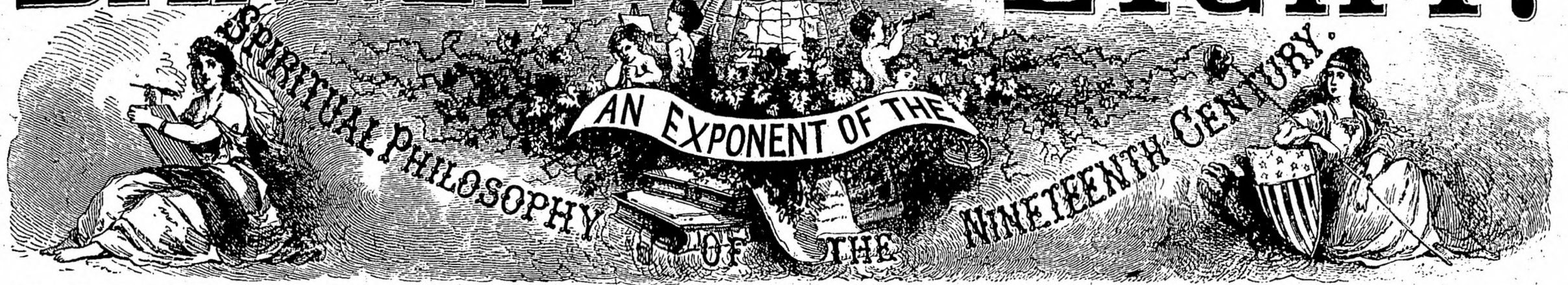


BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. XXXII.

{ WILLIAM WHITE & CO.,
Publishers and Proprietors. }

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1872.

{ \$3.00 Per Annum,
In Advance. }

NO. 12.

Foreign Correspondence.

LETTERS OF TRAVEL.

NO. III.

BY J. M. FEEHES.

EDITORS BANNER OF LIGHT.—Sunny are these days, sailing 'mong the Pacific Islands, decked in the rich and gorgeous drapery of the tropics.

"Oh soft are the breezes that wave the tall cocon,
And sweet are the odors that breathe on the gale;
Fair sparkles the wave as it breaks on the coral,
Or wafts to the white beach the mariner's sail."

Ethnology and comparative philology show us the quarries whence nationalities and tribes were hewn. From the rich table-lands of India and the undulating valleys of Iran came those primeval emigrants that gave to the West culture and intellectual activity. But the extreme East—the Micronesians and the Polynesians of the Pacific—whence those intertropical races? During our week's stay on the Hawaiian group of islands, and others since, the natives, their customs, laws, languages and religious ideas, have been a constant theme of thought and study.

It is generally conceded that the languages spoken by the millions of Polynesians have the same common structure; with such differences as may be resolved into dialects resulting from long non-intercourse. Legendary chants handed down from old Hawaiian bands say their ancestors came from Tahiti; and still further down the mouldy ages, from Southern Asia.

Strange as it may appear, when a native New Zealander and Hawaiian meet—though more than four thousand miles apart—they are so closely connected socially, that they very soon engage in a free interchange of ideas. This in some degree is true of the Marquesan, Tahitian, Samoan and others of the Polynesian stocks. The system of taboos in some form runs through all the Southern Polynesian families.

THE MICRONESIANS.

Brush the dust from your atlases and look at the location of your island neighbors in Oceania. Have we not all one father? Are we not brothers all? The numerous Caroline, Ascension, Gilbert Islands, and others adjacent, evidently belong to the Micronesian division, and were peopled either by the Chinese, or Northern Malayan races. The ruins on Ponapi, one of the Caroline group, built entirely of basaltic prisms, indicate a marvelous civilization in the past. The present natives have no conception why nor by whom such massive walls, parapets, vaults, &c., were constructed. The present race upon the Gilbert Islands has stout physical developments, high cheek bones, fine straight hair, black and glossy. The aquiline nose is the rule, and the cerebrum, particularly in the frontal region, is largely developed. They are less savage than some of their trafficking visitors.

Swarms of children innocent of any clothing flock to the harbor upon each landing. So prolific are they yet, on the greater number of these islands—and so uncontaminated with the diseases of foreign civilizations—that their population is deliberately limited by practicing abortion to prevent too great a number of hungry mouths. They should study the Malthusian method of depopulation, or welcome to their sea-girt shores Shaker missionaries to initiate celibate communities.

THE MARSHALL ISLES.

These are a large group of the Micronesian family, ranging from 4½° to 12° north latitude. They were first discovered by the Spaniards in 1529, and called by them the "good gardens." The inhabitants were straight, light-colored and strangely tattooed. Their dress was decidedly Adamic—fig-leaves and mats about their loins. At present, the men wear full beards, are energetic and very hospitable. The women are dressed in fine matting, have long black hair, and decorate themselves profusely in shell-jewelry. Ocean travelers consider them beautiful, though minus the corset, the waterfall and panier.

They traverse the seas with large retinues, are eminently clamish, and count nobility of descent on the mother's side. While worshipping deities, they hold the spirits of their ancestors in great reverence. They are skilled, say European residents in their midst, in every kind of "incantation and necromancy." They consult their media when in a state of ecstasy, and heal by beating and striking the diseased part. Consecrated groves and sacred spots are common among them. Their desolate cemeteries are in waving groves of coco-nut trees, and weird-shaped paddles lift their blades for tomb-stones. They are of Japanese extraction.

THE SAMOANS, OR NAVIGATORS.

These very important islands, a sort of half-way steamship house in the Pacific, for recruiting, repairing and re-provisioning, lie between latitudes 13½° and 14½° south, and about 170° west longitude. The captain made a short call at this group—nine in number—too short for our individual purpose. They are volcanic in origin, safe to approach, and partially belted with coral reefs. Pago-Pago is a deep, land-locked harbor on the south side of Tutuila. Upolu is the most thickly populated, containing twenty thousand inhabitants.

Mr. J. H. Blethen, our kind and gentlemanly commander, had permitted us to study his maps and charts of this densely-wooded group of isles—gems of the ocean—before reaching them. The afternoon approach was too grand and gorgeous for the pen to paint. The sea was a polished mirror; the sky, glass; the sun, well adown the

western-spaces, gold; and the scattering clouds, crimson and purple, were chariots of fire.

