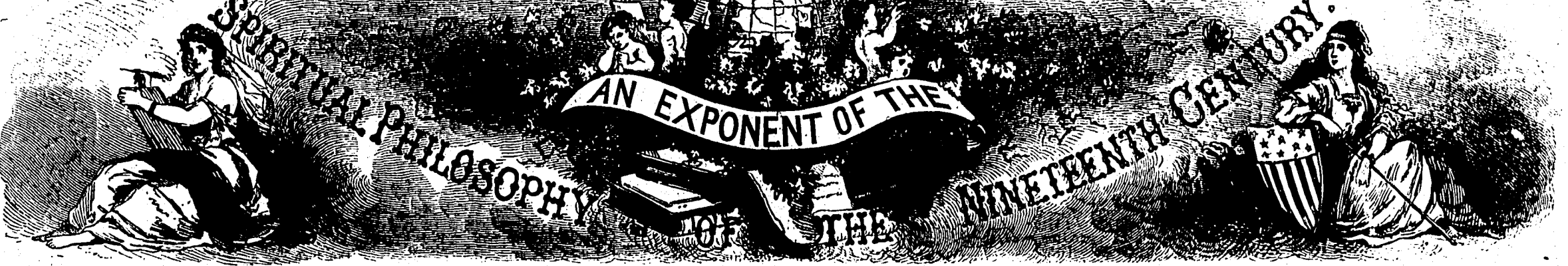


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## Spiritual Phenomena.

### ACCREDITED MANIFESTATIONS.

#### THE SPECTRAL CLERGYMAN.

BY COUNT HALLSHEIM.

"I am not so decidedly skeptical on the possibility of supernatural appearances as to treat them with ridicule, because they may appear to be unphilosophical. I received my education in the University of Konigsberg, where I had the advantage of attending lectures in ethics and moral philosophy, delivered by a professor who was esteemed a very superior man in those branches of science. He had, nevertheless, though an ecclesiastic, the reputation of being tinged with incredulity on various points connected with revealed religion. When, therefore, it became necessary for him in the course of his lectures to treat on the nature of spirits as detached from matter, to discuss the immortality of the soul, and to enter on the doctrine of a future state, I listened with more than ordinary attention to his opinions. In speaking of all these mysterious subjects, there appeared to me to be so visible an embarrassment, both in his language and in his expressions, that I felt the strongest curiosity to question him further respecting them. Finding myself alone with him soon afterwards, I ventured to state to him my remarks on his deportment, and entreated him to tell me if they were well founded, or only imaginary suggestions.

"The hesitation which you noticed," answered he, "resulted from the conflict that takes place within me, when I am attempting to convey my ideas on a subject where my understanding is at variance with the testimony of my senses. I am equally, from reason and reflection, disposed to consider with incredulity and contempt the existence of apparitions. But an appearance, which I have witnessed with my own eyes, as far as they, or any of the perceptions, can be confided in, and which has even received a sort of subsequent confirmation from other circumstances connected with the original facts, leave me in that state of skepticism and suspense which pervaded my discourse. I will communicate to you its cause. Having been brought up to the profession of the Church, I was presented by Frederick William the First, late King of Prussia, to a small benefice, situated in the interior of the country, at a considerable distance south of Konigsberg. I repaired thither, in order to take possession of my living, and found a neat parsonage house, where I passed the night in the bedchamber which had been occupied by my predecessor.

"It was in the longest days of summer; and on the following morning, which was Sunday, while lying awake, the curtains of the bed being undrawn, and it being broad daylight, I beheld the figure of a man, habited in a sort of loose gown, standing at a reading desk, on which lay a large book, the leaves of which he appeared to turn over at intervals; on each side of him stood a little boy, in whose face he looked earnestly from time to time, and as he looked he always seemed to heave a deep sigh. His countenance, pale and disconsolate, indicated some distress of mind. I had the most perfect view of these objects, but being impressed too much with terror and apprehension to rise or to address myself to the appearances before me, I remained for some minutes a breathless and silent spectator, without uttering a word or altering my position. At length the man closed the book, and taking the two children, one in each hand, he led them slowly across the room; my eyes eagerly followed him till the three figures gradually disappeared, or were lost behind an iron stove which stood at the furthest end of the apartment.

"However deeply and awfully I was affected by the sight which I had witnessed, and however unable I was of explaining it to my own satisfaction, yet I recovered sufficiently the possession of my mind to get up, and having hastily dressed myself, I left the house. The sun was long risen, and directing my steps to the church, I found that it was open; but the sexton had quit it, and on entering the chancel, my mind and imagination were so strongly impressed by the scene which had recently passed, that I endeavored to dissipate the recollection by considering the objects around me. In almost all Lutheran churches of the Prussian dominions, it is the custom to hang up against the walls, or some part of the building, the portraits of the successive pastors, or clergymen, who have held the living. A number of these paintings, rudely performed, are suspended in one of the aisles. But I had sooner fixed my eyes on the last in the range, which was the portrait of my immediate predecessor, than they became riveted to the object; I instantly recognized the same face which I beheld in my bed-chamber, though not clouded by the same deep impression of melancholy and distress. The sexton entered as I was still contemplating this interesting head, and I immediately began a conversation with him on the subject of the persons who had preceded me in the living. He remembered several incumbents, concerning whom respectively I made various inquiries, till I concluded by the last, relative to whose history I was particularly inquisitive. We considered him," said the sexton, "as one of the most learned and amiable men who have reigned among us. His pure character and benevolence endeared him to all his parishioners, who long lament his loss. But he was carried off in the middle of his days by a lingering illness, the cause of which has given rise to many unimportant reports among us, and which still form the subject of conjecture. It is, however, commonly believed that he died of a broken heart."

"My curiosity being still more warmly excited by the mention of this circumstance, I eagerly pressed him to disclose to me all he knew or heard on the subject. 'Nothing respecting it,"

answered he, 'is absolutely known; but scandal has propagated a story of his having formed a criminal connection with a young woman of the neighborhood, by whom it was even asserted he had two sons. As confirmation of the report, I know that there certainly were two children who have been seen at the parsonage, boys of about four or five years old; but they suddenly disappeared, some time before the decease of their

supposed father; though to what place they are sent, or what has become of them, we are wholly ignorant. It is equally certain, that the surmises and unfavorable opinions formed respecting this mysterious business, which must necessarily have reached him, precipitated, if they did not produce the disorder of which our late pastor died; but he is gone to his account, and we are bound to think charitably of the departed."

"Thus spoke the sexton, and it is unnecessary to say with what emotion I listened to this relation, which recalled to my imagination, and seemed to give proof of the existence of all that I had seen. Yet, unwilling to suffer my mind to become enlaved by phantoms which might have been the effect of error or deception, I neither communicated to the sexton the circumstance which I had witnessed, nor even permitted myself to quit the

pains enough, if you have searched all these drawers, chests, and coffers, and everything that may have been in them."

"Indeed," answered Wallis, "I have examined them myself, and looked over all the musty writings one by one; and they have all passed through my hand and under my eye."

"Well," said the Doctor, "will you gratify my curiosity by opening and emptying this small chest or coffer?"

Reginald Wallis, looking at the chest, said, smiling:

"I remember opening it," and turning to his servant, he asked: "William, do you not remember that chest?"

"Yes, sir," replied the servant; "I remember you were so tired, that you sat down upon the chest when everything was out of it. Yes; you shut the lid and sat down, and sent me to fetch you a dram of brandy, as you said you were ready to faint."

"Well," said the Doctor, "it is only a whim of mine, and probably the chest may contain nothing."

"You shall see it turned upside down before your face, as well as the rest."

Thereupon Wallis caused the coffer to be dragged out and opened. When the papers which it contained were all out, the Doctor turning round, as if looking among them, but taking little or no notice of the chest, stooped down; then, as if supporting himself with his cane, he struck the stick into the chest, but snatched it out again hastily, as if it had been an accident; and turning to the chest, he shut the lid, and seated himself upon it. Having dismissed the servant, "Now, Mr. Wallis," said he, "I have found your grandfideel of settlement; and I will lay you a hundred guineas it is in this coffer!"

Wallis raised the lid again, handled the chest, looked over every part of it, but could see nothing; he was confounded and amazed.

"What do you mean?" cried he to the Doctor; "here is nothing but an empty coffer!"

"Upon my word," rejoined Scott, "I am no conjuror, but I tell you again that I am very certain the lost title-deed is in this chest! Ah, you may well look at me with amazement and incredulity; but no matter! It may be an idea—a prementum on my part—call it what you will—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted Reginald Wallis, impatiently. "But—"

"Call your servant back again," said Dr. Scott, "and tell him to bring us a hammer and chisel. This was quickly done; and, when the implements arrived, the Doctor struck a good blow with the hammer on the bottom of the chest."

"There!" he exclaimed, "do not you hear it, sir? Do not you hear it plainly?"

"Hear what?" cried Wallis; "I do not understand you."

"Why, the chest has a double bottom—a false bottom," said the Doctor. "Do not you hear it sound hollow?"

In a word, they immediately split the false bottom open, and there found the parchment spread out flat on the whole breadth of the bottom of the trunk.

It is impossible to describe the joy and surprise of Reginald Wallis and of his whole family, for he sent for his wife and daughters to come up at once to see the place and manner in which the lost deed was found. The reader may imagine how fervent were the expressions of gratitude poured forth to Dr. Scott; but he gently repelled them, observing that it was by a mere "accident" he had been instrumental in discovering the document.

It was not until some years afterwards, when he lay upon his death-bed, that he revealed the whole truth of the mystery, and explained how he had acted in accordance with the instructions of one from the dead.

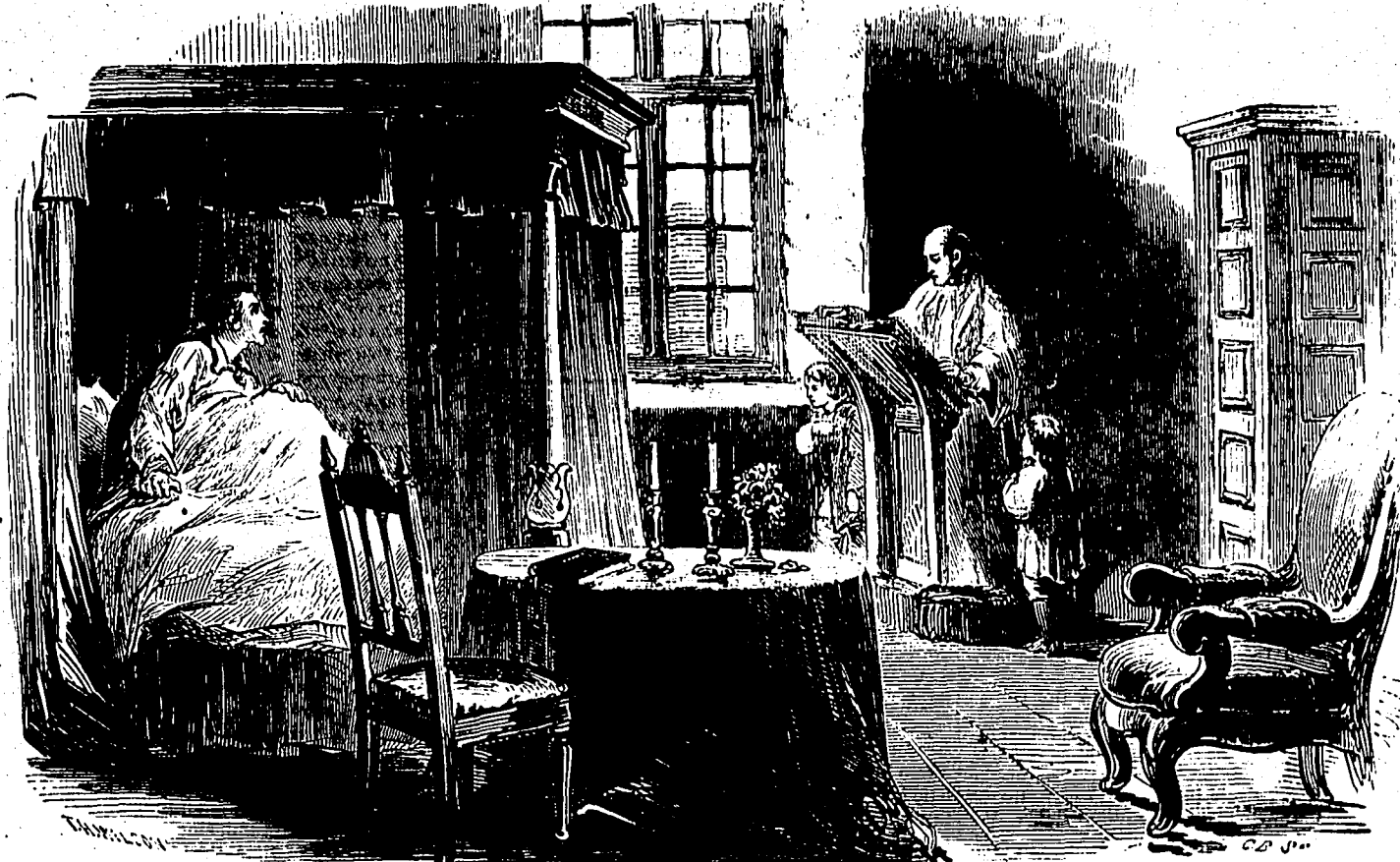
#### THE MOTHER'S DREAM.

