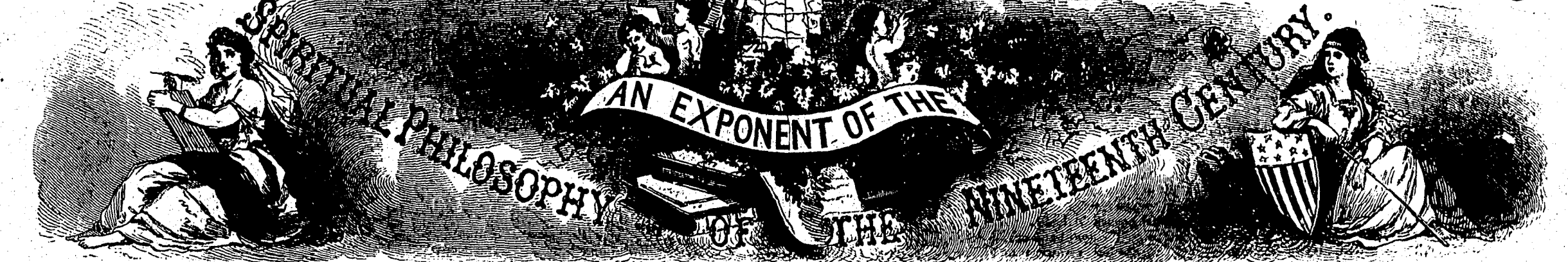


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Literary Department.

REMINISCENCES AND EXPERIENCES

OF A

WORKINGMAN.

BY EMILE SOUVESTRE.

Translated from the French, for the Banner of Light,
BY SARAH M. GRIMKE.

INTRODUCTION.

We owe the permission to publish these memoirs to the kindness of a friend, whose sympathizing nature often led him, through his business relations with the working classes, into intimate intercourse with them. In conversing with a workman he did not forget his dignity as a human being, and when the duty of examination had been performed, the employer became the philosopher and the friend. He studied the men thus thrown in his way, that he might understand and serve them.

In 1846 he became acquainted with Pierre Henri, whose sobriquet was *The Just*. He was struck with the man's intelligence, his good sense and his pleasant disposition. A further knowledge of him convinced our friend that he richly merited the name which his scrupulous integrity had won for him. He immediately engaged him to superintend several buildings then in progress, of which he was the architect. Their daily intercourse resulted in reciprocal esteem, which soon ripened into confidence and affection. In their familiar conversations Pierre Henri had mentioned incidentally various circumstances which had occurred in his life. An accident revealed his entire history.

An unusual press of business detained our friend later than usual, and a sudden and violent shower preventing his return to his home, which was at some distance, he accepted the invitation proffered by the superintendent to take refuge in his house. He was received with all the courtesy which naturally springs from self-respect and a respect for others. The wife of Pierre Henri was a laundress, and with the assistance of her daughter had the oversight of a dozen women whom they employed. The son took charge of the workshop, allotted to each his task; kept the accounts, and when necessary handled the trowel and the hammer. All the workmen wore the costume and preserved the habits of their profession. The master-mason, enlightened by experience and observation, wished his children to avoid the danger of unclassing themselves, of leaving the beaten track and entering upon an untrodden road, where all is difficult because it is new. Besides, it was painful to him to think of their deserting those obscure classes to which he felt allied by the ties of brotherhood, and who were to him, in the great army of mankind, all that the regiment to which he belongs is to a soldier. He was thoroughly aware that the surest means of elevating the working classes was for those who possessed intelligence, education and virtue to remain identified with them. He knew that to mingle with the coarse and profane does not necessarily make a man coarse and profane, but that if he remains uncontaminated his example often allures others into the path of virtue. Hence he earnestly desired that his son might not only be a model workman, but a pattern of sobriety, industry and integrity.

After the exchange of civilities usual on a first introduction, our friend, who wanted to look over some memoranda, was conducted to a private room, which served as an office for the mason and his son. After completing his own business, he began to examine several estimates of buildings which lay on the table with other papers. Whilst turning them over, his eye fell upon a manuscript bearing this curious inscription:

"All that I can recall of my life
Since 1841.

By Pierre Henri, called *The Just*."

On being questioned, the mason acknowledged that the manuscript contained reminiscences of his life, written on rainy Sundays, or during the long winter evenings, without any other intention than simply to narrate his experiences and the principal events of his life. He made no difficulty of allowing his guest to read it, and warning him that his patience would not hold out beyond the second page, told him that he was entirely welcome to take it home. Our friend thanked him, and promised to return it safely. Pierre Henri assured him that his son had made a fair copy of it, that the papers he held in his hand had long been destined to the laundry stove, and he did not care to have them returned.

Having thus become the legitimate proprietor of the manuscript, our friend read it, and then mentioned it to us. Some months had elapsed since we perused it, and on reflection we concluded that it was so interesting and instructive that it would be advisable to publish it. The next step was to obtain the consent of the author. After some hesitation he yielded, without any other restriction than the omission of some names, and some details of too personal a character to be made public.

We have used the liberty granted us to abridge several chapters, and in some places to express the idea more clearly. Sometimes, too, we have completed sketches which were either too confused or too unfinished. If these omissions and these additions have in some measure modified the work, they have always been true to the meaning and the spirit of the writer, as the manuscript, which we have preserved, will show.

This manuscript is carefully written, the interlineations in the text and the additions on the margin having been made by the son of Pierre Henri, who had a more liberal education than his father, and who belongs to that phalanx of poet

workmen whose advent is one of the significant signs of our times. We have introduced them because the memoirs of the mason being somewhat defaced by time, the corrections of the son elucidate the meaning of the father, and complete his reminiscences by facts orally received from him. The memoir, begun under the title of *Reminiscences*, assumes afterwards the form of a journal, and ends by being a mere summary of events. Even this change is not without its significance, and undoubtedly corresponds to the states of mind experienced by the writer. When we are young we love to stop by the way and cast a retrospective glance at the landscape we are leaving behind us. Later in life, pressed by care, we think only of the present, of overcoming the difficulties which obstruct our passage. When advanced in years, we are occupied in calculating distances and avoiding the ruts.

Alas! Is not the life of almost every human being but a daguerreotype of that of Pierre Henri? We set out with our imaginations filled with dazzling pictures of the future; we finish by becoming arithmeticians.

Not thinking it best to print the entire memoir of the mason, we have selected such parts as seemed to us best adapted to calm the spirits writhing under the crosses of life, and to soften hearts in danger of becoming hardened by the ingratitude and hypocrisy of those whom they have served and trusted. At this crisis, we hoped the contemplation of the character of such a man, whose destiny was humble, but who nobly and patiently struggled against adversity, and triumphed over difficulties by his energy, his industry and his integrity, might encourage and strengthen those who are ready to faint under the heavy burdens of to-day.

CHAPTER I.

The House in the Street Chateau-Landon—The Neighbors of Pierre Henri—The Vendor of Chestnuts—The Little Sister Henrietta—The Friend Maurice.

As far as I can remember, I lived with my father and mother, in a two-story house, in the street Chateau-Landon, near the outskirts of the city. On the ground floor lived, all alone, a vendor of old clothes, who pursued his business during the day, returned home in the evening, regularly got drunk, went quietly to bed and slept off the effects of the brandy by the next morning. He rarely spoke to any one, and was as quiet as a dead man in his grave. Weeks often passed without our seeing or hearing him, but his life was so uniform that we could guess with certainty what he was doing at any given time. Until seven o'clock we knew Vautru was in the city, about eight that he was drunk, and, on inquiry, we found that he was always right.

One day, however, we were mistaken. Vautru did not go out as usual in the morning, and the little Rose, our neighbor, after having peeped through the air-hole which lighted his apartment, ran away terrified. We inquired what she had seen. She replied, weeping, that the clothes-merchant had turned black. Some neighbors went to look at this strange sight; they entered the room where Vautru lived, and found him burnt to death.

I can never forget this event, because it was the first time I ever saw a dead body. It had been placed in the coffin, covered with a white sheet, a candle at the head, and another at the feet. A plate stood on the lid, where each corner deposited some coins to defray the expenses of the funeral. My mother sent me with her offering, and I was shocked at the sight of this blackened corpse. Although Vautru had been our neighbor, I had taken little notice of him; but when I saw him stiff and motionless, and the thought occurred that he would never rise from that coffin, I almost felt as if I loved him, and I began to weep. I have concluded, in reflecting on this circumstance, that we should not be too careful to shield children from sorrowful spectacles. The buoyancy of childhood renders them thoughtless of suffering, while the sight of death and of sorrow melts their hearts and makes them less selfish.

Above the clothes-dealer lived the Mother Cauville, an excellent woman, left a widow with three children to support, and without any means. "My husband is gone," she said; "I have lost my only dependence; henceforth I must rely on my own resources. Whilst he lived I had every comfort around me; now I must provide for myself and my family." This courageous woman purchased a hand-cart and went about selling pot-herbs; the eldest daughter purchased a basket and sold the various fruits in their season, and her brother became an itinerant chair-mender. The little Rose, about eight years old, was left at home to take charge of the house and prepare the meals. At first poverty assailed them rudely; they measured out their scanty supply of food, and blew upon their benumbed fingers, and slept upon straw. But little by little, the hard earnings of the widow and her children had increased; farthing added to farthing amounted to a sum sufficient to buy a mattress, to get a stove, to enlarge the loaf. Rose manufactured, in her spare moments, matches, which her sister sold, and knit stockings for the family. When I left them they had furniture, Sunday garments and credit at the baker's.

The example of the Cauvilles affords a striking proof of what may be achieved under great difficulties, with very slender means, by energy, perseverance and will. It is by uniting small efforts that we arrive at great results. Each separate finger has little power of accomplishment, but, united, they form a hand with which we can build stately edifices and tunnel high mountains.

My parents lived in the third story, above Mother Cauville, and in the attic cats and sparrows had taken up their abode. Most of my time was spent in chasing this game, or in strolling about the suburbs. I had about a dozen playmates, who, like myself, were better furnished with appetites than with shoes, and whose only parlor

was the king's pavement. Everything served us for amusement. During the winter's snow we fought great battles; we threw dams across the streams to convert the street into a pond; with the turf on uncultivated lands we built ovens and mills. In these childish labors and sports I was neither the strongest nor the wisest, but I hated injustice, and was frequently chosen arbiter in the disputes which arose among the boys. The condemned party sometimes revenged himself upon the judge by thrashing him, but this, so far from blunting my sense of justice, or making me repent of my impartiality, only confirmed me in the course I had pursued. The blows served the same purpose as the hammer with which we drive a nail; the harder we strike, the deeper the nail sinks. The same instinct led me to do nothing that I did not consider right, and to say nothing but what I believed to be true. For this adherence to principle I suffered severely more than once, especially in an adventure with a vendor of chestnuts.

He was a peasant who frequently traversed the suburbs of the city, with an ass laden with divers fruits. He always visited a fellow countryman who lived opposite to our house. The wine to which he was treated often prolonged his stay with his friend, and at such times groups of boys would gather round the ass, looking with eager and covetous eyes at his delicious burdens. One day the temptation proved too strong. The ass was laden with a sack of chestnuts, and through a hole we discerned the shining treasure, which seemed to be peeping out of the window on purpose to provoke our appetites. Some of the hold-out pointed out the aperture, and proposed enlarging it. They deliberated upon it; I alone set myself in opposition to the plot. As the majority carried the day, they were about executing their design when I threw myself before the sack, exclaiming, "No one shall touch it." I was about reasoning the matter with them, when a blow on my mouth stopped my utterance. I returned it with interest—a general mêlée ensued. This unequal battle proved my Waterloo, and being overwhelmed by numbers, in my fall I dragged down the sack I was defending. The peasant, attracted by the noise, rushed out. I was prostrate under the feet of the ass, in the midst of his scattered chestnuts. Seeing my assailants flee at his appearance, he took me for their accomplice, and without waiting for any explanation, he began to beat me for the theft, which in reality I had prevented. In vain I remonstrated. The peddler was resolved to be revenged, and was, besides, too drunk to understand what I said. At length I escaped, half murdered, bloody and greatly exasperated.

My companions did not fail to rally me about the handsome reward I had received for my scruples, but my determination remained unshaken. Instead of being discouraged, my resolution to do right was strengthened. If my bruises and wounds gave me pain, I felt that they were no disgrace; and that whilst I was laughed at, I rose in the estimation even of my persecutors. I have often thought that the vendor of chestnuts in beating me rendered me a signal service, without being aware of it. Not only had he taught me that we must do good for the love of it, and not for the reward it may deserve, but he had furnished me an opportunity of establishing a character. Thus began—thanks to him—a reputation which I have never forfeited. If a good name is a recompense for noble deeds, it is also a check and an incentive; the good opinion which is formed of us stimulates us to merit it.

Except my integrity I had all the faults common to children the principal part of whose education is obtained in the street. No one seemed to care for me, and I grew up like the grass in the highways, under the care of God. My mother was too much engrossed by family cares to pay any attention to me, and my father was away all day at his work. To neither of them did I seem of any account, except as one more mouth to feed. They wished to keep me from suffering, but their care extended no further. This was their way of manifesting their affection. Poverty, which always stood sentry at the door, sometimes rudely pushed it open and walked in, but I do not remember feeling its clutch. When the bread was insufficient, my father and mother first satisfied my hunger, and then contented themselves with the remainder as well as they could.

Another reminiscence of the same period is the walks we took on Sundays in the outskirts of the city. We used to go to some large hall where the people were drinking and carousing, and not unfrequently a battle ensued. I remember distinctly the efforts of my mother and myself to prevent my father from taking part in these quarrels, but we often had to lead him away disgraced by blows, and he left these terrible scenes very reluctantly. Sundays were always to me days of terror and of torture. A circumstance occurred which rendered them still more hateful.

I had a little sister named Henrietta, fair and delicately formed, who always slept beside me in a wicker cradle. I was tenderly attached to this little creature, who always greeted me with a smile, and extended her arms as I approached. The Sabbath walks were even more distressing to her than to me. Her cries always irritated my father, and he would utter dreadful curses against the innocent child. One day, transported by anger, he took her from my mother. He was half drunk; she slipped out of his arms and fell upon her head. They then gave her to me to carry. She uttered no cry, and my father congratulated himself that he had silenced her. I felt her head drop upon my shoulder, and thought she had fallen asleep, but from time to time I heard a low moaning sound. On reaching home she was put to bed, and the household was soon wrapped in slumber. The next morning I was awakened by the most piteous shrieks. My mother had my darling little sister in her lap,

whilst my father was gazing on them with a look of mute despair. The child had died in the night. Without comprehending then the cause of her death, I connected it with our Sunday walks, and this increased my aversion to them. After the lapse of a few weeks my father wished to resume them, but my mother refused to accompany him, and thus I was delivered from this bitter trial.

I had now reached my tenth year, and no one yet thought of my education. The indifference of my parents was greatly encouraged by the advice of Maurice, who had always been the trusted friend of the family. A mason by trade, as well as my father, and likewise from the same part of the country, he had, independently of the influence which these relations gave him, that authority which results from an unblemished character, from intelligence and experience, and from a degree of competence acquired by labor and industry. Among us it was said, "Maurice says thus, or so," and as the lawyers express it, that was the law. Now Maurice had a perfect horror of book-learning.

"What is the use of tormenting your son with the alphabet?" he often said to my father. "Have I ever needed the conjuring book of the schools to make my way in the world? It is not the pen and the writing desk, but the trowel, which makes the workman. Wait for two years; then you must give me Pierre Henri, and unless the devil interfere we shall make him buckle down to cutting and laying stones."

My father highly approved of this arrangement; my mother would have preferred having me sent to school, in the hope of one day seeing me wear the cross. However, she reluctantly abandoned the idea of my being a distinguished personage, and had not God interfered, I should not at this day have any knowledge of reading or writing.

CHAPTER II.

Why and How I went to School—Mr. Saurin—I am banished to the Bench of Incurables—Pierrot and the Battle of Jena—I become a Good Scholar—The Arithmetical Sanctuary of Mr. Saurin.

Our friend Maurice not only worked for others as principal of a corps of laborers, but he had begun some time previous to make little contracts on his own responsibility, which had brought him in some money, and this incited him to go on. He had been spoken to about some mason's work for a gentleman in Versailles, who had formerly employed him. He mentioned it at our house, and my mother advised him to get a friend to write to the gentleman. But Maurice had a decided repugnance to a correspondence; he declared that he would rather wait until Sunday, and go on foot to Versailles to conclude the business. Unfortunately another workman was more prompt, and when we saw him on Monday he told us that the gentleman had signed the contract the evening before his visit. He regretted Maurice came too late, for he would have given him the preference. Here was a job lost, worth several hundred francs, for want of a letter. Maurice detested pen, ink and paper, more than ever, which he declared gave the advantage to artful and cunning intriguers over honest workmen; by which we may understand that the honest workman was he, who could neither read nor write.

My mother drew from this circumstance a totally different conclusion. She saw that it would be an advantage for a workman to know how to put black upon white, and she proposed sending me to school. My father, who had thought nothing about it, made no opposition. They bought me a satchel, which was slung across my shoulders by a strap, and furnished it with two pens, a quire of paper, a leather inkstand, a primer in which the alphabet was headed by a cross, and which they called, on that account, "The cross of God." Thus equipped they took me to the school of Mr. Saurin.

Mr. Saurin had been before the Revolution a lay brother or novice in a convent of Capuchins. It was there, without doubt, that he learned the strict discipline which he enforced, and also to speak through his nose. In other respects, he was the best man under heaven who ever ate God's bread—patient, obliging, disinterested! I liked everything about my master except his cat-o'-nine-tails. Nevertheless, I must confess he used it with a great deal of justice, and always accompanied chastisement with words of kindness.

"It is for thy good, my dear boy!" he would repeat smiling. "Remember this correction, my child; who loves much, chastises much. I do this on account of the interest I feel in your welfare!" and at every sentence the knotted cord lashed your shoulders or your back.

As for me I was always among the best beloved, that is to say, among those most frequently whipped, and I must acknowledge I held the first rank among the Incurables. That was the name given by Mr. Saurin to the most inveterately idle and lazy. My love of locomotion, and my impatience under restraint, I tried to appease by flinging my legs from right to left, and contrariwise, or by a somerset, which changed into zigzag lines my neighbor's writing, and sent the ink spurting over the beautiful copies set by Mr. Saurin. These copies, suspended over every desk by a string fastened to a wooden pin, served much less as models for writing than as shields to conceal our tricks. Mr. Saurin, who always wore a smiling face, even when playing his cat-o'-nine-tails which made us cry, called them *capot screens*. I profited by them as much as any one, and a whole year passed without my having the least appetite for reading or writing. I was constantly recalling the words of Father Maurice, and I regarded school-learning as a superfluity which was unnecessary for me. In order to appreciate its value I had to learn its use.

It was then, if my memory serves me, the year 1806. One evening as I left the school-house, I saw about a dozen workmen gathered before a

great handbill pasted on the wall, but not one of them could even decipher the title. There was among my schoolfellows a little hunchback named Pierrot, who was the best scholar in the school, and who read with as much ease as others whipped tops. Spying the silver cross, which was suspended by a tri-colored ribbon around his neck, the workmen called him, one of them took him in his arms that he might see the bulletin; he began to read in a low musical tone:

"BULLETIN OF THE FRENCH ARMY.
Victory gained over the Prussians at Jena."

It was the account of the battle of the five French battalions which the Prussian cavalry could not break; and of the five Prussian battalions which the French cavalry had scattered like leaves before the wind. Pierrot read this news with an air as proud as if he had been commander-in-chief of the army, and the workmen drank in the words with eager ears. When he stopped, the most eager called out, "What more? What more?" And others responded, "Give him time; allow him at least a little breathing spell. He reads well, this little citizen. Come, my jewel, you are under the command of Marshal Davoust."