The steam checked and the vessel at rest, the natives flocked to us like birds to a banquet. Physically, they are a splendidly-made race, with full, high foreheads, wavy beards, and white, exquisitely-set teeth. They are light in color, and quick in motion. They have dark brown hair, eyes black and expressive. The occasional reddish hair seen had been bleached. Honest and trusting, they are evidently of Indo-Malayan origin.

The women are well-formed, healthy and handsome, and what is more, are famed for their chastity. Both men and women go as naked as newborn babes, except weirdly-woven leaves and sea-grass aprons around their loins. Our passengers bought of them war-clubs, fans, fruits, head-gearings, birds, baskets, spears and shells. Missionaries are among them. Already they exhibit hopeful signs of civilization in wishing to barter for tobacco, whiskey, fancy-colored clothing, and lime preparations for bleaching their hair. Some of these natives bleach or color the hair red—Americans, black; tastes differ.

The scenery upon these islands is transcendently beautiful. Cascades are numerous, the valleys fertile, and vegetation varied and luxuriant. Tropical fruits, coco-nuts, pine-apples, bananas, citrons, bread-fruit, oranges, limes, sugar-cane, coffee, taro and dyo-wood trees abound in rich profusion. The largest portion of Upolu has a fine garden soil, where large springs of pure water bubble up and flow in thousands of little streams toward the sea. The whole group is exceedingly valuable. Action has already been taken by the United States toward annexation. Articles of confederation have been drawn up, signed by the chiefs, and forwarded to Washington. They are pending in the Senate.

Among the code of laws drawn by these native chiefs, to be recognized in commercial relations between the United States and the Samoan Islands, are the following:

"6th. All trading in distilled or spirituous liquors or any kind of intoxicating drink is absolutely prohibited. Any person so offending shall be fined one hundred dollars on conviction before a mixed court. All such liquors found on shore, and kept for sale or barter, shall be seized and destroyed. If any native is found intoxicated, the individual who has supplied him with drink shall pay a fine of ten dollars. If any foreigner be found drunk or riotous, he shall pay a fine of ten dollars."

"6th. Any person found guilty of offering inducement to a native female to prostitute herself to a foreigner, to pay a fine of ten dollars; and any native female found guilty of prostituting herself to a foreigner to pay a fine of twenty dollars."

And these Samoan chiefs are called "savages," "degraded heathen," to whom tobacco-smoking, wine-drinking Christian missionaries must be sent to save them from hell! Permit me, Messrs. Editors, to express a calm, dignified contempt of that conceited ignorance which characterizes two classes of Americans—radical rationalists who crankily assert that there "are islanders in the Pacific, and ferocious tribes in Africa, that have not the faintest idea of God or another state of existence," and pompous clergymen who everlastingly prate of the "polluted" and "fiendish heathen" of Oceania and "India's coral strand."

THE FEEHES.

Islands, like individuals, have their reputations. Those dotting an ocean which covers one-third of the entire surface of the globe, should be more thoroughly explored and better understood. The Feejees, constituting quite an archipelago, contain one hundred and fifty-four islands, seventy of which are inhabited. They are governed by chiefs. The natives, though dark-hued, are noble in mien, shrewd, and enterprising. Missionaries have given them a hard name. Their side of the story has never been heard nor published, but admit themselves good at retaliation. A. G. Findlay, F. R. G. S., says:

"These islanders have been misrepresented. Late visitors speak very highly of their honesty, cleanliness, refinement and virtue."

The men have heavy, bushy heads of hair, and wear full beards. When discovered by the navigator, Tasman, they knew nothing of the venereal diseases that accompany Christian civilization. The taint of syphilis is not yet common among them. They had, when first visited, no idols. They believed in transmigration and immortality. They worshipped in caves and groves. They also had their mediums, who, when in ecstatic states, foamed at the mouth; but every utterance breathed in this rude trance-condition was carefully noted as the voice of a god.

They build their houses in coco-nut groves. Often they are umbrella-shaped and rudely thatched. It requires little or no labor to sustain life. Enterprise is little more than a dream all through these equatorial regions.

HOW WERE THESE ISLANDS PEOPLED?

What the camel is to the Arab, the horse to the Asian Mongol, the canoe is to these islanders. In the construction of their proas—sea-crafts made of bread-fruit wood—they display great talent. The better class of them will carry a hundred men in the open sea. The sails and rigging are managed with great dexterity. They provision these proas with coco-nuts, taro, preserved bread-fruit, &c., which, with their skill in fishing, enables them to sustain voyages for several months. This rationally explains the method by which the different and widely separate Pacific isles may have been peopled. Not only have these natives swift-sailing canoes, but they have rudely-constructed maps of their own invention,

made of large tropical leaves and sticks, tied in straight and curved lines, indicating ocean winds and currents. And, further, Japanese and Chinese junks have been blown at sea, performing long voyages, and finally stranding with their occupants upon distant islands. Bancroft tells us that these have even reached the continent of America.

In December, 1832, one of these junks was wrecked on Oahu, near Honolulu, after having been tempest-tossed eleven months. Only four, out of a crew of nine, survived. The population of Lord North's Island must have originated in some way similar to this, as it is over a thousand miles distant from any other land.

WHENCE THE HAWAIIANS AND POLYNESIANS?

Since islands flock Oceania, as stars the sky—since they are peopled with thronging millions, it is natural to inquire their origin. The mariner's compass is not new. Navigation is old as tradition. China was known to Egypt more than three thousand years before the Christian era, and a commercial intercourse maintained between the countries. Africa was circumnavigated by ancient Egyptian mariners, and among the relics of that old civilization may be traced indications of an acquaintance with the American coast. In that period the geography of the world was well understood. Chaos and darkness had a long, dreary reign thereafter.

Migration and ancient navigation largely account for the mingling of oriental races. There has been a determined effort on the part of Bible worshippers to trace a close parallel between the dogmas and ceremonies of the Hawaiians and others of the Polynesian groups to the "lost tribes" of the Old Testament. The purpose has failed of success. Those "ten tribes"—the Hebrew race itself—illiterate, warlike and barbarous, are of little account to the progressive ethnologist.

That remote parallels may be drawn between Israelitish and Hawaiian notions, is true. Research gives these.

Previous to the missionaries landing and after, the Hawaiians "practiced the rite of circumcision."