Nearly a century ago a poor but honest old woman, named Howell, who lived at Greenwich, England, had a very unpromising son who got connected with a set of desperadoes, and, in consequence of nefarious practices, was several times imprisoned in Clerkenwell Jail. The magistrates of the county, in order to reclaim him, sent him to sea as a marine; from which, however, he found means to escape in 1779. Returning to London, he committed a burglary in Bishopsgate street, and was sent to the Poultry Compter for trial at the sessions, together with a young woman who passed as his wife.

On the same night his mother at Greenwich dreamt that she saw her son in prison, and ironed; she beheld him also arraigned at the bar with the woman, found guilty and condemned to die, whilst the woman was acquitted. This calamitous dream was carried still further. She saw her son going in a cart to Tyburn, and there executed with four other offenders. The catastrophe of this scene so operated upon her mind that she awoke in the utmost agony, and resolved, without communicating her design to any of her neighbors, immediately to reach London, to try whether she could hear anything of her son.

On inquiry, she was informed that the young man was in the Compter; to which place she instantly repaired, and was admitted. On her entrance into the yard, she beheld her son exactly as she had seen him in her dream; declaring that the place all around was just as she had viewed it the preceding night. To shorten the story, she told the dream to the turnkey, but concealed it from the prisoner, who, soon after, was tried, convicted and sentenced to be executed, and accordingly was hanged at Tyburn the 19th of January, 1780.

Sydney Smith said he saw no more reason why he should remember all the old books that had made him learned, than why he should remember all the old dinners that had made him fat. Mental and physical vigor justified both literature and dinners.



THE SPECTRES APPEAR TO THE NEW INCUMBENT.

chamber where it had taken place. I continued to lodge there, without ever witnessing any similar appearance; and the recollection itself began to wear away, as the autumn advanced. When the approach of winter rendered it necessary to light fires through the house, I ordered the iron stove which stood in the room, and behind which the figure I had beheld, together with the two boys seemed to disappear, to be heated for the purpose of warming the apartment. Some difficulty was experienced in making the attempt, the stove not only smoking intolerably, but also emitting a very offensive smell. Having, therefore, sent for a blacksmith to inspect and repair it, he discovered in the inside, at the furthest extremity, the bones of two small human bodies, corresponding perfectly in size as well as in other respects with the description given me by the sexton of the two boys who had been seen at the parsonage.

"This last circumstance completed my astonishment, and appeared to confer a sort of reality on an appearance which might otherwise have been considered as a delusion of the senses. I resigned the living, quitted the place, and retired to Konigsberg; but it has produced on my mind the deepest impression, and has in its effect given rise to that uncertainty and contradiction of sentiment which you remarked in my late discourse."

#### THE GHOST AND THE TITLE-DEED.

Some years ago the well-known physician, Dr. Scott, was seated by the fire reading, at his house in old Broad street, London. It was evening; the cares of the day were over, and the Doctor was enjoying his book, when, accidentally raising his head, he saw in an elbow-chair, at the opposite side of the fire-place or chimney, a grave gentleman in a black velvet gown, a long wig, looking with a pleasing countenance toward the Doctor, as if about to speak to him.

The Doctor was much perturbed. According to his narrative of the fact, the spectre, it seems, spoke first, and desired the Doctor not to be alarmed; that he came to him upon a matter of great importance to an injured family, which was in great danger of being ruined; and though he (the Doctor) was a stranger to the family, yet, knowing him to be a man of integrity, he had chosen him to do this act of charity and justice.

The Doctor was not at first composed enough to enter into the business with due attention, but seemed rather inclined to get out of the room if he could; and once or twice he made an attempt to knock for some of the family to come up. Having at length recovered himself, he said, "In the name of heaven, what art thou?"

After much importunity on the part of the Doctor, the apparition began his story thus: "My name was Richard Wallis, and I lived in the county of Somerset, where I left a very good estate, which my grandson, Reginald Wallis, enjoys at this time. But he is sued for the possession by my two nephews, John and Herbert, the sons of my younger brother, William."

The Doctor then asked him how long the grandson Reginald had been in possession of the estate; and he replied, "Seven years; for I have been so long dead."

He then went on to tell him that his nephews would be too strong for his grandson in the suit, and would deprive him of the mansion and estate; so that he was in danger of being entirely ruined and his family reduced.

The Doctor then said, "And what am I able to do in it, if the law be against your grandson Reginald?"

"You must know," replied the spectre, "it is not that the nephews have any right; but the grand deed of settlement, being the conveyance of the inheritance, is lost; and, for want of that deed,

my grandson Reginald will not be able to make out his title to the estate."

"Well," said the Doctor, "and still what can I do in the case?"

"I will explain," rejoined the apparition. "If you will go down to my grandson's house I will give you such instructions that you shall find out the deed of settlement, which lies concealed in a place where I put it, and where you shall direct Reginald to take it out in your presence."

"But why can you not direct your grandson himself to do this?" demanded the Doctor.

"No questions on that point," replied the ghost, solemnly. "There are divers reasons, which you may know hereafter. I can depend upon your honesty; and you may so dispose of matters that you shall have all your expenses paid you, and be handsomely rewarded for your trouble."

Having obtained a promise from Dr. Scott, the apparition told him he might apprise his grandson that he had on some former occasion known and conversed with his grandfather, and ask to see the house; that in a certain upper room, or loft, he would see a quantity of old lumber, coffers, chests, &c., which had been thrown aside to make room for more fashionable furniture; that in a certain corner he should find an old chest, with a broken lock upon it, and a key in it, which could neither be turned in the lock, nor pulled out; and that in this chest lay the grand deed or charter of the estate, which conveyed the inheritance, and without which the grandson might be ejected.

The Doctor having promised to despatch this important commission, the spectre disappeared.

After a lapse of some days, and within the time limited by the proposal of the apparition, the Doctor went into Somersetshire; and, having found the house alluded to, he was very courteously invited by Mr. Reginald Wallis to walk in. The two gentlemen soon entered upon friendly discourse, and the Doctor pretended to have heard much of the family, and of his grandfather, from whom, he said, he perceived the estate descended to its present occupier.

"Ay," said Reginald, shaking his head, "my father died young, and my grandfather has left things so confused, that, for want of one principal document, which is not yet come to hand, I have met with great trouble from two cousins, my grandfather's brother's children, who have put me to very great expense about it."

"But I hope you have got over it, sir?" asked the Doctor.

"No," replied Reginald; "to be candid with you, we shall never get quite over it, unless we can discover this old deed—which, however, I hope we shall find, for I intend to make a general search after it."

"I trust you may succeed," said the Doctor.

"I do not doubt that we shall. I had a strange dream about it last night," added Mr. Reginald Wallis.

"A dream about the deed?" exclaimed the Doctor. "I hope it was that you should find it, then?"

"I dreamt," continued the other, "that a strange gentleman came to me, and assisted me in searching for it. I do not know but that you are the very person."

"I should be glad to be that person," said the Doctor, smiling. "At all events, I may help you to look after it, and I will do that, with all my heart; but I would much rather be the man that should help you to find it. Pray when do you intend to search?"

"To-morrow," answered Wallis.

"But," said the Doctor, "in what manner do you intend to search?"

"Why," replied Reginald, "it is our opinion that my grandfather was very much concerned in

preserving this document, and had so much caution as to its safety, that he hid it in a secret place; and I am resolved to pull half the house down but I will find it, if it be above ground."

"Truly," said the Doctor, "he may have hidden it, so that you may pull the whole house down before you find it. I have known such things utterly lost by the very care taken to preserve them."

"If it were made of something the fire would not destroy," said Wallis, "I would burn the house down, but I would find it."

"I suppose you have searched all the old gentleman's chests, trunks, and coffers over and over?" said the Doctor.

"Indeed I have," replied Mr. Wallis, "and turned them all inside out, and there they lie in a heap up in a loft, with nothing in them. We even knocked three or four of them into pieces to search for private drawers; and then I burnt them in a rage, although they were fine old cypress chests that must have cost money enough when they were in fashion."

"I am sorry you burnt them," said the Doctor.

"Indeed," cried Wallis, "I did not burn a scrap of them till they were all split to pieces, and it was not possible there could be anything in them."

This made the Doctor a little easy, for he began to be alarmed when Wallis told him he had broken up some of the pieces of furniture and burned them.

"Well," said the Doctor, "if I cannot do any service in your search, I will come and see you again to-morrow, and wait upon you during it with my best good wishes."

"But, my dear sir," rejoined Mr. Wallis, "I do not design to part with you, since you are so kind as to offer me your assistance. You shall stay here all night, and be at the commencement of the search to-morrow."

The Doctor had now gained his point so far as to make an intimacy with the family; and, after much apparent reluctance to intrude, he consented to sleep at the mansion. Mr. Wallis asked him to take a walk in the park; but he declined. "I would rather," said he, smiling, "that you show me over the house."

"With all my heart," exclaimed Wallis.

He took the Doctor up stairs, showed him the best apartments, and his fine furniture and pictures; and coming to the head of the staircase, offered to descend.

"But there is another story," said the Doctor; "shall we not go higher?"

"There is nothing there but garrets and old lofts full of rubbish, and a place leading to the turret and the clock-house."

"Oh, let me see it all, now we are here," cried the Doctor; "I love to view the old lofty towers and turrets, and the magnificence of our ancestors, though they are out of fashion now. Pray let me see them."

After they had rambled over the mansion, they passed by a great lumber room, the door of which stood open.

"And what place is this?" asked the Doctor.

"Oh, that is the room," said Wallis, "where all the rubbish, the chests, coffers, and trunks, lie. See how they are piled one upon another almost to the ceiling."

The Doctor now began to look around him. He had not been in the room two minutes before he found everything precisely as the apparition in London had described. He went directly to the particular pile he had been told of, and fixed his eye upon the very chest with the old rusty lock; upon it, which would neither turn round nor come out.

"Upon my word," he cried, "you have taken



## Original Essays.

## THE NATURAL HISTORY OF RELIGION.

BY DYER D. LUM.

## No. V.—THE VEDA AND THE VEDIC AGE.

Until recently it was generally supposed that the Hebrew myth of the confusion of tongues was as good a guess as any toward accounting for the great variety of dialects spoken. Those of modern origin we could account for; French, Italian, Spanish, &c., could easily be traced to the Roman; but it was reserved for modern scholarship to demonstrate that the Greek, Roman, Persian, and Sanskrit, were derived from the same common source; that the Persians and Hindus were brothers of the Englishman and German, and all alike of Aryan descent.

The study of the Sanskrit language has shown it to be one of the oldest of the Aryan or Indo-European group, and has opened to us the source of most of the Aryan myths, and revealed their origin in physical phenomena.

When the Aryan race entered Northern India they found a "dark-skinned" race, far advanced in ancient civilization, possessing "ancient cities," "cities built of stone," cities that were attacked by siege and blockade. An English officer writes: "There are incontestable proofs of the aboriginal race having once occupied every part of India; and that, ere the Hindus came among them, they had made sufficient progress in civilization to form large communities, establish kingdoms, and become merchants and extensive cultivators of the soil. There are distinct remains of old castles, extensive excavations, and other monumental ruins. Several of their principalities have continued to the present day."