They were again silent to listen to Pierrot. The reading finished, other passers by wanted to hear the news, and the little hunchback had to recommence. This deformed child, who had been usually treated with heartless ridicule, suddenly became an object of great consideration. It almost seemed as if he were regarded as one of the actors in the glorious transactions of which he had been the medium of communication. Every one spoke kindly to him, every one had a word of encouragement and courtesy for him, while the rest of us were forced to keep silence, at the risk of kicks and cuffs. This cripple suddenly became our king.

This struck me as the misfortune of Maurice had struck my mother. Without reasoning about the matter, I felt that knowledge was a good thing, and worth having. The triumph of Pierrot put me in the notion of learning to read. I cannot say that I formed any resolution, but from that day I became more attentive to my lessons. The praise bestowed upon me by Mr. Saurin cherished these good dispositions, and my first attempts inspired me with courage to persevere.

At the end of the second year I was master of reading and writing, and had begun to study arithmetic. These lessons were only given to favorite scholars, to those who, as the old Capuchin expressed it, were filled with the sacred fire. We assembled in a little private apartment provided with a blackboard, on which our master made his demonstrations. The profane were forbidden to enter this sanctuary; the room with the blackboard was to them like the chamber in the castle of Blue Beard. Mr. Saurin taught us the four rules of arithmetic, with as much solemnity as if he were teaching us the art of making gold, and perhaps he was teaching us a science even more precious, for I have sometimes concluded that the knowledge of arithmetic was the greatest boon one man can bestow upon another. Knowledge is a blessing, the love of labor is better, perseverance still better; but without arithmetic all that avails nothing; it is like striking the air. To calculate, is to find the relation between the effort and the result; that is to say, between cause and effect. A man who cannot calculate works at haphazard; he does not know whether he has chosen the right path; if he has, it is mere chance. Arithmetic is in industrial concerns what conscience is in things pertaining to honest dealing; it is only when it is consulted that we see clearly what is right, and the mind is at rest. Experience has often proved what I now say, for the benefit of others as well as myself.

Thanks to the instructions of Mr. Saurin, I learned to calculate with promptness, and to resolve all the problems which he set upon the blackboard. Since Pierrot left school I was the first in my class; the little silver cross always ornamented my patched waistcoat. Like Napoleon, I was made Emperor for life.

CHAPTER III.

A Great Misfortune—A True Friend—Opinion of Mr. D. Concerning Children—Mr. Lenoir and his Geographical Maps.

One winter's evening Mr. Saurin had detained me unusually late to solve some problems, and I did not get home until night-fall. On arriving, I found the door locked; it was the hour when my father was always at home, and my mother preparing supper. I could not imagine what had happened, and I seated myself on the staircase to wait for them.

I had been there for some time when Rose came out and espied me. I inquired if she knew why our door was locked; but, instead of replying, she looked terrified, and I heard her exclaim as she reentered her mother's apartment, "Pierre Henri has come!" Some remark was made, then I heard hurried whisperings. Finally the Mother Cauville appeared at the head of the stairs and invited me, in a friendly voice, to come up. She was just about sitting down to table with her children, and she invited me to partake of their supper. I answered that I would rather wait for my mother.

"She has gone out on some business," said the widow, after some hesitation. "She may not return for some time. Eat and drink, my poor Pierre."

I seated myself next to Rose. Everybody seemed struck dumb except Mother Cauville, who pressed me to eat. But, without knowing why, my heart was too heavy to partake of the food set before me. I listened intently for footsteps on the staircase, and turned my eyes toward the door every moment. The repeat flushed, they gave me a seat near the fire, and all the family gathered round me without speaking a word. This silence, these unusual attentions, frightened

me, and I rose, exclaiming that I wanted to see my mother.

"Be patient; she will soon return," said the widow.

I demanded where she was.

"Well, she is at the hospital."

"Is she sick?"

"No; she went to take your father there, who has met with an accident."

I earnestly declared that I wished to go to them. Of this she disapproved. She pretended that she did not know to what hospital the wounded man had been carried, and averred, moreover, that if I went, I would not be admitted. There was, then, no alternative; I must wait. I felt as if my heart was in a vice, and I was struggling. Every one seemed to partake of my distress. We were seated around the fire, which was gradually dying out; the rain and the sleet rattled on the dilapidated roof of the old house. Just then a dog began to howl, and, without knowing why, the tears flowed down my cheeks. Mother Cauville took no notice of this. It seemed as though she feared to offer consolation lest she might inspire hope.

At length, quite late in the evening, we heard heavy footsteps on the stairs. The family all rushed to the door; I followed with trembling steps, and saw my mother in the entry. She was drenched with the rain; her face, disfigured with mud and blood, wore an expression I had never seen before. She advanced to the fire without uttering a word, and fell into a chair. It was evident that she wished to speak, for her lips moved, but only a low hissing sound escaped. I threw myself on her bosom and clasped her in my arms. After a long interval Mother Cauville inquired after Jerome.

"Well, I told you," stammered out my mother, in a voice scarcely intelligible, "the doctor warned me at once that he could not live; he had only time to recognize me and to give me his watch, and then—it was all over."

The neighbor clasped her hands, the children gazed at each other. As for me, I did not entirely comprehend the meaning of what my mother said, and I exclaimed that I wanted to go to the hospital to see my father. At these words my mother raised her head, grasped me with both hands, and shook me in a kind of frenzy.

"Your father! wretched boy! you have no father! Listen to me—do you understand? you have no father!"

I was terrified; I stared at her; it seemed impossible for me to take in her meaning, and I continued to cry out that I wanted to see my father. "Don't you understand that your father is dead?" interrupted Mother Cauville with some impatience.

The truth suddenly broke in upon me. I had seen the dead bodies of the clothes-merchant and my little sister. I knew what death was. That word revived in my memory many frightful images and recollections—a body wrapped in a sheet, a coffin nailed up, a hole dug in the earth. I uttered loud shrieks and sobbed violently. They forced me from my mother and carried me to our own room. I remember nothing more. When I saw my mother the ensuing day she was in bed. I thought she looked better than on the preceding evening, because she was no longer pale. They said she had the fever.

In the course of the day our friend Mauricet came to see her, but I was sent away during his stay. The next day he returned to take me to the funeral. I was dressed in my best suit, and a piece of black crape was tied round my hat. Only about six or eight persons followed the hearse, which astonished me greatly. My father was buried in the public cemetery. Mauricet purchased a wooden cross, which he immediately placed on the grave. I returned home, my eyes swollen and red, but with a lighter heart. It is thus with most children; grief cannot long repress the buoyancy natural to them. Since then I have often reflected on this subject. One day, in conversation, I mentioned it to Mr. D., the engineer, complaining of the ingratitude and insensibility of children. He quietly remarked that it was a wise provision of our Heavenly Father.

"The necessary avocations of life," said he, "divert the minds of men from their deepest sorrows. When we have a trade the mind must be occupied with our work. We are compelled to adjourn grief until work is done, and thus work affords us consolation by degrees, even in spite of ourselves." But the child has nothing to demand his attention, and if he was absorbed by his feelings he would dwell incessantly upon his sorrow, and death would be the consequence. God has not been willing to weaken children by such severe trials; he knows that they need all their vitality to increase in strength and stature; that the fire of life must burn with a steady flame before afflictions press heavily on the heart, or it would be quenched in tears. Therefore he has given to a child quick forgetfulness of misfortune, for the same reason that he has given him a sense of hunger, that he might take his necessary food and thereby grow to man's estate."

On quitting the cemetery, friend Mauricet returned with me to my mother's. At sight of us she melted into tears; our return announced to her that she should never see again the companion with whom she had spent twenty years. Mauricet was somewhat provoked.

"Come, Madeline," said he, with a brusqueness mingled with kindness, "this grief is unreasonable. Jerome, like yourself, is just where the good God wills him to be. Let us all accept our lot; he is at rest. As for you, go to work, and take courage. Here is this poor boy, who has need of his mother. Look! here is another Jerome. He already looks as much like him as two sons resemble each other."

So saying he pushed me toward my mother, who embraced me, sobbing.

"That's enough," said he, withdrawing me after a few minutes. "Wipe your eyes, shut up the fountain of your heart. You are a brave one, my old woman; now is the time to prove it. What do you expect to do now? Let us consider that; it is of more importance than anything else."

My mother answered that she did not know; that she saw no means of getting a livelihood, and she had no resource but begging from door to door.

"Do not talk so absurdly," said Mauricet, with some asperity. "Is that an idea worthy the widow of a workman? If you have hands to beg, surely you have hands to work—your own I am always bringing up to my wife and daughter as an example. So, then, you do not know how to keep house; you are no longer the best laundress in this quarter of the city, your whose skill and industry have obtained for you the name of *The Little Notable*."

This well-deserved eulogy aroused my mother somewhat, and she consented to confer with Mauricet as to what she had better attempt. The mason had his plan all ready, and he induced her to agree to it so adroitly that it really appeared as if the widow had all the honor of using her own judgment. It was concluded that she should get a situation as caretaker of some back-

color's rooms, whilst I should go into some work-yard to mix mortar and to learn a trade. Mauricet promised to watch over us, and if at the outset the avails of our labor should not suffice, he promised, in his unostentatious and homely way, to give us something to make the pot boil.

We quitted our room in the third story and took the basement, formerly occupied by the clothes-merchant. This change, to which we were compelled by our circumstances, was heart-breaking to my poor mother. It was impossible to get our furniture into the cellar room which we were to occupy, and we were obliged to sell whatever was not absolutely necessary. The cradle in which my little sister used to sleep, where I had so often seen her smiling face as she opened her bright eyes to welcome the dawning day, was what I regretted more than anything else. As to my mother, there was no end to her lamentations; her household had been her pride and glory, and to see it reduced and crowded into the little dark chamber we were to inhabit, seemed to her a disgrace as well as a misfortune. She buried her face in her apron, as if to hide her shame.

I know not why the poor set more store than the rich by the things which surround them and among which they live. Perhaps they value them more, because they have been acquired by hard labor and with great self-denial and difficulty; or, perhaps, because they are in constant use, and daily ministering to their comfort. With the poor, nothing is displaced, nothing is changed; the furniture with which they commence house-keeping remains intact until the family is broken up. So to speak, their surroundings become a part of themselves, and it seems as bitter a trial to part with them as with old friends. If by accident anything is broken, they repair or transform it into something else; even the pieces are turned to some account. When the fire has cracked the earthen dinner pot, they use it to plant sweet peas and mignonette, thus turning it into an ornament and placing it in the window. All these dilapidated things are like friends who have lived with us a long time. For my part, I always cling to things I have been accustomed to see and handle. This very day my garret is crowded with broken furniture and useless utensils; I call it "The Hotel of the Invalids for Disabled Servants." I know this seems absurd, but some allowance must be made for such feelings, and even whims, when they do not interfere with our duty.

The following week my mother found employment at an old bachelor's, who resided in a small tenement at the head of the Faubourg St. Martin. Mr. Lenoir had but one passion, and that was for geography. The walls of his habitation were covered with maps and ornamented all over with pins headed with sealing wax. These pins, as he told me, designated the routes of the most celebrated travelers. Their most trifling adventures were familiar to him; he knew the name of every place they had visited, and of every tribe in Africa. As a set-off to this foreign learning, he was utterly ignorant of his neighbors, and had never been outside of the district in which he lived in Paris. Hence this singular man was regarded as a monomaniac; but in reflecting on this subject, I have come to the conclusion that most of those who laughed at him were little if any wiser. Did they not also forget useful and available knowledge for ruinous or useless pursuits and fancies? Did they not also travel over their Africa with red headed pins, instead of being occupied in contributing to the comfort of their families? Often when I am tempted to squander my time I have remembered Mr. Lenoir, and that has saved me. The thinking man derives a lesson from all he sees and hears; even fools may give us instruction.

[To be continued.]

BILL AND JOE.

BY O. W. HOLMES.

[We predict for this lyric, from the *Atlantic Monthly*, a currency and a permanent fame equal to the best of Beranger's world-renowned pieces in a similar vein. It touches that never failing key-note to which the universal heart in every condition of life responds. The author of "Old Ironsides" and "The Chambered Nautilus" has achieved a new triumph in verse.]

Come, dear old comrade, you and I
Will steal an hour from days gone by—
The shining days when life was new,
And all was bright with morning dew—
The lusty days of long ago,
When you were Bill and I was Joe.

Your name may haunt a titled trail,
Proud as a cockade's rainbow tinge;
And mine as brief as a puff of wind;
As Tant O'Shanter's luckless mare;
To-day, old friend, remember still
That I am Joe and you are Bill.

You've won the great world's envied prize,
And grand you look in people's eyes,
With O N. and L. D.
In the bright letters, fit to see—
Your feet, old fellow, follow they go!
How are you, Bill? How are you, Joe?

You've worn the judge's ermine robe;
You've taught your name to half the globe;
You've sung mankind a deathless strain;
You've made the dead past live again;
The world may call you what it will,
But you and I are Joe and Bill.

The chaffing young folks stare and say,
"See those old buffers, bent and gray—
They talk like fellows in their teens!
Mad, poor old boys!" That's what it means—
And shake their heads; they little know
The throbbing hearts of Bill and Joe!

Now Bill forgets his hour of pride,
While Joe sits smiling at his side;
Now Joe, in spite of time's disguise,
Finds the old schoolmate in his eyes—
How calm, stern eyes that melt and fill
As Joe looks fondly up at Bill.

Ah, penitence scholar, what is fame?
A fitful tongue of laughing flame;
A giddy whirlwind's frolic gust,
That lifts a pinch of mortal dust;
A few swift years, and who can show
Which dust was Bill and which was Joe?

The weary old takes his stand,
Holds out his bruised and aching hand,
While galling thousands come and go—
How vain it seems, this empty show!
Till all at once his pulses thrill;
"Is poor old Joe's 'God bless you, Bill!'"

And shall we breathe in happier spheres
The names that pleased our mortal ears,
In some sweet lot of harp and song
For earth-born spirits none too long,
Just whispering of the world below
Where this was Bill, and that was Joe?

No matter; while our home is here
No longing looks for realms more dear;
When fades at length our lingering day,
Who cares what pompous tombstones say?
Read on the hearts that love us still,
His face! Joe! His face! Bill!

A Scotch engineer has discovered a method of producing intense light with common coal-gas, by mixing it with atmospheric air. Under ordinary conditions the introduction diminishes the illuminating power, but greatly increases the heat of a gas flame. In the new plan the mixture of gases is lighted after passing through a tissue of irridoplatin wires; the metal soon becomes heated, the flame disappears, and a vivid white light is the result. It will burn, it is said, in a gale of wind without protection, and a downfall of rain will not quench it.

No man is so learned but he may be taught; neither is any one so illiterate but that he may teach.

Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS.

Address, No. 16 West 24th street, New York City.

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

DEAR READERS, WHOM I CALL ALSO FRIENDS—For three months I have been away from you, carried off by a power not to be resisted on one of those journeys that bring us, through peril and suffering, very far on our way toward that city that is waiting for us all where the clear light of faith shines, and where we can see far back on the track that we have traveled, and find all along the way traces of the power that has been leading us.

When we go through any sickness or danger, our eyes seem dimmed, so we cannot see beyond the mists that gather about us; but a little further on, as we turn we behold so many glowing lights about the way that we wonder that we thought it filled with darkness.

The story of "Ned Tigby" by the missing of its final chapters, has perhaps been filled out by each of you, and so it has been rich with the colors of your imaginations, and perhaps you will not care if you do not read my concluding chapters. But to those of you who remember the story of Mr. Clyde, I will give the sequel.

I know it has been a great source of dissatisfaction with the orderly and prompt editor of the *Banner* to have the numbers of his paper marred by any omissions or failures. But I am sure you will take all blame from him, and not feel that he trusted too much to my former promptitude.

Your true friend,
LOVE M. WILLIS.

NED RIGBY.

PART IX.

The deepening twilight of December, in the city, seems like the sudden dropping of a veil over eyes that have been shining on us in the clearest light of love. It does not linger, as in the country, to coax us to the western window to see the wonder of the planet Venus, as she hangs her love-torch up to give us a little more of the beauty of light and usher in the great revelation hidden by the glory of the sun.

Mrs. Clarkson and Grace had been sitting in the bay window for an hour, and had been watching the passers-by with quiet interest; for Mrs. Clarkson had one of those warm, generous natures that feel sympathetically with all mankind, and the walls of her elegant mansion did not enclose her sympathies, which went out freely to the unknown and humble, as well as to those she loved and honored. Grace shared her mother's sympathy, but she was full of her own thoughts, for the great mysteries of God's providence were only shown to her in outward circumstance.

"Mamma," she said, "to-morrow will be Christmas Eve, and I am so glad! But why is not everybody glad?"

"The world is very glad. We do not know how many joys are to be found in the humblest home," said Mrs. Clarkson. "But there's old Prudie, who has been begging this morning. I do not see what Christmas is going to do for her."

"Prudie is a beggar, and she has her joys, no doubt, or else she would be willing to work. And if she gets an extra dish for herself, or to sell to her poorer friends, she will be very glad." "We will give her one, won't we?" said Grace. "Certainly. We will have some gingerbread baked, and a little tea in a parcel, and that will be as great a joy to her as some of her patrons find."

"And then there's Mrs. Rigby." "I was thinking of her," said Mrs. Clarkson. "And we will go and find her, won't we? I want little girl to play with. Say, mamma, will we go to the goodly goodly? And now tell me the beautiful Christmas story you were reading. I do not know exactly what Christmas means, and perhaps that will tell."

"It is just the time for a story, indeed," said Mrs. Clarkson. "In this dim light we can better bring out the other pictures which the words will give us. There was once a proud castle that reared its head above the valley, and looked as a king might look who cared not at all for his subjects except to rule them. In the beautiful valley was a little hamlet, so humble that it was not more than a mushroom beside an oak, as compared to the grand castle with its turrets, its arches and its overhanging walls."

In the castle dwelt a solitary prince. He was grand, like a great pine in the forest, and as solemn, for around the pine hung no tender vines, only a few shreds of mosses, and around his life no tender affections were gathered. He had everything he asked for that his great possessions could give—everything that he could wish for was his, yet his life was as gloomy as a great granite rock on which no mosses grow or vines twine. He cared for no one, and no one cared for him.

In the little hamlet dwelt a widow and her two children. She was so poor that she could hardly get bread for her little ones, and their garments hung in tatters. She paid her tithe to the lord of the castle, and taught her children to hate him as an oppressor.

He is as cruel as the north wind," she would say, "when it sweeps into our poor room and chills our blood. You must seek to do him harm; you must put poison-plants for his herds, and tear down the enclosures of his flocks; you must trample on his grain, and grieve his young trees." "They are the scum of the earth," the lord would say of his poor tenants. "They have nothing and can miss nothing, so take from them the greatest measure of their harvest, and drive off their goats for the rental."

And thus there was a perpetual feud between these neighbors, on whom the same sun shone, and on whose dwellings fell perpetually the light of a Father's love.

One morning as the lord of the castle lay looking at the sunbeams that stole in between his rich hanging curtains, he thought of his day's sports, and fell into a morning doze. All at once his attention was attracted by a little figure just above him, and he saw in place of the sunbeams a golden warp. It stretched from his room out of the window, and as he raised himself he saw that it reached to the little hamlet. The little figure had a golden shuttle, and she began to weave a web of most beautiful texture. On it were figures of little children, and they reminded him of the days when he played with his brothers and sisters, and there were faces of gentle women, and he thought, when looking on them, of his mother.

