imitators of the Creator; and, therefore, spirits can do no more than reproduce fragmentary evidence of chemical power to aggregate substance. They cannot put the life into it; that is the mystery of God. Nevertheless, doing thus much you will realize that another of the powers of the gift of discerning spirits enables us to go further than the power of vision: by that of touch we realize that there are attributes possible to the disembodied spirit, and, therefore, possible to us, of which we know not. What the soul disembodied can do, our souls can achieve when we do but possess the knowledge.

The last of the powers that belong to this gift, which I may now notice, is that of beholding the soul in its home of light and bliss. Happily for the true balance and equilibrium necessary for the spirit while it yet lives in matter, this power is so limited to vision. We may not with mortal eye, we may not even with our pure spiritual eye, separate from the body, behold the forms of life and the glorious blossoms of life which spring out of the ashes of this material form—for, could we behold these, all our senses would so follow that of sight that we should fail to realize the beauty, the use and glory of this poor, dull earth again. It is only ecstasy that can realize the glory of the life beyond, but foregleams of immortality, flashes of light from Paradise, and wafts from the fragrance of the blossoms of eternity do come in soft breathings, and low whisperings, and gleams of light, falling across our darkened way, and now and then a vision of the bright and glorious home of beauty which God has destined for his struggling pilgrims, gladdens the eye of the seer. And oh, what a glorious presentation it is! What a sunlight, to which this shadowy earth of ours is but the eventide—or, at best, night, illuminated by the stars of God's providence and blessing. We have never seen daylight yet—we are still in the darkness, and are the liberty-angel, Death, shall

open the gates of life for us it is not well we should comprehend (except by the revelations of your mediums, the footprints of the boundaries of both worlds,) that there is such a glorious reality in store for us; and when the forms of the beautiful, the bright, the glorious, and the risen are thus perceived, there are transfigurations also realized which it is not well for us to inquire into. We perceive there so many strange, changeable operations of spiritual life that we could not comprehend them; we cannot leap beyond our shadows; we can take no step in advance of our knowledge; the instruments, the modes, the occupations, the growth of instruction, the means of progress, are all so vastly in advance of our experiences that we can but hope and trust, and faithfully work up to them. But every revelation brings us the same assurance of eternal wisdom and eternal goodness—the fitness of all things, the adaptation of all means to ends. The deeper we search into the volume of spiritual life, the more we consider the power of discerning spirits, and the gifts and the revelation which this power has brought to us, the more surely do we realize that it is well with us, and that we are safe—very safe—in the hands of the Infinite One. How supreme is that goodness that cares for the darkest criminal! For oh! the discerning of spirits in the land of darkness, as well as of light, brings hope with it. There is movement even there—there is life there—there is struggle there—there is effort there. The fire of passion is burning out, the darkness of crime is expending itself on itself. The creator of his own ill is realizing the work he has done, and the thing he has made of himself. In the transfiguration of death one of the grandest and most glorious attributes of the soul is self-knowledge—the perception of the true causes; and, therefore, in the case of the dark and evil spirits, the undeveloped and the criminal, the passions which he has indulged, and the habits with which he has bound himself, and the chains with which he has manacled his soul down to the earth—all this brings so much teaching with it, brings such bitter remorse, such an agonizing realization of Milton's piteous cry of the fallen angel, "Me miserable!" Yet, with all this, there is such a perpetual strife for happiness—happiness is such a goal for the soul, the longing to be blessed, the effort to live and ascend is so inevitable, even to the darkest mind, even to the most miserable prisoner of crime, that the turning point must come at last, and the gift of the discerning of spirits has never been bestowed upon the seer in vain: for whilst he beholds the darkness visible, the cloud of thick night that clusters round the soul, outworked from its own miserable heart, he perceives how surely that misery and that very wretchedness is becoming the tutor to the soul to stretch out its hands in the appeal, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

I may not dwell further upon this point. The gift of discerning spirits is so full of instruction; it is so rife with teaching; first concerning the glorious faculties of the human soul—it brings to us such assurance that there are properties of soul yet unwrought, that there is a grand mine of science yet to be worked, and yet to be systematized and developed, in this new day of mental dawn and illumination, that I pause upon it with delight, and point to it, not as a mere marvel, not as an evidence of phenomenal power, but as an evidence of what we shall be, what we may be, and what an era we have entered upon when we can recognize these powers no longer as miracle, or magic, or hallucination, or folly, but as actualities which we must deal with, which we must cultivate and which we must investigate. Thus much, therefore, for the knowledge which it brings to us of ourselves—for the revelation which it gives us of the presence of a spiritual world about us—of the ministry of angels, of the marvelous love of the Infinite, who has related us not only to the spirits of the departed, but by the aid of the inspiration that is brought to them of broader vistas, the inspiration by which they drink in the light of archangelic worlds, has connected us with grand and glorious spheres of which now we only dream: but they are all there. We cannot aspire too high, we cannot hope too much, we cannot dream too brightly of the glorious path of light on which we enter when first we realize the true nature and attribute of soul, when once we realize what a grand and glorious thing life is, through the discerning of spirits.

THE OLD AND NEW.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Oh! sometimes gleams upon our sight,
Through present wrong, the eternal right!
And step by step, since time began,
We see the steady gain of man.

That all of good the past has had
Reminds us to make our own time glad,
Our common daily life divine,
And every land a Palestine.

We lack but open eyes and ear
To find the Orient's marvels here,
The still, small voice in autumn's lush,
Yon maple wood the burning bush.

For still the new transcends the old,
In signs and tokens manifold;
Slaves rise up men; the olive waves
With roots deep set in battle graves.

Through the harsh noises of the day
A low, sweet prelude finds its way;
Through clouds of doubt and creeds of fear,
A light is breaking, calm and clear.

Henceforth my heart shall sigh no more
For olden time and holier shore;
God's love and blessing, then and there,
Are now, and here, and everywhere.

Mediums Wanted West.

I have been frequently impressed to have you call the attention of lecturers, and mediums for physical manifestations, to the fact that there is a large field here for building up a spiritual society. There are four villages within a radius of twenty-eight miles, with a daily steamboat running between them in seasons of navigation, and stage lines in winter. Port Huron is situated at the crossing of the Grand Trunk Railroad, on the St. Clair river; city of St. Clair, twelve miles south of Marine, and eight miles south of St. Clair City; and Algonue, seven miles south of Marine City. So you will see that those places lie on the border of the noble St. Clair river. In Port Huron the Spiritualists have a large society; in St. Clair the same. About one-third of the people of the place are Spiritualists, and they would come out boldly if we could have some test mediums pay a visit. A great many have not been able to investigate, for the want of an opportunity. Mediums traveling from East to West, or from West to East, if they see fit to stop and visit us, shall not go away empty, I assure them.

R. P. McNIFF.

Marine City, Mich., Nov. 24, 1866.