The invading Aryans were a white race, "the bright race," from the same parent stock as the Persian and Greek.

In the Veda they speak of themselves as "the righteous," "the twice-born," and regarded themselves as the "chosen people" of Indra, and looked with contempt on the possessors of the soil, and their phallic and serpent worship, bestowing upon them opprobrious epithets, as "demons," "devil-worshippers," etc. The Aryans mention their cities, and allude to commerce, merchants, sailors, iron, chariots, travelers and inns for their accommodation. A reviewer in *Blackwood* says: "They had numerous flocks and herds, but they also cultivated the soil and laid it out into fields. They 'measure the land with a rod'; they 'plow the earth for barley'; and they 'bring home the produce of their fields in carts.' They have towns, and practice many of the arts of civilized life. Weaving is an ordinary occupation." They worked in iron, and also in gold; they forged armor and weapons of steel.

What, then, was the date of this invasion? How old are the Vedas, and what age do they represent? Dr. Dwight tells us that "The Vedic Sanskrit was a spoken language in India as late probably as 1500 years before Christ, or 500 years before the days of Homer and Solomon," and to this we must add the time that it was a living language, for the Vedas were their earliest writings.

Prof. H. H. Wilson, in his translation of the *Yishnu Parana*, remarks:

"The earliest form under which the Hindu religion appears, is that taught in the Vedas. The style of the language, and the purport of the composition of these works, as far as we are acquainted with them, indicate a date long anterior to that of any other class of Sanskrit writing."

Brace says:

"In regard to the date of these immigrations, everything is obscure. Bunsen supposes that the Aryans were in the land of the Indus from 4000 to 3000 before Christ. Dunker dates the probable formation of the Vedas in the earliest days of the Aryan life, in India, from 1000 to 1500 B. C."

While, then, it is not yet possible to give the exact date of their origin, they remain, as beyond question, of greater antiquity than the age of Moses, if not of Abraham. What, then, is the Veda? and what are its characteristic features?

The Veda is not one single book, but is comprised of four collections of hymns, of which one, the *Rig-Veda*, is the oldest, and the one which we will examine.

The Brahmanism of modern India is professedly based on the Vedas, held by them to be of divine inspiration, but bears but little resemblance to the teachings of the *Rig-Veda* alone; as Catholicism and Protestantism are based on the New Testament, yet differ so widely from the faith of the Apostles. We are familiar with the claims of Garbett and Gausson for the plenary inspiration of our Scriptures, but the theory of an infallible book-revelation is not peculiar to Christianity.

Prof. Max Müller says:

"Though we look for it in vain in the literature of Greece and Rome, we find the literature of India saturated with this idea from beginning to end. According to the Orthodox views of Indian theologians, not a single line of the Veda was the work of human authors. The whole Veda is, in some way, the work of the Deity. . . . The views entertained of revelation by the Orthodox theologians of India are far more minute and elaborate than those of the most extreme advocates of verbal inspiration in Europe."

Again, we are familiar with the oft-repeated assertion that the Hebrew Scriptures must have been miraculously preserved, and reference to the Rabbinical studies which gave us even the number of words and letters in the Scriptures, thereby preserving their purity. But by the same rules of evidence, we are forced to admit "providential design" in the *Masonic* studies on the Vedas. Max Müller, in his recent work, says:

"So the works of *Katyayana* in the fourth century B. C., which give us the number of the hymns, the verses, words, and syllables of the *Rig-Veda*, prove that at that time the Vedas existed in exactly the same form in which we possess it. The number of the hymns is 1,028; that of the verses varies from 10,402 to 10,222; that of the words is 153,820; that of the syllables 432,000. These Rabbinical studies on the Vedas seem to date from about 600 B. C."

The Vedic Geography was identical with the ancient Greek, representing the earth as a circular plain situated in a surrounding ocean. The similarity of the two shows that it originated in the dim pre-historic past, before the Vedic Aryans had migrated from the Bactrian table lands, and while the Greeks were still a portion of the ancient Aryan race. Later Hindu scholars possessed more accurate knowledge, for long centuries have elapsed since Aryabhata taught that "the earth is a sphere and revolves on its own axis."

The modern triad of Gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, were entirely unknown to the Vedas. Shiva, now so generally worshipped in India, was not a Vedic god, but a deity of the older inhabitants, who were phallic worshippers. Baldwin, in his recent work, says:

"He did not belong to the religious system of the Indo-Aryans; but he was a great deity of the older people of the country; and the later Brahmanism, seeking to absorb everything that could give it strength and influence, adopted him and introduced him into its system by means of a conveniently invented avatar."

Idolatry likewise was entirely unknown. The testimony to this is explicit. Max Müller says: "First of all the religion of the Vedas knows of

no idols. The worship of idols in India is a secondary formation, a later degradation of the more primitive worship of ideal gods."

Mr. Colebrooke says:

"The real doctrine of the Indian Scriptures is the unity of the Deity, in whom the universe is comprehended; and the seeming polytheism which it exhibits offers the elements and stars and planets as gods. The three principal manifestations of the divinity, with other personified attributes and energies, and most of the gods of the Hindu mythology, are indeed mentioned, or at least intimated, in the Vedas. But the worship of deified heroes is no part of the system."

Commenting on the above, Prof. H. H. Wilson remarks:

"It is true that the prevailing character of the Vedas is the worship of the personified elements; of *Agni*, or fire; *Indra*, the firmament; *Vayu*, the air; *Varuna*, the water; of *Aditya*, the sun; *Soma*, the moon; and other elementary and planetary personages. It is also true that the worship of the Vedas is for the most part domestic worship, consisting of prayer and oblations offered in their houses, not in temples—by individuals, for individual good, and addressed to unreal presences, not to visible types. In a word, the religion of the Vedas was not idolatry."

In the Veda we can easily trace the more primitive worship of the elements in their oldest hymns, belonging to a simple age, handed down and incorporated with those of later growth. This element worship was far older than the advent of the Aryans on the banks of the Indus, at which time they had progressed to higher and more spiritual conceptions. Mr. J. C. Thomson, in his introduction to the *Rigveda Gita*, says:

"The idea of a great, invisible Supreme Being comes prominently forward, and the worship of the elements, no longer the simple, selfish but necessary faith of the shepherd and husbandman, is incorporated with the spiritual idea, and they themselves invested with mystic personality."

The invocation of *Varuna*, or *Agni*, or *Ushas* is not to be taken in the sense of polytheism, or a plurality of gods, for each was alike supreme in the eyes of the worshiper. Max Müller says: "Every god is conceived as supreme or, at least, as inferior to no other god, at the time he is praised or invoked by the Vedic poet; and the feeling that the various deities are but different names, different conceptions of that incomprehensible Being which no thought can reach, no language express, is not yet quite extinct in the minds of the more thoughtful *Rishis*."

The Veda says: "They have styled him *Indra*, *Mitra*, *Varuna*, *Agni*, and he is the celestial, well-winged (*Garutmat*); for learned priests call One by many names, as they speak of *Agni*, *Yama*, *Matarisvan*," &c.

In all forms of Sabalism we have a mystic triad, originating in the rising, meridian and setting sun. All of the Vedic deities are resolvable into the sun, moon or Nature. Mr. Colebrooke divides them into three classes, whose places are heaven, earth and the intermediate regions, or sun, fire and air. "Other deities belonging to these several regions are portions of the (three) gods; for they are variously named and described on account of their different operations, but, in fact, there is only one Deity, The Great Soul, Mahanatma. He is called the Sun, for he is the Soul of all beings."

Mr. Thomson refers as follows to this conception:

"We find three elements deified in the Vedas: fire, water and air, or in air more common forms of wind and rain and the chief of these is naturally the sun. The consciousness of a single Supreme Being, Creator and Guardian of the world was then brought into play; and, to invest this idea with a palpable form, the chief of the triad, the sun, was identified with it. Hence we find in the Vedas hymns which attribute to the sun all the qualities of a Supreme Being, omnipresence, omnipotence, the oversight and care of mankind, and a hundred more. Thus the idea of one God was established by the side of that of a Trinity, and in some degree connected with it."

The consideration of these hymns and prayers will be the subject of our next article.

## WHY OBJECT TO SPIRITUALISM?

Spiritualism feels indignant at the disrespect shown to it by the different sects of Christendom, and frequently throws back the gamut in a spirit that is not always the most commendable. A body, however small, that remains calm and undisturbed against unjust assaults, will always command respect. But Spiritualism numbers its millions, and has a truth, a demonstration so remarkable that by the simple force of its powers, spiritually and not carnally used, it will triumph. The angel world has it in charge, and here, there and everywhere the evidence of a communion with departed beings, of an unseen intelligence, shows itself beneficently at work in every variety of way that can appeal to the senses and understandings of men. It must and it will triumph over all obstacles. The unsatisfactory nature of the old creeds, the narrow conception of life and duty, their dim realization of the spirit that everywhere surrounds them, and that manifests itself so conspicuously at this season of the year in outward nature, are wearing and tearing at the very vitals of our present popular Christian belief. Here is an Orthodox sister or brother, sincerely religious, but afraid of the world, instead of mixing in with it and fulfilling their part in its activities; afraid of dying, of even talking of death; afraid, I might almost say, of cheerfulness; afraid certainly of all amusements, of most recreation; afraid that Sunday may not have its penances complied with; that conceives of a theatre as hell; goes to a concert with timorousness and apprehension; denounces a circus, where children may find delight and age relieve itself with a generous laugh—the saving grace of that day; and wherever taste comes in that may refine the mind and give a charm to life, a rigid utilitarianism is set against it, or a shake of the head, and this, together with their theology, that dooms, at its best estimate, all others but themselves to doubt of future welfare, is the heaven that constitutes much of the religious element of Orthodox Christianity, and is too unnatural in these days to long resist the inroads of progress. Disintegration from within, attacking persons of more thoughtful calibre, will do its work more effectually than harsh criticism from without, and we know that outside of their creeds a true and fervent spirit exists with many that might do more good and tempt imitation but for its connection with these false and unnatural doctrines. To be religious, and at the same time very mean and disagreeable, is a feat these sectarians are equal to, and so long as life is burdened with false sentiments of sin and salvation, so long will these anomalies of character exist. The Unitarians never had much at issue with Spiritualism; they were, we think, more than others the forerunners, the John the Baptists of the New Dispensation, and they will not be long in engraving upon their very advanced ideas this blessed communion of the spirit-world. They must remember that this intercourse is often only reached through a rudimentary experience, that may conflict with their sense of propriety in sacred things, but let them continue their investigations, and a higher light than they had any conception of will surely come to them.

The Universalists, the phlebotom-branch of the liberal faith—we hope they take no offence, if, indeed, it be not praise—are more sectional in their spirit and efforts, but both are too substantially with us to wish them other than God-speed on their own peculiar way of inculcating truth. They have made the most of the simple religion of Jesus; all they want now is the further light which he and the media, or the inspired of his day left unrevealed, and this embraces a spiritual insight, and knowledge of Nature's laws, and the laws of being that have required just these subsequent centuries to comprehend and evolve. A great obstacle to the spread of Spiritualism is of a social nature. Society is conservative; it requires singular independence to get out of its currents; like Nicodemus, the convert goes by night, or the mother of Jesus ponders within herself, rather than confront the frown of the community; very frequently, and a formidable difficulty it is, the condemnation of our best friends. But these disabilities are lessening every day. Then sympathy is another drawback. Very many would witness the most startling phenomena, be brought in contact with the most convincing testimony from the departed, and walk away with the utmost indifference, viewing it as a passing novelty—persons too sensible in their everyday walks, sitting devoutly in a pew on Sunday, far enough so far as tameness in life goes, and yet wholly unconscious of the spirit within them, of the mighty forces that are soon to constitute all there is of them. True enough, bell-rings, knockings, noises, liftings, violence even, can alone raise the dead, the material, those whose minds run in grooves, and ruts, and channels; but could fear, and superstition, and bigotry, and an eye to reputation be lost sight of, could free inquiry have full scope, the natural and physical laws upon which these phenomena depend, would of themselves attract attention, if, indeed, they would not set the world upside down with them. But the great significance of the whole matter lies elsewhere—the yearning of the departed to come to us and demonstrate the everlasting life; to tell us of their home, its various beauties, its several conditions and employments; to assure us that it is in full harmony with the one that has preceded it; to tell us of their love, sympathy, and interest, that nothing can thwart or overthrow; to tell us of progress for all, however thick the tares may have been; to teach us, as well, that other lesson, that from thorns men cannot gather grapes, that sin in that state, wrong doing, selfishness, injustice, crime, that go thither, work their way upwards, under fearful delays and disadvantages, justifying, as seen from his point of vision, the hyperbole of Jesus, in remonstrating with the sensual of his day.