But how fast the little weaver went. Her web reached out into the sunshine, and already there gleamed on it figures of flowers twining in garlands and crowns. His eye followed the weaver as she toiled, until the golden gleaming web was finished even to the hamlet. Then she rolled it up and brought it to his room. She hung it over the wall, put it upon the bed, spread it on the floor, and feasted on it at the window. The room became a palace of glory; it seemed full of warm light like that of the spring sunshine, and the lord of the castle thought himself in heaven, rejoicing in the light of the sun of love.

When all was completed the little weaver perched herself on the bedstead and waited for him to speak.

"Tell me, if you can, what all this means. I seem to be in a new life. I feel like a boy again, when I laid my head in my mother's lap, and she told me a fairy tale. Oh, if this life could only continue!"

"That is easily done. I have been weaving the web of love for you. Its threads reached from you to your humblest tenant. No such web could have been woven in your castle, for besides, there was no place to fasten the threads; they must reach from heart to heart."

But those miserable ones do not hold the threads that join to my life."

"Ah, but they do, and you will never weave the golden web until you fasten them there. I have only shown you what you can do, and how you can make your home full of the golden glory of the heavens." Saying this she rolled up her golden fabric and disappeared. The lord opened his eyes to the dull room, through which stole the sunbeams, and wondered where he had been.

In the little hamlet, on a pallet of straw, lay the poor woman with her children. The night had given her poor rest, and her limbs were weary. She looked at the sunlight as it broke into the room through the leaves of the poplar. The light was beautiful to her, for there was yet a little in her heart, and she fell into a tender sleep, with

one thought on the labor before her, and another of the days long gone by. She saw the sunbeams turn into golden bars, along which sped all kinds of beautiful things, such as she had known when she was a girl. Mother's smiles were there in the form of white lilies; father's caresses like white vells; sports and pleasures like shining gems; and as she looked, she saw that these golden bars reached to the castle of the lord, and that little fairy-like spirits were bearing back and forth these beautiful gifts.

"Let me break down these golden bars," she said. "I hate the rich; they are enemies to the poor; nothing shall join my life to theirs. The children turned in their sleep, and the mother continued:

"No wonder you tremble, fearing lest love shall be strong enough to make me remember that all men are children of one Father."

At this, the tiny sprites bowed their heads, and the beautiful gifts flew back and forth, as flies a shuttle in the warp.

"All children of one Father," they said in chorus, "and he is Love. The rich and the poor he leadeth by his hand. See how all beautiful things come at the bidding of his love!"

And they sent up and down their gifts, that glowed as the flowers glow in the sunlight. The widow awoke and rubbed her eyes, and her face was solemn and sad. She had in her heart sweet memories. But as she looked out of her window and saw the turrets of the castle glowing in the light, the old feeling of bitterness sprung up, and she angrily shook her little ones, and told them that it was time to begin work, work, work.

But the golden web was woven and the golden bars were welded, and before noon the lord of the castle asked the woman to come and dust out his vacant rooms, and the children came with her; and the noise of their feet pattering over the floors was the sweetest sound he had heard for many a day, and when they went home at sundown, a gloom seemed to settle down on everything. And as the poor woman returned to her cottage, she put little sprigs of green over her doorway, and lighted a taper and called the day the day of the Sun.

And so other days followed, until the little ones were more at home in the great rooms of the castle than in their own dwelling. And the lord called them to him and took them on his knee, and listened to their prattle with smiles.

And so Love kept spinning her threads and weaving her web, and on her golden bars went up and down all the good things of heaven and earth.

"I see," said the lord, "we need each other. That is God's way of showing what his love is. I need these little ones and they need me; we will live together in peace."

And the woman in her home whispered to her little ones, "Do not forget that love is better than hate, and God gives us all some good things. I have no castle, but I have your love; I have no fields, but I have the opening buds of your minds. Let us all love one another."

And thus there began in that kingdom the reign of peace on earth; for love was the law, and love brought plenty to poverty, and kindness to desolate grandeur. And they called that kingdom the land of Good Will.

When the Christmas bells chimed, the lord awoke in his castle, and said, "Now I know the words that are ringing through the universe, Peace on earth, good will to men." They mean that the coming of the kingdom of heaven is love on earth."

And the widow awakened her children to listen to the bells.

"For," said she, "they ring new chimes. 'We are all children of one Father.'"

And the little ones looked up and said:

"And we may love the rich lord?"

"Yes, for the love that gave you to me, gave us all to each other."

"That is a part of the story," said Mrs. Clarkson, "that I was reading, and it is a beautiful lesson of love to us at this time; for with the good Father there are no rich or poor, and all are alike whose hearts are filled with his love."

Grace, who had been thoughtfully from the window for she was trying to solve the great social problem that vexes so many wise minds.

"Did God make me rich and Nell poor?" she asked.

"I am afraid I cannot answer that question," said Mrs. Clarkson, "but it is certain that we are in our places by a power wiser than we are, and that we have something to do for each other."

"I know what it is," said Grace; "it is to make everybody happy."

"You have found out the great secret of a noble life, my little girl, and I shall let you lead me into the beautiful paths that always are to be found for the seeking; for little children stand close to the ear of God."

"Then I'll whisper, mamma, and ask him if he won't make all the little children happy."

"And he will whisper into your heart and tell you that he has made you one of his little servants, and that he has to do his work through just such loving hearts and just such willing hands as yours."

"Then, mamma, I must change my plan for to-morrow and ask lots of God's children; but I do not know many, only such as wear nice clothes and have a plenty of good things."

"But Nell knows them, for she lives among God's poor."

"Then Nell and I must have a party together."

"We'll go like you like to go, among children who dressed in elegant garments, while you had nothing better than calico?"

"I'll wear my gingham, mamma, and ask all the little girls to wear theirs, and that will be a calico dress party."

The result of this evening's talk was a busy time in arranging for a real Christmas entertainment that should express the full meaning of the song from heaven, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

VERMONT.

Formation of a Society in Stowe.

EDITORS BANNER OF LIGHT—Thinking perhaps our spiritual friends and brethren throughout the country would be glad to learn of the movements and success of their co-workers in this Green Mountain State—those who dwell in the shadow of this grand old Mansfield mountain, the highest point in Vermont—I propose to give a brief account of what we are doing. I have been a Spiritualist at heart from my earliest recollection, and consequently have taken a deep interest in all the movements of the friends and workers in the broad field of this grandest and most glorious of all philosophies ever presented to mankind. For several years past we have procured speakers from time to time, as our limited means would allow, aided and assisted by a few warm-hearted and true friends, which meetings we have enjoyed highly, and feel as though they had been productive of much good. Last fall we adopted a brief plan of organization, and circulated it among the friends, and now we have the names of sixty-two members upon it, and I think there are many more nearly or quite ready to join us. We have organized under the name of the "First Society of Spiritualists of Stowe." February 6th we met and completed our organization and plans by choosing the following officers for the coming year: President, W. B. Parish; Vice President, J. W. Stiles; Corresponding Secretary, W. B. Parish; Recording Secretary, Lucius Salles; Treasurer, Mrs. O. M. Tenney; Trustees, C. H. Hanks, J. C. Town, H. S. Atwood, Mrs. O. M. Tenney and Mrs. O. G. Hale. Committee to raise Subscriptions, &c., W. B. Parish, Mrs. Sarah A. Slayton and Mrs. Mary Ann Hanks. So you see we are in a pretty fair working condition, and hope, by the aid and assistance of our spirit-friends, to do a good work for ourselves and humanity.

Yours fraternally,
W. B. PARISH, Secy.
P. S.—As our plan of organization, by-law &c., are somewhat lengthy—and as you have such a world of matter from all quarters to publish—I thought best to omit it, but will say it is somewhat similar to that of other Spiritualist Societies, being liberal and free from all creeds, dogmas and arbitrary rules.
W. B. P.
Stowe, Vt., Feb. 23d, 1869.

Each ant in an ant hill knows its companions. Mr. Darwin several times carried ants from one hill to another, inhabited apparently by tens of thousands of ants; but the strangers were invariably detected and killed. Thinking that there might be a family odor by which they were recognized, he put some ants, from a very large nest, into a bottle strongly perfumed with sandalwood, and stored them away for twenty-four hours. At first they were frightened by their companions, but soon recognized, and allowed to pass.

The Lecture Room.

The Search after God; or the Religion of Manhood.

A LECTURE BY HON. WARREN CHASE,
In Music Hall, Boston, Mass., Feb. 21st, 1869.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

Before proceeding with his lecture, Mr. Chase read Theodore Tilton's beautiful poem,

TIE LOTUS PLANTER.

A Brahmin on a lotus pod
Once wrote the holy name of God.
Then, planting it, he asked in prayer
For some new fruit, unknown and fair.
A slave near by, who bore a load,
Fell fainting on the dusty road.
The Brahmin, pitying, straightway ran
And lifted up the fallen man.
The deed scarce done, he looked aghast
At touching one beneath his caste.
"Behold!" he cried, "I stand unclean:
My hands have clasped the vile and mean!"
God saw the shadow on his face,
And wrought a miracle of grace.
The buried seed arose from death,
And bloomed and fruited at his breath.
The stalk bore up a leaf of green,
Whereon these mystic words were seen:
FIRST COME MEN: ALL OF EQUAL CASTE,
THEN COME THEMSELVES THE LEAST AND LAST.
The Brahmin, with bewildered brain,
Beheld the will of God writ plain!
Transfigured in a sudden light,
The slave stood sacred in his sight.
Thenceforth within the Brahmin's mind
Able to good will for all mankind.

Man is by nature a religious being. If religion in man is the gift of God, it is implanted in his interior essence, and is a portion of the nature with which he was endowed at his creation. In every grade of human society can be found vestiges of religion; there is no religion without a God in it; and in every form the God is shaped and fashioned to the intellect which worships it. Man creates the God he worships. That portion of the race around the frigid zones, where the seasons are of such extreme rigor as to be uncongenial to the culture and expansion of the human intellect, has weak and childish views of Deity; the views there entertained and attributes ascribed to God are puny and insignificant to us, and unimportant to the more advanced portions of the race; but those ideas are of the utmost consequence to those who worship in them.

In the torrid zone, where the inhabitants sleep in ignorance and live in idleness, and where sluggishness of mind and body seem inherent in all, the ideas of God and religion correspond to the state of the society; and their system of religion is extremely ridiculous to the more advanced portions of the race.

In the temperate zone, where the intellect is developed, there is not only more religion, but the characteristics of the religion are correspondingly advanced and superior.

This fact is marked in all the differing degrees and distinctive features of the religions of the world: that everywhere the idea of God corresponds to the degree of human development. There cannot be one God for all; for a God adapted to the wants of the more advanced, would not be appreciated by the lower grades of society. The inferior races and grades of human beings must have a God which can be brought down to them—such as the images, idols and monstrosities which have come down to us from the past, and which appeal to the physical senses of their worshippers. There are even among us portions of society who need visible forms of God presented to the eye, in order to aid in their conceptions of Deity; and the decorations and symbols in the churches meet that requirement, and bring the subject within the reach of their senses; the pictures of God presented to their view make them more religious.

Throughout society around us we can perceive the wide extremes of religion; the more advanced stages of intellect remove all forms from the Church; with them the pictures are not visible,

valuable to man; but as we advance along the line of history we see on every hand sacred traditions and foolish ceremonies passing away from human worship—first the ridiculous expression, and now even the form itself. Last of all idolatry to quit its hold on the human intellect is the worship of the human form, which has been presented as an incarnation of the living God. This idea, in pictures and other methods holds its place in the Christian Church. It has been endeavored in the past to place this human form to immense proportions, and place it far, far away, beyond the reach of mortal perception—embodying, as some denominations declare, the universe, bound into human likeness with all these worlds but parts infinite, of which man is the form finite. But gradually, as in the case of the worship of animals and monstrosities, and the grosser methods of religious expression, this form of God will drop away from human minds, and man's intellect can perceive how God can exist without a human body; that this divine intelligence can exist to whom no motive, motion, condition or possibility is obscure; that this eternal MIND can endure which knows no past or future, but to whom all is forever present; that a divine intelligence can exist conscious of all that has been, and of all that will be.

Infinity cannot be measured, but it can be worshipped, and we can speak of its attributes. To the Infinite there is no here or there; no now or then. Men measure distances and changes in their lives by other kinds of distances and changes, and upon those alone do we predicate times and distances; while to the Infinite all that to us was, and is, and is to be, is in the constant, eternal now!

An idea of God adapted to the manhood of the race; an idea adapted to the refined religion of the human mind; an idea adapted to the world in which we live, when it shall have broken away from its leading-strings and needs its nursing priests and toy-books no more; when it shall become conscious of its powers—shall feel itself expanded to the full measure of true manhood and womanhood—where shall we find it? Incarnate in Jesus? No, but incarnate in the race; incarnate in every existing form; which is found in the power which lifts us to that developed condition in which all shall recognize in the religious nature of man the true appreciation of God in man; in which we shall feel that the divine spark within us is the incarnation of God within us, and under such teaching shall strive to make our bodies living temples "holy and acceptable unto the Lord." The time is coming which shall bring this light to the world of man—the condition of manhood, when a religion fit for it must be born, even as Christianity was born to the age which required it; as Mohammedanism came to meet a great need in its day, or the Protestants split-off from Catholicism—just as every religious denomination has had its necessity, even down to the skirmishing sects of Unitarianism and Universalism, which border on the broad domain of Spiritualism. As each of these were formed to meet a demand of the age, so has Spiritualism been born to the age which needed it, bringing with it a higher and more advanced religion than the world had ever known. Ah! but it was born in a Bethlehem! It was born in a stable! It had no place in respectable society! Was Christianity any better off during the first hundred years of its existence? When in all the history of the past did any new religious truth come to the world having a place in respectable society? Where does God plant the beautiful water-lily, whose purity and whiteness are typical of nothing on this earth save a soul, who, sanctified by trial, and glorified with hope, waits by the shore of the river of change to be transported to the home of the angels? He plants it amid the sedimentary deposits of a stagnant pool, whose odor almost sickens unto death; up from that corruption the beautiful flower emerges, shedding its perfume to the hand that bears it away! So when a great truth is planted by the Divine Intelligence, it is nursed among colleges, hymned through cathedrals, preached in the churches? No! Only when it has been humbly nursed and cultured into strength to demand attention is it seen and appreciated by those for whom it was prepared and intended.

The truth—Spiritualism—has come; we have found it in a stable, outside of society; no respectable church to take it in; no college to acknowledge it; scarcely a welcome even in the families of Europe and America; and yet it is the germ of a higher life. It is true it had its infancy in the physical manifestations, it has sown its wild oats, and is verging upon its manhood, and the advanced minds of our country begin to see that there is in it a religion for the future.

But many people say, "It is a religion without any God." Why? Because their God is not in it. Each Church fails to find its God, and so declares us to be a Godless people. But we are not a Godless people; our God not only pervades and permeates this whole world, but every world and every form of being. Our work and religion refer to a God of this world; while we are here our religion is to consist, not in praises to God, not in giving glory to him when we do not possess the glory to give him, but in doing good to one another—in actions, not in words. In the religion of manhood prayers will be carried in baskets—not baskets of tracts from which the spirit has escaped, leaving only the printed page, but baskets full of the necessities of life; not in carrying coals to Newcastle, nor glory to that Being whose glory fills immensely; not in doing deeds for Christ's sake, but in doing deeds for our brother's and our sister's sake—for the sake of all those who need them. This religion is to be brought into real life and into actual practice; it is to be carried into every department of existence. We are to weave this religion into all the circumstances of daily existence; we are to abandon the old and foolish forms of inverted religion, called profanity, and, at the same time, abandon that phase of religious expression which is used in the pulpits of Christian societies; we are to abandon the long, wordy prayers, the utterances which condemn mankind, and the excuses that are offered to God for the conduct of the race. We are to bring this practical religion into the minds and actions of men, so that they may feel and know that there is no prayer or power, in earth or heaven, that can set aside the effects of our actions in life. For in this new religion we shall know that there is a law of compensation for every act—an ample reward for each good deed, and a corresponding recompense for evil conduct; and the soul shall find, in every stage of being, its works following it. We shall know, in this coming time, that our kindred, and those with whom we have mingled in this life, are living yet; we shall from them obtain a knowledge of their mode of life; we shall know that, in that state of being, whatever we have done for truth will come back upon us in blessings, to reward our efforts, whilst the self-condemnation which will come to us for misdeeds will supersede and render unnecessary a general Judgment Day, or a mighty Judge for all; the condemnation shall come from the power within each individual soul, and not from any without.

In this religion for manhood we shall find a God everywhere; a spiritual life corresponding to the physical life, as the divine essence corresponds to every form in the mineral, vegetable or animal kingdoms, in the human system and in the spiritual world. As the divine essence unfolds the mortal form without the will of the individual, as you enter this stage of being, not by any power of will, but by a power which unfolded your form and wrought out for you the external features and the internal consciousness working through form, so, throughout the universe, the divine power is at work in all things, unfolding external forms and living in them, but never dying, casting off and taking on as you move through the stages of being, and expand your life in the spiritual or celestial world. Little did we who first became interested in the opening phase of Spiritualism, as unfolded in the physical phenomena, dream of the possibilities therein contained and about to be given to the world.

But some were ready to inquire: "If Spiritualism is true, what, good is it, going to do? Allowing it to be true, what are you going to do with it?" We did not propose to do anything with it, for the first ten years it was among us. What do you do with your children at first? You propose to feed them and take care of them, and about the time they attain the age of ten years you begin to call out the tendencies, the drift, the direction of the child's mind. So have we done with Spiritualism. At first we nursed it; it was in a state of infancy; it rapped, moved tables, jerked the arms of media, and performed other childish acts, and many cultivated minds were repulsed from it on account of them. Those same people did not find fault with the manifestations of childhood in the families of their neighbors, but were unwilling to allow such a stage of childishness in the undeveloped theory of Spiritualism. They would not have seen a God in the child Jesus, had they beheld him in infancy. They did not see that it was necessary for Spiritualism to have this early phase. As our new religion has advanced beyond the physical manifestations, we have recovered from the infantile demonstration of great truths, the philosophy of a continued, conscious existence after death, an approximate knowledge of the elemental structure of spirit forms, and kind words from those who have gone before, and from whom we never hoped, perhaps, to hear again! After our curiosity is satisfied we begin to inquire about religious and scientific knowledge, and upon

matters connected with that life and our own; by such inquiries we have gained information concerning the religion of the spirit-world—a religion adapted to the wants of human life, and it passes over all God-worship, over all phases of popular devotion, over long prayers and psalms of praise, and in simple forms of beauty and rationality appears to man, bidding him turn his devotions to the race; that his services, if servant he would be of God, are to be performed in good acts to his fellowmen. Among the utterances of the early days, even among the fables, we will find the record that whosoever you have visited in sickness or in prison, whosoever you have clothed and fed in time of need, whosoever you have supplied with the means of physical life and mental culture and rational devotion, these are the gods, and as you have done it to them you have done it to God. These teachings can be found in the Old Book and the New—among the grand sentences of truth which have been dragged along the past by those philosophic and reformatory minds who lived a thousand years in advance of their time, and inculcated the divine lesson: "Do not to others as you would have others do unto you."

Leave those old ideas. Let the Catholic have his picture, and curse it not; let the idolater have his image, and curse it not; but see to it that you, who have a superior religion, exhibit its superiority in your acts toward your fellow beings; see to it that you

"Count all mankind of equal estate."
Then count thyself the least and last."