"They offered their first fruits to priests and the gods."

"They had sacred seasons for fasts and feasts—and also observed new moons."

"They refrained from touching the bodies of the dead, because considered unclean."

"They had cities of refuge similar to those of the Israelites."

"Their dreams, visions and revelations taught that the souls of the departed went to Po (Sheol, the place of night), or to the regions of Akea and Miliu, as resting-places, from whence they frequently returned as messengers to the living."

The theory, however, of their Jewish descent and extraction, vanishes like mist when it is considered that the Hebrews themselves were derivatives—racial descendants—the refuse and clanish outlaws sloughed off from the matured civilization of Egypt. Burrowing with, these Hebrews borrowed their religious notions from the lower castes among the Egyptians. They were afterwards modified into Moslem theology. But Egypt, be it remembered, received her religious doctrines largely from India. Godfrey Higgins shows, very conclusively, that Abraham migrated from the banks of Jumna in India, northward, founding a tribal colony, with covenants and codes of laws. These mythologies and religious ceremonies are traceable alike, through Egypt, Abrahamic Hebrewism, and Polynesian tradition, to that common pivot—the cradle of religion—India. Northern India and Southern Arabia were the old centres of civilizations and religious speculations.

[Concluded in our next.]

The London Medium and Daybreak

For November 29th contains an earnest call for help, on the part of Bro. J. Burns, its editor and proprietor, in behalf of the "Spiritual Institution," which he has so long labored to uphold. It also gives, among other items, the following concerning our recent disaster:

"We very much regret to hear that it has been stated in an American paper that the Banner of Light office and bookstore have been entirely consumed by the late fire in Boston. No doubt the energy which has hitherto characterized our American friends will soon enable them to resuscitate themselves, and the Banner of Light will, we sincerely hope, go on as usual. We shall anxiously await some definite information from our American brothers."

The concluding portion of the following paragraph from the same issue of the Daybreak states in brief what we have often maintained concerning many supposed cases of lunacy:

"A most extraordinary application was made in the Court of Queen's Bench, on Friday last, by Mr. Jencken, on behalf of Mrs. Lowe, who had been incarcerated for some time in a lunatic asylum. This lady, who is a writing medium, had on that account been confined as a lunatic, and was liberated a few months ago, as the result of an inquisition. Though the application to proceed against the Commissioners by indictment was dismissed, yet the fact that such an application was made by Mr. Jencken, confined as a lunatic, raises a question of great interest, and Mrs. Lowe deserves the gratitude of the entire community for her cool courage. It is a notorious fact that mediums are now have been incarcerated unjustly because of the ignorance on the part of the officers of the crown as to the nature of psychological influences. Indeed, it is affirmed by those who have a good opportunity of forming a correct opinion, that a large number of lunacy cases are simply forms of undeveloped or arrested mediumship, which intelligent treatment would speedily set to rights."

A client burst into a flood of tears after he had heard the statement of his counsel, exclaiming, "I did not think I had suffered half so much."

Literary Department.

THE YOUNG AUTHORESS: OR, CRUMBS OF TRUTH AND FICTION.

Written for the Banner of Light,

BY MRS. H. N. GREENE BUTTS,

Author of "Vine Cottage Stories," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER I.

The Obnoxious Lecture.

The breath of the early violets stole in at the open window of Elm Cottage, while the golden sunbeams played with the waving curtains. Mary Melville was in her cosy library. She had just penned an eloquent passage for the "Emancipation of Women," when she was abruptly addressed by her old friend, Jane Seymour:

"Mary Melville, I am surprised to hear that you have become interested in these modern reforms that are discussed so much in the Lyceum."

"Why surprised?" said Mary.

"Because," returned Jane, "these questions are all so unpopular. I thought you were a conservative. Just think of Mary Melville, the young authoress, advocating Spiritualism, 'Labor Reform,' and even giving a lecture before the Lyceum, in favor of woman's rights!"

"Jane, I am certainly interested in these reforms—in all others whose object is to elevate and improve the human race, and I am also convinced that I have some duty in reference to them."

"Well, Mary, I expect that society is sadly out of joint; but I do not intend to trouble my head about it. Let the world wag as it will. I am far enjoying myself. I shall not make myself miserable because somebody works too hard, or because all of the women in the country do not have their rights. I have all I want. If anybody suffers, let them change their occupation."

"Jane," said Mary, rising from her desk in an earnest manner, "I regret to hear you express yourself so indifferently. Truly you are well-circumstanced. You have a pleasant home, parents, wealth, and a large circle of admiring friends; you have leisure, books and music. But do you never think of the many poor, lone and dependent girls who are compelled, if honest and worthy, to toil from early dawn to dusky night for a scanty pittance? Do you say that they might find more lucrative employment? that it is their fault that they occupy so menial a position in society? Why, Jane, there are many thousands of women to-day, in our large cities and factories, who long to rise out of their extreme privations, but who do not know how to compete with society as it is, nor how to overcome the obstacles that intercept their progress. I do not ask for myself more wealth or leisure. It is not so much because I feel the need of better circumstances, that I plead the cause of those who are wearied by life-long toil—those of our own sex who long for intellectual culture, yet have no means of opportunity, such as we have, to gratify their aspirations or their thirst for knowledge."

"But, Mary, what of Herbert Winslow? If I mistake not, he does not sympathize with you in your wild notions in regard to woman's rights. I hear that your lecture before the Young People's Lyceum offended him exceedingly. His father is a prosperous banker, and all his ancestry of English nobility; and Herbert, like his father, is proud and conservative, as you are aware."

"I am indeed aware that there is much truth in your last declaration," said Mary; "but I hope to do what is right, and then leave the consequences with Him who wisely shapes the destiny of all his children, but who makes it the duty of the strong to bear the burdens of the weak. Why should we forever walk in green and flowery pathways, while many who are no less worthy are left, through our indifference, to tread the wine-press alone with weary feet, or silently weep in the shades of Gethsemane."

"Well, Mary, I know you are a good girl, and laboring to help others. But I only called on my way to the sewing-circle, to see if you were not going. It is several weeks since you met with us."

"Yes, Jane; but I am very busy now with my writing; and besides, the circle may wish to take up the very topic we have been considering, and I should not like, by my presence, to interfere with free discussion. You must spare me this time."