The St. Louis Democrat says there is a blind woman in Mount Vernon, Ill., who possesses extraordinary clairvoyant powers, which enable her to reveal the whereabouts of lost property and make similar disclosures, which always prove true. Lately a murderer who had long escaped arrest, was discovered through her agency and secured.

Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS.

ADDRESS CARE OF BANNER OF LIGHT, BOSTON.

"We think not that we daily see
About our hearths, angels that are to be,
Or may be if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air."
(LEIGH HUNT.)

AUNT ZERA'S STORIES.

NUMBER SIX.

"How like another sky that field of snow looks," said Will, as they sat by the window looking out upon the white field.

"I was thinking," said Grace, "of Cousin Mattie the day she was married."

"A beautiful thought," said Aunt Zera, "and like a poet's, to compare the soft snow to a bridal garment. And I was thinking of those beautiful lives that are as pure as heaven."

"Only the snow disappears," said Eunie.

"Yes, the snow disappears from our sight, but it ascends and takes its place in the sky above us, to be glorified by every gleam of light. And is it not so with those that leave the earth having lived pure and noble lives?"

"I very much fear that some one is about to read a text," said Kate, laughing. "So please shake out those curls, Aunt Zera, that you have had bound back all day, and find a story that will be like that field of snow."

"And go way back," said Will. "I like to know of people that lived hundreds of years ago. It seems like taking a long journey, to hear about them."

"I have been looking over some old books," said Aunt Zera, "and I found a few verses by Petrarch, and then I hunted up some recollections of his life, and of his beloved Laura. Shall I tell you some of the beautiful history?"

"Will it be a love story?" asked Grace. "If it will, do tell it quick."

"Yes, a genuine story of love!" said Aunt Zera. "I was in hopes," said Jennie, "that you were going to talk of a poet again."

"And didn't you know that Petrarch was a great poet?" said Will. "He wrote poetry all his life."

"Yes," said Aunt Zera, "he was a celebrated Italian poet, and he is famous for the beautiful words he wrote more than five hundred years ago, and the most celebrated were those about Laura, and so full of fervor were they, that she has become as well known as he, and loved throughout the world. Her parents were among the nobility of the city of Avignon, and she inherited wealth and great beauty. It was customary in those days for parents to contract marriages for their children."

"What do you mean?" said Jennie.

"Why, they made a bargain to sell the daughter to some man," said Will.

"Not quite that," said Aunt Zera, "but they concluded who they would like to have their daughters marry, and settled the whole thing without consulting the daughters' wishes very much."

"Isn't that the way they marry princesses now?" asked Eunie.

"I am afraid that a good many people try to have their daughters marry for the sake of honor or wealth, without thinking whether there will be much love to make the honor or wealth worth anything. But Laura married very suitably for her rank and position."

"I thought you said she had loved enough for a kingdom," said Will.

"Oh, but she did not marry Petrarch, but a most respectable and good-tempered man."

"That spoils it all," said Grace.

"But," said Aunt Zera, "I am not telling a story out of my own brain, or giving you any fancies or dreams, but a real history. We have handed down to us a description of a part of her bridal outfit."

"Oh, charming!" said Grace.

"She had two complete suits—one of green and the other of scarlet, trimmed with fur and a coronal of silver."

"Only think!" said Grace. "Cousin Mattie had nine new silks and a poplin and—"

"In all, twenty-five dresses," said Jennie; "and she was only a merchant's daughter."

"Besides her two suits, we are told that she had a bed, by which was meant, probably, all the fixtures suitable for a lady of wealth in those days, consisting of a carved wood bedstead and silken hangings. By this we can imagine that in those days young ladies were accustomed to provide household articles, as do the substantial people in the country nowadays. Petrarch was an accomplished courtier, who loved fine arts, and was fond of pleasing others. His complexion was fair, and he had sparkling blue eyes and a pleasing smile. Laura is represented as being wonderfully beautiful, with pale golden hair, while her eyebrows were dark. Her mouth is described as being composed of pearls set amid roses. But best of all was the look of gentleness and sweetness that she always wore. Her voice was like music. Petrarch met her when she was nineteen years old, after she had been married two years. He felt sure that her soul was the other half of his own, and that she should love her forever. There is no doubt that he was pleased with the attention that so intellectual a man bestowed upon her, but in her manner she was gentle and kind, but no more. Petrarch knew that in this life his love was hopeless, and he now began to celebrate her in his verse. He wrote so finely and with so much heart, that all the world began to listen. So widespread were his poems, that all Europe knew Laura, and almost all revered her; not because of her beauty merely, but for her moral greatness. For she led a life true to the right, and uninfluenced by the flatteries of so great a man. She neither became vain or foolish, neither did she in any way displease her husband, but knew herself renowned and yet possessed the grace to be unharmed and to retain her dignity and sweetness. It is said that when Charles of Luxembourg, afterwards the Emperor Charles IV., visited Avignon, one of his first inquiries was for the celebrated Laura. At a ball given in his honor she was present, and was presented to him. He stepped forward and reverently kissed her on the eyes and forehead. It is also said that the people were so pleased at this token of his respect that they applauded, thus showing how much she was regarded in her own city."

"I suppose," said Grace, "that she wore one of her two dresses—the green or the scarlet?"

"We should like to know which," said Aunt Zera, "but we are quite sure that it was either the green embroidered with violets, or the scarlet trimmed with fur, or, as some say, with feathers. There are several portraits of her, and they are all taken in one of these dresses. Petrarch tells us that she wore the green dress embroidered with violets when he first saw her. No diamonds are mentioned as belonging to her bridal outfit; and why do you suppose she had none, while she had many pearls? It was because the art of cutting them was not then invented."

Petrarch received many honors. He was crowned with the laurel wreath of poetry, at Rome, in 1342, but nothing made his life joyous. He used to retire to Vaucluse, where he had purchased a small estate. Here he planted the laurel tree, which was his favorite because of its name, and here he solaced himself by writing other poems, all of which breathed of the one great thought that at this time filled his mind.

In 1347 Petrarch saw Laura for the last time, and she seemed to have a foreboding of some ill to come, for her eyes seemed to be looking away to some far-off scene.

Not long after, she died of the plague which swept away thousands in a day. But so greatly was she beloved, that her friends crowded about her dying bed, not fearing the contagion so much as desiring to comfort her and minister to her. Her death was like her life, sweet and beautiful. The poet was far from her, but he felt the shadow of her death before knowing of it."

"How could he feel it?" said Will.

"There are invisible cords that unite all those that love each other. Petrarch dreamed of the evil, and seemed to know some ill was coming."

"Pshaw!" chimed in Will.

"And Joseph was warned in a dream, the Bible says," said Eunie.

"Yes," said Aunt Zera, "we should believe very little of the world's history if we did not believe in some power that is about us both warning and instructing us. But the most beautiful part of this history, to me, remains to be told. After Laura's death, Petrarch believed himself to hold constant intercourse with her. He believed that he saw her beside him, soothing his sorrow, and in the night time making the darkness as light, by her bright presence. She seemed to be pointing heavenward, as if to remind him of that beautiful home to which she had gone."