Remember the saying of one of old: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." He who blesses a fellow being shall have the blessings of the divine government showered upon him; he who inspires men to nobler actions, who turns to light and love his fellow being whose nature is immortal, but whose pathway is drifting to darkness, has paid his devotions to God, and his religion is sure and steadfast and immovable—a religion that needs no mouth-utterances, but is revealed by practical work; a religion whose devotion shall expand through all the spheres of being, taking on inspiration and throwing it out to the world as the flower disseminates its perfume; a religion which shall lead the soul onward and upward to the joys awaiting it in the home of the angels.

Written for the Banner of Light.

GUARDIAN ANGELS.

BY JOHN WILLIAM DAY.

"They are gone, and here no longer
Shall their mortal forms appear;
Make our faith, O Father, stronger
That their spirits still are here.
Here to wake the land of feeling—
But the "me" of memory die,
Here to find no hope appealing,
Trailing, from all our woe!
Oh, when round us night is falling,
May our souls, in hope secure,
Hear their holy voices calling:
"Come where life and joy endure!"

The sunset crowns Rome's glittering turrets high,
And evening shadows creep along the plain;
The vesper bell rings upward to the sky,
And choral anthems shake each lordly fane.
They sing of her who bore a mother's pain
To bring the Christ, the promised Saviour, down
When Syrian shepherds heard th' angelic strain,
And Chaldean sages stooped his brow to crown
Whose manly life-like flowed "neath priestcraft's midnight frown!

Beyond the broad Campanian's level breast,
Mid twilight shadows bend a pilgrim band;
From many a distant clime their feet have pressed,
To gain th' "Eternal City's" wished-for strand.
Among the shattered wrecks, the ruins grand,
That speak the fleeting breath of earthly power,
They kneel in silent awe, by breezes fanned
Rich with the perfume of the prayerful hour—
The vestal virgin's chant thrumme from the far-off tower!

Prone in the dust around, neglected lie
The cross-crowned staff, the keys, the scallop-shell;
When marching on to greet th' Italian king,
These bade the expectant bosom prouder swell.
But now, in hearing of the vesper bell—
The precious goal in sight—the journey o'er,
The wanderer needs no aid! His beads to tell;
His toll hath brought fruition's heavenly lore!
And Faith with eager hand draws in the golden store!

And o'er the kneeling group a woman stands—
A girlish figure, stately and serene—
She points the travelers on, with eager hands
Nobly uplifted 'mid the wondrous scene;
She points, while written on her holy mien
Is traced: "Not yet your goal is there!
Where, on her seven-hilled throne, an ancient queen,
Rome sits, and upward from the city's glare
St. Peter's mighty dome looms through the twilight air."

We seek a holy shrine, through earth's dark way,
Through sin's hot sands, and fierce temptation's woe;
We seek the portals of eternal day,
And God's evangel cheer our wanderings slow.
Think ye the cadence of the Jordan's flow
Deafens the friendly ears who've gone before?
Think ye the voice whose kindling power we know
Is hushed for aye where death's black waters roar,
And Eden gives no smile back from her golden shore?

Not as the north-lights in the midnight gleam,
When frosty stars in chilling ellipse roll,
So in the twilight thought, the peaceful dream,
They come to cheer the sin-bereaved soul!
They bid the beacons blaze, the watch-tolls toll
To mark the invading fiend's delusive power—
They tell how Autumn creeps in russet stole—
Through Winter's sorrowing path to Springtide's hours,
And vernal gales that float o'er fair, celestial flowers.

Oh! in our wandering group a vision bright;
We see the heavenly city's gates of gold,
And all the spirit's power is plumed for flight,
To reach that land—to clasp the loved of old!
"Is then the guardian speaks: 'Not yet ye fold
Th' immortals in your arms of crumbling clay;
Life claims your duty; dare the winter cold
Of trembling age—or manhood's blazing day—
Till God the Father calls, and angels lead the way!"

When human spirits bow in humble prayer,
And deaf the pompous creeds of priestly sway,
Loved friends departed cleave the vesture air,
To wipe the tear from sorrowing eyes away!
They point beyond earth's broad Campanian gray,
Where towering domes and glittering spires arise—
Where God's bright glory sheds a fondles ray—
And farther than th' Italian sunset dies,
The smiling Summer-Land sits throned among the skies!

THE WASH-TUB AND THE BALLOT-BOX.

EXTRACT FROM AN ESSAY DELIVERED BY F. T. LANE, BEFORE THE FRANKLIN LITERARY ASSOCIATION, LAWRENCE, MASS., FEB. 10TH, 1860.

Poor Biddy, who stands at the wash-tub every Monday morning, ought to be commemorated. You erect for her a pyramid of soiled linen, which she diminishes to the tune of penitence an hour; but when she has her rights, she will swing the ballot as her countrymen do the "sholelah"; then we shall honor her not by giving her soiled shirts, but by granting her full and equal rights with ourselves.

When we throw up our arms into mid-air, and wriggle ourselves into a clean shirt, we ought to pronounce a benediction on poor Biddy at the wash-tub.

A clean shirt is a "thing of beauty," and it might be "a joy forever" were it not for the wear and tear of buttons, and the fact that we mortals who wear them are made out of the "dust of the earth," and with a clean shirt, even, cannot overcome the natural tendency to grovel in our native element.

People joke about a shirt on a bean-pole, but a shirt will keep clean and tidy on a bean-pole longer than on any mortal man I ever beheld!

We adorn the walls of our rooms with beautiful pictures; we delight in crayons and chromes; a case of stuffed birds always finds a ready market. "Now if we can think of nothing better we ought to erect a 'stuffed shirt' in honor of the poor women who wear their knees over the wash-tub.

Woman at the wash-tub has this inspiring motto: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." The woman who had such a horror of dirt that she scrubbed through the floor into the cellar, we ought to honor as a Kitchen Saint. (Perhaps A. J. Davis, in his next new book, will titler her with that "sacred" appellation.) You have doubtless heard of the old lady who conceived heaven to be a place "where she could sit down and rest with a clean apron on."

As cleanliness is next to Godliness, the washer-woman's vocation is one that cultivates the noblest of virtues. We

ought, then, to give her the ballot. But the man who sits down in a puddle of tobacco juice and talks politics—no should stay at home, and sit in a wash-tub, and soak.

Dirty men get elected to office here on earth; but I think they will never be counted among the "elect" in heaven. It would never do to put them within spitting distance of the "Great White Throne." That place must be reserved for old ladies with clean aprons.

I have somewhere read of a scene like the following:

SCENE 1st—Mother in the cellar spitting wood.

SCENE 2d—Daughter in the parlor, singing to a well-dressed simpleton, "Who will care for mother now?"

I can imagine a scene almost as striking as that:

SCENE 1st—Small, delicate woman at the wash-tub, rubbing away for dear life.

SCENE 2d—Stout, portly man behind the counter selling tape, and declaring that it would be unfeeling for women to vote!

Men let their wives get down on all fours, and with soap and scrub away hour after hour. Ask these same men to let their wives arise and put on a clean attire and go to the polls with them. Oh no! that would be undignified! Most men think it very becoming for their wives to work among pots and kettles, and do the drudgery for the whole household. The lords of creation go to their counting-rooms and offices and "sling ink," as Artemus Ward calls it; but the women—they may stay at home and sling "dish-water."

The most vehement opponent to woman's rights is generally the man who has but one shirt to his back. He evidently fears that while he is lying about for the purpose of having his nether garment cleansed, his wife might leave it soaking in the tub, and go to the polls without him!

A woman at the wash-tub is a more comely sight than a man with dirty jaws at the ballot-box.

Woman at the wash-tub can only cleanse our apparel; but give her the ballot, and she will make our political character as spotless as our linen. She would take the noisy, blustering politician on election day, and trot him on her knee until all the venom was "gulped" out of him.

Give woman at the wash-tub the right to vote, and every "don of vice" will be in "hot water." Her moral influence will be as cleansing as her "soap-suds." A woman who can go out on a cold, windy day, and with mouth full of clothes-pins reach up in mid-air to hang the clothes a-drying, is more exposed than she would be at the ballot-box.

Give to woman at the wash-tub the ballot, and every vote she casts will be a moral clothes-pin, with which to fasten the cords of creation to the line of duty. And she will "fight it out on that line, if it takes all summer."

As the Lord said in olden time, "Mash is my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe"; so woman with the ballot will say, politically, "The National Capitol is my wash-pot; over every Doughface will I use my shoe."

Then give to woman at the wash-tub the ballot, for politics is like a dirty shirt, and woman alone can cleanse it.

Original Essay.

MEDIUMSHIP, OR "THE WAYS OF GOD," OR SPIRITS, WITH MEN.

BY MRS. MARIA M. KING.

"The field is the world, and the reapers are the angels." God sends forth his angels as ministers of good, emphatically, to man. His Omnipotent Wisdom ordains that it shall be the office of the higher to reach down and assist the lower, always, and not, by any means, depress it, or hinder its upward progress. This Omnipotent Wisdom provides that the world of spirits, disembodied of flesh, shall reach down from their higher sphere and raise up humanity from the plane where it is groveling in sensualism to that where it can receive truth, and recognize the hand of benevolence in the ministrations of those whom God has ordained to be his direct ministers to them.

It has been the method of "Providence," or spiritual beings, to deal with individual men as well as nations, according to the necessities of the situation; and these necessities have developed methods which have puzzled mankind, and prompted some thought and investigation of the "whys and wherefores" of the evident dealings of the Superintending Intelligence of the universe with men. Some have scouted the idea of a Superintending Intelligence; others have manufactured a devil; and others, legions of devils, whereon to shoulder the responsibility of what seemed to them devilish, or inconsistent with their notions of just dealing by an All-wise Intelligence. Others have dimly discerned that God's benevolent angels oftentimes veil their faces to men, and appear in the disguise of "demons of darkness," that they may effect some purpose which in the order of Nature must be effected, and can be by no other means. This latter class are few; but having divested themselves of the fear of Satanic influences, they fearlessly plunge into investigation of all phenomena, and gain wisdom thereby which places them upon a plane where they discern the clear light of Infinite Benevolence shining through all the ministrations of spiritual beings to men.

Man in the flesh is the one great enemy—the only "fiend" which man in the flesh has to dread; as intelligence in the second sphere has developed effective means whereby the evil-disposed of that sphere are restrained from preying upon helpless victims in the lower sphere. This will not appear unreasonable, as men know that the intelligence already developed in the first sphere is devising means for protecting helpless victims from the influence of the depraved; thereby greatly aiding progress of all classes of men; and it cannot be questioned that a superior intelligence and power to that in existence in the first sphere has been developed in the second. The sages of the second sphere make it their employment to devise means for the good of all grades of men below them; and they have not in vain devised for ages. They are God's instruments of good to men in the flesh; they are his intelligence, in a sense. They are prompted by an individual intelligence wrought out by the experiences and discipline of their active lives, and are also aided by inspirations from the sphere above them. These sages are the guardians of the interests of every soul of man in earth-life, and they prompt the necessary discipline to which every soul is subject, and also superintend, to the necessary degree, the immediate guardians of all individuals in the flesh, that nothing in reality inconsistent with or detrimental to the most rapid advancement possible of each individual may transpire. If this is fatalism, or takes from individual man any inherent individual right, then be it so; for this is the method Nature has established, and through which she elevates man to his high destiny; in other words, evolves and individualizes the God-principle inherent in her. She, in reality, subjects man to no process, no experience or discipline, which robs him of his individuality, or prevents the most rapid development of this individuality, as she cannot do this consistently with her own designs. The individualization of spirit, the advancement of man to the plane where he acts as her most effectual assistant, is the great end of all her action; therefore, when man, from his standpoint in the spiritual sphere, judges of the wants of men below him, and acts in God's stead, "in appointing his ways" for him, it is Nature acting in her legitimate way.

Say men in this day: "Whence come the contradictions, the mistakes, the evident untruths, which are dictated through mediums? Is it from their imperfect development, or design on the part of the dictating spirits? If it is from the former cause, surely it is time mediums under-

stand it, and seek a remedy; if from the latter, to what motive shall we attribute it?" Important interrogatories and suggestions are these truly, and it is time mankind were answering them correctly for themselves. It is true that men know too little of the laws governing mediumship and perfect control by the communicating spirit, to judge, at all times, whether a mistake comes through the imperfect development of the medium or by design of the spirit communicating; yet men should be capable of judging whether there is not some design manifested attributable to some spirit, or grade of spirits, whenever a mistake occurs. It is undeniable, as must appear to all on due consideration of the subject, that the controlling spirit must understand the grade of development of his instrument, and he can withhold a truth which he knows will appear through the medium's brain distorted. If his own disposition or knowledge does not prompt him to withhold that truth until it can be given correctly through a well developed brain, his guide or teacher has the power to restrain him. That this is not always done, and truths come forth through mediums distorted in every possible manner, is because the wisdom which controls in the matter of communicating with men in the flesh permits it to be so for wise purposes.

"Thus saith the Lord," has bound the intelligence of past ages and the present to the dogmas of the Church; has stunted the growth of man's reasoning faculties, from compelling their disuse. Now, shall it be the method with intelligent spirits who have, in this dawn of the spiritual age, opened a free communication with men, to rivet the chains which theologians are binding about the intellects of the people? Shall they in any way sanction the habit of the people of the present to accept, unquestioningly, all or anything that is revealed? How are the chains to be broken? How are the people to be set upon their guard against the practice of their acquired habit of believing what their teachers say, without reasoning themselves on all propositions presented by them? Let intelligent, thinking minds, refer to the past history of mankind for an example of the effects of this closing of the reason and submission to authority. The stagnation of mind, which was almost the universal condition throughout Christendom after the Church had gained its maximum of influence in the world, resulted naturally from the disuse of the intellectual faculties, which was compelled by the Church. "I hold the keys of heaven, earth and hell, and of science and art," said this monstrous usurper and oppressor, "and ye shall think only as I dictate, at the peril of the most exquisite tortures that my inquisitors can invent!" Art, science, philosophy and literature languished, being smothered by the "abomination of desolation" that sat in the highest place. Grosser sensualism alone was encouraged and held away, for the reason that the intellect had no freedom for action. The human race would have stagnated as a whole, had not a remedy been interposed to stay the power of the Church and set men to thinking. Reason began gradually to come into exercise, and when the human intellect was aroused at the dawning of a brighter age, men braved the terrors of the Inquisition for the sake of maintaining the privilege of exercising their own reason.

"Take things as you find them, and do the best you can," is the only maxim by which the world of spirits can be governed in dealing with men. This universal tendency to submit to the authority of the Scriptures, or of creeds, or established theories in the schools, acquired by habit and demanded by public opinion, must be checked, else the great good which it is the will of the spirit-world to do for man cannot be done. It must be checked, I repeat; and it will be checked, at whatever expense of faith in the communications of spirits on the part of those who have not yet developed sufficient faith in the Spiritual Philosophy to cause them to stand firm, whatever stumbling-blocks may be thrown in their way; or at whatever expense of faith on the part of Spiritualists in the integrity of purpose of those who communicate and permit errors, contradictions and mistakes.

There is but one method of counteracting this tendency among Spiritualists of accepting, unquestioningly, all that is revealed from the spirit-world—one method of teaching all men the important lesson: THAT REASON IS ABOVE ALL AUTHORITY; and the great effort should be to develop Reason, which stands as Governor among the intellectual faculties. It is of small importance, comparatively, in what faith an individual starts out upon his career of development. He is destined to discover the true faith, ultimately, through his reason, by comparing all faiths. The help which comes from being early taught the true mode of nature in dealing with man and the universe at large, is important; however, let it not be proclaimed in the ear of the investigator, "You shall not question this or that proposition, because it is well understood to be established truth," lest you stultify his faculties at once. Give him plainly to understand that nothing is too sacred to be questioned that does not commend itself to what reason he has already developed, at the same time admonishing him that he is to cultivate his reason by all means in his power, and hold himself open to the reception of new truths, which, being combined with those already received, will cause him to change his opinions—to form new bases from which to start anew on his grand tour of investigation of Nature's broad principles.

If you say to the believer in the power of spirits to communicate, "Spirits make no mistakes, particularly the wise ones that communicate through the best mediums," or "the good spirits do not mistake facts, or permit mediums to do so," it is, in reality, telling the individual that there are things upon which he will not be required to reason. If he can believe, implicitly, that good spirits can always be trusted to state sentiments to him which cannot be questioned, he is on dangerous ground—dangerous to the proper exercise of his manly prerogative.

It should be understood by all men that there are differences of opinion among spirits upon important questions, and different opinions are promulgated through mediums with all honesty of purpose by the communicating spirits. Men in the flesh differ in opinion, and promulgate their opinions, and investigating minds are called upon to judge for themselves which are correct. Again: Different forms of expression are in use among spirits, as well as among men in the flesh. These different forms of expression are frequently misunderstood and misapplied by those who study spiritual communications. Certain expressions are sometimes purposely used to carry out the designs of the spirit, which expressions are just, and in perfect consonance with truth, but from the circumstance of the imperfection of human language, or from the particular mode—characteristic of a certain language—are not exactly expressive of the ideas conveyed to the mind or minds addressed in the flesh. For instance: we of certain circles in spirit-life call our grandparents, to remote generations, fathers and mothers, as they in reality are, but not in the exact sense

that men in the flesh apply to these terms. We call that revered grandmother, that ministers to us in our mother's stead, mother, as much as we call her mother that gave us birth. We can be misunderstood by men in the flesh in the use of this or similar terms, if it suits our purpose to be, but not otherwise. If we would inculcate an important lesson to or through a medium, and can do so by causing the misuse of a term better than in any other way, we sometimes do so.

A wise teacher in your schools sometimes takes the book from the hand of the pupil and reads, purposely making mistakes in his reading. This he does, not to inculcate the practice of incorrect reading, neither to distort the author's meaning, but for the sole purpose of inculcating the practice of careful reading. The pupil understands this, unless he is very stupid, and is not prompted to make the same mistakes that his teacher did, but to avoid them. This exactly illustrates the mode of spirits with men. They, in reality, make their method as apparent as the teacher does; and if men do not discover it, it is for want of due care, which the very method will be sure to develop in time. When an important question is answered in perhaps a dozen different ways by as many different mediums, and, also, artfully dodged by others, is it not plain evidence of the design of spirit-teachers to elicit thought on this question on the part of the interrogators? Does it show a design, on the part of spirits, to teach the habit of lying more than the practice of teachers in earthly schools, who resort to many methods to elicit thought in young minds? The many devices of spirit-guardians and teachers are all of this sort, or conceived with the view of bringing out the thinking and reasoning faculties of men. Grown-up children can bear harder lessons than babes, therefore hard lessons are given them to learn.

I would inculcate the important principle that mediums should be instructed; that it is entirely unfitting that any should stand up as public teachers who are ignorant entirely of that they teach. It has been demonstrated, beyond a shadow of doubt, that mediums who have attempted to teach scientific principles, being entirely ignorant of the first principles of science, have failed to elucidate scientific principles to the satisfaction of scientific men. The trouble lies in the difficulty which spirits experience in seeking to instill a magnetism into the medium's brain, that does not find its like there. The magnetism of whatever knowledge an individual has acquired remains in the brain, as the nucleus which will attract other magnetism of its like; according to the principle that knowledge begets a love of itself. When there is no magnetism in the brain stored from study of scientific works or treatises on philosophy, art, history, &c., a spirit seeking to develop that brain as an instrument whereby to teach in any of these departments, must labor at the same disadvantage that a teacher of these branches in earth-life does with a pupil who has never acquired an idea of the knowledge sought to be imparted. The latter has first to overcome the greatest of all obstacles to the success of his undertaking, viz: the apathy or want of interest of his pupil; and this he can only do by scattering a few germs in his mind, at great cost of labor—a few elements in his brain, to be the forces to attract others. The spirit must overcome the obstacle of a lack of appropriate magnetic conditions of the brain for receiving into it truths of any nature, by the method of first instilling the requisite quality of magnetism into the brain in sufficient quantity to be attractive to the mass of magnetism that must be impelled into it as the thoughts of the spirit when he wishes to give utterance to these thoughts through the medium's organization. A tedious process, both for the spirit and the medium, is that which compels such a long period of preparation. When spirits take the risk of communicating great truths upon any important branch of knowledge, through mediums ignorant themselves and not half developed for this use, they take the risk of being entirely misunderstood by men in the flesh, or of having the truths they wish to teach entirely misrepresented or distorted by the process of coming through a brain unprepared to give them utterance.