Mary had guessed about right; for Jane Seymour had scarcely entered the sewing-circle, which was held in the parlor of a near neighbor, when the all-engrossing subject was introduced.

"There seems to be quite a commotion in our village at the present time," said Mrs. A., as she nervously plied her needle on a garment for some needy freedman.

"I suppose you refer to the sensation occasioned by Miss Melville's lecture, recently given before the Young People's Lyceum," remarked Mrs. F. "It is strange that a person educated as Mary Melville has been, should run off into such absurd, unpopular views."

"And the greater the mystery," interposed Miss S., "that she should persist in her radical notions, when she must know how obnoxious they are to Herbert Winslow. I would not wonder at

all if that lecture should cause them a final separation."

"Then I would not give much for his toleration or affection, if based upon such a slender foundation," quietly replied Elma T. "Mary Melville is a noble-minded, generous-hearted girl. She is courageous, and dares be true to her best convictions, though her most intimate friends should disavow her."

"Well, this all comes from allowing 'free speech,'" laughingly remarked Mrs. Standstill. "I told my husband, in the beginning, that no good would come from it. We hire a minister, and pay him a good salary; and I guess he's competent to tell us all we need to know!"

"And do you think, besides," said Elma, ironically, "for my part, I am glad that the subject of woman's rights has found its way into the 'Young People's Lyceum.' Although you may say, with R. W. Emerson, that 'when God lets loose a thinker upon this planet, all things are at risk,' still I believe it is better to think for ourselves, even though our thoughts, when expressed, may seem crude, or too radical to suit conservative minds."

"Why do you add Spiritualism, free religion and other skeptical and absurdisms to your category of reforms?" asked Mrs. Standstill, angrily.

"I shall certainly do so," firmly replied Elma, "as far as I find them to be sound and rational. I am already half inclined to favor the doctrine of spirit communion. At least, I hope it is true."

Mrs. Standstill and several other ladies gave their needles a nervous jerk, but none made reply.

"I am glad, Elma," remarked Mrs. K., "to hear such expressions from your lips. Since the removal of some of my dearest friends to the spirit-land, I have felt deeply and anxiously upon this subject. But my church has no sympathy with me, and my heart is almost starved for something besides old theology."

A murmur of holy surprise passed around the room, but Mrs. K. continued:

"As far as Mary Melville is concerned, I know she is conscientious, brave, good and self-sacrificing. She has deep humanitarian feelings. She has heard the cry of famishing women, as they sat in damp cellars or unfurnished attics, plying their needles with bloodless fingers for a scanty pittance. She has seen their thin, pale lips pleading unsuccessfully with soulless contractors for more remuneration, and has seen these same contractors—sitting at the communion-table, while few voices from the pulpit dared to say, 'Thou art the man!' Dollars and cents, ledgers and cash-books, government stocks and bank dividends seem to have stifled the cry of the poor and needy who are calling for justice. Many seem to have forgotten the pains and sacrifices, the terrible ordeal through which our country has recently passed. Some are ready to make any compromise, ready to oppress the working classes—in short, to do any disgraceful thing, if they can only have political prestige and make money. But I cannot forget Andersonville, Gettysburg, nor the battle of the Wilderness. My dearest idols have been sacrificed on their bloody altars, and I shall still call for justice while a woman's heart throbs within me. Yes; and henceforth my voice is for peace, for I have learned that there is no justice in war."

An electric shock could not have caused a greater sensation among the ladies present. The truthful words of the independent and gifted Mrs. Kent had not fallen altogether in vain.

CHAPTER II.

Amusements.

"Good-morning, Cousin Mary. I have just come in to give you a good scolding; and I want you to lay aside pen, ink and paper, and attend to what I have to say."

Mary Melville quietly laid aside her writing, and said, playfully, "Well, Cousin Kate, please proceed."

"Now, in the first place, I want to know why you were not out to the dance last evening. It does seem strange to me how you can spend so much time alone, making yourself unhappy, because somebody somewhere is suffering."

"Do you really think, Kate, that I am very unhappy?"

"No, I will not say that; but you have a sedate look, and I think it would be better for you to mingle more in gay society."

"I do not think, Kate, that I am predisposed to live isolated; but I will acknowledge that I sometimes prefer the society of solitude."

"You are the strangest girl, cousin, that I ever saw! You ought to have looked into the hall last evening. Why! it was magnificent! I was perfectly delighted; and every one said that

of the advertisement, marked

Message Department.

Each Message in this Department of the Banner of Light was spoken by the Spirit, whose name it bears through the instrumentality of

MRS. J. H. CONANT.

While in an abnormal condition called the trance. These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earthly life to that beyond—whether for good or evil. But those who leave the earth 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 FRATERNITY HALL, 254 WASHINGTON STREET, on TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY AFTERNOONS. The Hall will be open for visitors at two o'clock; services commence at precisely three o'clock, after which time no one will be admitted.

The questions answered at these Circles are often propounded by individuals among the audience. These read to the controlling intelligence by the chairman, are sent in by correspondents.

Donations of flowers for our Circle-Room solicited.

MRS. CONANT receives no visitors on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, until after six o'clock, P. M. She gives no private sittings.

SEALED LETTERS.—Visitors at our Free Circles have the privilege of placing sealed letters on the table for answer by the spirits. First, write one or two proper questions, addressing the spirit questioned by his or her full name; then put them in an envelope, seal it, and write your own address on the envelope. At the close of the séance the chairman will return the letter to the writer. It should be distinctly understood that the answers to questions propounded by writers must necessarily be brief; the spirit addressed always writing its answer or answers upon the envelope containing the question or questions. Questioners should not place letters for answer upon our circle table expecting lengthy replies, otherwise they will be disappointed.

WILLIAM WHITE, Chairman.

Invocation.

May the descent of the Holy Spirit of Truth be our conscious blessing this hour, and may that Spirit lead us away from all error, and baptize us with its own beauty, with its own strength, with its own wisdom, with its own love. May we understand that we have come from that Spirit—we belong to it, and we are destined to be absorbed by it. Oh, grant, then, loving Presence, whom we cannot understand in our finiteness, that we shall so obey thy law that we shall gather peace to our souls, that we shall render unto all other souls that which may be their due, and that we shall gather from them all that belongs to ourselves; so may we inaugurate thy kingdom of peace, of wisdom and of love, here on earth. Amen.