Twenty years afterwards he writes of her as he then saw her, appearing in a cloud of glory. She tells him that death is a blessed change to those who live a noble life, and that she found it the entrance to a scene of glory. She is a wise spirit, too; for she refuses to tell him of her love when living or after death, but rather points him to higher and nobler things, as if she wished to make him still act a life of heroism and virtue."

There is at Milan, in a celebrated library, a copy of Virgil that belonged to Petrarch. It lies there within wooden covers, a wonderful history in itself. It was the favorite companion of Petrarch, and he constantly studied it. It contains, in Petrarch's own handwriting, the memorandum of Laura's death, and praises of her virtues."

After Laura had rested in her grave two hundred years, her tomb was opened. She had become so celebrated by the beauty of Petrarch's verse, that even her dust seemed precious. Francis the First visited her tomb, and placed an epitaph of his own composition in it. He ordered that a fine mausoleum should be raised to her memory. But it was never done, and she did not need it, for she will ever be remembered as long as men love to study into the lives of the past centuries."

"Well, I wish I could visit her grave," said Eunie.

"I would rather read some of Petrarch's verses about her," said Will.

"I would like to have her appear as she did to Petrarch, and tell me about her home now," said Grace.

"See that snow," said Aunt Zera; "the field that was so white has begun already to show spots of brown, the sun is so warm. It is like the fading away of something beautiful, and just so that life five hundred years ago left the earth. I can almost fancy those white clouds are a part of the brightness that covered the field so little while ago, and so I shall dream that from those two lives, lived so long ago, there comes to us still some reflection."

"Well," said Kate, "I am glad that I know how she was dressed, and I think I should have liked the dress embroidered with violets best."

"But you must remember that it was not because of her dress that her memory was cherished, but because she was worthy the love of a noble man, and because her influence over him was always for goodness and purity. I like to think of her best as the angel of his life, both while she lived and after she died."

"Are folks angels before they die?" asked Kate.

"To be sure they are," said Aunt Zera. "I often think I see many about my path, and am about to ask about heaven, when lo and behold! they are my own dear nephews and nieces."

"Ah! ha!" said Will. "I think I'll retire and look after the cows. That is good common sense work."

"And I to the kitchen," said Eunie.

"And I to my geography," said Grace, "to find where Avignon is."

"And you'll show me, won't you?" said Kate, "and then I'll get my book of fairy stories, for I think I like them better than the stories of the poets."

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The First Newspaper of America.

Do you ever think, children, as the BANNER comes to you week after week laden with its good things, that there was once a time when there were no newspapers in this country; and for a long time after they first began to be published they were so very expensive that but few could afford the luxury of taking them, and those few mostly business men?

Let us tell you about the first newspaper ever printed in this country. It was called the "Boston News Letter." It was published in 1704, by a Scotchman, whose name was Jonathan Campbell. He was postmaster of the then town of Boston, and also a bookseller. This, you know, was a long time before the War of the Revolution, and there were then no United States of America. This great nation was not then born. We were simply, in those days, the North American Colonies, and were subject to the reigning power of Great Britain.

Well, this paper, which may be called the forefather of all the newspapers of the present day, was printed on half a sheet of writing paper. Sometimes it had one advertisement, and often none. After it had been published fourteen years, its subscribers had increased to such an extent that three hundred copies were sold, and Mr. Campbell announced that as his weekly half sheet was not sufficient to enable him to keep up with the foreign news, he would publish an extra sheet once a fortnight.

After a year, he announced that this plan had enabled "the News Letter to retrieve eight months of the thirteen that it was behind in the news from Europe, so that those who would hold on till the next January (five months), might expect to have all the arrears of intelligence from the Old World needful for to be known in these parts."

Two years after, when the paper was sixteen years old, another notice appeared from the publisher, to the effect that, "Hereafter copies of the News Letter would be printed on a whole sheet."

of writing paper, one-half of which would be blank, on which letters might be written."

This tiny newspaper—about large enough to be laid upon the centre-table of a doll's baby-house—was, as we have said, the ancestor of the BANNER OF LIGHT, and of all the numerous dailies and weeklies that Boston now sends out to hundreds and thousands of readers.

Contrast it with the BANNER OF LIGHT which comes to you every week with eight large pages of reading matter; delightful stories, like Jessie Gray; sweet poems; children's tales and sketches, with charades and puzzles and transpositions; communications from the beautiful world where our loved ones, whom the death angel has taken from us, live and love us still, and whole columns of advertisements to tell us where to find every beautiful and useful thing we can want, from a new book to a microscope or steel pen.

Think, too, that all your privileges and pleasures are as far in advance of those enjoyed by the children who lived in 1704, as the BANNER OF LIGHT is in advance of the little "Boston News Letter," and rejoice and be glad that you live in these glorious days of Steam Printing Presses, Magnetic Telegraphs and Railroads, when newspapers and magazines and beautiful books are as abundant almost as the leaves on the forest trees, where we can know to day what was going on yesterday in the cities of London and Paris, and when a journey of a thousand miles is accomplished in a few hours.

To Correspondents.

Mathematical puzzle correctly solved by G. V. P.

UNIVERSALISM VS. SPIRITUALISM.

The following letter from Harvey A. Jones, Esq., will well repay a perusal. We commend it to our readers:

TO REV. G. W. QUINBY, EDITOR OF GOSPEL BANNER:

Dear Sir—Chance has thrown in my way your paper of Saturday, Nov. 17th, in which you criticize with great severity a Rev. S. C. Hayford, for leaving the ranks of the Universalist ministry and going over to those of Spiritualism. You begin your criticism with some show of fairness, but before you have "done" a quarter of a column, girding the Universalist creed closer and closer about your loins as you proceed, till near the close of your editorial, you become a veritable champion in the creed-bound cause.

Of Mr. Hayford's antecedents I know nothing but what can be gathered from his letter published in the same issue with your article. Said letter, however, bears the impress of the gentleman in every line, and the true man speaks out in his avowal of his conscientious convictions of duty, and had you been disposed to have been magnanimous, would have won from you a tribute for so much at least; while it seems neither you nor his congregation make any charges against his individual character, aside from his lapsing into "heresy."

You quote from Mr. Hayford's letter, saying that "religion is a reliance on our own internal power of communion with God and angels." You then add, "This, then, is all there is of religion: not to do nor believe anything!" Now, Bro. Quinby, how many years has it been since you complained of the Orthodox misrepresenting Universalism? Spiritualists do not, of course, believe anything, or believe in doing anything? Is it the trouble with you they believe and do too much?

Draw your lines of creed still closer; send forth your "paper" bulls! Who knows but you yet may land the van among the Evangelical Churches in religious persecution and excommunication? To be sure, you can't take such men as Peabodys, Fishbacks, Barretts and Hayfords with you, baptized with the inspirations of a living faith,

Correspondence in Brief.

The Message of David Wilder Verified by his Son.