G. B. Springfield, Ill.

## The Lecture Room.

## Beautiful Life.

## LECTURE BY NELLIE BRIGHAM.

DEAR BANNER—Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham delivered one of her always eloquent and effective discourses, Sunday morning, June 6th, at the Everett Rooms, before the flourishing society of New York Spiritualists.

A report of the same appeared in the following day's *Herald*, characteristically complimenting the congregation on their *desyptic* appearance and *free love* proclivities; (is it worth while to add that a free love plank NEVER existed in the Spiritualistic platform?) and falsifying the lecture and lectures in almost every particular. The former was twisted from its purport until scarce a vestige of the original remained, and the modest, almost unadorned, drab dress of the lady, noted for the neatness and simplicity of her attire, was metamorphosed into an elaborate and profusely jeweled toilet—a sort of fashion-plate, calculated to excite the derision of the pit portion of the *Herald's* audience, and the prejudice of the public at large. Well, friend Bennett, it may be *fun* for you to bark and bay around our house of worship, but we do assure you it is not *death* to us. Indeed, we are indebted to you. Our growth was never so great; and, surprised at our own stature, we cannot but ascribe some of our success to the efforts of such eminent enemies, endeavoring to block our way. Of the multitudes joining us everywhere, not a few, we consider, come on the general principle that what you oppose must be true.

The always impromptu subject of Mrs. Brigham's lectures was, on this occasion, suggested by the service opening hymn.

## "BEAUTIFUL LIFE."

Instead of realizing the beauties of life spread out on every hand for our improvement and happiness, the display, with its diversified forms and countless colorings, has been designated "a fleeting show for man's delusion given." Nothing true or consoling has been extracted from the sad spectacle except the final heaven to which it possibly led.

The green fields and cool pastures of the future have engaged attention, not as the end of a race to be run—the product of a process of personal preparation, but as states which each move of time brought nearer the few originally promised possession. Duties done; discipline undergone; seas of sorrow sailed; lives of labor led, had nothing to do with the brightness of the coming time. The believers in God's wrath have covered all things with a pall, seeing no native joy here for man. Christ spoke of sending a comforter, but the Church claims we have no need of a new revelation. The old well of Abraham, the water from the rock in the wilderness, suffice for all time. God created earth with infinite care, and placed man upon it as king; but the gift was tinged with a dark temptation which had overcome and destroyed the divine plant.

Life has lost its character as a blessing, and become a curse; but we see it as the gift of wisdom, to be accepted from origin to end with thankfulness. God's presence around us teaches his love, purpose, and power. The seasons are pictured truths, which, if man were not above the brute, where Solomon placed him, would have been painted in vain. The ever-flowing fountain of inspiration is not drunk by desert sands. It finds, in the spirit of inquiry, an ever-opening channel for the flow of its crystal waves.

Reason has been defined as a path leading to hell; but, unabused, it cannot conduct us astray. Infidel and Atheist have taken its torch to light their path, and though urged by heaven's viceregerents on earth to extinguish it, if they would see, have had their way, step by step, revealed to them by its flame.

Though buried, this beacon blazes again in every brain. Men are angered if accused of its absence, yet dare not apply it to the hereafter. Light is admitted only through certain crevices, and artificial opinions are the result, which burn only to betray. The lifeless pond with its unhealthy atmosphere, and the creed-chained mind, are the same—breeders of disease, desolation and death. Reason denies no truth, but selects, rationalizes, and utilizes its manifestations. Its convictions are carefully reached and naturally sustained. If death closed the gates of life; if the dead were lost, our human love would die out; the felled tree would cease to bear fruit. But love lives on. The tree lies not where it falleth; the connection

continues between root and branch—between both worlds. The departed exist and are seen across the waves on the green shores where they wait to meet us. One says this undermines the faith of our fathers, which sustained them and is sufficient for us. We will cling to the old. Reason is lurking, but deceptive. If we are wrong, your system saves us; if right, our planks are too. Let us think for a moment. We aim to understand the principles of holy things. We return love for love. The element of fear is cast out, the path for the safety of the feeble obliterated. Obedience springs from knowledge. The love element sweetens life, and develops its best traits; that of the "wrath of God" makes man also morose and vindictive. Better, if so many are doomed, that we remain in ignorance, resembling the blissful brute, "Which, pleased to the last, partakes its flowery food, And licks the hand upraised to shed its blood."

Science, accepted only when it does not conflict with religious faith, becomes diseased and deformed. The female foot in China is clubbed and crippled by compression; it is equally an evil to shackle the soul. Bondage dwells in the idea that the world is a delusion and a show; and the song errs, that sings:

"I would not live always,  
I ask not to stay  
Where sorrow and death  
Hover dark o'er our way."

We need not walk the world, eyes earthward, searching for shadows and worms. The beauties about us should attract our attention. Man is finite and frail. If made so to be punished perpetually for his weakness, then spread ashes everywhere. If not, the love and light for all should kindle the eye with hope and banish the gloom from our landscape away. The soul must grow through a soil of ignorance and imperfection. But for his mistakes man could not progress. Through suffering he gains knowledge, and without it there could be no victory.

War throws forces in contact, and if the right at first always triumphed it would soon forget what it was fighting for. In your recent conflict your first defeat was a blessing, strengthening you to accomplish greater good. The newly launched ship dances lightly on the wave, unfit for sea, until prepared by proper loading; so life, balanced with joy and sorrow, keeps safely and steadily on its course, yet men would throw out the ballast necessary to make the voyage complete. Well that man did not create and cannot completely control. The death he considers a curse is the best of blessings. Age, with its falling faculties and weary spirit, thanks God when the shell drops away. We walk in a darkened valley, among mounds of graves; just over the near hill of death is the eternal light, and the radiance streams from that world to this, if we would see. All human experience, whether under a cloud, an hour or a life time, comes to us in kindness and love. Life leads upwards from darkness to light. The life's whiteness draws from the mould its beauty and brightness; so joy is brought out of sorrow, and the grandest victories come from conquerings of self. Robes of power and purity are gained both from the golden sun and the beating rain.

Oh, mortals! be patient and true! Changes, not cures, go with you into the hereafter, and unfoldment and advancement are ever upon you as a work, and before you as a goal. Beneath life's wild waves the voice of Deity is never deadened in your bosoms. The shell cast by the surf on the shore, and removed again into some far desert, still, amid storms of sand, sings of the sea. So amid the billows of time the still, small voice is heard, guiding through the tempest and telling of God's ever encircling arms. We cannot drift away from that Presence whose breath we are, and whose heart our every aspiration folds closer to his own. His perfect plan in all his works, his angel army that throng the human highway, teach that life is high, holy and noble, not a "fleeting show for man's delusion given," nor sad-sung song, but a purpose and picture of beauty and good forever. Error only sees darkness in the design. Cowards only shirk the discipline of duty. When its great work here is done, its tide high enough, our billow-beaten bark will be lifted out upon that smoother sea whose waves are everlasting life.

WALTON TOWNSEND.

Harlem, N. Y., June, 1869.

## Written for the Banner of Light.

## THE REVELMENT.

BY MRS. EMMA BOARD LEBMAN.

The world sat clothed in darkness, woven from The shadows of unnumbered superstitions. Wrong and Oppression strode with heavy feet Over the broken, bleeding hearts of men, Crying with voices loud, tempestuous, "Down wit' our aspirations! slaves ye are, And slaves ye shall be for all coming time. Ye have no right to reason for yourselves; Ye have no right to question, What is Truth? Lo! Falsehood, crowned and sceptred, Kinglike, grand, Wearing the patriarchal mask of age, We bear enthroned among you. Worship him; Behold his jewels blazing in the sun. His royal robes of purple and of gold; Kiss but his sandals, minions, cowards, slaves! Your lips would soil his holy garment's hem."

Thus spake the tyrannous, despotic train, And o'er the broad field of Humanity The words were shaken, seedlike, by the wind, And germinating after many days, Some grew to lofty stature, bearing fruit Sweet to the taste, but deadly poisonous, Which starving men and women snatched and ate, And gave unstinting to their little ones, Then did their minds grow dull and lethargic, And Fear drove out the angel Innocence From tender youngling hearts, and they did curse Their mother Nature, and misnamed her Evil. And mingled prayers and groans, and shrieks of pain, Went up to the Most High from rack and wheel, And loathsome dungeons, out of whose dark depths Oft rose the terrible cry: "There is no God! There is no merciful God; for if there were He would strike down our tyrants and release us." They prayed to Falsehood, poor deluded ones, They prayed to Falsehood, and he still deceived them, And fed and thrived on their agony. But when at length the God within them stood Discovered; when the inner life, the soul, Came forth in its immortal majesty Revealed, how did Falsehood's blunted weapons fall Powerless and ineffective from the hands Of Cruelty and Hate.

Ah! then was shown The strength of the true Deity, whose realm, Whose wisdom, and whose love are infinite, Behold Him marching onward, robed in light, White Truth, with flaming sword, drives from His path Grim Prejudice and stupid Ignorance. His banner is the blue, star-seeded sky, And Love and Charity His ministers. Peace follows in His steps, with Hope and Faith; Their brows are wreathed with garlands, and their hands Fling blessings to the eager multitudes That, fast increasing, gather from all sides, Their eyes alight with joy, or dropping tears Of grateful rapture o'er their freedom gained.

Oh mighty Ruler! glorious and good, Our thoughts flow out in song to welcome thee, And from our souls' expansive gardens, filled By angels' hands, a thousand virtues shoot And bud and blossom 'neath thy quickening smiles, Oh mighty Ruler! glorious and good, Thou art our own, we will not let thee go, Thou shalt be ours through all Eternity.

## Jottings from John Wetherbee.

EDITORS BANNER OF LIGHT—My last to you was from Cheyenne, a "youngster" of eighteen or twenty-four months, with a population of three or four thousand souls, in the territory of Wyoming. There, we left the cars for a stage-ride to Denver City, one hundred and ten miles south, Mrs. H. E. M. Brown, of Chicago, being one of our party, of whom I have already spoken as being on a lecturing tour to California. We stopped at Burlington, a small hamlet eighty miles south of Cheyenne, and fifteen east of the mountains. Mrs. B. was received by Bro. Hinman, who was expecting her—a life-long frontier man, who, though not having the advantages of the Spiritualistic sanctuary vouchsafed to us in the East, is still up to high-water mark on the subject. She gave her first lecture there on Sunday, 6th. It can hardly be called a town, though it has one street, a post-office, a tavern, and a dozen cabins, but people coming from the ranches for ten or fifteen miles round to hear her, there was quite an audience gathered. During that week she lectured also at Valmont, a little suburb of Boulder City, six miles out between it and Burlington. Speaking of Valmont, reminds me that in the *Boulder Pioneer* I noticed that the Rev. Mr. —, of Valmont, had resigned his pastorate. A friend tells me that another reverend in that town of ten or twelve houses, who was liberal in his theology, held his meetings at the same hour on Sundays. The first named became disgusted with the inhabitants, because they went to hear the latter and heterodox, while he delivered his thrilts, lastly, and finally to empty seats. The fact, to me, was favorably for Valmont, showing that in this far-off and thinly-peopled land of cabins and ranches common sense is appreciated, and that "the voice of free grace," as interpreted by evangelical reverends, does not (to use a mining expression) show any color in the pan. I need not, in the light of this fact, say that the expression, after hearing Mrs. B., was that "she panned out well."