Sept. 5.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—Your questions, Mr. Chairman, I am ready to receive.

Ques.—(From a correspondent.) If spirits see and know—as you say—what is going on, and can interfere, as you also say, why do they permit such torture, and even murder of infants, as often takes place?—A blow from an unseen source on the head of one of these torturing devils, when about to practice on some infant, would suffice to scare him or her into abstinence, at any rate?

Ans.—Your correspondent displays a lamentable degree of ignorance. We would recommend that he turn his attention to spiritual matters, learn of the philosophy of spirit return, which involves the philosophy of life. There are certain laws inherent within every being and every thing, from the atom to the world, which cannot be broken. No interference on the part of any spirit or spirits, even of God himself, can break the law. The evils that exist upon earth must be gotten rid of in a natural way, and they who would become benefactors to the multitudes of earth, must do so by taking advantage of and acting through natural law. There are millions of returning spirits who know little or nothing about natural law. They are lashed here by the waves of law, which casts them upon your shores, and they act there for a time. A returning wave takes them away again. Spirits who visit earth do not propose to bring about the millennium, or the good time coming, in an hour or a year or a thousand years, or many thousand years, because they know it cannot be done. The doing away with evil, and the bringing in of good, is an immense work, and all spirits who desire to elevate themselves, do so by elevating some one else, by doing good in any and in all directions that it is possible for them to reach; but they must work through natural law, and the course which your correspondent marks out is one absolutely adverse to natural law.

Ques.—In the Banner dated to-day, [Aug. 31], is a communication professing to come from Charlotte Steinway, Evansville, Minnesota. According to the communication, she died at two o'clock, in Minnesota, at which time it would be about 4:20 in Boston, yet the communication was received through Mrs. Conant at a little after three o'clock; in other words, from one to one and a quarter hours before she died. Now, there are thousands of believers and unbelievers who will have the same trouble with this communication that I did, and if the controlling spirit can clear up the discrepancy it will have a great effect.

Ans.—All spirits visiting this place, intending to identify themselves to their friends by the relation of events, dates, names, &c., first inquire of the presiding spirit on our side what time it is. The exact sun-time is given them, from this place. For example: I may be the presiding spirit. The one following me, desiring to give personal communication, will ask me for the correct time. I say, it is quarter past three. He dates the events which he is about to narrate for his identification from that time, precisely as the navigator takes his bearings from Greenwich. Now there are instances where the spirit takes into consideration the difference of time between different places, and they sometimes waive the general rule and make one for themselves. For example: I died at quarter past two in Minnesota—Minnesota time; but that is not the rule, you understand, it is the exception, with all spirits that manifest at this place. It seems to be a rut into which they have all gravitated, and they nearly all run in it, and you must judge them accordingly.

Ques.—(From the audience.) What do you mean by "being absorbed in the Great Spirit?"

Ans.—It is my belief that there will come a time when we shall be consciously one with the Intelligence of the Great Spirit, the Almighty, or Jehovah, or whatever else you please to term this Infinite Power. At present, our comprehension is so vague, so very small, concerning this Great Spirit, that we are hardly willing to acknowledge ourselves parts of this life, which we certainly must be in order to live; but the time will come when we shall be fully conscious of that fact, and to be fully conscious of it is equivalent to being absorbed by it.

Ques.—Can mediumship be acquired, or must it come by natural law?

Ans.—Mediumship is a natural gift. It is not a thing that can be acquired. It can be unfolded as any other gift of Nature can be, but that is all. The germ must be there at conception.

Ques.—Do not all have it?

Ans.—Yes, all have it to a greater or lesser extent, but there are marked specimens, as there are of all things else in Nature.

Ques.—Is there any such thing as a positive evil?

Ans.—No, for to my mind a positive evil means an absolute evil, something that will always be evil. I do not admit of that, since I believe in the existence of God everywhere, and in all things. I believe that this God will finally bring all evil to good.

Ques.—Has human conscious existence always been, or was there a beginning?

Ans.—I believe that human consciousness, or human souls, have always existed, that they never had a beginning, and consequently can have no ending. Sept. 5.

Dr. John Gardner.

I went forth from this life in absolute darkness, since I did not believe in a life after death; but a good God, being no respecter of persons, was quite as good to me as to any one else, and I have learned, or rather unlearned, the mistakes I made on earth. I am now in the enjoyment of circumstances or conditions that prove to me that the soul is endowed with eternal life. There was nothing on earth that proved that to me. The church was a myth, and all the various religious faiths were like so much children's play to my mind. I was a physician by education and occupation. When I saw the breath passing out from the dying, I said, "That is the last of them."

I believed it; and I promised some of my good church-going friends that I would assure them in some way, if it were possible to, of my change of faith in the other life, provided I found another life and changed my faith. They did not know of this happy way of return, neither did I; but I am compelled to say to them that, with all their churchy power and influence and faith, they are quite as much in the dark as I was. They will find quite as much difficulty in ascertaining their true status in spirit-life as I did. I would advise them to change their base of operations here on earth, and investigate by this new light that seems to be flooding the world, and that offers everybody—rich and poor, bond and free—a chance to bask in its beams. That is my advice to them.

I had a singular experience with this medium, whose physician I was for a time during my earth-life, which produced so great an impression on my mind that I never forgot it; and I really believe it was the remembrance of that which roused me to consciousness in the spirit-life, and made me know where I was; and what change I had passed through. It may not be amiss for me to relate that experience.

One afternoon, in the year 1851, I was called to see this medium, who was sick at that time. Her powers in this direction were not known—neither by herself, I believe, nor by any of her friends. On coming to her bedside, I soon saw that she was in the last stage of Asiatic cholera. The fatal collapse had set in, and the physician knows too well where that must end. I saw not the slightest hope in her case, when she roused and said to me, "Doctor, can you save me?" I merely replied, "I am sorry I was not called before. I will do what I can."

I immediately prepared the remedies which I usually gave in such cases, and added something a little unusual, deeming it would have a good effect in her case, if anything could. I administered the medicine once in twenty minutes. I watched for the effect, but there was none. True to its nature, the disease prevented the action of any remedies upon the system. They had no effect whatever. The remedies which I had given were the best—the very best known to me, and those which would never fail, if given before the setting in of this fatal collapse; but I was informed by her attendants that this collapse had been upon her for over four hours, and she was then fast sinking in death, to my mind.