To the Publishers of the Banner of Light:—In your last number (41) I find a communication from my father, David Wilder, who passed on in September last, at the age of eighty-eight years. Some of your readers may remember him as Treasurer of this Commonwealth, from 1837 to 1842, when he retired from the public service, in which for more than thirty years he had been almost constantly engaged.

Those who knew him, will bear witness that his theological opinions were of a very positive character, and as I had more than one occasion to learn, not at all favorable to our belief.

He has referred to a conversation held upon the subject of intercourse with the other world, at my house in Brookline some years since, and reports correctly what passed between us.

I cannot deny that I was very anxious that he should accept the truth which we value so highly, and that it was a trial to me to have him close his mind so firmly against it, as many more of my friends continue to do. But I did not doubt that when he had passed on, and the reality of the future organized active life had been made clear to him, he would return and do us justice, as I am sure all others will in their turn.

Many will be ready to acknowledge the truth before they change their condition, though a majority, perhaps, will prefer, like Nicodemus, to make their investigations privately, and keep their conclusions to themselves. Such, however, should remember that it is not possible to conceal even their thoughts from their friends in the other world, and that, so far as the general good, all their actions here can be exposed. But they have nothing to fear from others than themselves, as sometime in the future they will learn and admit to us, as our friend has who has just spoken.

I should add, that neither Mrs. Conant nor any other person connected with your paper had any knowledge of the circumstance mentioned by my father, or that I had desired him to return and make himself known. DAVID WILDER, State House, Boston, Dec. 17, 1866.

The Rochester Knockings.

It is said that the raps were first heard in the tenant house at Hydeville, N. Y., 1843 or 4, or about the time that the world came to an end the first time, according to Millerism. In 1842 and after, the writer was accustomed to communicate with the invisible through his magnetic subjects. Among other things, his spirit-friends predicted that intercourse between the natural and spiritual worlds would soon become common, and which he often stated in his lectures on Phrenology and Magnetism, chiefly in New York State. By request, he talked one evening in 1848 to C. W. Capron and his friends, in Dr. Fossate's office, at Auburn, near which the writer then lived in Skeneateles, N. Y. He spoke of the knockings in the Wesley family in England; with the Seers of Prevorst in Germany; of those of the Hamptons; around Rachel Baker, the sleeping preacher, and in the Fox family, all in New York State. Before parting, Capron promised to call at Hydeville, and did so, but the Fox girls had gone to Rochester to reside, and he found the evidence that the raps were a reality, so strong, that he followed the ladies to Rochester, was converted from his skepticism; persuaded Miss Katherine Fox to visit Auburn, and where Mrs. Benedict and Mrs. Tamm were soon developed as mediums also. The spirits, through Kate, promised to rap publicly, if he would go to Rochester. Accordingly Capron and George Willet engaged for that purpose Mechanics Hall, at Rochester. Crowds attended for three consecutive evenings, and the excitement increased, and the newspapers spread the mystery far and wide.

Thus the Rochester Knockings gained a notoriety in the world. Outsiders, however, were skeptical, as many are now; the papers soon said that the mysterious knockings had stopped, and had all died out. But the few spiritual believers then existing laughed at those rumors; for the "ghosts" would not down at the bidding of their ridiculous opposers.

In the same year, 1848, the raps through Mrs. Benedict, then of Auburn, promised, in answer to a question by the writer, in the presence of L. N. Fowler and others, to aid in the improvement of Phrenology, which they have since fulfilled.

SYSTEMATIC PHRENOLOGY.—By the aid of the spirits and the study of many years, the writer has made large discoveries and improvements in this useful science. Whoever will aid me with means to publish a pamphlet of sixteen pages and eight illustrations (four pages of which are already stereotyped and printed), shall share in the profits of the sale of the work, as the parties may agree.

Address, H. R. PARKER, Boston, Mass. Dec. 17, 1866.

From Vermont, III.—Discussion on Spiritualism.

As we have been having a good time; and more, as we live in a place not very extensively known outside of our own noble State, I take this opportunity of letting our friends and co-laborers in the cause of Progress know that we are still battering away at the old forts of bigotry and superstition, feeling that they must soon crumble under the combined forces of science and the angel-world. My object in writing, however, is to speak of some of the events of the past week. We secured the services of Dr. B. C. Dunn, for four lectures; but after he had delivered the second, a Mr. Hughes, (formerly a Universalist preacher), desired the privilege, on some future evening of having one hour to present his objections to Spiritualism; and as he refused to discuss more than one evening, the Doctor accepted his challenge, on his (Hughes) own conditions. This was on Sunday night, the discussions commenced on the next Wednesday night, and should have ended then, but it seems Mr. Hughes did not succeed in making his objections as plain as he had expected, so it was decided to continue the discussion, and it was kept up until Saturday night. Now as to the result, I will say but this: that the people were the judges, and I know not that it made one apostate. I hope not. But one thing it has done, and that is, it has set many minds to thinking; which will, I believe, bring them out all right in the end. I think I speak the sentiments of all the Spiritualists of this place, when I say we were well pleased with the arguments of Dr. Dunn, and we would recommend him to all who wish the services of a highly entertaining inspirational speaker. A. W. W. Vermont, III., Nov. 26, 1866.

Movements in the West.

I have some items of interest for the BANNER, showing the true and rapid progress of Spiritualism in the great West. For the last four months I have been lecturing and healing with good success in Iowa and Illinois.

There is a general coming up to the help of the spirit by the people in the work of reform in Missouri, Ill. I spoke there through the month of September, to more than good audiences. They have a true union spiritual society, that works for the all-good of people and country. They wish to be remembered by speakers coming westward. Elisha Nye is the man of note to be addressed.

My next place was Havana, Ill., where I spoke to a gathering to increasing audiences. The progress of Spiritualism in Havana has been slow but sure, through the earnest efforts of Dr. James Boggs. He has truly borne the burden of spiritual labor, and kept the Spiritual Philosophy before the people for a long time, and now he is a happy man, for he sees the cause of Spiritualism established in his city. They have just organized a Children's Progressive Lyceum, which is a true sign of earnest life and labor.

I am now engaged for a short time in Belvidere, Ill. Thence I go to Iowa City, Iowa, where all letters for me should be sent.

Dr. H. P. FAIRFIELD, Box 256, Iowa City, Iowa.

Hall for Spiritual Lectures.

I will be one of one thousand to raise \$10,000 to build a free hall in Washington City, and when built pay \$1.00 per annum to support lectures in it until the liberals are able to support themselves. Washington is the great political center of our country, in which we have a common interest. Then, during the session of Congress at least, there should be regular lectures. If there is any class needing refinement and reform it is

our public men. The history of Washington politics, and their influence on private character and public morals, is a terrible chapter of human existence. The subject is fruitful, but I may not pursue it. JOHN B. WOLFE. Denver, Col., 1866.

Spiritual Meetings in Toledo, Ohio.