Since my arrival here I have tramped over a good deal of mountain ground, and am making my headquarters at the "Hoosier Mill," up in the mountains. I will not give you any description of them, having in former visits done so. Knowing that Mrs. Brown was to lecture on Sunday afternoon and evening in Boulder City, though not considering spiritual lectures one of the novelties to me, I thought I would attend, and from choice took a pleasant morning's walk down the mountain road to hear her, some ten miles, following the frisky little stream, down the gulch by the side of it, and by the way, "Tramp! tramp! tramp!" as the popular war-song says, is the way to enjoy these mountains.

She spoke to good and attentive audiences, and was kindly noticed by many who were not of spiritualistic tendencies, who came from curiosity, and no doubt got some truth that will be remembered. She expressed a wish, at the close, that your humble servant, who was present, would add a few words. I thought it rather "rough," I being on a materialistic tour, and not on a spiritual one, but I complied at both sessions, and from courtesy to a stranger and a free blow, rather than any merit in my poor words, I succeeded in getting their attention. It may be interesting to notice that, before and during the evening service, I thought the one bell of this city did considerable ringing; I learned they rang the bell three times that evening for an audience, and as the Hall of Justice, where Mrs. B. lectured, was full, it caused, perhaps, a vacuum in the meeting-house of the place, and this was the reminder, and seemed as if it said when it was ringing:

"Blest is the man who shuts the place  
Where sinners love to meet," &c.

I am not good at quoting from Watts, but I give the above as a suggestion, and as Mrs. Brown is only a bird of passage, I presume the fate of the Valmont pastor that I mentioned will not be repeated here in Boulder City.

It surprises me how many people one meets here who are well informed on Spiritualism and incline to it, though having but few or no opportunities of observing it, and who have got their ideas from report and reading. Perhaps the instinct of man is more active in these elevated and rarefied regions. I sometimes think mine is, though my letters may not indicate it.

"Banner of Light" are out here and in repute; in one town it was the only Boston paper; the city of New York seems to be the terminal line of the secular message department, after one leaves the Missouri river. Nobody ever hears here of Boston *Journals*, *Heralds*, and *Travellers*, &c. So your *Banner*, if not as great a gun at home—and that point is at least debatable—its report reaches a greater distance, it seems to have a long range, and one, you know, is pleased to see a familiar face when in the land of strangers.

There are some good Spiritualists here who are rather rough on the *Indian*, and criticize your sympathy for them. They forget that they (the Indians) held this land by God's patent, earlier than our preemptions; and that every man here is here without invitation from this original occupant of the soil. Still, I think civilization and progress justify this western movement of the white race to do what the aborigines could not do, and is justified even if at the expense of that race, whose sands are fast passing. Still, we owe them tender treatment, even if their barbarities freeze the blood, for they have no churches, and have not been taught these eighteen hundred years "to return good for evil," as we whites have, and I think to very little propriety; so

"Before we glee poor Indian (traveller) names  
Suppose a change of cases."

Suppose we were the Indians, occupying this broad land, I am inclined to think we should meet the invaders or gobblers "not only so, but more so."

I am, however, no Indian lover. I like some of these hospitable Indian haters far better than I do Indians. From my standpoint Indians are a worthless set. One would not know them by the description in white man's poetry; but God made him, as Shakespeare would say, so let him pass for a man. The place where the Indian is most useful, and where he shines the most, is in the hunting-ground of the spirit-world, to which he is fast passing, and we behold now only the demoralized rear-guard. God speed it, and may its inevitable exit be easy, and natural, and not with blood.

As you are a lover of short letters, I will let this Indian peroration close this one. Soon to be homeward bound. I am, yours truly,

J. WETHERBEE.

Boulder City, Colorado T., June 19th, 1869.

EXPAND YOUR LUNGS.—God intended all women to be beautiful, as much as he did the roses and the morning-glories; and he intended they should obey his laws, and cut indolence and coarseness, and indulge in freedom and fresh air. For a girl to expect to be handsome with the action of her lungs dependent on the expansive nature of a conical worth of tape, is as absurd as to look for turnips in a snow bank, or a fall-grown oak in a little flower pot.—*Dayton Ledger*.

A soothing nap-sack—A pillow.







### New Zealand Correspondence OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

SHORTLAND TOWN, THAMES GOLDFIELD,  
Auckland, N. Z., March 25th, 1869.

To the Editors of the Banner of Light.

Please conduct the following elements of devout thought and personal inquiry to the general communion of "Free Mediums, Spirits, and of Spiritualists in America." Were we in closer geographic communication to you, the real truth of the question should at once and forever be settled for ourselves. As it is, the outcome of a truer spirituality—a remarkable and strange correlation in substance to your own; but whether the American phase is specially its own, or whether the plastic forces of form must be individualized by influences of hemisphere and telluric suitability, is a matter of peculiar import for every clime and country. The adaptation of the supreme and general principles are quite perceptible to all humanity; but the conditional organs of each order, the garb most suited to clothe the ethnological parts of man's whole person, is a matter to define by spiritual genius.

Now, if it is practicable to plant the American phase of Spiritualism in this part of the southern hemisphere; if you can really give the tests of evidence here such as are purported to have been given amongst yourselves—the marvelous works of healing, the good deeds of perfect love quite unselfish and delicate, the personal spirit proofs of the resurrection to the life immortal, with the sublime inductiveness of reason to infer the absolute authority of the spiritual philosophy—why, then, do you keep such great benefits to yourselves? Why not flume the divine currents of vitality out to the land's ends and digits of the earth, so that all humanity may feel the purified life-blood from the lungs of Spiritualism?

These British Colonies of the South do occasionally receive the flying visits of some few sectarian great guns of America, who have been hailed by their credulous friends here. A short time ago, the Rev. T. Earl missioned his way from place to place, and converted and built up numbers to his sect, who call themselves Christians, in his track, to be followed by another popular missionary from America, and which the sect here are patiently awaiting.

We seldom hear of Spiritualism in New Zealand, unless it be by way of burlesque and misrepresentation, and by copied extracts in the public papers. It was almost, as I were, by accident, I happened to see some half-dozen *Banners of Light* that were lent by a friend who brought them from Tahiti, and from one of your community living in the latter place. One must honestly confess that the impression derived therefrom is very much in advance of preconceived notions; and were we quite sure of no possibility of mistake of its truth and suitability in that form, to this, and every part of the world, give us certitudes and means of proof, and we will throw ourselves right into the work to breast the waves of popular opposition, and if need be, to martyrdom, and the stake, if the baptism of sectarian prejudice requires a vicarious victim to teach the Christ of self-sacrifice to redeem them to at-one-ment with themselves and with God. Oh, ye eleven millions of American Spiritualists, with all your missionary machinery and motive power, come over from "Macedonia and help us." Come, map out the orbit of your stars and shed them the benign rays of light and immortality on us, and let the roseate day-dawn of warmth and brightness be rich with the blessings of your apostles and prophets, such as earth hath never seen, I feel, as from prophetic intuition, such flights of thought that shall yet bless the world with the true brotherhood of "Astral communion," quite distinct from the rope of sand, a former mere convention of circumstances, that undermined individuality, and destroyed itself with the selfish food it fed upon.

It is difficult to get your books and papers here without risk and vexatious delay and inconvenience of money transit, &c., else I might apply to some of your hired mediums for personal tests, &c.; but I ask some definite tests by letter, if any, or even a number of Spiritualists will freely do it. I may have to leave here; but in any case, any communication will most likely reach me if addressed to the care of the person and place I name. I may say that the cost may not concern me only. The answer is likely to convince, or as otherwise, other parties acquainted therewith. Will some of your mediums tell me the three "main thoughts," or more properly, one concentric idea of thoughts of my life and being, with definite identity and comments therewith?

Will the test mediums reveal some public event, in unmistakable detail, that transpires in Auckland, or in New Zealand, anywhere about the time of the seer's investigation, which must be at the time of reply, or that will take place here during the intermediate time of the transit of answer to me, in order to prevent the possibility of mistake?

Let a true description of the halls and the interior likeness of a thing in my mind just now within one of the buildings that the Rev. T. Edgar holds divine service, on Sundays, in Auckland and suburbs? If the Spiritualist's answer should be weighty, I will be faithful, and if need be, publish the most fitting in the public newspapers here for the purpose of truth. Yours, most truly,

WILLIAM YEATES,

Care of Rev. T. Edgar, near the Hall, Parnell, Auckland, New Zealand.

### The Belvidere Seminary.

On Wednesday and Thursday, June 23d and 24th, at the Belvidere Seminary, Belvidere, N. J., the largest liberal school in the United States, a very enjoyable occasion was participated in by audiences representing various parts of the American continent, including South America, San Francisco, Texas, Cambridge, Mass., Wilmington, Del., &c., and the pleasantest feature of the whole interesting series of entertainment, commencement and address, was the harmonious and well-regulated action of all minds present.

Tuesday evening was devoted to the closing festivities of the Adelphi Literary Society, and those who received circulars of invitation thronged the buildings to their utmost capacity, till midnight's sacred hour witnessed the fall of the curtain on a grand dress scene from the "Lady of Lyons" at the close of the performances. There were given, during the evening, five other dramatic representations, viz., "Macbeth's Soliloquy," scenes from "Cinderella," scenes from "Little Redfoot," and one each from "Julius Caesar" and "Measure for Measure," many of which elicited the highest praise as selections of quality, ably performed, and well appointed as regards music, costumes, &c. Bouquets in profusion were presented to favorites.

The exercises of the gymnastic class, taught after the system of Dr. Dio Lewis, formed a very agreeable feature. He exhibited both theoretical and practical thoroughness.

Wednesday afternoon was occupied with the Commencement, which was well attended, though not so uncomformably crowded as on the previous evening. Every one enjoyed the favorable conditions. The great blessings of fine weather, and smiling faces, added to the graceful performance of the various duties assigned to the girls, and the beautiful floral decorations, tended to the comfort and happiness of all. At the close of the exercises, many of which deserve especial mention, after the diplomas were conferred, the graduates listened to a few impressive remarks by Rev. Fisher Israel, of Wilmington, Del. The same evening this gentleman delivered a progressive and highly entertaining address in the hall of the Seminary, on "The Modern Culture of Woman," before an appreciative audience. Thus terminated the Anniversary exercises for 1869.

To the friends of the school, and the public generally, I would say, the school will reopen September 14th, 1869.

Catalogues containing full particulars, can be obtained by addressing the Misses Bush, Belvidere, N. J. Applications should be made early. A BOSTONIAN.

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LEWIS B. WILSON, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

All business connected with the editorial department of this paper is under the exclusive control of LUTHER COLBY, to whom letters and communications should be addressed.

### Clerical Back Scurrishness.

The letter from a "Professor," or at any rate a "Rev." Mr. Taylor, which was copied from the *Indianapolis Journal* into the *Banner of Light* of May 15th, with appropriate comments, was supposed to proceed from the actual experience of a man who had not the desire, much less the hardihood, to hedge the plain and impressive truth with the dead brush of his creed and profession. In that letter, unstudied and off-hand as it manifestly was, he reported what he had recently seen, felt and known, and what an impression it had left upon him. Coming from a man in his position in the Church, and a writer for two important publications of the section of country in which he resides, his recital bore an interest which would not have attached otherwise to an experience by no means singular. The letter was read widely in our columns, and, without doubt, gave great satisfaction.

There evidently has been an outside, or Church pressure on the writer of it since, to induce him to do or say something that shall somehow seem to cut the too apparent and too close connection between it and Spiritualism; as if "what God had joined together could by man be put asunder." So urgent has apparently been the influence, that the man has been compelled to yield to it. And yet the yielding is nothing but the simplest and silliest pretence, that could not deceive even an intelligent child.