After having administered four, or perhaps five doses, with no effect, she again roused, turned to me, and said, "Doctor, double the dose, and give it to me once in ten minutes; and also apply baked potatoes under my arms, on my wrists, and on my feet. Bind them on, hot from the oven." I said to myself, "Nothing can do her any good; in my opinion, nothing can do her any harm. This order shall be obeyed." I carried it out as quickly as possible. After sitting by her bed some two—between two and three—hours longer, I felt the pulse returning, and the hue of death upon her face was departing. I began to hope—I scarce knew why. I knew that there never was a case on record where a recovery had ensued after this fatal collapse had set in. But she slowly began to improve, and after about three hours, the pulse became plainly apparent. It was evident that she was better. She then looked up to me, and said, "Doctor, I shall live. Give me twenty drops of laudanum, with twenty drops of spirits of camphor, once in twenty minutes, until I sleep. I shall get well."

I was particularly averse to all narcotics, and never gave them. I left them out of my practice entirely, and she knew it; so I hesitated. She again made the request, and it seemed to me to come in the form of a demand. I had not the remedy with me, because I never used it. I inquired if it was kept in the house. No, it was not. Her husband immediately said "I will go for it." It was brought from the nearest druggist's, and I gave it according to her directions. After I had given three doses, she slept; but when she awoke she was beyond all danger, and I left her, wondering what was the power that had spoken to me, for I felt conscious it was something besides herself that had given me such orders—had worked so miraculously. I termed it a miracle.

When the friends and neighbors inquired of me concerning her sickness, I said, "I cannot tell you how it is that I have saved her; certainly it was a miracle!" By the remembrance of that miracle, my own consciousness was quickened in the higher life. By the same power I return

here, speaking through these very lips that I was the instrument of saving in mortal life, years ago.

We cannot tell how truly God speaks to us, even through the simplest methods. We should heed all the voices of Nature, I think, and weigh them well, and when we meet with anything that clashes with our fixed opinions, instead of throwing it aside, we should analyze it—we should ask whether or no God had sent it to us as a revelation direct from himself. I am Dr. John Gardner, of Portsmouth, N. H. Sept. 5.

Philip Atchison.

[How do you do?] I am well. I got sick, and died, but I got well pretty soon afterwards. My name was Philip Atchison. I was ten years old. My father did not believe anything about people's coming back, but I thought I'd come. Father thinks it was playing base ball that killed me, but it was n't. He feels bad all the time because he allowed me to do it. It wasn't that, at all. You see, about four years before, I had the scarlet fever, and it left me with awful trouble here [at the pit of the stomach], so I never could run without losing my breath, and sometimes fainting away; but they did n't think anything about it—they did n't think it was anything but weakness. The doctor said it was n't weakness, it was an abnormal growth; it was a result of the settling of the fever there. It produced (the doctor in the spirit-world said) an abnormal growth, and it pressed on the heart. That's what killed me, and it wasn't the ball striking me there at all. The ball did n't strike me there at all, so father need n't feel bad about it any more. I've got well. I am all right. I lived in New York City, sir. Unfortunately I did n't live in the Hub. My father used to live here. Good-by, sir. Sept. 5.

Willie Thurston.

My mother don't know I am dead. I do n't like to trouble her. I was drowned from pier 10, in New York, to-day. [How did that happen?] I went to jump into a boat, and did n't jump far enough. I could n't swim, because mother never would let me learn to swim. My name was Willie Thurston. [How old are you?] In my thirteenth year. [Can't you say something, so your mother will know it's you?] Yes, she told me to be sure and come home by the first of September, and I got unable to write and persuade her to let me stay another week, and she died. [Where did you live?] In Pittsburg, Penn.

Well, I can't help it now. I should be well enough if mother only knew it, and did n't feel very bad about it; but, you see, father's dead, and Agnes is dead. Father was killed in battle, and Agnes had consumption, and I was the only one left, and she said if anything happened to me she knew she should lose her senses. If she does, I do n't know what I shall do. I hope she'll try and bear it, because I did n't suffer anything, and I got all right, and I do n't want her to feel bad. If she does, I shall; and if she don't, I shan't. My mother's name is Mary Jane Thurston. Good-by, sir. Sept. 5.

Séance conducted by John Pierpont; letters answered by "Vashit."

Invocation. To thee, oh Father and Mother God, we come to pay our vows and to breathe out our praises and our prayers. We come to ask thee for the baptism of higher and grander and holier truths than those thou hast already bestowed upon us. We come, as it were, to stand upon the Mount of Transfiguration, and behold thy power, thy love, and thy truth. And we ask, oh Mighty Spirit of Love, that thou wilt remember with especial care those who are sick and afflicted in this life. Reconcile them, oh Lord, to their condition, and may tender angels minister unto their needs, and bless them by day and by night. And when their hour of change shall come, take away their fear, and crown them with the roses of hope and the lilies of faith. Bless thou the drunkard through thy ministering spirits here in the body, and out of the body—they who have lost the equilibrium between the intoxicating cup and their own reason. Oh, Mighty Spirit, restore it, and let Reason again sit upon her throne, asserting her rights, and placing her foot upon the head of wrong. Bless thou the mourner—they who look upon their dead without hope and without faith. Oh, may ministering angels reach the inner courts of their lives, ministering unto their keen necessity, showing them whither their loved ones have gone, and strengthening them in their hour of trial. And oh, Father and Mother, may the seeds of wisdom, love and truth that we shall sow here, bear an hundred-fold, and become gems of purest water in the hereafter. Amen. Sept. 5.

Questions and Answers. **Ques.**—(From the audience.) Suppose a medium, otherwise gifted, be deficient in memory, especially in regard to dates, periods of time, and the names of persons and places, must not the effort of the spirit to project such facts be limited to the capacity of the physical organs for such expression?

Ans.—Yes, in a certain sense, but not in a sense absolute. It is not always known to you in the flesh what the physical capacities of your fellows are, and sometimes spirits acting upon these mediums are able to bring out a good deal more than the mediums themselves are able to bring out, to make a great deal more out of the capital that they find existing in the mediums.