Much has been necessarily attempted through but partially developed mediums in this the opening of the dispensation of the Spiritual Philosophy; it having been a necessity to awaken interest in spiritual manifestations by every means in possession of the powers that worked for the institution of the dispensation. The best instruments at hand were chosen, and years of preparation were foregone, in most cases, in order that some good seed might be sown and germinate to bring forth a harvest in the near future.

Ignorant mediums have been necessarily used, and Spiritualists may understand with what results to the public. Some scoff at them, and turn away disgusted from Spiritualism, because they blunder frequently in expressing truth. Others more thoughtfully accept the good, making due allowances for the bad. The time has come when the great body of Spiritualists, and mediums in particular, should understand that the public are calling for educated, intelligent mediums in greater quantity than they are found. Mediums necessarily work on the plane on which they are developed; and spirits are developing mediums on a plane where they know that their duty is to acquire for themselves all the knowledge in their power, and expect no revelation from the spirit of that which they may know of themselves by research. By this plan mediums are put upon their guard, and stimulated to study the subjects of which they treat as mediums. This is the only method whereby mediums can be perfectly prepared to be good instruments in the hands of spirits for promulgating truth. The only tests that this class of mediums can give will be the truths they utter. When it comes to pass that such tests satisfy the people, then they will have arrived upon a plane where the higher wisdom of the second sphere can be safely dispensed to them. Until then they must have test mediums, and mediums of all grades, as at present. Until then many will expect the highest truths through any or all grades of mediums; and if perchance they find "stumbling-blocks" here and there to arrest their attention and point them to the direct path to wisdom, they will cry out, "It is the devil," or "It is an undeveloped spirit," or "the mediums are corrupt, and draw around them lying spirits." Let it be so. "The sword of the spirit" is sharp, and "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," of separating the spirit of truth from the great mass of commingled truth and error, which from its voluminousness, blinds the vision of men. Truth is to be elicited, at length, by just the means in progress in the world at the present time; therefore, let men rejoice. Let mediums patiently wait the day when their vocation shall be better understood by all; and let them not shrink and cover at the insinuations that many of them are of being the instruments of "Satan," or of "undeveloped spirits." If they understand their calling, they know, though others may not, that those who minister through them are God's ministers for good to any they may minister unto. If they do not understand their calling, and have not yet learned that God never made man to be an instrument of a disembodied "fiend," then they should seek to learn from Nature that most important lesson, that Divine Benevolence and Intelligence instituted the law that the higher sphere, or the higher element, by reaching up and communicating to the lower, never degrades, but elevates these thoughts to the criticism of a criticising public, confident that truth will prevail, and no injustice, ultimately, be done to any.

Planchette—Where Came It?

Within the last two years the attention of the ever curious public has been largely attracted by experiments with "Planchette," and, through its agency, thousands in this country have been converted to the knowledge of spirit intercommunication. It has been introduced in the families of the learned and unlearned, the pious and the (so-called) profane, the rich and the poor alike, under the name of Planchette, where had the name "Spiritualism" been associated with it, no admission would have been allowed.

Mediums have been found in most of these families, through whom the little instrument would be endowed with life, motion and intelligence, and messages from the departed have been written out, calculated to attract attention, stir the affections and enlighten the intellect of those present to the recognition of the fact of a life beyond, and to the intimate connection existing between the dwellers of earth and the dwellers in the spiritual spheres. Bigots have denounced, scientists have sneered, and the clergy have anathematized it and those who used it, in vain. It numbers its converts and friends in almost every village and family, and is moving forward to new victories over bigotry, superstition and death. All this you and your readers know.

My object in writing is to answer, so far as I can, the oft-repeated inquiry, "Where originated this little instrument?" So far as I know, it originated about ten years ago in France; and, in 1859, being in Paris, I visited, in company with and by invitation of the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, the family of Count —. The Countess was a medium, and, through her, communications were daily had with the spirit-world, by writing with the "Planchette." There I saw for the first time the little heart-shaped instrument, and, through it, received words of cheer from my spirit-friends in my own tongue (the medium not being able to write a word in English). The next day we (Mr. O. and myself) called upon the manufacturer, and I purchased a "Planchette," which I brought home with me.

Mr. Jacob Edson, of this city, who saw it, made several from the French sample, and they were placed on sale in Boston, as will be seen by the following notice taken from the "Spiritual Age," of the date of July 2d, 1859, which was recently sent me by some unknown friend:

"THE PLANCHETTE.—A neatly constructed instrument, called a Planchette, is much in vogue among the Spiritualists in Paris, for facilitating communications in writing through physical mediums. A few of these implements, manufactured from a sample brought from France, by Dr. Gardner, have been placed on sale. Persons desiring to experiment with them and test what advantage may be derived from their use, can procure them at Bela Marsh's, 14 Bromfield street, Boston."

There is also in the *Banner of Light* of the date of May 28th, 1859, an extract from a letter written by me while I was in Europe, giving a brief statement of my experience with "Planchette," which the curious can see by referring to the file.

I have thus stated my knowledge of the origin of Planchette, and have shown that the statements which have been put forth in various scientific, religious and secular journals, in regard to its origin in this country, are false; and that the claims of parties in interest, that the little instrument was patented, or patentable, is absurd. No one need pay an exorbitant price for it, for, with a pocket-knife, an ordinary gimlet and a shingle, any person can make one, with slight cost, that will perform as well as those with ivory castors. With such an instrument, and a little patience in sitting with it, almost every family will find a medium of their number, through whom their spirit-friends will gladly communicate messages of love that shall scatter from their pathway every doubt of a glorious hereafter for all humanity.

Boston, March 9th, 1860. H. F. GARDNER.

The Right Position.

MESSRS. EDITORS—I was particularly pleased with a short editorial in the last number of the *Banner of Light*, addressed "To whom it may concern," not because I discovered that you were taking new ground upon the subject of allowing personal controversies to occupy the valuable space of your paper, for this has been the general policy of the *Banner of Light* from the first, but because its re-statement presents a cardinal principle of the Spiritual Philosophy, to which we shall all do well to take heed, viz: that individual idiosyncracies and short-comings are superficial and transitory, incident to the powers of development, and are unworthy of much public thought or attention, while the great principles of virtuous living—the best ideals of noble manhood—and the conditions of higher spheres of existence, are most worthy, and profitable to occupy our attention. "As a man thinketh, so he is," is an aphorism of inspiration in the olden time. Pure and noble thoughts make pure and noble lives, and it is equally true that the habitual contemplation of vicious and sordid characteristics of poor human nature tends to reproduce the same qualities in the observer.

We have to thank you, Messrs. Editors of the *Banner of Light*, for your generally successful efforts to keep out the mass of fault-finding and contentious communications which angular and mistaken brethren pour upon you through the mail-bags.

H. B. STORER.

Bible Logic.

The Bible says that "God is a spirit, which no man can see and live." The Bible also says that "God created man in his own image, and breathed into him a living soul." If then the external body of man was created in the image of God, (whether in form or substance only), and that body be vivified with the actual breath of God, where is the difference in nature between God and man? The Bible would seem to teach that there is none in element, but only in degree, for man was not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, lest he should rival his Creator in his attributes! Here then would seem to lie the Biblical difference: Man is a finite spirit, clothed in the finite elements of earth; God is an infinite spirit, clothed in the infinite elements of the universe. In this the Bible probably speaks truly.

PAUL.

Vineyard, N. J.

The lectures here through Willis F. Wentworth, the three first Sundays of February, were well received, and deeply interesting to those who could appreciate the true philosophy and aims of Spiritualism. The second and third Sundays of March we are to have the inspirations of the angels through Mrs. Nettie C. Maynard.

As our indefatigable friend Loomis is dispensing each Sunday about thirty copies of the *Banner of Light* to our audiences, in addition to the regular subscribers by mail, you can safely say that we are a lively spiritualistic people, and notwithstanding the church societies here have been blessed with what is called "revivals of religion," we have been by the angels blest "more so."

L. K. COONLEY.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals have notified the Brighton butchers that they intend to stop the cruel practice of "bleeding calves," on and after the 30th inst.

J. BURNS, PROGRESSIVE LIBRARY, 1 WELLINGTON ROAD, CAMBERWELL, LONDON, ENO.

KEEPS FOR SALE THE BANNER OF LIGHT AND OTHER SPIRITUAL PUBLICATIONS.

The *Banner of Light* is issued and on sale every Monday Morning preceding date.

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1869.

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LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR. 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.

A New Starting Point.

We open to-day the Twenty-fifth Volume of the *Banner of Light*. Little did we imagine, when we issued the first number twelve years ago, at the impressive behest of the angel-world, through what a series of varied experiences we should be compelled to pass. During that term—brief enough to look back over, but long in the prospect—we have faithfully devoted our talents and industry to the momentous work in part entrusted to our keeping. How well we have thus far performed our service, and to what extent we have accomplished our task, the invisible presences all around us are alone capable of fully testifying. The obstacles that have confronted us have been legion, and at times—alas, how often!—our heart has well nigh failed us, and we have earnestly prayed to be relieved. But our sleepless angel-guides have as often cheered us on, promising anew their protection and support while we were passing through the vicissitudes incident to the responsible work to which we were committed. And it is in compliance with their earnest solicitations that we have kept constantly at our post of duty. To-day we are ready and willing to admit the truthfulness of their promises, for they have ripened into unmistakable and visible verities.

We have lived to see the sacred Cause advocated by us years ago, when its disciples were few in numbers but firm in purpose, grow to imposing proportions, so that it already counts its believers and advocates by millions. We are satisfied. Yet we are admonished that we have not at present any right to claim a relaxation from our labors. They are still needed, perhaps more than ever before. We have assurances which beget a conviction, that we are to pass through severer ordeals in the future than any to which our faith and patience have been subjected in the past; and that although we have in a measure overcome ignorance, bigotry and superstition, we are in the future to prepare ourselves to encounter envy, pride and malice. But the promise comes to us, freely and fully, that we shall under all circumstances be preserved from harm, and, with other workers, be instrumental in the final establishment on earth of a free religion, such as the world has never yet been blessed with or even known.

From the very inception of our work in this broad field of labor, it has been our effort to show to our fellowmen, by conclusive and comforting testimony, that liberated spirits do in reality return from the higher-life and commune with us; teaching the better way; showing that the avenue to the tomb continues on to the realms of life immortal. Men have worshiped, through all the past, only from the external; to-day they are learning how to worship from the internal; the circumstance of life has changed to the circumstance of life—from the God without to the God within. We are to be guided by the ever-living Present, instead of the dead Past. The scriptures of Nature are to take the place of written scrolls and parchments. We mean not to tear down any faster than we are able to build up a more beautiful edifice. And hence our thoughts go out only in charity to all who differ from us, and even to those who manifest impatience with our faith.

Upon those who are engaged with us in rearing the beautiful, shining temple, whose foundation-stone was laid by the great medium, Jesus, eighteen hundred years ago, we would enjoin harmony of action, to the end that the glorious fabric of SPIRITUALISM shall stand completed without spot or blemish. We know that "to err is human—to forgive divine," and therefore it should be our constant and prayerful endeavor to educate ourselves more fully in the potency of that irresistible, that crowning virtue, CHARITY, which endureth long, suffereth much, is not puffed up, and never vaunteth itself. Let our good words find their fittest and fullest illustration in still better deeds, remembering that the world advances at last only by virtue of what is done, and that words are vain, and phrases empty, that fail to find embodiment finally in those humanitarian movements which form the substantial records of Time.

Obedient that spirit alone, the countless thorns of earth will give place to beautiful flowers, and the spirit-world be wholly peopled with well-developed individualities, instead of—as now in part—subjects of ignorance and superstition, spirits in prison, whose baleful influence is yet felt by the people of earth. Spiritualism comes to liberate this crowd of imprisoned ones; and hence, as in acting our parts in life, we descend lower or rise higher in the moral scale, so do those in spirit-life who have not yet risen above earth-influences, rise or fall correspondingly with us. As we perform life's duties well or ill, so shall our condition be in the great Hereafter.

Entertaining views of this character, we enter confidently, but never more seriously, upon another year's labors on behalf of humanity's highest good. Profoundly conscious of the great work in which we are engaged, we pray with reverent humility for that assistance and counsel from the higher spheres which we have gratefully received in such generous measure through the eventful past.

Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism.

Arrangements are being made in this city to celebrate in a suitable manner the twenty-first anniversary of modern Spiritualism. Tremont Temple has been engaged for that purpose. It will take place on Tuesday evening, March 30th (as no suitable hall could be obtained for the 31st). The Children's Lyceum will occupy the first hour of the evening with an exhibition of their various exercises, to be followed by speeches, interspersed with singing, &c. It will be an interesting affair, and worthy of the occasion. The admission fee will be fixed at the low price of twenty-five cents. We hope to see the hall crowded to its utmost capacity.

Music Hall Meetings.

Miss Lizzie Doten lectured in Music Hall, in this city, Sunday afternoon, March 7th. The theme announced was, "A Communication from the Spirit of the Times." In her usual terse and pointed style she touched upon various important subjects, including many needed reforms, and pointed out the great good Spiritualism was doing for the benefit of mankind. It was an able discourse, and the audience were well pleased with it. She closed with the following noble original poem, entitled

HESTER VAUGHN.

[Hester Vaughn was tried for the crime of infanticide. She was convicted, and sentence of death passed upon her. Subsequently, by the efforts of benevolent individuals, and the pressure of public opinion, her sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. Susan A. Smith, M. D., of Philadelphia, who visited her in prison, and was chiefly instrumental in obtaining her release, gives the following statement in relation to the circumstances attendant upon her alleged crime: "She was deserted by her husband, who knew she had not a relative in America. She rented a third-story room in this city, (Philadelphia,) from a German family, who understood very little English. She furnished this room, found herself in food and fuel for three months on twenty dollars. She was taken sick in this room at midnight, on the 6th of February, and lingered until Saturday morning the 8th, when her child was born. She told me she was nearly frozen, and fainted or went to sleep for a long time. Through all this period of agony she was alone, without nourishment or fire, with her door unfastened. It has been asserted that she confessed her guilt. I can solemnly say in the presence of Almighty God that she never confessed guilt to me, and stoutly affirms that no such word ever passed her lips."]

Now by the common weal and woe,

Uniting each with all;

And by the anarcs we may not know,

Until we blindly fall—

Let every heart by sorrow tried—

Let every woman born,

Feel that her cause stands side by side

With that of Hester Vaughn.

A woman, famished for the love

All hearts so deeply crave,

Whose only hope was Heaven above,

To succor and to save;

With only want, and woe, and care,

To greet her child unborn;

A weary burden, hard to bear,

Was life to Hester Vaughn.

No friend, no food, no fire, no light,

And face to face with death,

She struggled through the weary night,

With anguish in each breath;

Till that frail life which shared her own,

Had perished ere the morn,

And left her to the hearts of stone,

That judged poor Hester Vaughn.

Who was it, that refused to draw

A lesson from the time,

And in the name of human law,

Pronounced her grief a crime?

Was her accuser, cold and stern,

A man of woman born,

Whose dead to woman could not earn

Some grace for Hester Vaughn?

The word of judgment is not sure,

To wealth and station high,

But that she was alone and poor,

Was she condemned to die.

Oh God of Justice! for whose grace

The sordid worldlings fawn,

Has not thy love a hiding place,

For such as Hester Vaughn?

Come to the bar of Judgment, come,

Ye favored ones of earth,

And let your haughty lips be dumb,

So boastful of your worth.

What virtues, or what noble deeds,

Your faithless lives adorn,

That thus by laws, or lifeless creeds,

You sentence Hester Vaughn?

What countless crimes—what guilt untold—

What depths of sin and shame,

Are gilded by your lying gold,

Or hidden by a name!

Ye pave your social halls with skulls

Of infants yet unborn;

Then virtuous with suspicious lulls,

And crushes Hester Vaughn.

Ye, who your secret sins confess,

Before the Eternal Throne—

Adulterers and Adulteresses!

What mercy have ye shown?

For place and power, for gems and gold,

Ye give your souls in pawn,

But Heaven's fair gates will first unfold,

To such as Hester Vaughn.

The "mills of God grind so slow,"

Will "grind exceeding small;"

And time, at length, will clearly show

The want or worth of all.

Distinctions will not always be

With such precision drawn,

Between the proud of high degree

And such as Hester Vaughn.

Through Momyersburg's prison bars,

She counts each weary day,

Or 'neath the calmly watching stars,

She wakes to weep and pray.

Thank God for her in heaven above,

A brighter day will dawn,

And those who judge all hearts in love,

Will welcome Hester Vaughn.

At the close of the poem, the controlling influences stated that they would not be able to use the organism of the medium again for lecturing until she had sufficiently regained her physical strength.

This is to be regretted, for Miss Doten ranks among the ablest lecturers on the Spiritual Philosophy, and cannot well be spared. We trust, however, it will not be long before she will be able to resume her public labors.

Prof. Denton next Sunday.

We are happy to announce that Prof. Wm. Denton is to lecture in Music Hall next Sunday afternoon, March 21st. This able and popular lecturer is sure to fill the hall. His subject will be—*Spiritualism and Science Man's Great Saviour*.

Getting New Subscribers.

The work of obtaining new subscribers is being effectively carried on by our old subscribers. It proves conclusively that the *Banner of Light* could be circulated largely in every town and city in the country. The following are additional names of those who have sent us one or more new subscribers: Nathan Lamb sends twenty-one dollars and four new subscribers; David D. Wait sends the money for a new subscriber and four renewals; N. S. Medberry, one; J. H. Rees, one; David H. Hale, one; A. M. Vannalway, twelve dollars for three renewals and one new subscriber; Enos Foster, one; J. B. Atwater, one; Mrs. Lewis Putnam renews and sends a new name; L. K. Coonley, two; John G. Webster, one; Harriet W. Torbox, one; David Thomas, one new and two renewals; J. Curl, one; Preston Day, one; D. T. Averill sends his second new subscriber; B. F. Porter, one; Martin Daniels, one; Joel Boyd, one; Lewis Bisbee, one, and promises more; Jerome Fuller, one; Jennie Simple, three; Hiram Lee, one, and renews his own; A. S. Hayward, two.

Cambridgeport.

Mrs. N. J. Willis will lecture in Washington Hall, Cambridgeport, Sundays, at 3 and 7 o'clock, March 21st and 28th, and April 4th.

The Banner of Light Free Circles.

The reports of these circles which we publish every week upon our sixth page, are attracting more than ordinary attention and criticism at this time. All acknowledge that the invocations are pure and holy; but many of the messages which follow, from the uneducated, are little understood, and, therefore, condemned. We hold that the lowly in life, whose opportunities when here were limited, have just as much right to be heard, in their way, as those who passed their earth-lives under more favorable conditions. Each express themselves according to their ability. All in a measure prove their identity by their own peculiar style of expression. Many undeveloped ones, on ascertaining that our circles are free, embrace the opportunity to reach their earth-friends through our columns when they have no other avenue open by which to return. And they are welcome. "I am holier than thou" has too long divided the human race; the lines of caste, of position, of education, have been drawn closer and closer as time rolled on, and now the All-Wise is about to sunder these cords. Through lessons of sorrow and anguish those in high places are to learn that all the human race are brothers and sisters, and that they are dependent each upon the other. When this great revolution is accomplished, wars will cease, and all can with safety carry on their daily pursuits in peace and plenty. Our circles were established to help on this glorious epoch, and mankind will yet acknowledge the wisdom of the spirit-world which inaugurated the Message Department of this paper.