EDITOR BANNER OF LIGHT.—Permit me a space in your valuable paper, that I may give your readers some account of our doings here—spiritually. We have a very fine hall, leased for three years, and hold meetings every Sunday, at half-past ten A. M., and half-past seven P. M., to which we invite all, free.

Mr. C. A. Hayden delivered three lectures for us last week; and I am sorry I am not able to give him a sufficient and merited notice. He is logical and eloquent beyond my powers of description.

Mrs. J. T. Fowler speaks for us December 23; and we invite all to come and hear one of those discourses seldom equalled, and in my judgment rarely surpassed.

I wish to say a word to those who live too far off to unite with us, and can't have meetings at home; send us aid, and we will return you a thousand fold; help us to expand until we are able to enclose you in our circle. You can send your note to our Treasurer, C. B. Elles. Those who from fear of being injured in business don't like to come out, can send us their note through the post-office. We are willing to bear the cross, but you can help us—we know you can. Give us means, and we are willing to do the work. Toledo, Ohio, Dec. 14, 1866. M. KNIGHT.

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1866.

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

WILLIAM WHITE & CO., PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

WM. WHITE. C. H. CROWELL. J. B. RICH.

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LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

All letters and communications intended for the Editorial Department of this paper, should be addressed to the Editor.

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

Religious Movements of the Day.

We were reading in a San Francisco paper, the other day, an amusing but perfectly truthful sketch by its editor, of the manner of getting up "revivals of religion" in his native town, years ago, the system having undergone no change to his knowledge since. It was a seaport town, where fifteen or twenty vessels were laid up for refitting and repairing every winter, and sailed for the whale-fisheries with the return of warmer weather. While the season was busy and brisk with the work of repair, caulking and carpenters and coopers being as active as merchants and ship-owners, and sailors were ashore spending over rum and knocking to pieces dilapidated old chairs and buggies—there was no time to think of anything else but what then engrossed the thought of the place. In October and November, however, the whalers were all off in pursuit of the oil-yielding monsters of the deep. The sound of hammers was no longer heard. The task of preparing outfits was all accomplished. The women were freed from the pressure of the work of making up clothing for a two and three years' voyage. The last sailor was forced on board, and the long wharf was deserted and silent. Then began the "revival" business. Because the weather was getting colder, and there was nothing left to do.

Says the writer, in continuation, and in explanation: "The Methodist and Baptist revivals were forcible, noisy and demonstrative. The Presbyterian revival was of a more quiet character. The Episcopalians looked on in dignified silence, and disapprovingly shook their heads. Certain individuals 'got religion' regularly every winter, and lost it regularly in the spring. I do not speak of this in ridicule. Every unprejudiced reader who has lived in an Eastern town has, to a greater or less extent, been a witness of the truth of these assertions. The work of 'getting religion' always flourished better when there was most commingling of the sexes. The first scenes of conversion were generally among the young ladies. Their pleadings with the young gentlemen for a reformation of heart were attended with remarkable success—at least temporary success. I never knew a revival to flourish among a society made up wholly of males."

The picture, on its face, is a faithful one. We give it only on that account. It furnishes as pointed and plain an illustration as we could have of the machinery—for it is just that—of the revival system. Well may the writer ask what every other reflecting mind asks, Why should there be anything like revivals in religion? Why should there be any ups and downs to such a matter as religion? If it is a vital and eternal principle, then it cannot die, and needs not to revive. But the answer would, if truly given, overturn the whole system of creeds, of which it is so useful and efficient an agent. It is a powerful and ready weapon in the hands of those who use it. When church matters grow dull, and the people are lax and become tired of the old preaching, and interest flags generally, and there are fears that the establishment may go down—then is stirred up that current of enthusiasm which is always found so very potent in men's, and particularly in women's hearts, and a contagious excitement is kindled, which in due time spreads through the dead branches and boughs, leading most of the congregations to confound what mortal power is able to effect with that which is purely spiritual and from on high. A great part of this excitement and contagion is magnetic—an influence involuntarily thrown off from the more robust and strong, and sometimes the more spiritual and soulful, upon such as are simply receptive and unresisting.

This thing, however, has come to be stale in a very large degree. Having been practiced as an art, or agency, so long and steadily, it is naturally losing much of its effect. Hence the people in the churches are casting about to yield their sentiments to a different class of influences. There is a far more independent spirit abroad; far more inquisitiveness and disposition to search into what is newer and broader and better. Hide-bound Theology has had a great many questions to answer of late years, which it knew it would not do to refuse answers to blankly, and which it has failed in even a majority of cases to respond to satisfactorily. Even such a journal as the New York Herald sees this, and recently devoted a column to its statement in detail, closing by asking, "What is to be the destiny of the new faith of Spiritualism?" It wants to know, too, if there "may not be something in it beyond the reach of reason and philosophy?" "At all events," it adds, "the religious world, like the political world in both hemispheres, is full of the elements

of agitation, innovation and change; and from these disturbing elements Christianity, Protestant and Catholic, is evidently on the road to some new and wonderful reforms."

No statement could have more truth in it than that contained in the last clause. That there is a mighty upheaval going on, comparatively silent now, because unrecognized in its effects, any observing mind may readily discover. The churches are by no means satisfied with the meagre and unsubstantial creeds and theories which are all that their systems teach and preach. All of them in this country are divided, and we behold so venerable an institution as the Church of England, whose roots strike down into the very depths of the social soil, agitated and shaken to its centre with simple discussions of questions that were never asked until this generation. There is religious as well as political commotion everywhere. It is, in fact, the advance of "the spirit of the age." If Spiritualism is not abreast with that power, then no religion is. It looks at everything as it is proposed. It is the grand solvent which is destined to answer many a perplexing problem.

The Indian Business.

A document in the shape of a Report from Major-General Hazen, acting Inspector-general of the Platte department, published some time since, reveals better than any characterization of it could, the atrocious cold-bloodedness which signals the entire treatment of the Indians at the hands of our officers. It is a labored effort of one of our military commanders to excite and keep alive the prejudice against the Indians, which too many are ready to appeal to from interested motives. To be perfectly fair with General Hazen, we make room for an extract from the report to which we refer. It is as follows:

"The ideal Indian of the popular mind is found only in poetry and Cooper's novels. The Indian who now inhabits the plains is a dirty beggar and thief, who murders the weak and unprotected, but never attacks an armed foe. He keeps no promise, and only makes them that he may more easily carry on his murder and pillage. He knows no sentiment but revenge and fear, and cares only to live in his vagrancy. All efforts to better his condition have as yet failed, and his ingratitude, and prove unproductive of any good. The fact that one in a thousand has become civilized proves nothing, nor does it that our people can sometimes become as low and deceitful, and murders as the Indian. The white man owes the Indian nothing. He is in the way of natural evolution of progress, and when Government pays, what is to him a reasonable compensation for his title to the territory, or for privileges in it, the debt is as perfectly canceled as when a corporation pays the assessed value of the site of a public school."