Ques.—(From a correspondent.) Has Theodore Parker ever visited the moon? And if so, is there land and water there, and is it inhabited by beings similar to ourselves?

Ans.—Yes, Theodore Parker has visited the moon. That satellite of the earth is inhabited by beings very much like those upon the earth, only far inferior, the majority of them, at least in intelligence, and in stature, to those on the earth. At a future time, when the intellect existing upon earth is ready to receive the answer to such questions; these unsettled queries with regard to planets, and the centre of the solar system, will all be canvassed by those who have been there, and therefore can relate from experience, which is knowledge.

Ques.—(Dr. J. H. Fulton, of Montreal, sends the following six questions.) The answer given in the Message Department, recently, as to the prevention of small pox, is: "Water, fresh air and proper food." Now, what is meant by "proper food," if not a due supply of animal and vegetable?

Ans.—Medical men in our life determine that there is no standard that can be made general with regard to what you eat here. Some demand an abundance of animal food; others demand an abundance of vegetable food. Some demand all vegetable, some nearly all animal. Some demand fruit; some demand a large quantity, some a very small quantity; some between the two. Some want a mixture of many things, excluding many. There are no two constitutions that make the same demand with reference to food. Naturally, then, what will do for one will not do for anybody else; therefore, each case must have its own special attention; and the physician must be largely qualified to fill his important post.

Ques.—I did not know that human souls, after passing through earth-life, were ever re-incarnated. Is this their own free-will, and have they the power of choosing their parents?

Ans.—No, it is not their own free will; neither do they have the power of choosing their parents. Since they had no voice in coming into this world, you are to suppose, at least, that they can have none upon another incarnation; nor can you say that you have not been incarnated many times in human bodies ere you came upon this stage of action, yet you can remember nothing of it. It should be understood that at each physical incarnation, the soul is provided with a new and different set of organs. These organs take up and remember—make records of all that belongs to them—all of their experiences, and nothing more. They do not go back of themselves. At every re-incarnation you are provided with a different set. They do not go back into the past. You are forever pressing onward. This doctrine of re-incarnation is one as old as life itself. When first the intellect began to act concerning the soul and its destiny, this was one of the first questions it considered, and because it could not be understood by the ancients it was laid aside, and the present generation has ignored it entirely. But Spiritualism has dragged it to the surface, and proposes to ventilate it—proposes, ere it gets through with it, to show you what it is, and prove its claims.

Ques.—Is Dr. P. B. Randolph's theory of monad incarnation correct as to the higher intelligence being developed by the more frequent process?

Ans.—It is, in the main, correct.

Ques.—If re-incarnation develops higher intelligence, why is it so many souls fall in attaining full development, as from abortions, miscarriages, infantile deaths, &c.?

Ans.—Your correspondent has assumed a position which does not exist. Every soul once bearing the stamp of a soul, once entering into conceptive life human, never goes back. It may be retarded in its progress, it may meet with stumbling-blocks innumerable, but it never goes back. The doctrine of re-incarnation does not involve a backward movement, by any means. I know it is so considered by those who do not understand it, but it is a mistake. Its progress is onward, forever onward.

Ques.—How can we ascertain how many times a soul has been re-incarnated?

Ans.—By consulting records which are kept in spirit-life.

Ques.—Might not a soul be worse off in earth-life by re-incarnation, than it was the first time?

Ans.—To its own consciousness, yes; to Infinite Wisdom, no. By that I mean that you [to the Chairman] may have been, in a former incarnation, surrounded by all that which could make life here a happy life, a pleasant life, a desirable life; and, doubtless, were I to question you concerning your present status, you would say, "There are many things that I want, to make me happy; there is much that I have not got that I absolutely need." Doubtless, for one, that you have not perfect health; for another, that you have not enough of this world's goods—not so much as you would like; for another, you would like place, position and power—such as every soul aspires to. You might have had all these in a former incarnation, but Infinite Wisdom has determined that you have need of just the precise condition that you find yourself in, therefore it is the best for you; it is good for you; it is an incarnation better than the last. Sept. 9.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—I will now, by request, take up and consider an article which has appeared in the last Banner, from the pen of a Philadelphia correspondent, concerning the charges of public mediums. He carries the idea that most if not all of our public mediums, charge exorbitant prices for an exhibition of their gifts. This is true, absolutely true. But who is to blame? The mediums? No. Their guardian spirits? No. Other spirits? No. Who, then? Why, the investigating public. By that, I mean those who have investigated in the past—those who are investigating in the present. Speaking of them in general terms, they are to blame; they have forced these mediums to that condition of action. Now they complain of the result. There is not one of these mediums who has not been forced by the public to do just what they have done. The public, in its blindness, considers that those mediums who possess these natural gifts should exercise them to gratify public curiosity, and to enlighten those who have something more than curiosity at stake in the matter—the desire to know of the hereafter and of their loved ones—and that, since these gifts cost them nothing, they should dispense these bounties freely. Well, now, let us see. These mediums are called upon to travel from one point to another. They must make use of the usual conveyances. Conductors, drivers of stages, demand their fare. They cannot go without paying it. Now, then, their time, their strength is used up in the giving of these manifestations of love. A large amount of their vital forces is expended in this way. They can do nothing else. If they exercise these gifts at all, it must be to the exclusion of everything else. So in the early days of Spiritualism, the seekers after truth—the investigators—were not willing to pay these mediums. The mediums were forced by the spirits to expend their last dollar in enlightening a benighted world. They exhausted all their means—all of them. I am speaking now of public mediums. All of them exhausted their means before they were allowed by the spirit-world to charge fees for their gifts; for that spirit-world expected that this world would deal justly by them. It did not, and so it has come to pass that these mediums, having been crowded down a little too hard, have risen a little too high, and the equilibrium is lost. Now, since it was lost through no fault of theirs, it is the public's duty to regain it. The investigator must regain it—must set things right.