We print the present week messages given at this office Dec. 7th and 8th. The questions and answers, it will be seen, treat upon important subjects, especially the somewhat lengthy discussion between the controlling intelligence and a clergyman.

Thomas S. Bradstreet hailed from Northfield, Vt. Said he and most of his people believed in the literal resurrection of the body at the second coming of Christ; but he had entirely changed his mind since he became a spirit. He tried to believe in the Baptist religion when on earth, was baptized, but it did not serve him in the spirit-land. He said he was just the same man now that he was when he lived on the earth—no better, no worse—and if he could come back to live, he should belong only to God's universal church that all belong to, and should try to be an acceptable member.

Deacon Eli, of Amesbury; Samuel White, of Keene, N. H.; Nancy Jane Powers, of Lawrence, Kansas, and George H. Merrill, desired to communicate privately with their people.

William Boyd, from Wisconsin, gave a somewhat lengthy, but quite interesting message.

Augusta Stearns, of Hartford, Conn., and Mary Ann Tibbets, of Lowell, followed. The former was anxious to communicate with her father and mother and two brothers, to tell them how happy she is in the beautiful spirit-world. The latter informed us that she was born in Bath, Maine, and she desired to impress upon the minds of her relatives that they should not grieve because she died out of the Church; that it did not make the least difference.

For Gravestones.

What shall we write on the gravestones we set up at the head of buried friends? It is admitted that a very perceptible advance has been made in the sense and sentiment of such inscriptions. Superstition is being compelled to draw aside the thick curtains of its gloomy realm, and let in the modern light and life of humanity. People do not drive over their graves as they used to; nor do they suppose that, because a friend is dead, the world has lost its reckoning; nor do they addict themselves to such strained conceits and turgid hamdrum of galvanized sentiment as until pretty recently was regarded as the only thing worth bringing out in view of death. The fine, because natural, fancy of Dickens has entered into many bereaved hearts; and the ground is not always stiled cold, where men lie "in cold obstruction" and "rot," but warm, where ugly seeds sprout in the form of beautiful flowers, and good men and women leave their lifeless forms and fly up as angels to heaven. All this striking change in public sentiment comes of the more liberal and elevated tone of thought and presentation of faith. We go out at death—we are not confined up and imprisoned. We are released, exalted, enlarged, glorified. Death is losing its terrors, as Christ promised it would. The literature of graveyards for the next century will be a great improvement on what it has been in the past.

A Worn-out Dogma.

It is very common for parents, on the death of children, to speak of the event as the work of a "wise Providence," no matter whether the little ones came to their end by an ignorant disobedience of the laws of Nature or not. "God in his wisdom," they are accustomed to say, "has seen fit to remove my little ones by death." Now, in a very great many of these cases, there is no special Providence about them, and certainly there is no wisdom. A mother, for instance, half clothes her offspring, a tender young thing, and turns it out with almost savage cruelty into the wintry weather. What can she expect but the loss of her child? She has—no doubt ignorantly—disregarded one of the plainest laws of Nature, that human life must be shielded from extreme cold if it is to be preserved. That is God's law. She has broken God's law, yet she talks of God having "in his wisdom" bereft her of her offspring. The plain truth is, she has murdered her own child, and now seeks to appease her remorse by pleading the wisdom of the God who gave it to her. Yes, but he accompanied the gift with certain fixed laws for its preservation; and to break those laws, whether ignorantly or knowingly, is to defy God and trample on his gifts.

The Anniversary in New York.

The observance of the twenty-first anniversary of modern Spiritualism, at Cooper Institute, New York, on Wednesday evening, 31st inst., should be kept in mind by the friends in and out of the city, as it will doubtless be an occasion that we can all look back upon with pride and pleasure. The feast must indeed be an intellectual one, when we can enumerate among the speakers the names of Hon. John W. Edmonds, Hon. Warren Chase, Andrew Jackson Davis, Mrs. Mary F. Davis, Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham, Dr. R. T. Hallock, Prof. S. B. Brittan, Dr. F. L. H. Willis, Mrs. Emma F. J. Ballene, Dr. H. F. Fairfield and others.

The Lyceum.

We are pleased to learn, by a note from Bro. Fred. W. Davis, of Fitchburg, Mass., that their Children's Lyceum "is doing finely, growing rapidly, and all seem to take a new interest in it."

Frank L. Wadsworth has a "Chicago Department" in *The Present Age*. His introductory reads well. Success to him in whatever field he may labor.

Our New Heading.

The readers of the *Banner of Light* will not omit, this week, to thank the gifted artist and engraver who has embellished the present number with so beautiful a specimen of his taste and creative skill. If they will be at the pains to compare the new heading, herewith presented, with that of their last number, they will be sure to appreciate all the numerous points of superiority in this head over the former one, that has served a good term, and earned a right to go into honorable retirement. Doubtless many, who have become familiar with its expression from its regular visits, feel a pang of regret to part company all at once with so pleasant a friend, whose coming suggested so much to them. But allowing for every feeling of that sort, we think we may confidently present this heading as a production in most points far better adapted to the character of our sheet and the sympathy of its readers, and more fully expressive of those aims and purposes which inspire our regular weekly exertions.

This improvement in the appearance of the *Banner* very naturally suggests to us to say that still others are in course of preparation, to be brought out from time to time, and certain to excite the approbation of our appreciative hosts of readers; and we improve the occasion to impress earnestly on their attention the importance, not less to themselves than to us and to the cause, of revived exertions in extending the circulation of the *Banner* in every part of the world.

Woman's Work.

The organization of women in New York, for advancing the interests and securing the protection of the sex, is laying out good work, and a good deal of it. There is no kind of question that, in a large, commercial city, like New York, there is an urgent need continually for just such an association, which shall undertake to perform those nameless offices which at present are left unperformed, to the manifest wrong and wretchedness of the sex. Among the other projects, already set on foot by this association, is a foundling asylum; in other words, they propose to open one of the wards of the Bellevue Hospital to unmarried women, for the delivery of their children; then, if such mothers, hitherto styled "unfortunates," are not desirous of taking with them their infants when they leave the asylum, the latter are to be sent to Ward's Island, to be properly taken care of until they are grown up, when they will be put out to trades. The rate of deaths among these little people in this State is as high as ninety per cent.—a shocking fact when taken in connection with the average number of infants that are raised elsewhere, with ordinarily good care. As society goes, not more in New York perhaps than in other cities, an Institute of such a character seems to be of pressing importance. Not only are unhappy girls, who are about to become mothers, to be cared for in their extremity; but their infants are to be reared with care, instead of neglected, as at present.

Movements of Lecturers and Mediums.

Message Department.

EACH MESSAGE in this Department of the BANNER OF LIGHT was claimed by the spirit whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of

Mrs. J. H. Conant.
While in an abnormal condition the trance. These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earthly life, and that they are not good or evil. But those who leave the earth-sphere in an undeveloped state, eventually progress into a higher condition. We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

The Banner of Light Free Circles.
These Circles are held at No. 153 Washington street, Room No. 4, (up stairs), on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. The Circle Room will be open for visitors two o'clock; services commence at precisely three o'clock, after which time no one will be admitted. Seats reserved for strangers. Donations solicited.
Mrs. Conant receives no visitors on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, until after six o'clock p. m. She gives no private sittings.

Banquets 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.
Oh Sacred Presence, oh Divine Life, from the darkness of human ignorance we would be delivered. We pray thee, oh Lord, that the sunshine of thy wisdom may penetrate our souls and illumine all the darkened chambers of our being. We address thee as our Father, as the kindly Spirit governing all things. We come to thee with lipservice. We praise thee and we pray unto thee through the darkness of the external world. We ask that as the shadows of the external world shall pass away, so may the darkness of our inner lives give place to the morning of truth. May we flee away from all prejudice, from all past errors, from all superstitions, from all that would bind our spirits, and in the freedom of love and wisdom and justice and truth may we walk the earth again, teaching thy children in human that the Great Father of all Life watches over them continually, and reveals himself unto every soul. Oh we pray thee, our Father, for greater light. We pray thee that we may so successfully cast the shadows behind us that our souls shall bask in the sunlight of greater truth. With the dews of this life still upon our spirit-brow, with the shades of mortality still closing around us, with all the ignorance that is incident to human life still high upon us, we lift up our hearts, beseeching thee for greater light. Oh Lord, we ask thee for light, and when we receive it may we freely give. May we not conceal the light which we have obtained, but may we give it unto those that have less than ourselves. May we fully realize, our Father, our relation to all things, to every form of life, and our relation unto thee. May the idea of total depravity, oh our Father, fast flee away from the minds of thy sons and thy daughters in earth-life; but may each one feel that they are divinely born, that the divine power and love and justice rest upon every soul alike. Oh may they feel that they are thy children, each and all; and feeling this, we know, our Father, that they will be great benefactors toward wisdom; they will understand that they dwell, even in earth-life, in the kingdom of heaven. We pray thee that benevolence, that kindly nature, may find a resting-place in every household. Oh may thine angels be welcome everywhere, and may the hearts of thy children be unsealed, and all their senses keenly alive to the coming of the angels, for by so doing they shall become acquainted with the life that is to be, with thy hereafter, which will be open unto every soul; by so doing they will bring high unto the earth-life that kingdom, that promised land that every soul so earnestly prays for. Hear us, our Father, and answer according to thy wisdom, not according to our prayers. Amen.
Dec. 7.

Questions and Answers.
CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—Your questions, Mr. Chairman, we are ready to answer.
Q.—Will you give an opinion with regard to the following extract from Swedenborg's writings? "When spirits begin to speak with man, he must believe that he believes nothing that they say; for nearly everything they say is fabricated by them, and they lie; for, if they are permitted to narrate anything, as what heaven is, and how things in the heavens are to be understood, they would tell so many lies that a man would be astonished."
A.—The experience which you, as Spiritualists, have passed through during the last twenty years, should answer the question. If that cannot, I am in serious doubt as to whether I shall be able to answer it to the satisfaction of even one individual soul. To say that spirits return always telling what is absolutely true to all, would be uttering what is untrue. But to say that they return always bearing falsehood, would be equally untrue. If death finds a man a liar, it does not change him. He enters the spirit-world the same liar. He carries with him all that belongs to his spiritual nature. He leaves nothing behind. Death rolls him out of the external members through which he manifested. But there are many different ways of defining a lie. Many people decide very unwisely concerning truth and falsehood. We are very apt to say that a thing is untrue which we know nothing about, which has not been brought to our senses so near that we could recognize it as a truth. We are very apt to stamp "lie" upon that which seems so to be to us. It is a fault of our human nature, and one which we can only outgrow by experience—by being brought in contact with all the different states of life, and being able to view them all with impartial perception. Swedenborg was a very excellent seer in his day. He was permitted to behold many things that pertain to the spirit-life, but he was by no means a perfect seer. There never was one. He was by no means an infallible clairvoyant, for there never was one. If there was, or if it could be, then the function of seership would cease. Clairvoyance would have reached a state of infinite perfection, which I do not believe it ever can, or ever will. Since round and round the circle of human experience runs, there can be no such thing as absolute perfection in any one sphere of life. We attain wisdom by discreet degrees, says Swedenborg. I believe it. But I also believe that we never can attain the highest wisdom. There will always be something beyond a state of beatitude that we have not reached, something that we did not know about, something that has not been brought to our comprehension. If every spirit returned giving precisely the same information with reference to facts pertaining to the spirit-world, would you be any better off, as Spiritualists? I think not. You would say at once, "They always tell us the truth; we can always depend upon them. We need not exercise our powers of observation. They are always on the right side. Let them lead us." Now they come with all the imperfection of human life resting upon their spirits, and by their acts, by all they say to you, and all they do with reference to you, you know that they are still human and fallible. What the result? What you are kept in constant active regard to your spiritual belief. All the powers of your better nature are perpetually being taxed to know what is the best way, what is the truth. Instead of allowing any other spirit or spirits to decide for you, since you cannot place implicit faith upon them, you fall back upon yourself. You measure them by your own ideas of justice. You throw them into the balances of your own being, and you weigh them there, and if they are found wanting, your reason decides. Your reason can very easily detect whether or no they are wanting in all that makes up a perfect spiritual being. It would not be well for you, as Spiritualists or Christians, to be shown the better way to life in a struggle, and not only a struggle for life, but a struggle for the struggle for the well here in time; and through these hard struggles you attain knowledge; you become wise for yourselves. You do not gather that wisdom which belongs to any other spirit and appropriate it to yourselves, but you gather that which belongs to you as individuals. You bring out all the powers of your inner life, and make them strong by action.

Q.—If the laws of Nature are the laws of God, does man die by the laws of God when he obeys the laws of his passionate nature?
A.—There are an infinite number of degrees of

divine as of human law, and whose attains the highest finds the most happiness. The higher you ascend in point of law, the happier you are. I do not believe that any human soul can, by any possibility, disobey God's law. I know there are many who differ from me. I cannot conceive of an infinite law that can be broken by a finite individual. To me the law of God cannot be broken. We may talk about breaking it, but it is all talk, after all. We learn by the mistakes we make in life concerning the better way. We learn that by bowing down to the dark shades of human life that come to us through all the various human passions, we do but gather to ourselves that which will in time turn and rend us. And when we are severely scourged, we shall begin to look about to see wherefore the chastisement wherein we have made a mistake, and when we have become satisfied wherein we have, we shall turn and pursue the better way.
Dec. 7.

Timothy S. Bradstreet.
[How do you do?] Comfortable—comfortable. I am from Northfield, Vt. I hear it is your custom to receive from all persons who come here some facts by which they may be known. My name is Timothy S. Bradstreet. I am none of your scholars. Do not know much about speaking in this way, but I should not have come if I had not got something to say. I've got a brother, you see, that's a believer in—well, in what to me is a very poor kind of belief. In a little fractured way myself, but I've been here long enough to find out there ain't much truth in it. He believed—and so did most of our folks—in the resurrection of the body at the second coming of Christ. Well, let me see: I do not know but what I should get along very comfortably in hunting up mine, but I rather think I should have something to do. I had a foot amputated at Newbern. I had an arm taken off on the field. The body was buried in one place, the foot in another, and the arm in another, but I do not know where the foot and arm are buried. Now who is going to take interest enough in it to find out and tell me? That's what I want to know.

I want Robert to think of these things; might as well look 'em in the face as to be making a fool of yourself when you get on this side, as I did. I know 'taint very pleasant to make your will, or to talk about dying. It aint to folks that do not know what sort of place they are going to, to be sure. 'Taint very pleasant, anyway. But it's more pleasant to do that than to be looking round for what you will never find when you get on this side, and making yourself comfortably miserable about it. I used to have a good many hard talks against the people called Spiritualists. I thought they were the greatest set of outlaws that was ever suffered to exist, and I said a good many hard things about 'em. And they are bad enough—no question about that. [The best of us are bad enough.] Yes, we are all bad enough, but to say they are what I supposed they were, would be to say what is a lie. Now we better tell the truth to ourselves and to everybody else. I take it. Be full as well for us when we get on 't'other side. That's my experience. My brother wants to know, I suppose, if I died happy. No, I didn't. I tell you what 'tis, my religion when I came to die was very much like an empty canteen when you are thirsty. It didn't serve. Didn't tell me where I was going, who I was going to meet, nor anything at all about it. Had an idea I was going to die away from heaven, but where the wings were coming from was more than I could tell. Couldn't get the first clear idea though my head at all. I wasn't happy. It was a jump in the dark. I would not go through with it again. No, no, not if I could avoid it. So I'd like to have my folks know where they are going afore they are called for—not take a jump in the dark, as I did.

I tried to believe in the Baptist religion. I was baptized and all that, but then it didn't serve me, and if I come back here to tell anyone, I must tell the truth—can't say I died happy. No, I can't. Do not think I should have died any happier if I'd been among my friends. I didn't know where I was going, and when I asked the chaplain for light, he replied, "I have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." I must say I was thundering mad. I was looking to him for light, and somehow or other it made me mad. I wanted something that could help me, and he told me that, and then he prayed and prayed, and that's all the good it done. And I'm back here, and comfortably off. My brother said, "Good-by, brother; may the blessing of God go with you, and may our religion be your strength." The last words. Well, the blessing of God did go with me, but "our religion" didn't amount to much. Our folks used to say to me, if I ever did backslide, I should be a pretty hard sinner. I should turn pretty soon to religion. I don't think that 'tis one of those sort of people that stand up and say one thing was wrong I'd stand up and say so in the face of the devil, if need be. Now that's just where I stood. I remember having a little bit of a cross-fight between some of the people of our faith, with reference to the short-comings of one of our brethren. They all denounced him, and the poor fellow was down, and getting it, I tell you, right and left. Well, I looked the matter all over and fair in the face, and I said, "He is a poor human critter like myself, and if I'd been placed where he was, I should have doubtless done the same, and I stood up and fought for him, right in the face and eyes of the whole. Got denounced for it, but I let you do it, I care. If I was here, I should do the same thing over again, and I should say I didn't care a d—n. Yes, I should, I know I should. It was only an artificial string that kept me from it, then. I thought it wasn't right. I don't think so now. I think righteous indignation is good for the soul. What I want is, that my brother and all our folks should know that we've got the bodies that we need—us at death—the body that we need—and the old ones, that are deposited here and there, we do not need, and never shall, in my opinion. As to the heaven we used to hear about here, I have n't seen it, and do not ever expect to. It is a real, tangible, common sense world. I have n't seen it, and do not ever expect to. I'm not an angel, and don't want to be. I am just what I was in spirit before I died. No better. They will say, I s'pose, I don't talk so good as I did. Well, that depends upon how we view goodness. I should not do just as I did when I was here if I could come back, because I shouldn't belong to any Church, I'm sure of that—only to God's great universal Church, that all belong to. And I should try to be an acceptable member, I tell you; for I know the consequences of being down on the lower side. I know if we violate our sense of right here in the earth-life, we get thrashed for it to yonder. So I should do the best I could, and I shouldn't tie myself to any steeps. No.

Well, my friend, if I don't agree with you, all right; we will agree to disagree. Got my name, have you? [Yes.] Age, forty-one. [Do you wish to give any more facts?] I do not know; think I've given about enough. I should like to talk with my friends as I do here—a good many things I want to say, which of course I would n't care to say here.
Dec. 7.

Deacon Eli.
Say that Deacon Eli, of Amesbury, Mass., would be glad to communicate with his family.
Dec. 7.

Samuel White.
Samuel White, of Keene, N. H. I want to tell my boys that I can give more information concerning what they are in trouble about than anybody else, and there's only one way to do it, and that is to let me talk—to send a letter that I can answer through that man in New York. [Mansfield?] Yes. Eighty-seven years old when he—been nine years away.
Dec. 7.

Nancy Jane Powers.
I am from Lawrence, Kansas. I was born in Newburyport, Mass. My maiden name, Nancy Jane Trey. My married name, Nancy Jane Powers. I have been married since my death to return, but have found the way headed up on every side. My principal object is to assure my friends that there is a life after death, and that those who enjoy that life can return, under proper conditions, and communicate with their friends here. I do not wish to talk concerning the manner of my death; that is known to my friends, and I care not to speak of it again. Only say that I desire to speak with one of them who would be glad to talk with me. I have much to say, and I am sure they will

not regret it if they give me an opportunity to speak. Is it Mr. White? [Yes.] Why, how strange! [I am glad you have been able to come.]
Dec. 7.