So the Indian "is in the way of natural evolution of progress." Such progress as some men make by cheating in the purchase of skins and lands, and the sale of rum. "The white man owes the Indian nothing." Oh, no; he has got all the red man ever had, and now he turns him out to die on the prairies and by the mountain sides, and at other times slaughtering his squaws and papooses, and burning his lodges. This is Gen. Hazen's patent for an "evolution of progress." No candid mind can deny that, of the two, the Indian is not in these matters making the most progress by far. Such totally inhuman sentiments as these Hazen sentiments are a disgrace to the philanthropic age, which should lose no time in rebuking them.

If the Indian cannot "be civilized," as the above extract would imply, it is mainly by reason of Gen. Hazen having put his standard of civilization too low. How will he be able to answer to such illustrations of an elevated Indian character as are to be found in the case of Eli Parker, the Chief of the Six Nations, at present on the staff of General Grant? Mr. Parker is a civil engineer of great skill and large attainments, and a gentleman of well-known culture. In his position at the head of the Six Nations, he has shown that the tribes could be easily adapted to the requirements of civilization.

The Indians in Michigan are answering to the demands of the age, and becoming civilized as fast as they can. The main difference in this respect between them and the negro is, the latter is by nature more domestic. The Cherokee Indians have established precisely the opposite of what Gen. Hazen would have believed. This style of speaking of the Indians is false and wicked, and ought to be brought to an end. If the Indians are treacherous, what have we been ourselves? At any rate, no Gen. Hazens will ever teach such things the true side of civilization.

How to Save in Cost.

The cooperative plan, as applied by sundry classes in London, is found to work to a charm. The same thing should be tried in this country. We have indeed seen a proposal to set such a plan on foot in New York, and hope it will succeed. By clubbing together their means and forming a respectably strong body of capital, clerks and men of measured incomes can purchase all the commodities of life very much nearer cost than at present, and in fact at the best wholesale prices. When men see their own interests in a matter of this sort, they will be sure to find a way to work them out. The New York enterprise, we hear, is to have a capital of not less than \$100,000 to begin operations with.

The system is an excellent one, because both sound and economical. Applied, however, to sharing in the profits of labor with the proprietors of mechanical and manufacturing establishments, it is found to work still more admirably. Workmen put the stimulus of interest, which is the next thing to inspiration, into their efforts, and not only is twice as much done but it is done twice as well. The time has come when the inherent rights of Labor are being heard. The awakening of the age to the plans and claims of justice does not permit a single one to go unheard; and none is so powerful or urgent as that of Labor. By presenting and advocating Cooperation in all its forms, we think the case will be sooner determined in favor of Labor than in almost any other way.

Becoming Frightened.

Under the heading, "Lack of Ministers," the New Covenanter (Universalist) says: "No denomination is suffering more severely from this lack than our own." And why? Because the most talented and far-seeing Universalist ministers are joining our grand spiritualist army that is now marching on to victory. This is why Bro. Quinby of the Gospel Banner feels sore at the loss of Rev. Mr. Hayford. He sees that it is but the beginning of a general stampede in the same direction. The Orthodox are in a similar fix.

Miss Doten in Mercantile Hall.

The course of lectures being delivered in this city by Miss Lizzie Doten, is exceedingly popular, and the hall has been over-crowded each Sunday afternoon. On the 10th she gave a fine discourse, closing with an original poem in harmony with the address. In the evening she spoke in Chelsea. Remember that next Sunday is her last here for the present, as she speaks in New York the next two months.

Our Friends over the Water.

We had a pleasant call from Bro. Edwin H. Green, last week, the gentleman alluded to in the following circular issued by the friends of Spiritualism in England. He has visited various parts of our country, going as far West as St. Louis. We reciprocate the kindly feelings expressed in the circular, and shall, in return, do all that lies in our power to aid our English friends in spreading the glorious truths of Spiritualism throughout the world.

ENGLAND, Sept. 18, 1866.

To the Spiritualists of the United States of America:—BROTHERS AND SISTERS.—Through our beloved brother, Edwin Harrison Green, we, Brethren and Sisters of the Progressive Spiritualists of Great Britain, greet you. We would, through him, express to you our warmest thanks, and our hearty cooperation—our thanks for the goodness we feel, on reading in the BANNER OF LIGHT and in the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, the notices of your Conventions, and the noble efforts you are making in our Great Father's vineyard to free the mind of man from the trammels of Creeds, Ignorance and Superstition—our cooperation, by forming, through our Brother, bonds of unity in our holy cause.

We most joyfully fraternize with you in the work of providing a more liberal and enlightened system of education for the young, believing, as we do, that the basis of all permanent social progress must be laid in the right education of children, the holy innocents of childhood being the best soil in which to sow the seeds of truth.

We would also cooperate with you in cherishing and extending among all nations, the feeling of true Brotherhood—the feeling that wherever man is, there are our brethren; and we shall rejoice with you in the realization of the idea that mind is master of matter; not a non-entity, an ethereal nothing; and we congratulate you that we have at last found means to demonstrate that the invisible is, and ever was the only reality, the visible being but the effect.

Through our Brother we greet you, and mingle our happy hearts with yours in songs of thanksgiving and praise to the Great Father of all, that we have been blessed with the knowledge that so soon as we have cast off our visible bodies, we begin to enjoy our new birth, a birth into a higher and loftier condition, where the gravity of old philosophy cannot longer press upon us; where we shall receive our reward under the law of moral gravity, according to as we have lived lives of truthfulness and holiness.

We greet you, then, dear Brethren and Sisters, with the thought that time is the only boundary for nations, and that the people therein are one vast brotherhood. Such being our simple greeting, we would ask you to receive our Brother, and explain to him any plan of organization which may have proved most useful to you in the promulgation of the glorious cause of spirit-communication, subscribing ourselves fraternally yours in the cause of Progressive Reform.

JOHN HODGE, President of the British Association of Progressive Spiritualists.

JOSEPH DIXON, Treasurer. Corresponding Committee.—Miss L. Chapman, White Stone Lane, Hill House, Huddersfield; Mrs. Chapman, Bradford-on-Avon; Miss M. A. Aldwin, White Stone Lane, Hill House, Huddersfield; James Calhoun, 65 Ring street, Cork, Ireland; Thos. Etchells, Dungeon House, Huddersfield.

Realization of a Vision.