He was, it seems, in former years, settled as a Methodist clergyman at Montpelier, Vt., and while there, as it happened, found it exceedingly profitable, in one way and another, to assail Spiritualism as the worst and most dangerous of heresies. The brethren, therefore, who had such a vivid recollection of his passionate denunciations while there, were beyond measure astounded at this complete revolution in his belief; and, being duly pressed thereto by the well-satisfied Spiritualists who reside in and around Montpelier, he made answer to the "*Freeman and Messenger*" of that place, in such broken, halting and inconclusive phrase as we shall proceed to quote. Perhaps, as we published the whole of the original letter to the *Indianapolis Journal*, we should in justice reproduce his explanation, withdrawal, contradiction, and attempted summersault in full likewise. It appeared in the *Montpelier Messenger* of June 23d, and is as follows:

"HON. C. W. WILLARD—Having been informed by two or three of my private correspondents from Montpelier, that my letter to the *Journal* of this city, (*Indianapolis*) which was copied into the *Banner of Light* (Darkness rather—surely it darkens counsel by the multitude of words without knowledge)—has been construed into an endorsement of modern Spiritualism by me, and said letter having been read and commented on by many in the capital of your State, and elsewhere, that your paper circulates, I wish to take this method of setting my friends right on that subject. While I am 'morally' certain that God does, at times, and under certain circumstances, for a gracious and wise purpose, as in the days of Abraham, Lot, Ezekiel, Jesus (on the lake of Galilee), Constantine, Luther, Wesley, &c., permit the disembodied spirits of our departed loved ones to revisit the scenes of our mortal existence, yet I can but condemn the conduct of many who claim to be Spiritualists. But let every man know that it is not *creed* but character that will lift a man for the sphere that he will occupy in eternity. Judas' went to his own place, not because he was numbered among the twelve, but because he was a traitor and 'carried the bag, a low, mercenary, gross, reckless creature, a murderer.' 'No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.'"

And I wish to be distinctly understood upon another point. No fact in science, whether of mathematics proper or that of the simplest forms of Moral Philosophy, is responsible for the false constructions and erroneous inferences that wicked men put upon or draw from said fact. If, from a great fact in Nature or Providence, a man draws a false inference or conclusion, he must take the consequences. He has wrought his own undoing, e.g., 'Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.' Well now, the inference that some have drawn from this great fact, in the providence of God is, that all men, irrespective of moral character, will be saved, while the 'author of eternal salvation' has said to the wicked, 'Ye shall die in your sins, and where I am ye cannot come.'"

Let every man, therefore, whatever his creed may be, remember that it will not be his *creed* that will either save him or damn him, but his *character* will determine that. If his 'LIFE be hid with Christ in God,' all right; if not, he must take the consequences. T. B. TAYLOR.  
*Indianapolis, Ia., June 4, 1869.*

The too apparent wit of calling the *Banner of Light* the *Banner of "Darkness rather,"* we freely forgive, because of the effort it costs its author. It is our general opinion that such efforts carry their own appropriate penalty with them. In Mr. Taylor's case, it is easy to see what he underwent, from the harum-scarum style of writing that follows it. He was too plainly frightened by the shadow of his feeble joke, and could not fairly collect his wits till he put a period to his mental scare by affixing his familiar signature. There he grew calm again. The poor man has unwittingly made a confession of facts, personal to himself strictly, which directly and distinctly prove that he has been visited by spirits. That he does not deny even now. But when his church friends cry out, "Fie!" and point the finger forbiddingly, and whisper in his ear that *this* is not the way to secure ecclesiastical standing and preferment and good things generally, he lifts both palms protestingly, and says he is no Spiritualist at all, that he never dreamed of being called such a naughty, naughty thing, and that he believes in no such view from beginning to end. What, then, his readers and our readers will join in asking, does he mean by his second letter? Let us patiently try and see if we can understand.

He dodges the facts which he recited in his letter to the *Indianapolis Journal*, but contents himself with saying that he is no Spiritualist. Now that is less than a child's answer; and if his interrogators are at all intelligent they will exact from him a recantation of his belief in the facts themselves. It matters not whether he consents to be

called a Spiritualist or not, so long as the facts he confesses to a belief in actually make him out one. It isn't the profession, Mr. Taylor, but the reality that your questioners are after? Did you, or did you not, see, hear, feel and speak with those spirits of dear, departed friends as recited? Do you continue to believe that they were spirits, and the spirits you pretended to recognize? If you answer yes to these questions, you may stand on the street-corner from cockerow to curfew, denying and protesting that you are no Spiritualist, but the facts are still against you; they convict you in spite of yourself; your second letter, feeble and flickering as it is, has positively no meaning at all, while the first one stands. You may have your choice as to which you will hold fast by; but if you still maintain the first, the second is not worth the paper on which it was written.

But it is instructive and amusing together, to note the prominence into which a course of ecclesiastical training will too often bring individual conceit. Mr. Taylor, in order to escape from his awkward dilemma, would have it that this spiritualist to himself was singular, just as it was to Abraham, Lot, Ezekiel, Jesus and St. John. So rare and remarkable an occurrence, then, should, in his eyes, constitute it an event; and it must have been ordered for some end at least commensurate with itself in importance. What that great purpose is, appears nowhere save in Mr. Taylor's second letter. We are quite willing to accept it, however, for as much as it is worth; and the purpose is manifestly to show the popular mind how very weak is the reason, and how narrow the sense, by whose pretensions proclamations it has so long consented to be governed. This poor, scattering, palsyish letter shows the absolute folly of entrusting the shaping of one's faith, or the guidance of one's belief, to such shaking hands as cannot in truth guide the career of their individual possessor. We commend the lesson to our discomfited Indianapolis friend and brother. For ignorantly and willfully denouncing the spirits, when preaching at Montpelier, he was visited by them, at Indianapolis, in such a way that he could not live and withhold his confession; and, after he had once made that, he was goaded by the very persons to whom he had formerly denounced Spiritualism, into making this wretched exhibition of wavering between his faith and creed, which proves that to the public neither is of any further interest or concern.

### The Exposition of Spiritualism.

In continuation of the article already quoted from, in the *Monthly Religious Magazine*, on the nature and proofs of Spiritualism, we proceed to offer our readers the following highly significant extracts:

"Round Tao-tae and Tertullian, in regard to the supernatural, in their respective eras, might easily be assembled a crowd of witnesses, Socrates and Plato, Plutarch and Virginius, more than half the people of whom he was the biographer, Pliny, and it may be almost all the classical authors, nearly every father of the Church, and nearly every historian of the Catholic Church, during the Middle Ages. And if these magnates of intellect could be assembled together, they would be found agreed in a state of mind, to which at once would be credible such works as Baxter's last two volumes, or 'Aubrey's Miscellanies,' or 'Turner's Providences,' compiled though these volumes are of incidents, such as transpire at present only to be despised, or at best to be whispered among friends only in moments of confidence. And now of the state of mind of all these great thinkers, and as to the preternatural occurrences which they wrote about, and as to the modern marvels, which they would have been ready to credit, Spiritualism furnishes the explanation, being, as it is, the key which fits an intricate lock, and yielding as it does to intelligent inquirers, knowledge as to the laws involved in portents and prodigies."

"Many Christians are provoked by the phenomena of Spiritualism, in just the same way, as they have been annoyed sometimes by the marvels which have been reported, as attendant on religious revivals. A spiritual novelty troubles them, unsettles them in their minds, and makes them feel as though nothing were certain. And this is because they do not half know themselves. For man, as a spiritual being, whether looking toward heaven or toward hell, or toward some opening between the two, with earnest longing, is thereby in affinity with the powers of a spiritual world, and capable of being quickened by them, as to faculties in him which ordinarily are latent. But truly, if the universe be infinite, it must have myriads of qualities; and if God be the head thereof, and we 'beirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,' we must have senses, susceptibilities in us, many more than five. And it would seem as though such a multifarious nature might, now and then, by accident or the favor of Heaven, express itself or be receptive in ways which are outside of the utilities of ordinary life—just as some common flower with five petals might show ten with cultivation."

"If tables, by the presence of a medium, should only beat time to sacred music, millions of people would believe that the heavens did thereby vouchsafe to show their sympathy with men. But as that tipping of the tables is not for sacred music only, but for anything else almost, just as man talks with man; it would seem as though something through it might be inferred, more important still, as information, than even the sympathy of the heavens. For of heavenly sympathy with him, there is no poor wretch but ought to be sure, who has ever been inside of a church. But if through a table or anything else, there be signified from outside of this visible world, a common understanding with man, and as though of all kinds of persons, good and bad, wise and silly, then is man informed, not so much as to the heavens, about the favor of which he ought already to have been sure, but as to there being spirits and regions, intermediate between earth and heaven. And with knowledge like this, and with even a suspicion of it, there are texts in Scripture, which deepen in meaning, as the eye regards them."

"The susceptibility of man as to the spiritual world—this is What Spiritualism would teach. . . . There is a channel, by which human beings are open to the spiritual world, and to effects from it. To deny the worth of what comes through it, may be sometimes right, and be sometimes according to the Scriptures even an imperative duty; but to doubt the reality of the channel itself, may be a grievous mistake, and be indeed what may vitiate a whole system of theology."

"But why should these spiritualistic phenomena be so much more abundant and familiar in this age, than apparently at any former period? Why are there so many more mediums to-day, than were ever known before? It may be because of an occult something in the air; or it may be because of something by which the bodies or the souls of this generation are affected unconsciously, and perhaps only for a time, and in a manner which may be disease, or even perhaps improvement. After having agonized in spirit, for some years, George Fox suddenly found him-

self living in light, and also preternaturally acquainted with the names and properties of all vegetables and minerals. Also he found that he had become a mouthpiece for the spirit, and a man with attendance on whom, people were convulsed in their bodies and quickened in their souls, and often also made into such channels of the spirit as he himself was. And in the early days of the Shakers and the Irvingites there were many things, which were curiously like the marvels which attended on George Fox. And indeed in history, are many instances of movements which began from the spiritual world, and which yet were also characterized by the wisdom, or ignorance, or other peculiarities of the mortals through whom first the impulses were given."

"It is but walking in a ruin show, when a man is thoughtless as to the spiritual world, to which already he belongs; and careless as to the channels by which he is himself approachable from it; and heedless as to its atmosphere, which yet he may sometimes be inhaling as breath, without knowing of it."

"According to the phenomena of Spiritualism, the constitution of human nature is manifestly still the same as what the lawgiving of Moses presupposed, and as what the revelation of Jesus Christ was given to meet; and still the same as it was, at Athens, Rome, and Antioch, when the gospel began its struggle with idolatry. And it is only with ascertaining the place where the first hearers of the gospel stood mentally, that one can catch with full force the words which were addressed to them. And anything to-day, which might more or less enable a student to read the epistles of Paul, in that state of mind about the universe which Paul addressed, would be or should be a great blessing. And the Christian expositor, who is regardless of the philosophy which attaches to the case of that 'certain damsel who had a spirit of Pytho,' and who was exorcised by St. Paul, would seem to be a little out of the light in which his epistles perhaps ought to be read."

"But now a man may live a healthy life and a good life, while ignorant of geography, and of his relative position among a thousand million fellow-creatures on this earth, and while utterly ignorant even of the chemistry of his own bodily economy. And whatever may be our locality in the spiritual universe, and whether we suspect it or not; and whatever may be the channels, by which spiritually our lives are sustained; and whatever the mysteries of our spiritual constitution; and whatever we may fall be the gifts of the spirit of which we also may, from causes connected with our individual personalities, or with the era which we belong to, yet there is certain for us, under Christ, a more excellent way than any, which can be accidentally or blindly missed. 'For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.'"

"But that charity—what is it? It is not simply giving goods to feed the poor, nor is it even a man's willingness to let himself be burned alive. For it is what is more than that, being as it is, what is of a man's inmost nature. Because it is that sympathy which rejoices with them that do rejoice, and which weeps with them that weep; and believes all things and hopes all things; and which therefore is that attractiveness in a man's spirit which silently and imperceptibly procures for him more of the spiritual uses of the universe than possibly his intellect could ever search out."

"But then of these born priests of the church, there is never one—blessed man—that 'sitteth in the seat of the scornful.' Alas! in unsettled, discordant times, like the present, how large a part of our best learning is simply getting to unlearn! And in regard to bad habits to be broken, when life becomes earnest, how much caution there has got to be about that seat of the scornful! So often the fountain-head of wisdom in a man is choked by notions originating with people wise in their own conceit, or perhaps with blameless men helplessly bewildered in intricacies of thought! But when wisdom is not to be gained from the outside world, there is still a way through which it is to be got, by simplicity and faith. 'I said, days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.'"

### The Banner Message Department.

See the sixth page of the *Banner* for interesting matter from the spirit-world. The message from Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, late a member of the U. S. Congress, in which he gives his reasons why Andrew Johnson, while President, was not convicted of high treason, will no doubt surprise the friends who requested him to give his views through our medium. Whoever projected the question into spirit-life, which he has answered, are in duty bound, as honorable persons, to give us full explanation of all the facts in the case.