George H. Merrill.
I am George H. Merrill. I want to go to my mother, if I can. My mother lives here in Boston, and my grandmother lives in Enfield, N. H., and my grandfather is dead, and my Uncle George is dead, and Uncle Edwin is dead, and Mary Eliza is dead. I been here since last winter. I had the lung fever and congestion of the lungs. Caroline is my mother's name, and my father's name is Josiah, and I want to know how I shall go to them just as I come here. Ask them to call on some medium and give you an opportunity to speak. Yes, well, I will. And say that I go and have the nicest times with Uncle George, and I don't get any homesick now. I was at first, but I don't now. And I have been to see grandmother, and she has lost her glasses and can't read the Bible so well, and so she is troubled, and Uncle George he laughs as hard as he could, and I thought she might hear. [Did you hide them?] No, no, sir; she lost them. [Do you know where they are?] Yes, sir, in the garden; and she couldn't find them at all, and she thinks she never shall get another pair that fits her eyes so close, as she can read the Bible so well, and Uncle George said he'd make no difference whether she reads it or not; he just as well off. But she did n't think so.

She did n't know I was there making fun. But then it was Uncle George's fault, 'cause I should n't done it if it had n't been for him. He was always turning the house upside down. [Do like him pretty well, do you?] Yes, sir, I do. I go almost everywhere with him. [Would your grandmother be afraid to have you there?] She would, if she knew it. I thought she would hear, but she did n't at all, nor could n't see us. [Did you go very near her?] Oh, yes; why, yes, as near as I be to you, and I sat upon thy drawers the day, and she did n't know there. She's got some high drawers where she keeps her things, and I sat up there. [What were you doing?] Oh, having fun. Good-afternoon. [Good-afternoon. Come again.] Yes, sir. [How did you come?] Nine years old now. I am now, I was n't when I died.
Dec. 7.

Scéance conducted by Joy H. Fairchild; letters answered by H. Marion Stephens.

Invocation.

Our Father, thou Infinite Jehovah, we ask that the benediction of the holy spirit of this hour may rest upon and abide with us, leading us out of darkness into greater light—revealing unto our souls more of thy divine life, and informing us concerning our relations unto thee. Our Father, thou hast surrounded us by the wonderful things that belong to thee; and thou hast called us from every point of being to learn of thee. The volume of life thou hast opened. Oh teach us to read it aright. Strengthen us, oh Lord, for we are weak. Give us of thy wisdom, oh spirit of wisdom, for we are ignorant. Give us of thy truth, oh soul of truth, for we are in the shade of error. Give us of thy light, and thy love, and thy justice, oh Infinite Spirit of all good, for thou seest we have need. Grant that these mortals may fully appreciate the communion with departed spirits. May they receive the gift as from the right hand of the Father Almighty—their Father, and the Father of all souls. Oh grant that their souls may be quickened to praise; and if they have need, that they may be guided aright by sources of wisdom that they may be guided aright that they may weigh in the unerring balance of divine justice everything that thou in thy wisdom dost present unto them. Father, we praise thee beyond all praises. We adore thee from the deep, holy places of our inner lives, and we rejoice to feel that we are so high unto thee, that thy life is our source, and that our own lives revolve in thee, and are over receiving strength from thee. Father, if thou dost veil the glory of thy face, we worship thee in the manifestations of art, of science, of Nature, of all that we see, for in all things thou art—thy dwelling-place is everywhere. We hear thy voice speaking unto us through the elements of time. We hear thee, also, beyond the confines of mortality. We recognize thy life everywhere. Oh teach us to praise thee aright for the gift of mortality. Teach us to pray and to praise. And as we bow, oh Lord, before thy greatness, may we understand more of thy wisdom, of thy love, of thy justice, and as we understand, oh may we press toward thee, lifting up the down-trodden, speaking peace to those who are dreary-hearted, giving light and comfort to those who have need, and everywhere becoming ministering angels, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.
Dec. 8.

Questions and Answers.

Q.—Is there growth in the spirit realm, and are the processes of assimilation and education the same as we find here in this material condition? And are the chemical changes at all analogous?

A.—There is indeed growth in the spirit-world, and the various processes through which the spirit passes are indeed analogous to those of earth. Each spirit receives from all its surroundings, and gives, in turn, to all. The process of give and take is by no means entirely of earth. It belongs to the spirit. It exists through the sphere of mind as of matter. All the various chemical changes through which the body—the physical body—passes during its pilgrimage in earth-life, takes place in the spirit. The chemistry belonging to earth is divinely and spiritually represented in the spirit-world. It is carried far beyond that of which your human senses can take cognizance. There is that change which is in itself analogous to the change called death. There is a gradual waste of spiritual forces, a gradual accumulation of newer forces. There is no such thing as rest, in the absolute, anywhere in the universe.

Q.—Is the spirit-world any particular place or world? If so, where is it?

A.—The term world is but a term, and it conveys a very small idea concerning that that you seek to know about, namely, life—spiritual life as beyond material life. What is what you understand to be the spirit-world. But it is by no means a special locality; it is a condition of mind related to matter. It can just as well be here in this room—and is here—as it can be in some distant star. The spirit-world is wherever there is spirit. It cannot be otherwise; and you all know very well that to rob you of spirit would be to rob you of life. Every atom composing the material world is in reality in the spirit-world, because it contains spirit, or life, and that spirit claims a spirit-world in which to move, through which to progress, to unfold. The notion that many teach of a distinct locality set apart for departed spirits, is entirely erroneous. Each spirit can, if it chooses, depart a locality for itself, and if it does—but there is no special locality set apart by the Divine Creator. The old notion of a heaven and a hell has given you very erroneous ideas of a life to come. You fancy that you must be transported to some distant locality; that all your surroundings must be entirely changed. That is not so. Your spirit-world, your heaven, may be with your nearest and dearest friend here in the earth-life, or by a law which is natural to you, you may gravitate to some distant locality, and that will be your spirit-world. But do not create that there is a locality set apart by the Creator for departed spirits, for there is not.

Q.—Do animals exist as animals in the spirit-world?
A.—To me they do, most decidedly. The animal spirit, in form and expression, is distinct from the vegetable, the mineral spirit. The soul of the animal, the propelling life, toward the exterior is distinct and separate from all other kinds of life by which it may be surrounded, and it is by no means robbed of its identity by the chemical change called death. It passes through an infinite number of degrees of change, coming out of the lower and gradually ascending into the higher. So do you, and so do I. The same law that holds us in its grasp and determines the progress of animals in life, and determines concerning their law of progress. Yes, there are animals in the spirit-world. You may be sure of that, because you have them here.

Q.—And they progress, I suppose, with corresponding development?
A.—Oh yes. The flower that fades to your human senses, blooms more beautifully in the spirit-world. You have that in this life which can best

appeal to the condition of this life; we have that in ours which can best appeal to the conditions of our life. And just so far as ours are superior to yours, so are these outgrowths of them superior to yours. The flower with us is more beautiful than with you.

Q.—You closed your invocation with the term, "Father, Son and Holy Ghost." How are we to understand that?

A.—The term is used simply to convey the idea of the past, present and future—an all-sustaining life that ever has been, that is, and ever will be. It is the life-principle manifested in the vegetable and animal kingdom, and in man, the same in essence?

A.—In essence I believe it to be the same, but marked by distinct degrees through form. The indwelling life, the essence, the all-pervading principle that changes the forms of matter and changes your thoughts, I believe to be the same.

Q.—Does it attain its highest possibilities when it culminates in man?

A.—By no means; for man, as such, is only a few steps higher than his brethren of the field. We are apt to place too high an estimate upon self.

Q.—Are we then to understand that there are races of beings in the universe higher than man?

A.—Oh, yes; because there are conditions of mind far superior to those with which you come in contact, far superior to any that have an existence on this earth, or any other, at the present time. Life is a school, and we are all pupils therein. We never abandon the school. The master is ever beyond us, ever ready to teach us something that we have not yet known; consequently we are ever being drawn out. When we attain one glorious height, lo! there are more beyond us.

Q.—(By a clergyman.)—Are there any beings superior to Jesus Christ?

A.—Oh, yes, very many.

Q.—(By Cl.)—What kind of beings are they?

A.—Beings like himself who have had larger experience. It is the experience one gains in the world, and the world of matter that makes the human and divine glory.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Have these superior beings passed through humanity? Have they been men?

A.—Yes, I so believe.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Jesus Christ was not, then, born of the Father, as he declared himself, when he said, "I and my Father are one."

A.—Oh, yes, he was. And you and I may assert the same with as much truth; since we cannot live apart from the Father, since we have no existence apart from his—the great existence called life—we, and that are one. It cannot be otherwise.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Why did he deny that the Jews were the children of God? as where he said, "Because ye do not the works of God ye are of your father the devil?"

A.—And by that statement he showed very clearly that he had not attained the highest wisdom; that he was human as he was divine. For, had he attained the highest wisdom, surely he would have known that the Jew and the Gentile were alike precious in the eyes of the great All-Father.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Who was the more inspired, Moses or Christ?

A.—It would be very hard to determine; but it is not hard to determine concerning the order of inspiration. "Certainly Moses did not have as high an order of inspiration as Jesus the Christ. He ranked very far below him."

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then Jesus was not the light of the world, if he had human imperfections and follies in him?

A.—Oh, yes, he was a light of the world, and a very great light, too.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Yet you acknowledge he lacked wisdom?

A.—Certainly, he did not possess all wisdom, and yet he shed abroad those divine truths that he had gathered from all his surroundings, as none had ever done before him. And the light of those truths comes down to you of to-day; you fall down and worship them; and it is well. But, in worshipping the spirit of truth, the glorious truths that were given through Jesus, you are very apt to also worship the form, the name. This is a mistake. We are very apt to do it, because it is very hard for us to separate the life from the form. We are more apt to worship the Church than to worship the spirit of the Church.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Is death inevitable, or is it the consequence of sin? Can it be avoided?

A.—Death comes as the inevitable consequence of natural law, not as the result of sin. Science has proven that to be true. Ignorance determines otherwise. We are told of a fall, away back in past ages, and, in consequence of that, came sin and death into the world. But as the light of a newer and diviner dispensation dawns upon us, we see the folly of such a belief. Science tells us that death is the inevitable result of law. Change must come to these forms. They cannot exist in their present state but a certain length of time, then they must be resolved back again to their primal elements. It is not, by any means, the result of the sin of one pair or a thousand pairs.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Is there any such thing as being translated, as is recorded of Elijah—that he never tasted death?

A.—No; I do not so understand it. The ignorance that surrounded the common people of that day gave rise to such a story. The priests, the heads of the Church, knew better, even then.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then that is a false story?

A.—Absolutely; falsely rendered in your record.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Is Jesus risen with that body which was nailed to the cross? or where is that body?

A.—Gone back to its primal elements; lived again and again in a thousand times ten thousand forms, for aught I know; but never resurrected from the dead, as your record affirms.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then the apostles were false witnesses.

A.—By no means. They so believed because Jesus had the power to make himself an objective reality to those minds and those human senses. He took upon himself material conditions, and was, to all intents and purposes, living and acting through the material form. They saw it, they felt it; it walked with them and talked with them. But was it the literal body of Jesus? Oh, no.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Did he not declare unto Thomas that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have?

A.—Certainly he did—so the record says; and he invited one of his friends to thrust his finger into his side. But we do not affirm that this body—this objective body—was a spirit. Oh, no; it was a material body which he had gathered from the elements, precisely as spirits do, under certain conditions, from your media to-day. It is being done to-day. Jesus had the same power.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then the angel that told them "He is not here; he is risen," told a lie?

A.—No; he was not there; he had risen. The body was not the man.

Q.—(By Cl.)—What became of the body?

A.—We are told that it was taken away by the nearest and dearest friends of Jesus. They, like you of to-day, loved the body, and were not willing it should fall into the hands of their enemies.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then the Jews were right in saying the disciples had stolen the body?

A.—They were right, certainly.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then the apostles were all liars, and the Jews were right?

A.—No, they were not liars; but the Jews were right.

Q.—(By Cl.)—But the Jews declared that the disciples had stolen the body, and you confirm the same from the spirit-world?

A.—Yes, but they were not liars, because they did not say the body has risen, but he has risen, meaning Jesus—the spirit, not the body. No, where in your record can you find anything that will determine concerning the resurrection of the body. The disciples did not say, "We have not stolen the body of Jesus"; they simply said, "He is not here; he has risen." So he had.

Q.—(By Cl.)—But it was the Jesus that was laid in the tomb that was meant; of course we all understand that it was the very same body that was laid to rest.

A.—Oh, yes, you understand it so, because you are apt to deal more with the body than with the spirit. Was the man the body? You will say yes. I say no. It was the thinking spirit, not the body. What had Jesus to do with the dead body? Nothing at all. So the disciples declared that the living spirit had risen; they said nothing about the body.

Q.—(By Cl.)—But these declarations do not hang together. Either all Christianity is a humbug, or these declarations are false.

A.—So far as the Christian Church understands

Christ there is very much of error mixed up with their understanding of him, because they have worshipped the body; they have talked of the body; they have prayed to the body. That has been their ideal. I was a believer in the literal resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ before my death. But I know better now. The whole Christian world has indeed been imposed upon, but by its own ignorance—by nothing else.

Q.—(By Cl.)—But what assurance have we that we are not imposed upon here?

A.—None whatever—nothing that you can absolutely rely upon.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Then we may declare that we are now imposed upon, as well as the Christian world was before?

A.—Certainly, you have the right so to do. It is incumbent upon you all to weigh and measure everything by your own senses. Never believe a Paul or a Moses or a Jesus because they are such. Do not believe me because I declare myself to be a departed spirit returned here to communicate with you. But believe whatever seems to be true to you, and ignore all the rest.

Q.—(By Cl.)—But what is the good of having communications from departed spirits, if we cannot depend upon them? If we must take their instructions on our own judgment, I don't see any use in them.

A.—So you may say with regard to all kinds of instruction, whether through the Church or the Spirit-World.

Q.—(By Cl.)—There is a great difference. We give authority for ours.

A.—Ah, you have a very poor understanding concerning those of the spirit-world. You, like thousands of others, have placed the seal of divine authority where that of humanity alone belongs. When you shall learn that the spirit after death is human, as before, then you will cease to expect so much of them. They are fallible like yourselves. It is only their opinions and the experience they have gained in the spirit-world that they bring you. Nothing more.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Does a spirit come by divine authority to teach us this?

A.—All things that are taught at all are taught by divine authority.

Q.—(By Cl.)—I don't believe it.

A.—You have the right to disbelieve.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Lies are not of divine authority.

A.—Since I believe in one God overruling all things for good, of course I recognize the divine authority running through all. Therefore, to me all teaching is of divine authority. It may not be so to you.

Q.—(By Cl.)—Are the most infernal lies by divine authority?

6. Washington street, Boston, and 44 Broadway, New York.

INVESTIGATION OF THE SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

BY THOMAS R. HAZARD.

"Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven."

There is a class of professed investigators of "Spiritualism" whose minds seem to be so crammed with the learning of the schools, mingled with a vast amount of pride and self-conceit, but with scarcely a trace of common sense, who might profit by studying the above rule, laid down by Jesus of Nazareth many centuries ago. I sometimes meet such at "spirit circles," and am puzzled which to admire the most, the loftiness of their pretensions, or—as relates to spiritual things—their profoundness of their ignorance. The significant words, "Know thyself," were placed over the portals of an ancient Grecian temple. This class of investigators is plain never worshipped in a temple of that order. Plato, "Athenia's wisest son," who did, after devoting his life to study in the pursuit of knowledge, at length reached a position that he said was in advance of all his contemporaries in learning, for, said he, I have discovered that "I know nothing." These investigators are a long way in the rear of Plato's point at which true knowledge commences its growth, and will doubtless find it necessary, either in this sphere of existence or the next, to rid themselves of a vast deal of conceit and fancied knowledge before they reach it. Should they chance to do so, however, whilst in the mortal form, and happily learn their own utter ignorance of the interior life and its laws, they may then discover that in all that relates to the spiritual world, he who is in the least endowed with spiritual gifts has a knowledge of heavenly things greater than it is possible to obtain through the intellect alone; or in other words, however profound and varied may be a learned *seaman's* intellectual acquirements, "the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Among the most absurd features of such investigators is that of their not only insisting upon their right to dictate conditions to the "spirits," but requiring them also to conform to their natures and attributes to their own crude educational ideas of spirit existence. If they drink of the new wine at all, they insist it must be out of the old leather bottles. They may admit the extraordinary character of the phenomena if (say they) they be true; but they will not concede that they can only be exhibited under extraordinary conditions. They may admit that an electric spark will speed with greater force under the Atlantic by night than it will by day, but they will not concede that the imponderable essence used by spirits in making physical demonstrations may be subject to like laws. They acknowledge that the same condition of darkness that veils the things of earth from the natural eye is alike requisite to unveil the starry heavens to its view, but they cannot conceive that a similar law may operate in revealing the physical elements of earth to the spiritual eye. They claim that spirits (if indeed, say they, there are any such beings) are governed by no law! If they manifest their presence to mortals under one condition, they can under other and all conditions! If they come to one person, they can with equal ease come to another. If they rap through the organism of this illiterate man, they can do the same through that of this accomplished professor. If they heal through the mediumship of this ignorant quack, they can do it far better through that of this skillful physician. If they speak with the tongues of angels through this poor woman, how much better should they do the same through this learned divine, forgetting all the time that unless all these intellectually learned ones come to the investigation of the spiritual phenomena in the spirit of a little child, they can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven, or, in other words, they can never be unfolded into a condition to receive spiritual truth; not, though one or a thousand should be raised from the dead. The thing is as impossible as that a camel should pass through the eye of a needle—that the bright rays of the sun should illuminate the deep dungeons of the Inquisition, or that the beautiful and all-glorious spirit that spoke through the mouth of Jesus of Nazareth and his unlettered disciples should have controlled in like manner the dark organisms of Caliphaz, Herod or Pilate, or any of the millions of the successors of these murderers, whether in Church or State, who have since deluged the earth with innocent blood, shed in the name of him whom their fathers slew on Calvary, and whose poor perishing body, crucified anew and bereft of both life and spirit, they now teach men to worship as God.