Your correspondent, Mr. Chairman, says that he is well satisfied that the spirits do not advise such a course. No; but they do not interfere with it, for they know their subjects, the mediums, have been abused in this regard, and they are willing to give the investigators a lesson in this direction. When they have learned it well, and are willing to put their shoulders to the wheel to right matters, they will be righted, and not before. The spirit-world proposes, with reference to its public media, after a time, to inaugurate fixed laws or conditions concerning the pay of their media; and they mean to make the rich pay for the poor, and to give the poor their bread of life free. This, I know, is not human justice, but it is God's justice. By-and-by, when things are a little riper, this will be done. The circumstances attending the early mediumistic life of my medium are a fair example of what will be done with all by-and-by. The medium will be told by his or her guardian spirit what to charge each investigator coming to them for a look into the world beyond—for the exercise of those vital powers of theirs which are of so much importance, so very expensive to them physically. My medium was in the habit, in the early days of her mediumship, of charging according to the dictation of her controlling spirit. Sometimes she would query as to what it meant: "Why but you sat for Mrs. So-and-so, and charged nothing—absolutely refused to take anything. How is this?" You charge me two or three dollars. The answer was—so the guardian spirit tells me—"You are able to pay it, and they were not; therefore you must pay for yourself and them too." "Is that just?" "Oh, yes. You are not obliged to stay, but if you do stay, we want to commence operations now. The spirits are ready. If you do not stay, go now. It is at your option. If you do stay, you pay that." public media. Now, the future, with regard to public media, will be brought down to just that state. The rich must pay for the poor. They who are absolutely unable to pay for this bread of eternal life must not be excluded from receiving it. Sept. 9.

Henry Alton. My name, sir, was Henry Alton. I lived in Augusta, State of Maine. I was born in Bath. I was eleven years old. I died of inflammation of the lungs. I died last April. I want my mother to know that I am going to school—that I shall learn faster than I could if I'd stayed here—that I shall be a good boy, and I shall make Uncle Tim do just as well by her as if I had lived. She thinks he won't, but he will. You see, he thought a great deal of me, and always said he was going to will me his property. Well, he won't forget to do right by mother. She need n't be afraid, because I am one of his guardian spirits, and I know about it.

Do you like to skate, sir? [To the Chairman.] [Yes.] I did, oh, I did, when I was here. Mother says that's how I got my death of cold. I never was well, and I skated one night till twelve o'clock, and I got an awful cold. I got well of it, I thought; but I got dead sick again, sir, and had inflammation of the lungs; and after a while I died. But tell mother if it was that that killed me, it is all right—might as well have been that as anything else. I'd skate if I was here again, because I like it so well. I wish I was here, and could skate with you. You couldn't beat me. [Then you are a pretty good skater?] Yes, sir. You couldn't beat me, I do n't think, unless you're awful good. Call for me, if you go skating next winter, and I'll come and take a skate with you. Would you like it? [Yes, I should.] Well, just call for me, sometime. Let me know about it, and I'm there. Mother need n't be afraid of my taking cold, now, because I've got a body that don't take cold. I do n't believe I did take cold when I was here—don't believe that's what killed me. Good-day, sir. Sept. 9.

Lucy Beck. They called me, and I've come; but I can't tell 'em anything they want me to. Some of my nieces and nephews got it into their heads that I left a good deal of money—hid it away somewhere, and if Spiritualism is true, they want me to come and tell 'em where it was put, and they'll leave any. Well, in the first place, I did n't leave any. In the next place, if I had, I would n't have told 'em. I know what spendthrifts they are. I know 'em too well. My name was Lucy Beck. I was ninety-one years old, and I lived in Portsmouth, N. H.

They've got it into their heads that I used to sew money up in an old cloak I used to wear. The best of it is, I gave that old cloak away to a poor old woman. If there's any money in it, she's got it. I shan't tell whether there was or not, nor where the old cloak is, nor who the old woman was—that's what they want to know. The old woman is dead. She had a sick daughter, and all she left went to her, and she's out West—I shan't tell where. If the old woman found anything, or her daughter did, I am glad of it, glad of it! I did n't have and did n't leave anything like what they expected I did. I had a little—might have had a little more than enough to bury me, although I expect the city buried me, because my folks would n't. So I expect the city did it. If it did, there might have been a little left. If it was in the old cloak, the old woman and her daughter got it. I'm glad of it! No matter where they are. That's it. This is retribution. Good day, sir. Sept. 9.

Jim Fisk. It is amusing to consider how we unfortunate invisibles are called back here, for this thing, and that, and the other, that, in reality, amounts to nothing more than to gratify idle curiosity, or to put a few pennies or dollars, as the case may be, in one's pocket. Now an acquaintance of mine, in New York, has read my last message in the Banner, and he says, "Jim, if this was from you, come again and tell me what I was in my possession that you know of." I suppose he refers to a letter I wrote him, protesting against some movement that was to be made, or had been made, by Jay Gould. I know he has such a letter—probably had it in his pocket when he was reading the Banner. Now see here, old fellow, if you want to pay me for services rendered—coming back in answer to your call—establish a corner for the poor. See you do it, or else don't call for me again. Good-by. Jim Fisk. Sept. 9.

Frances Evelina Mason. I am Frances Evelina Mason, from Andover, Mass. I was nine years old. I want to send a letter to my mother. I want to tell her it was me that brought the flowers. It was me that tried to make a picture on the window. If she'll have patience about it, and not get frightened, I will try to do a good deal more. She must not think I'm gone a long-way off. I am right there at home, most of the time, busy as I can be about things. I did n't get only about half of the face, and that was n't clear; but next time I shall do better, I know. Father sends love, too. Good-day, sir. Sept. 9.

Hugh McCloskey. One James Burke, living in Boston, wishes to know if he received a communication and saw the spirit of one of the Catholic Church Fathers; and if so, will that other come here, and state his name and his purpose in coming to him? Yes, James; I, Father McCloskey, once your confessor, came to you, learning of your medium powers; and I propose to bring out those powers, that they may shine in our church, in its darkness, that they may become a power that shall overcome the darkness with light. Your friend and spiritual father in spirit-life, Hugh McCloskey. Sept. 9.

Séance conducted by Theodore Parker; letters answered by "Vashit."

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED. Tuesday, Sept. 10.—Clara Stacey, of Roughton, N. Y., to her mother, Michael, of Boston, to his wife, to her mother, Sept. 12.—Betsy Penhalow, of Portsmouth, N. H., to her son Daniel; Eldridge Payne, of Salem, Mass.; Emma Foster; Robert Canning, of the 35th Mass. Regt., to his mother; Annie Fairlee, of St. Johnsbury, Vt.; John H. Hogan, of Boston.

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