We are at great pecuniary expense in keeping open communication between the two worlds, for the accommodation of spirits and mortals; yet when parties, entire strangers to us, skeptics, receive information that is useful to them, pecuniarily and spiritually—messages containing tests of the identity of their spirit friends which they do not even pretend to gainsay—they scarcely ever even intimate to us or our friends, that the information they have received is true; but such is their bigotry, on the contrary, they oftentimes insinuate that the messages which we print on our sixth page, purporting to be given by spirits who have once lived on the earth in human form, are fraudulent productions, manufactured to order to deceive mankind. This bigotry is occasioned, we have the charity to suppose, by the false teachings of Old Theology, and we hope will wear off in good time.

This is one side of the picture. The other side is to come. Many noble-souled individuals have from time to time verified the spirit messages received through the instrumentality of our public free circle, and possessed the manliness to give us the evidence, with full liberty to publish the facts—which we shall ere long lay before our readers—giving evidence of the identity of the spirit returning, that shall forever set at rest all cavilling as to the validity of intercommunication between the two worlds.

### The Children's Lyceum Picnic.

The Boston Children's Lyceum and friends of this city and vicinity go to Walden Pond Grove, on a picnic excursion, Wednesday, July 7th. Of course everybody who can will join the happy party.

Dr. W. Persons called on us last week. He is looking finely, considering the amount of work he has accomplished the past winter, in Texas, in healing the sick. On his way home he stopped a few weeks in Louisiana for the purpose of aiding suffering humanity. He comes East this summer to rest and recuperate. He will return to Texas in the fall.

Sisters of Charity—Faith and Hope.

### W. H. Mumler, the Spirit Photographer.

This gentleman, whose late trial in New York excited such a lively interest among all classes in this country, and whose acquittal was a direct triumph for the cause of Spiritualism, gave his first lecture in Salem, Mass., Monday evening, June 28th, 1869, at Lyceum Hall, Church street, on "Spirit Photography," illustrating his remarks with copies of his pictures thrown upon a screen by a powerful magnesium light.

In commencing the lecturer stated that in taking the present course (lecturing) he had yielded to the wishes of many friends interested in the subject who were not in position to obtain a knowledge of the matter in any other way. He then proceeded to trace his past history, in order to show that his mediumistic powers were not the result of momentary development, but had been in process of elimination ever since his childhood, having seen spirits when he was seven years of age. At the age of twelve he was influenced to sketch, and draw pictures of birds, &c., which were far beyond his natural powers. He called upon those who did not believe in Spiritualism to explain how he acquired these powers, which were to him inexplicable save on the spiritual hypothesis. In 1856, he was developed for writing, also for answering mental questions, and was very successful in this phase of mediumship. In 1858, this control left him, and nothing of any account happened in his development till 1861, when he took his first spirit picture. He was then at work at Bigelow Bros. & Kennard's, as an engraver. He became acquainted with a lady photographer, and, finally, with the proprietor of the gallery, and used to frequent the place. On one occasion, being in the gallery before the arrival of the proprietor, he was seized with a desire to take a picture, and yielding to it, the first spirit photograph was obtained. He was at that time exceedingly astonished, and unable to account for the presence of the figure on the plate. The picture in question was brought to public notice by the *Herald of Progress*, and other papers, and public curiosity becoming aroused, he decided to commence the taking of spirit photographs as a business, and had continued down to the time of his trial. He bore no malice toward any one, but still thought that if the punishment of *fraud* was what was sought after, the Mayor of New York could have found many cases much more to the point than his in that city; but it was rather that Spiritualism was advanced by his works, that he was arraigned. The proceedings against him did not come from any one who had met with disappointment at his hands, but from Marshal Tooker, whose duty lay in the Mayor's office. The character of the witnesses in behalf of the speaker—Judge Edmonds, Mr. Livermore, Edmund Kirk, and many others—proved conclusively the truth of his position, and he was acquitted.

The lecturer then proceeded to exhibit copies of some of the pictures which he had taken in times past. These were upon glass, fitted as slides to the lantern, and produced a fine effect. The first was a picture of Mrs. Isaac Babbitt, with her spirit husband. The second, Marshal Tooker and his spirit friend, whose countenance was rather the opposite from pleasant to look upon. A picture of Dr. Flint followed; this gentleman is a medium for answering sealed letters, and it was requested that the influence would show through Mr. Mumler's art the method of operation. The picture represented a shadowy hand and arm, the hand resting upon the doctor's wrist. Pictures of Mrs. Hubbard and spirit child, and Mr. Hubbard, with the same, were then exhibited; the lady and her husband being members of Trinity Church, New York. A picture of Mr. Gurney, the celebrated photographer in New York, was next shown, said picture having been prepared and developed by Mr. Gurney himself, as testified by him in court. Mr. Mumler only placing his hand on the camera during the operation. Pictures of Mr. Hopkins, Judge Stillwell, and Mr. Case, with spirit relatives, followed, and the performances closed with a picture of Mr. Livermore, the banker, and his spirit wife.

We understand that Mr. Mumler will continue to lecture before the public till the latter part of September, when he purposes to return to New York, and resume spirit photography. He can be engaged to deliver his lecture and exhibit his pictures before Spiritual Societies by addressing, W. H. Mumler, 170 Springfield street, Boston.

### A Day at Walden Pond.

Last Tuesday, June 29th, the Union Picnic of our friends in Charlestown, Chelsea and Boston, arranged by Messrs. Richardson, Dodge and Young, took place at Walden Pond Grove, Concord—one of the most delightful spots in the country. It is worth a day's journey to behold the beautiful crystal lake, and sail over its fair surface in one of the comfortable barges. Truly a day spent in this grove is a bright spot in one's memory. Anna Wing expresses her admiration of the scene in the following poetic lines:

Its smile glimmers through the pines,  
The smile is gold upon the lake,  
Where the light breeze just stirs the waves  
In music on its shores to break.

Amid the merry crowd I move,  
Unheard the mirth that rolls along;  
Sweeter than human voice or words,  
The melody of Nature's song.

Oh human hearts, that gather here,  
Beneath this radiant sky of June,  
To talk of spirit-life and power,  
The "resurrection day" is come!

Christ walks this sea of Galilee—  
Our "elder brother," tireless friend—  
His human heart comes near to ours,  
His smiles with all our spirits blend.

The immortal and the mortal join,  
We fear no death, no gloom of graves;  
In peace divine our spirits rest,  
We know the Truth, that lives and saves.

The day was the loveliest of the season, warm and clear, and perhaps more fully appreciated on account of the rain storm the two previous days. Quite a large party were present, and, judging from the happy expression of their faces, all enjoyed the scene, recreations and spiritual feast without the least alloy. A good portion of the day was set apart for those who came to listen to addresses on the spiritual philosophy, and this part of the programme was well sustained.

The second picnic under the management of the above named gentlemen, will take place Wednesday, July 28th.

### Dr. J. B. Newton.

This celebrated healer, whose thousands of cures have made his name famous the world over, still continues to heal the sick at 23 Harrison Avenue, Boston. Those who have not and would avail themselves of his wonderful healing powers should do so at once, as the Doctor will leave New England in a few weeks.

### Framingham Picnic.

Mr. A. E. Carpenter's picnic, at South Framingham Grove, takes place Friday, July 16th.







## Message Department.

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

**Mrs. J. H. Conant,**

while in an abnormal condition called the trance. These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the sacred relics of their earth-life to that beyond—whether for good or evil. But those who leave the earth-sphere in an unevolved state, eventually progress into a higher condition. We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

**The Banner of Light Free Circles.**

These Circles are held at No. 158 WASHINGTON STREET, Room No. 4 (up stairs), on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday Afternoons. The Circle Room will be open for visitors at two o'clock, and services commence at precisely three o'clock, at which time one will be admitted. Seats reserved for strangers. Donations solicited.

**Mrs. Conant receives no visitors on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, until after six o'clock P. M. She gives no private sittings.**

**Boquets of Flowers.**

Persons so inclined, who attend our Free Circles, are requested to donate natural bouquets of flowers, to be placed on the table. It is the earnest wish of our angel friends that this be done, for they, as well as mortals, are fond of beautiful flowers, emblems of the divinity of creation.

**Invocation.**

To the good and true of all ages we pray; to those lights that have shone in every age, that have gleamed through the darkness of all time, we pray. Come high unto these mortals, ye who do continually perform the will of our Father who is in heaven, and in the earth also. Ye saviours, ye ministers of truth, ye holy spirits who do seek continually to perfect the souls of men, and ye holy deeds of charity everywhere, come high this hour unto these mortals, bathe their brows with waters of truth, and refresh their spirits with words which shall give them cheer, and cause them to look beyond the present with stronger hope of the future. Oh come high unto them and strengthen their good resolves. Come high unto them and illumine all the chambers of their being; cause them to go forth ministering wherever there is need; cause them to exercise benevolence, charity, love, unto all God's children everywhere. Oh teach them to forget hatred and learn love, ye ministers of truth, ye holy spirits who dwell in the Father, that buds and blossoms sometimes in earth-life, bearing precious fruits. Oh come high unto those who mourn, and show them that even the darkest hours of sorrow contain the sublimity of joy; and come high unto those who despair and fear concerning the other life. Teach them of that world where the soul passes at death and learns in that home what life is. Come high unto them, oh ye ministering spirits, whose love for earth and earthly things is great. Wash away their errors. Set up a cross in every soul that shall point to a crown in the hereafter. For ye are in the kingdom of heaven, and ye understand that which we know not. Your faces are ever turned heavenward, while they are sometimes bowed in the dust and shadows of human ignorance. Give unto them the dew which ye have gathered from the kingdom of peace, and truth, and everlasting joy. Amen. May 25.

**Questions and Answers.**

**CONTROLLING SPIRIT.**—Your queries, Mr. Chairman, I am ready to consider.

**Q.**—Which is the law or destiny of the human being, the continued development of individuality, or its loss or absorption into the great mass of spirit matter?

**A.**—All our individuality is dependent upon our education and our formation as spirits, and so far as human life is concerned, as physical beings, we can know of no individuality outside of that which is born of circumstances and conditions attendant upon form. We are constantly changing our individualities. The characteristics by which we were known in times past are not the characteristics by which we can be known in the present. The child is not the old man. Notwithstanding the same spirit may have an abiding place in the old man that dwelt in the child, the individuality is not the same. The child is the child, the old man is the old man—in characteristics. The theologian presents characteristics that are not found in the child. The child's theology is the theology of Nature—simple, perfect, fresh from the hand of God. The child worships things. It sees the flower is beautiful. It loves the flower; it worships it. It instinctively recognizes God there, and with child-like reverence bows down and worships. But when it comes up through the different stages of human life, its brow is shrouded with the cares and perplexities of that life; the characteristics of the child are gone. The flower has lost its beauty. It no longer bows down to that, but it bows down, perhaps, before the shrine of commerce. It erects another shrine whereunto to worship, and all its characteristics that belonged to it in childhood are changed. It does not hold them when it comes to mature age, but is constantly changing. As the spirit passes up through different gradations of matter it becomes changed, molded, remodeled. "Round and round the circle runs," and at each revolution it brings out something new—retaining the old in the crucible of past things, but as constantly bringing out something new, constantly making additions; and the thing that it was as an individuality in the past, it is not in the present.

**Q.**—Which is the better course to pursue: follow fashion, play the hypocrite, join cliques and rings, and be prosperous, having many friends, and enjoy the good things of this life, or obey conscience, reprove and abhor hypocrisy, "paddle your own canoe," and, in consequence, have few friends, be regarded as queer, unsociable, live poor and alone?

**A.**—So far as physical life is concerned, the former course may be preferable; but so far as the other life and eternity are concerned, the latter course is preferable. Obedience to conscience is obedience to all the God we can understand in this life. If we disobey conscience, violate its promptings, we commit an unpardonable sin, for which we will surely be chastised. There is no forgiveness for sin. If we make a mistake in life, the mistake gives birth to the rod that chastises us, and it is just as natural for the rod to fall upon our shoulders as for us to live in this natural world. We cannot escape the consequences of wrong doing. There is no Jesus of Nazareth that can ever shield us. We must pay the penalty we can go out free and hold our faces heavenward, saying, "I have done the best I could."