Inasmuch, said Jesus, as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me. And where in the whole length and breadth of Christendom is there a temple to be found that a despised, illiterate, inspired medium of the present day would be permitted to open his lips? And as with the servant so with the master. What, think ye, would be his reception, were Jesus of Nazareth to appear in New York on the Lord's day—clothed as of old in a close-fitting, seamless knit garment, (poverty garb), attended by a rabble of red-shirted, bare-legged, half-clad fishermen, publicans, harlots and sinners, as was his wont in Jerusalem, and enter one of the splendid temples dedicated to his service? Would he be allowed, think ye, to speak in his own name or in that of the divine spirit by which he was inspired in Judea? No! For there he would thunder forth as of old to those who sell pews, sermons and prayers as merchandise, and his own consecrated body and blood in lieu of doves, Begone, ye hypocrites, that have thus made my father's house a den of thieves! As the unlettered, but sincere and spiritually receptive mob passed along the broad aisle, would the door of any silken cushioned pew, think ye, be opened by occupant or sexton for Christ's reception? No; but should the unbidden *lofter* attempt to speak to those who call themselves par excellence his own—much less partake of his own flesh and blood from the altar—Caliphaz, the high priest of the day, and hundreds of self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees would close their ears in horror, and call aloud upon Pilate and all the police of the precinct to away with the blasphemous wretches to the tomb. Nor if the power of these "whited sepulchres, filled with dead men's bones" was level with their will, would the humble Nazarene and his disciples be permitted there to rest. They would be hurried to Herod's judgment seat, and from thence to the dungeon, the rack, the gibbet, the stake and the cross, as the witnesses of truth ever have been by the bigots of all priest-concocted religions in all ages of the world, whether at Salem, at Mecca, at Rome or Jerusalem, and whether sacrificed to Moloch, the blood-sucking God of their idolatry, in the name of Allah, of Jesus, of Jove or Jehovah. It is not fiction, this is history. But are there none left on earth to bear witness to the truth? to receive the Christ, the Spirit, the Lord from heaven at its second coming? Yes, thank God, there are. Though he come to his own, and his own receive him not, though the Levite reject him and the priest cast him out, though the rulers of the people condemn him, the self-righteous revile and the learned Scribes deride him, the infidel will receive him, and reverence and love him all the more for the lowliness and friendliness of his coming. Yes, the infidel will receive him. He returns thanks as Jesus, the Church infidel of Galilee, did, that the Father had hidden these things from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed them unto babes—for the world at large is yet to learn, and yet will learn, that infidelity to the priest is fealty to God.

Western Department.

J. M. PEEBLES, EDITOR.

Individuals subscribing for the BANNER OF LIGHT by mail, or ordering books, should send their orders containing remittance direct to WILLIAM WHITE & CO., 158 Washington street, Boston, Mass. Post-Office Orders, when sent, should be made payable to WILLIAM WHITE & CO., and not to J. M. PEEBLES. This course will save much time and trouble. Local matters from the West requiring immediate attention, and long articles intended for publication, should also be sent direct to the Boston office. Letters and papers intended for us should be directed to J. M. PEEBLES. Persons writing us in March will direct to Detroit, Mich., care O. C. Randall.

Spiritism and Spiritualism.

In metaphysical disquisitions, as in the discoveries of science, a clear understanding of terms employed is indispensable to the evolution of truth. Violent and often protracted discussions have arisen from verbal misunderstandings, or a lack of correct definitions.

The distinction between Spiritism and Spiritualism is apparent to even the ordinary thinker. An observer of events, either single or in series, is not necessarily a philosopher, nor a Spiritist a Spiritualist.

Defined in the widest and best acceptance of language, with an eye to the derivation and syllabic construction of words, *Spiritualism*, *Spiritual Philosophy* and *Harmonial Philosophy*—terms properly interchangeable—are really synonymous. Applied to mere phenomena, business schemes, and vague theories respecting force and spirit existence, *Spiritism*, rather than *Spiritualism*, is the appropriate term. Saying nothing of mortals, many spirits, though disrobed of their earthly organisms, are far from being spiritual or harmonial. Frivolous and disorderly manifestations demonstrate this. Our State and National Conventions, bearing on their ruffled surfaces the scum and drift-wood of angular, egotistic iconoclasts, have generally exhibited more sound than substance, more force than power, and far more of the *animus* of Spiritism than true Spiritualism.

Investigations relating to Spiritism are closely allied to the methods of modern science. These are the accustomed stages of research:

I. An acceptance of the outward appearance of things, or those which, coming directly within the cognizance of the physical senses, rest upon the floating, isolated facts of observation and half-sifted experiences.

II. Advancing in accordance with the laws of mental progress to the next stage, it relates its facts and thoughts to one another. It compares and sifts them. It investigates critically. It weighs irregularities, testing one through another. It perceives interrelations everywhere, and confesses that the first phase of objects is phenomenal, depending upon law-principle—something lying within and beyond as the motive force and all-energizing power.

III. The still higher stage, grasping matter, functions and forces, with out-putting feelers for causes, considers phenomena in their totality, and seizing them in their *noemata*, lifts them to the intellectual altitude of comprehension, system, intuition and spiritual illumination. It is legitimate, as a method from the outer to the inner; from shells to more etherealized substances; from parts to a beautiful unitary wholeness.

The child, reveling in showy objectivities, is "pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw." Youth, more observant and thoughtful, begins to systematize. Maturing manhood, witnessing a wilderness of phenomena, develops reflection, order, philosophy and spirituality. Briefly stated, the first, whether relating to science or Spiritism, is *sensuous knowing*, around which clusters a crude, undigested mass of elements, chemical formulas and psychological facts. The coming man—a constructor—appearing and bringing into the arena insight and critical classification, a war is speedily inaugurated. Fact battles against fact; discussions multiply; contradictions arise. These, necessitating defeats and victories, engender jealousies. Temples totter.

"It was but the ruin of the bad—
The wasting of the wrong and ill—
Whatever of good the old time had
Is living still."

Overarching all storms and underlying all upheavals, physical and mental, throbs the eternal heart-beat of progress. Those who, through aspiration and persistent effort, reach the third or "final stage," as certain metaphysicians denominate it, find their way out of mere phenomena, temporary angularities and quarrelsome abstractions, having attained unto a clear perception of synthetic unity, or to the rationale of that system of wholeness wherein chaos assumes order, antagonisms crystallize into structures, and specials melt away into the ocean-depths of the universal.

Reputed scientists, of this and European countries, are quite as contradictory in their statements as Spiritists. Their methods of research are similar. The veriest novice knows that the details touching the interpretations of science are as unlike in the colleges and universities of the two continents as the dogmas preached in their pulpits. Take the long agitated subject of "types"; or, what is more familiar to the general reader—the Darwinian theory—reasonable to us; yet we have Lamarck, Darwin and Huxley, versus Von Baer, Owen and Agassiz, all eminently scientific.

It was wisdom in Arago to caution men prominent in position against pronouncing anything a "finality outside of pure mathematics." The leading mind in the French Academy of Sciences, speaking of the ruins brought up from the sand-buried cities of Asia, said, "Builders upon the temple of science are in much confusion at present. . . . Science has settled but few things." A German *savon* says, "Absolutely comprehending not even a monad, the wisest only partially apprehend a few things." Not against the deductions of science do we pronounce, but the parrot pronouncements and unwarranted assumptions of its neophytes, not against phenomena, but a lack of insight into and a correct classification of them, as helps to a commensurate causation.

Considering matter and mind, eternal; force, substance in motion; and spiritual bodies etherealized from the vitalized and spiritualized substances of material bodies, in connection with the sublimated ultimates pertaining to the surrounding, overshadowing spirit-world; these, as natural steps in the line of discovery and growth, seem, as referring to the masses, the true methods—from the objective to the subjective—from phenomena to philosophy—from wild confusion to order—from dogmatic theology to that absolute religion, rooted in man's divine nature, accepting as helps all legitimate methods of analysis.

Spiritualism, the equivalent of the *Harmonial Philosophy*, as lucidly elucidated by our friend, A. J. Davis, embraces the principles of progress, refinement, purity and spirituality, in a moral and religious sense. Spiritism, a passing wave on the ocean of time, relates more directly to outward phenomena and intellect. It is clear and cold. As an entity, it has more body than soul,

more head than heart, more egotism than humility, more dogmatism than devotion, and more rampage than religion. Its public advocates freeze their audiences into perpetual absence.

Spiritualism carries with it the significance of a moral quality—that MORAL QUALITY which inheres and lies imbedded in the religious and spiritual constitution of man, awaiting a more perfect unfolding. An ancient apostle said, "To be spiritually-minded is life," and "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness."

God, being infinite causation, and finite spirit in man finite causation, it is the constant aim of the true Spiritualist to come into more intimate relations with the absolute and the Divine, and into closer rapport with the higher intelligences peopling the upper kingdoms of immortality. Genuine Spiritualism, knowing the truth of a present communion with spirits, through media as instrumentalities, strives to make that communion a help to soul-growth, to spiritual-mindedness and to holy life and living on earth, preparatory to those more heavenly joys that await the good and pure in the heavens.

The purpose of Spiritualism is the grand purpose of Nature. Spanning all human interests, it continually seeks by methods direct, inverse and diverse, to rightly generate and rightly educate humanity, that earth may be peopled with harmonial men and women, walking and talking with angels.

Oh, how refreshing to mortals, treading in comparative poverty the rock-paved highways of time, burdened with cares and crosses, to catch occasional breezes from Eden-lands, songs of encouragement from triumphal hosts of reformers, martyrs, apostles, prophets, and familiar words of sympathy and love from the glorified dwellers of eternity! Spiritualism is the "heavenly witness," the long foretold "gift of the spirit," that should be "poured out upon all flesh," the "living manna," the "crystal river," proceeding from under the throne; the "other angel," flying and crying "come up hither," and the promised "New Jerusalem" seen of John in vision descending from God out of heaven! As a Gospel adapted to the nineteenth century, musical with the love-ministries of angels, it is a perpetual baptism from on high, a continual regeneration, a succession of higher births and endless privileges, a gentler dispensation of divine love guided by wisdom, the strength of the weary, the balm of healing for the sick, the consolation of the dying, the comfort of the mourner, and the sweetest answer to prayer! As a moral power in the world, its influence is exalting; its aim constructive, its work apostolic, its inspiration continuous, and, with divine elements suitable for all redemptive purposes, its holy design is to lift humanity through the moral power of angel ministry into present higher physical, mental and moral conditions, preparatory to that future progressive existence that stretches in increasing loveliness along the measureless eras of eternity.

It reveals the eternal purpose of good from seeming evil—of sorrow blossoming into joys—of thorns transformed into roses, and tears crystallizing into pearls of matchless brilliancy.

In consonance with the law of cycles, we stand, though up one step higher, directly over a prominent initial point of ancient Spiritualism. Progress has taken from it the mask of the supernatural, and exhibits it to the world in the true light of *naturalness*.

The seers of Ancient India had their circular porticoes for the reception of heavenly messages; the Greeks derived inspirations from forest retreats and the clear waters of Castalian springs; the Roman Senators enriched their wisdom by consulting Sibylline oracles; the Priestesses of Adelpi and Dodona gave impressionable responses to inquiring minds; Jewish High Priests evoked revelations from the Urim and Thummim; Socrates listened to his spirit-guide as counselor and comforter; Jesus conversed with the ascended and glorified Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration; John with an ancient prophet—a "fellow servant"—upon the lone isle of Patmos. These were phases of ancient Spiritualism. God has not changed. His laws, immutable, cannot change. Therefore, under similar conditions, what was of the past, is to-day. The living present is the interpreter of all history. Thus modern Spiritualism corroborates the ancient, and the ancient holds out to us the trusted key that helps unlock the seeming mysteries of the age.

Spiritualism does not meet candid investigators to-day as the Church met Copernicus, Galileo, Friar Bacon and others. She constructs no iron creeds; she erects no martyr stakes; she builds no cold prison houses for men of genius; she dictates no line of thought, nor weaves thorn-crowns for souls that search for God in Nature; she pads locks no human lips, but bids the reformer speak out all truth, and strike all falsehood dumb. Conscious of the moral necessity of destruction, her work is constructive for a world-wide religion that shall be philosophic, a philosophy that shall be spiritual, and for a true science that shall be beautiful in proportion, unitary and holy. Spiritualism, the pulverizer of creeds, the liberalizing power of this century, takes freedom, science by the hand, and bids them go forth clad in their golden robes as the vanguard of human progress, leading up holy mountains to the living temple of truth quarried from bars of celestial sunlight.

The Religious Amendment to the Constitution.
The Columbus State Journal contains a synopsis of a lecture delivered in Columbus, by A. A. Wheelock, Esq., Feb. 12th, answering in the negative and at length the question: "Shall the Constitution of the United States be amended to recognize the authority of the Christian's God?" The Journal remarks that it published the proceedings of the Convention favoring such an amendment, and now gave as fair and full a synopsis of Mr. Wheelock's remarks as it had room for. It is the intention of Mr. W. to print this address in pamphlet form. We make the following extract:

"The question exceeds in importance any which has ever been raised for free men and women to moot, since the birth of our Republic. Other questions of great moment we have met and settled—others are still before us—political, social, financial; each more or less important to some of them strike so deeply, and so fully probe both the individual and national life, as the issue now fairly presented to us by the self-concocted representatives of God and Christianity, in their denial of that sacred right, 'Freedom to worship God.'"

"What do they ask? Simply and only that in the name of Christianity we assist in turning humanity backward! Is this the lesson the ages have taught us? Far from it. If the past has any instruction for us, it is found in the living and undeniable fact that man is a progressive being, and that the law of progress is more fully in him than in any other creature. He is a being of growth, and the force and power of his being, which we denominate conscience, the measure of this is the measure of man, as we look for an estimate of character and stability. If it be true that all of goodness, beauty and progress of the individual, race, nation and force of each, then the placing of any restriction upon man's religious ideas and convictions, can but interfere with the law of his growth and progress, and the same law applies to races and nations. In view of these facts, we are enabled to see more clearly what would be the nine reverend and twenty-four honorable gentlemen, who assembled recently in this city, and as they thought very wisely resolved that God should be put into the Constitution of the United States. Many questions of grave importance arise, when we consider this proposition. First, why

is this desired? It cannot be solely for recognition, for the Constitution recognizes and guarantees to every individual the right to entertain his own idea of God, and worship in accordance with that idea, when it declares that 'Congress shall not establish any form of religion.'"

Do they desire his recognition for ornament? An ornamental God could be of little service. They must desire his recognition for use, and therefore he must have authority, and that authority must be supreme!

But the difficulty arises here (as every human being has a God according to their conception of Deity), whose God shall be recognized? The Protestant, Catholic, Jewish or Christian God? Or shall we exercise this supreme authority? Who shall decide? How shall it be decided? At the ballot box? Shall the number of votes that decides the fate of the politician determine what God shall exercise authority over the nation? If so, as changes the policy of the government, by the success of different political parties, so would the character and authority of the nation's Deity change, and at no distant day this land of religious liberty might be given over to the control and authority of the Catholic's God, as expressed through the power of the Pope. Do Protestant Christians desire such a result?

Suppose the Protestant God be placed in authority, would Catholics and Jews would the Christian's God—'Jehovah'—come to be the sovereign religious power of the nation, would Christians meekly obey? Are men's consciences made of such flimsy stuff as to yield their religious convictions at the demand of others? Would not this be the culmination of religious tyranny? And yet those who advocate the use of thus amending the Constitution, claim any desire or intention to interfere with the sacred rights of conscience guaranteed by the organic law of the land. Mistaken men! Their zeal is not according to knowledge. Upon this plea tyranny has based its justification, and the character and authority of the nation's Deity, bound and fettered, religiously and politically, and the claim has ever been, it was for their benefit.

The high sounding name which these gentlemen have assumed—'The National Reform Association'—would indicate that they contemplate some reform. But the world is groaning under the burden of the nation's Deity, and they propose to none other than the abridgment of the sacred rights of conscience and freedom of worship, which was the foundation of this Republic, and which has, through martyrdom, sealed its triumph in the past.

Ere this can be accomplished, humanity must retrograde, and the nation must march these men to count well the cost of this undertaking."

The speaker continued for over an hour, and at the conclusion was greeted with applause from the audience.

Spiritualist Society, Chicago, Ill.

This Society, under the Presidency of John R. Robinson, Esq., and other efficient officers, is having exceedingly interesting meetings in Library Hall. Miss Susie M. Johnson spoke last month, giving universal satisfaction. During March and April she addresses the Spiritualists of Battle Creek, Mich. E. S. Wheeler is employed by the Chicago Society for the month of March. The Children's Progressive Lyceum, under the able Conductorship of Dr. Avery, has booked over two hundred and fifty children. Sometimes there are two hundred spectators present to witness the interesting sessions. The Society and Lyceum, as mutual helps, work in perfect harmony.

MINNESOTA.

People Hungering for Spiritualism.

DEAR BANNER—At the request of numbers of your readers, I furnish you with a brief account of my visit to Hutchinson, in this State.

The railroad does not reach thither, and no spiritual lecturer had penetrated thus far—so my trip was really pioneer work; but a lively team and agreeable company made the ride pleasant, whilst the revival of old and the formation of new friendships, made the visit a glad day in the weary life of a lecturer.

This village was founded by those world-renowned singers—the "Hutchinsons." One of the brothers, Asa, still resides here, and added greatly to the interest of our meetings by his soul-stirring songs. In this place I found a few warm-hearted disciples of the Spiritual Faith, and very many who had discarded the abominations of popular Orthodoxy; from both of these classes I received a most cordial welcome. I gave six lectures to full and attentive audiences. People came eight and ten miles across the bleak prairie to hear the New Gospel. A venerable mother in Israel said to me, "I have lived for weeks in anticipation of this visit, and now I shall for months live up to the sweet remembrance of it." Those who are not prepared to accept our heaven-born philosophy as their religion, bore testimony to its good accomplished, and from all sides I received urgent invitations to repeat my visit.

Returning, I stopped at Watertown, a thriving village in the Big Woods. Here I found but one professed Spiritualist, an old gentleman whose declining years are being made bright and happy by angel ministries.

It was said no one could lecture upon Spiritualism in this place without raising a mob, yet I have never anywhere spoken to a more quiet audience than that which filled the large school-house to hear a discourse upon the Similarity between Modern and Old Time Manifestations of the Spirit.

In Medina the Spiritualists have an organized Society and Progressive Lyceum. I have given this Society two lectures a month the past year and a half, and am unanimously invited to continue these ministrations another year.

Everywhere I find a growing disposition amongst Spiritualists to organize in Local Societies, and save their means for the establishment of Lyceums and libraries, rather than pour it into a common missionary fund. I am persuaded that a great work is shortly to be wrought in the rural districts, probably more efficient than anything at present practicable in the large cities. People who live in the sound of the Sabbath bell, are more independent in their mode of thought and freer from sectarian bigotry than those who dwell in the shadow of Church influence. Country school-houses can be obtained free of rent, and at short notice filled with intelligent and appreciative listeners.

Calls for lecturers multiply beyond my ability to answer, and I can only pray the angels, the lords of the harvest, to send forth more laborers.

Fraternally yours, MARY J. COLBURN.
Champlin, Minn., Feb. 28, 1869.

Spiritual Festival.

The Spiritualists of Londonderry held a festival at their hall, Thursday evening, March 14th, to procure funds with which to obtain speakers for the coming summer. Although the night was blustering and tedious to be out in, preventing those from a distance coming, a goodly number were present to join in the festivities of the evening. A splendid oyster and cake supper was furnished, and all seemed to appreciate it by the manner and liberality exhibited. Some sixty five dollars was realized over expenses, which, with the aid of other contributions from those friendly to the cause, will secure us speakers a good share of the summer. Orthodoxy has done its best to destroy this old of truth, but every effort in the past, as in the future, will prove a failure. People are beginning to love and appreciate light rather than darkness; to follow the dictates of an enlightened conscience, guided by visible manifestations and truths, rather than a blind faith, founded in fabulous ages, when ignorance and superstition covered the earth as the waters cover the sea.

DANIEL D. WAIT, Sec.

Mrs. Walsbrook's Tracts in South-Western Missouri.

Mrs. Walsbrook visited our place some two months ago, and left fifteen hundred or two thousand of her Tracts, which have been well distributed and are doing a good work. We need more of the same sort—something cheap to scatter broadcast, and the beautiful Philosophy may be placed in the hands of every body. Mrs. Walsbrook has just finished the manuscript for a book of some three hundred pages, written while in feeble health at this place, and having had an opportunity of examining a few sheets, I predict for it a large sale. I am glad to learn, by way of the *Banner of Light*, that her health is improving. May she still remain on this side, and prosper.

Carthage, Mo., Feb. 17th, 1869. O. C. COLBY.

Ready for the Field.

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