The following not improbable story is given to the public through an Oswego paper, and has been pretty generally copied into other journals. Spirit-warnings, given in visions or in dreams, of similar import, are of common occurrence among mediums, and the one here narrated is probably true:

"An Oswego lady, a boarding-house keeper, dreamed she saw a steamer on fire on Lake Erie, and in the rigging a man enveloped in flames. She then seemed to be transferred to the country, where she saw a new-made grave, and the sexton, a Mr. Pierce, with a white horse, bring the corpse of the burned man for burial. The next day Mr. Brown, one of the boarders, brought a friend to dine with him by the name of Pool, a gentleman from New York. As soon as she saw the stranger, she recognized him as the person in the dream on the burning steamer. She had never seen him before save in the dream. At evening he did not return with his friend B. to tea. She inquired where he was, and Mr. B. replied that he had taken the steamer Erie for Cleveland. She then related her dream, and expressed her fears to Mr. B., who only laughed at her credulity. Early next morning Mr. B. went out, but soon returned in the wildest excitement, exclaiming, 'Oh, my God! the steamer Erie was burned last night, and my friend Pool was burned with her! Mr. Pierce, the sexton, with his white horse, was sent to bring the remains and give them a sepulchre in the cemetery, just as was seen in the dream.'"

The Religio-Philosophical Journal.

At the recent annual meeting of the stockholders of the Religio-Philosophical Publishing Association, a new board of Directors was chosen, and a radical change effected in the business and editorial management of the Journal. Mr. H. C. Childs, of Wheaton, Ill., was elected President; J. W. Smith, of Ringwood, Vice President; Rev. J. O. Barrett, Secretary; S. K. Reed, Treasurer and Superintendent, and H. H. Marsh, Auditor. Frank L. Vadevort, one of the Directors, is retained in the editorial department.

The last number of the Journal contains the valedictory of S. S. Jones, Esq., as President and editor-in-chief. He says, "In retiring from its management, I shall not withhold my sympathy and good wishes for its continued growth and prosperity," etc.

We wish our contemporary the best of success, and trust its new managers will bring to it strength and patronage sufficient to enable it to work nobly and effectively in the cause of Spiritualism and general reform. There is a great work to accomplish, and we bid the Journal God-speed in its glorious mission.

J. M. Peebles in Charlestown.

Our collaborer, Bro. Peebles, on his way to Washington, D. C., where he is engaged to lecture during January, will make a flying visit to Boston, and we are happy to announce that the First Society of Spiritualists in our neighboring city of Charlestown has secured his services for two lectures—one in the afternoon, and another in the evening, on Sunday, Dec. 30th, in Washington Hall, commencing at the usual time. Mr. Peebles has no superior in the lecturing field, and wins the admiration and attention of his audiences as fully as Henry Ward Beecher does in "his happiest moods." This will afford an opportunity (which will not again occur for a long time) for our friends in Charlestown, and this city, too, to listen to this eloquent expounder of our Philosophy.

Spiritualism in England.

We have the published proceedings of the British Association of Progressive Spiritualists, at their Second Convention, held at Newcastle-on-Tyne, July 25 and 26, 1866. It embodies the prepared essays and papers that were read, the inspirational addresses by mediums, resolutions and discussions, with an account of the séances, and the wonderful manifestations witnessed thereat. The paper read before the Convention by Mr. Etchells, on "The Atmosphere of Intelligence, Pleasure and Pain," is of remarkable power and beauty, and is commended in strong terms by the London Spiritual Magazine. In it are facts concerning the phenomenon of "the Double," which are of profound interest. The entire report forms a body of solid and thoughtful reading for Spiritualists.

Let us Try Now!

As this year is about to leave us, every subscriber to the BANNER OF LIGHT should make a strong effort to add one more; and in this way the subscription list can be greatly augmented. There can be no great work performed without some effort. If every person that is now a subscriber will take hold of this matter in earnest, much good can be accomplished. We should all remember what strong efforts have been and are now made to check the Spiritual Car of Progress; and this should stimulate us to renewed exertions in behalf of our beloved BANNER. In soliciting subscriptions, we are apt to find persons half inclined to subscribe. In cases of this kind I think it a good plan to find two of the same mind, and induce each to pay one-half, and take the paper between them. In shops where there are a number of persons engaged, it will be but a trifle for each to pay, and have the paper placed where all can have an opportunity to peruse it. Let us try. A SUBSCRIBER.

We thank our correspondent for the above suggestions, and hope the friends of the BANNER will do all they can to carry them into practical operation. Scatter the LIGHT broadcast over the land!

The Mexican Question.

We have such confused reports from Mexico, it is difficult to know what to believe; but it is certain, if anything can be, that the French troops are to be at once taken out of the country. Maximilian ran away; then refused to abdicate; then abdicated and started for Europe; and now stays where he is, at Orizaba, and declares he is not going to leave, not going to abdicate, and has got all the money he wants out of the priests and merchants of Mexico. So far as France is concerned, the Mexican question appears to be settled; so far as Maximilian has to do with it, it is still in a muddle. Minister Campbell, with Gen. Sherman, has gone out with definite instructions, which begin with the recognition and support of the Juarez Government; and that leaves the Austrian no chance whatever to gain a permanent footing. Juarez has the inside track.

What Affection Is.

We have fallen in with a reported discourse on the Social Affections, from Rev. J. C. French, of Brooklyn, N. Y., many of the thoughts in which are worthy to be read in every circle and by every person in the country. He said that, in this world, affection demanded affection, and love is the food of love. Its first element is respect; there can be no love where there is no respect. The second element is confidence, which naturally follows respect. And in bringing these elements to your friend, you exact the same of him, and in equal quantity. You demand the demonstrations which these inspire. You are chilled by indifference and unresponsiveness. You pine in secret if the qualities you contribute are not fully answered to. Long pining in time destroys all; we cannot continue our love where it is not received and reciprocated.

The Holidays.

It is a pleasant thing when the Holidays come around again. They reach us this year under generally agreeable circumstances, and with hearts full of gratitude for the uncounted blessings of the year about ending. How happy the young people are now! There is danger of overdoing this class with the comforts of favoritism during the rest of the year, but while the Christmas and New Year's season lasts it is perfectly allowable to heighten their pleasures in every conceivable way not wholly at war with reason. The more friendships there are formed and renewed during this season, the better. The more kind wishes there are expressed, the more happiness will be diffused over the world. Such a term ought certainly to come as often as once in every year. It will be a blessing to thousands, those who extend and give quite as much as those who receive.

Enterprise Rewarded.

The Daily Evening Voice, of this city, which, when it was first issued by a party of energetic printers, was poked at by the "respectable" dailies of Boston as a slim affair, and which they prophesied would live but a few short months, has won its way to fame, and is justly appreciated by the business world for its telegraphic news far in advance of the other Boston dailies! Go ahead, gents, and teach the overgrown dailies that they should not forget the day of small things; that the acorn becomes the oak; and that the "Evening Voice" may yet swell to trumpet-tones all over the land, calling the workmen of the nation together in solid phalanx, to wrest the administration of public affairs from political knaves and newspaper wire-pullers.

Personal.

Warren Chase will lecture in Cleveland, O., next Sunday, Dec. 30th, and in Newark, N. J., the first two Sundays of January.

We hear that A. T. Foss is meeting with great success in Willimantic, Conn., where he has been preaching the Spiritual Philosophy for several weeks past. He goes to Portland, Me., for the month of January.

George A. Peirce will speak in the town hall, Newport, Me., Dec. 30; at North Turner Bridge, Jan. 6, 13 and 20.