**Q.**—Does Spiritualism teach a day of judgment?

**A.**—Spiritualism teaches that all days are days of judgment. It ignores the idea of a general judgment-day, because Spiritualism knows that we are being judged constantly.

**Q.**—Has all spirit exiled from eternity, or is each new being a new spirit or essence?

**A.**—I believe that all spirit ever has had an existence, as it ever will. Immortality, to me, extends not only over all the future, but over all the past. Each individuality is but the expression of the divine life through humanity. The expression that is given through the dog or the horse is the expression of the divine life through the brute creation. That which we see in the flower is to me the expression of the divine life through the floral kingdom. My God speaks to me through everything, and all things have a living spirit. I believe it is an essence running through all, one divine universal power pervading all, and bringing all constantly higher, and still higher. Spirit, in passing through matter, changes it, but I believe the spirit itself remains intact. May 25.

**Harriett Shannon.**

Harriett Shannon, my name. Twenty-nine years old. I was born in Portsmouth, N. H., but I died in La Crosse, Wis. I have been gone a little more than two years. I should have said my maiden name was Young. [Can you speak a little louder?] I would, but I cannot. I had a strange fear of coming back. It was something very unnatural to me, but I wish my friends to know that I come, and that this spirit-world is nothing that I expected it was. It is a life very much like this life, only things are much more real in this spirit-world than they were here. My friends will ask if I am sorry I took the course I did in life—in going West as I did. Say, no, I am glad

of it, and I accept the condition into which I have been placed as the very best that could have happened to me.

I wish my friends in the East to know that my child passed on before I did; that we are together, and are happy. It is well. They should not mourn. Say so. May 25.

**William C. Bessley.**

Ah! how do you do? [How do you do?] I am well, quite comfortable, and I want to send a message to my folks in Alabama. Any objection? [Not the slightest.] All right, then. I'll proceed to business. I did have some slight misgivings about coming here, but I see it is all right. [Did not you think you would be well received?] Did not know, sir, did not know. My name is William C. Bessley. I am from Prattville, Alabama. [This was said in a very loud tone.] Oh, I forgot; you ain't deaf, are you? The lady that just left, you thought, I asked her to speak louder, and I thought I'd speak loud enough to suit you. [Well, I can. An old lady helps me to come who says she knew all about these things. She used to live—let me see—about six miles, taking it through the pine woods, from where I did. Her name is Knox. She knew you. [Oh yes, I remember.] She lived in Pembroke, N. H. Her husband used to be hanged—no, what is it? [She said, "Oh yes, that is it." She was hanged, I tell you, in good shape. She was about seventy-five years old when she was hanged, or seventy-six. [She must have been near that.] Yes, well, I tell you, she is good for showing folks how to do these things. She told me I ought to come and tell my brother about this coming back business, and I am interested to do something to make him live kind of natural like, kind of sensible. He is in a kind of raving way because the niggers are taken away, but I reckon it's all right. We did not know much, anyway, and as long as we had niggers, I kind of think we'd been kept down, and he better sell what he can, what he's got left, and go a little further North, where he can learn something. Tell him that, will you? [Yes, if that is your desire.] That is my desire. And old Aunt Betsey with her young ones, tell him he better take care of her. [One of your slaves?] Yes; good old critter as ever lived, and he better take care of her. Sell something—some of the pine woods, sell anything, sell himself. Might as well. What's the use of living the way we did? Don't amount to anything at all. That old lady says she will help me get my message round to him. Lord knows how; I don't, stranger, unless—well, I do not know. I reckon I can tote him up to the first market. Do your papers go down there? [They go to New Orleans and Mobile, and several places in the South.] To Montgomery? [I presume so.] Well, I reckon I can get him up there. I don't know, I'll see. The lady says I've got something to do. Suppose I have. Time I did. [Did not you do much on the earth?] No, I did not, and I got hustled out, I tell you, pretty quick. The very first battle I was in, I got hustled out. But it's all right. [Did you get killed?] Yes, I did. I didn't think I was hurt at all, till I found myself on the other side. There was two of us—one on the ground, and I'd other up over it. Tell you it's kind of quick business. Oh, Jim is my brother's name. [At what battle were you killed?] I do not know what you call it, but we called the place there, Seven Pines. I kinder hung off from going into the fight, till I got pressed in, and then I went in, I tell you, I went in to win, but I was the wrong way. Well, stranger, you publish, don't you? [Yes.] And then I've got to look after it. That's worse than selling. [How many negroes did you have?] Well, let me see; I had seventeen of my own, and I reckon Jim had about twenty-two. [On a plantation?] Yes; well, we kind of speculated in niggers. Yes, a bad business, I know, but you get into it, and you don't know how to get out. I tell you it's a pretty hard work, where everybody owns niggers all round you, everybody buying and selling them—you don't feel much like giving them away. Somebody will, if you don't. I did the best I could to get 'em good masters. Never sold one to a bad master, not if I knew it for the sake of getting a high price for it. I did in my life. And I tell you what 'tis, I never kept 'em when it's been tight squeezing. Money was tight, and virtuous was tight, and it was tight all round. I could have sold at a good bargain. I always had good niggers, but could not always get good masters, and I never could, if a nigger come to me and said: "Oh Massa, Massa, don't sell me there. I don't want to go there." That was enough, that was enough. When I was going to sell any of 'em I always used to tell 'em all I knew about the place, and if they did not go willingly the bargain was up. I had a kind of conscience, you see, and I could not go back on it. I'm glad of friends, and I could not go back on it. We are good friends, best friends I have on this side—just the best friends I've got. If either of us had got to go hungry I was me. If I either of us had got to go bread and bacon enough for them, if I went hungry myself. But then it's all owing to a kind of softness I had round my conscience, some way. They used to say I was a fool. Jim said I was a fool. "Don't know anything—never will know anything—never make anything, anyway. You will sell niggers just where you should not sell 'em. You could get the highest price of anybody; you have the best niggers, and you always get the lowest."

Well, all right. Tell Jim I'm all right on this side, and if he can manage to scare up one of these kind of folks I can take to him and tell him all my things. He had better sell, and take care of the old woman, anyway, and her young ones. If he don't, it will be a bad thing for him when he gets here. Take care of her. She stuck to him through thick and thin, and he better take care of her.

Good-day, stranger. Hope when you come across you will have something better than a raft to come on. May 25.

**Lucy Stevens.**

Lucy Stevens was my name. Tell mother I did not die, won't you? I am nine years old today. Isn't it the 25th of May? [Yes.] Well, I'm nine years old today. I come from Georgetown, D. C., but I did not always live there. I lived in St. Louis before I went there. My father went there for government, and we lived in Georgetown. Tell mother I've been crowned with flowers to-day; and tell her I live with Aunt Susie and Lizzie—both of 'em—and it's my birthday, and I was crowned with flowers. And tell them I've seen Uncle Charlie here too. He was killed at Fort Fisher. What do you suppose he said when he first saw me? [I do not know.] He said, "Where in the name of all the fairies did you come from?" He did not know I was come, you see, I had inflammation of the lungs, and died pretty quick.

Tell father I want him to go to some place where I can talk, and then I shall come. [To some good medium.] Yes, and Uncle Charlie wants to come too. He says tell mother that the watch—his watch—was taken (he is sorry to say it) by one of his comrades. They supposed the rebels stole it, but they did not. He is very sorry to say it, and he hopes, if he sees my message, he will have "a soft place in his conscience," and send it to mother. He shan't tell his name, because that would be doing evil for evil. He is sorry he was so tempted, and hopes he will do better in future. Good-by, mister. May 25.

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letters answered by H. Marion Stephens.

**Invocation.**

Oh Sacred Presence, nameless and perfect, yet having all names and living through the imperfection of human life; thou Divine Presence that illumines our souls, and beckons our feet out of darkness into light; thou who art teaching us to walk in wisdom's ways: thou who doth chastise us when we make mistakes in life, that we may learn the better way; thou who art ever calling to us, whether in life, or in what we call death; thou Great Spirit, our praises, and teach us how to praise and how to pray. Thy holy guardianship we recognize; thy smile we behold in the faces of these fair blossoms, (referring to a bouquet on the table.) Thy holy spirit sheds its dew over us upon us, and we are forever within the arms of thy love. In our weakness we pray for strength; in our ignorance we pray for wisdom; in the darkness of our night of error we pray for truth. Oh, fold us closely around with thy mantle of light. Shed the beams of thine everlasting knowledge upon us, quicken

ing all our being, causing every faculty to rise up and plume its wings anew for greater flights. We ever seek to rise above the present, and we believe it is thy voice within us, thy holy spirit inspiring us to go forward, to march onward through life, gathering by the way, flowers—the beautiful flowers of faith, flowers that never wither. Oh give us strength to assist those weaker than ourselves. Oh give us wisdom to guide those who do not see thy face clearly. Oh give us power to uplift the down-trodden, and give us grace that we may ever find thy children, even in the dark places of human life, and that having found them we may aid them, and unto those who have, we may be able to shed holy dews of instruction upon those who dwell in high places. May they forget to do evil and learn to do well. May the small voice of the angel within the soul ever be heard and ever be understood. Our Father and our Life, perfect to-day as in other days, holy and true, thou strength of our weakness, thou light to our darkness, receive our prayers. Gather into thy great heart our praises, and, according to thy will, not ours, bestow thou thy blessing upon us. Amen. May 25.

**Questions and Answers.**

**Q.**—Will the time come on this earth when man will be so improved and unfolded in his understanding and acquirement of knowledge that he will live strictly in accordance with the laws of his being? Will the whole human race will constitute but one great family, living in harmony, having one grand common center of attraction (morally) around which to rally? If so, what are Nature's indications?

**A.**—The whole human race, individually and collectively, perceive the necessity of a better condition of things physically and spiritually. And, since they are able to perceive the necessity for such a change, for such an unfolding, it is very rational to infer that a better state of things, physical and spiritual, will finally be inaugurated, even on the earth. The good time coming, so long prayed for and so earnestly expected, is here, and it is in the very far distant future, but I also believe that, as the planet grows and unfolds—becomes more perfect, more harmonious, its children will grow and unfold and become more perfect and harmonious. Just so fast as the planet grows its productions can grow, and no faster. Health is in the order of Nature; disease is out of the order of Nature. We are only diseased when we are not in harmony with Nature's best laws. Disease comes as a consequence of infringing upon law. It matters not whether we infringe upon the law knowingly or unknowingly, the consequences are the same. I believe that the human intellect is constantly rising, progressing, unfolding, becoming more and more acquainted with its own powers and with the conditions by which it is surrounded—with the laws, physical and spiritual, by which it is surrounded. And when it attains that perfect state wherein it shall be able to perceive clearly its true relations to Nature and Nature's God, then I believe disease will be no more. The moral will have gained the ascendancy, and the good time coming, the millennium so long prophesied by ancient sages and seers, will have arrived.

**Q.**—Is the light of the stars which we see concentrated electricity emanating from their poles? If not, what is it? Our planet is one of the planets that inhabit the inhabitants of other planets, it seems a star. If so, is it not the electricity at the poles that they see?

**A.**—The earth is only an opaque body to the inhabitants of the earth. To the inhabitants of other worlds it is a luminous body. Light is found everywhere. Its dwelling place is everywhere. The sun could not shed its rays effectually upon the earth if there was no corresponding light inherent in the earth. The earth attracts the rays of light from the sun, and the sun in turn attracts light from the earth. All light is the result of motion. Electricity is a result of motion. Light has been called by some scientists the child of electricity. Well they may say, and we know, that without motion there could be no light. If this world, as a whole, stood positively still, if there was no motion at its centre or at its circumference, there would be no light. Life, change, progress cannot exist out of motion. Everything is in motion. Even this article of furniture (the table), that seems to be at rest, so far as our external senses can determine, is in motion. All its particles are in motion. The attractive, adhesive power is acting constantly between the atoms, holding it together as a body. There is light in the substance of this article of furniture. There is light in the rocks. There is light even in those places where darkness seems most dense. There is light everywhere.

**Q.**—Please explain the phenomenon that occurred at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the New Testament, Acts, chapter two, verses one to four.

**A.**—In all probability it was a natural phenomenon—some spirit akin to that which took place recently upon