Dr. F. L. H. Willis closes his lecturing engagement in Haverhill next Sunday. He speaks in Providence, R. I., during January.

Miss Louisa M. Alcott is writing a volume of sketches, suggested by her European tour.

Mrs. Ella Davis Rockwood, of Natick, Mass., has achieved marked success as a Lyceum lecturer.

Beecher's Lecture.

Henry Ward Beecher delivered the fifth lecture of the course before the Mercantile Library Association, to a very large and brilliant audience, in Music Hall, on the 19th December. His subject was "Universal Suffrage." His argument in favor of giving woman the right to the ballot was strong and sound, and several times received the hearty applause of the audience. Mr. Beecher was quite animated all through the discourse, which was very able and exceedingly interesting. The next lecture will be by John B. Gough, on Wednesday evening, Jan. 10th.

Fair in Charlestown.

The Independent Society of Spiritualists of Charlestown will hold a Fair during Christmas week, in the City Hall, as we stated last week. Those wishing to purchase Christmas and New Year's presents, will find a full supply of appropriate articles at this Fair. In connection with the Fair, there is to be speaking, singing, &c. The proceeds are to be applied toward building a new hall for spiritual meetings.

Anderson's Great Spirit-Picture.

We have received a photograph copy of W. P. Anderson's splendid picture of Antone, the half-breed Indian, which was elaborately described in our paper of Dec. 1st, by our New York correspondent. It is one of the most remarkable of Mr. Anderson's spirit-pictures.

Joe; Augusta Jennings, to her aunt, Carrie Dempster, in New York City.

Obituaries.

Passed on, from Granville, N. Y., Nov. 26th, 1866, Ruth, wife of Alexander Nicom, aged 84 years.

Another star is added to the galaxy of the immortal. Another link is formed in the chain of divine affections entering the celestial home, from whence will be borne messages of comfort to her bereaved family. Mrs. Nicom was a Quaker origin, and the last years of her earthly life have been crowned with knowledge of spirit-communion, which brightened her future prospects, and gave a blissful entrance into the Summer-land. She was a wife, mother, friend, and neighbor, we may not enumerate, for all that belonged to a true womanhood were manifest in her daily ministrations to the afflicted.

The funeral was attended at her residence, where many friends assembled to pay tributes of respect and extend sympathies to the bereaved husband and children, while angels sang to the blessed assurance that "All is well," which may they fully realize by the evidence that she still lives and loves with holy affections.

Passed to the Higher Life, Emma Florence Jarvis, of Warren, Maine, in the 44th year of her age.

Snipped by the frosts of the icy King, just as the tender bud seemed ready to unfold into a beautiful flower. This dear child came from her rocky home to our more genial clime, in the hope of finding respite from the grim messenger, whose icy fingers had opened with covering to her face, and a gentle, one by one, until all save one is gone. But it was in vain, for the angels had marked her as their own, and they came to welcome her to her new home with the celestials. So, as a grim and gloomy messenger came to her, but as a welcome friend to relieve her from life's pains and trials, and open the flower encircled door that leads to the home above. Though so young, she had a full knowledge of many loving friends, and to this it will be a satisfaction to know that death was not a "king of terrors" to her. Before the silver cord was severed, she expressed a strong desire, "I would give her up and let her go home."

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As a method of curing the sick and the diseased, with the methods of the schools, will show a difference equally profound and radical, and a superiority of the former over the latter equally great.

As the most prominent and important of all the other recognized spiritual methods of treating disease, we would refer to the Positive and Negative system, which, as is well known, was projected through the mediumship of Mrs. Amanda M. Spence, and is embodied in the Positive and Negative Powders which bear her name. In principle, in practice, and in results the medical schools of the day present us nothing that bears the remotest resemblance to them. They embody a deeply radical and revolutionary movement, as widely different from the system of mere drugs and chemicals as is the laying on of hands; while in results, or curative effects, the difference is so vast that a comparison is hardly possible. I make this statement with confidence, and with deliberation, and with a full knowledge of both sides of the question. Being myself an educated physician, and having been for several years a Professor in one of the oldest medical schools in the West, I fully understand the old system, and I know the full extent of its curative powers; and, moreover, having had the sole external management of the spiritual system of Positive and Negative ever since its projection into the world, through the mediumship of Mrs. Spence, and having during the past year, and at intervals since, treated thousands of patients, far and near, in all parts of the United States and Territories, with the Positive and Negative Powders, I fully understand the spiritual system, and know the full extent of its wonderfully curative and healing powers. I am justified then in instituting a comparison. That comparison shows the spiritual system, as embodied in Mrs. Spence's Positive and Negative Powders, to be superior to the old systems in the following prominent and most important respects, as well as in all others.

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2d. In its practical operation. Whoever has watched the treatment of a patient under the old system of treatment, or still better, whoever has visited the wards of a public hospital, must have been sickened, disheartened and discouraged at the endless and disgusting round of purging, vomiting, nauseating, sweating, cupping, blistering, plastering, salving, and the great variety of other visible, external and often violent effects which the physician intentionally produces, or endeavors to produce, in keeping with his principles of counteracting the visible external and outward effects of disease. But the practical operation of the spiritual system, as embodied in Mrs. Spence's Positive and Negative Powders, is radically different. They aim at the invisible cause of disease; and hence they neither produce, nor are they intended to produce, any visible, external or violent effects—no purging, no nauseating, no vomiting, no sweating, no cupping, no blistering, no plastering, no salving; but they silently, gently and soothingly pervade the patient's system, and by restoring the magnetic balance or equilibrium of the diseased organ or organs, restore them to perfect health.

3d. In its results. I have already published, in the columns of the BANNER, testimony and evidence, in the form of certificates and reports from private individuals and also from physicians, sufficient to convince every candid reader that the spiritual system, as embodied in Mrs. Spence's Positive and Negative Powders, is as far superior to the old systems in its results, or curative effects, as it is in its scientific principle and in its practical operation. And yet the evidence thus far published is but a small fragment of that which is in my possession. Diseases of all kinds, the most complicated as well as the most simple, diseases hereditary as well as acquired, diseases which are incurable as well as those that are curable by the old methods, all alike have readily yielded to the singular and extraordinary healing and curative power of the Positive and Negative Powders.

Such being the facts with regard to the Positive and Negative Powders, it is my intention to persevere in holding them up before the public until every family and every adult man and woman shall test their virtues for themselves, and thus, from personal experience, learn and appreciate their full merits. And in furtherance of this object, I take the liberty of referring the reader to the published testimonials which will be found in another column of the BANNER, and I also refer to all persons who reside in, or who may visit New York, a cordial invitation to call at my office, No. 374 St. Marks Place, and if they desire more evidence, it will afford me much pleasure to lay before them such a mass of letters, certificates and reports as will satisfy the most skeptical that I have said naught in exaggeration of the merits of the spiritual system, as embodied in Mrs. Spence's Positive and Negative Powders.

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