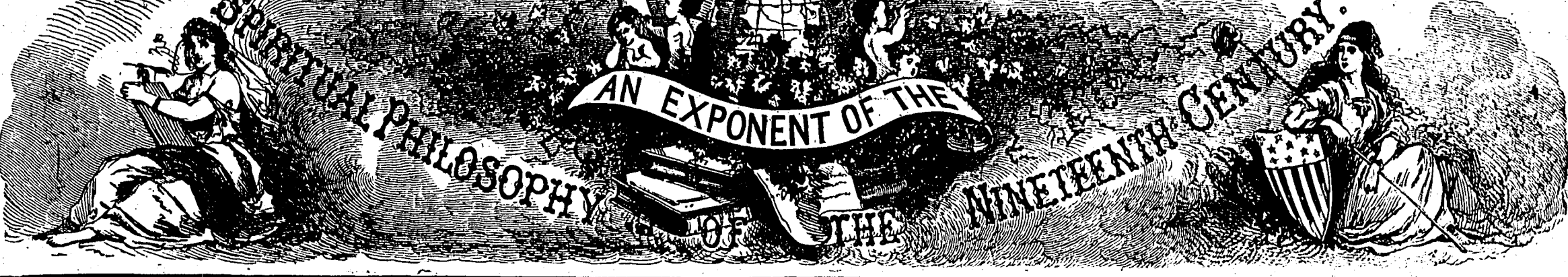


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Original Essay.

SPIRITUALISM FROM A MATERIALISTIC STANDPOINT.

BY ALLEN PUTNAM.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In the Index of Sept. 23d is a long article under the above caption, by B. F. Underwood. Though his standpoint is antipodal to ours, and his views of us circumscribed, yet among productions anti-Spiritualistic, few are as methodical and calm as his. Its tone, while neither objectionally unkind nor discourteous, bespeaks the author's assumption that Spiritualists as a body are weak and erring above any other class in their use of bases for argument and inference. But we sincerely believe that very many Spiritualists quite as thoroughly understand, keep in view and abstain from using some old, analogical and presumptive arguments in favor of a future life, which are specified by him, as does Mr. Underwood himself. We think they seldom appear in the columns of the Banner, or in the writings of logical Spiritualists. His form of statement, however, is such as substantially conveys a declaration that some plausible but inconclusive reasonings long prevalent among many Christian sects, are put forth more extensively by Spiritualists than by any other class of talkers, speakers and writers; while we believe that most spiritualistic teachers have been for years, and are now, omitting to argue analogically and presumptively concerning the great fact of a future life, more than do any other class who advocate belief in an hereafter of conscious existence. Of course, according to our perception of facts the critic's words reveal either limited observation on his part, or his omission to properly restrict the application of statements, which, though perhaps limitedly true, are not so very extensive.

First, he objectingly alleges that Spiritualists conclude, because there is progressive development here, that there will be hereafter. That is not bad analogical reasoning, provided there be an hereafter, and we hardly think that he really objects to it, though he seems to. But toward the close of his paragraph, he clearly implies that Spiritualists argue also that because there is progression here, there will be a life hereafter. We have personally associated with Spiritualists very much during more than twenty years, and never met with the use of such ghostly logic in any instance as is here set forth as characteristic of Spiritualists as a body. Most surely Spiritualists very generally dispense with jumpings at conclusions, and with all analogical and presumptive arguments in favor of a future life itself—for they, and they alone, rest upon demonstrative evidence that some of their kindred have survived the dissolution of their mortal forms. This clause of his charge can have no footing on anything whatsoever that has come under our notice.

Next, this materialist is displeased with Spiritualists because of their saying that "man's desires and aspirations . . . are strong indication that man will live forever." Perhaps most Spiritualists might freely say that man's desires and aspirations are to them indications (not proofs) that man will exist hereafter. But since most of the thoughtful inhabitants of Christendom might just as freely, and many of them often do, say the same, we see not why Spiritualists therein manifest peculiar weakness, or anything to their special discredit.

In the third paragraph is shown his disapprobation of maintenance by Spiritualists that "the inequalities of this life are an argument for future existence." In this case he admits that "religionists generally" do the same. Why then charge it against Spiritualists in an article designed to present their peculiar faults and shortcomings? The argument itself is not worth much, whoever uses it; and, so far as our observation goes, Spiritualists never advance it, nor are they tempted to, because they have received and can appeal to demonstration of a future existence.

Such calling forth ghosts of Protestant Christendom's old inconclusive arguments from closets to which we personally, and many other Spiritualists, consigned them very soon after spirits came and demonstrated a life to come, and where we have ever since let them rest in quiet because they were useless to us thenceforth—is very unexpected from even a materialist—notwithstanding such an one is in the least favorable of all possible positions for full and apprecia-

tive observation of our doings. In fact, Spiritualists have done more to debar occasions for use of such sayings and inferences as annoy the logical senses of the materialist, than have any other believers in a future life; for they have quite extensively been omitting use of the inconclusive logic complained of, and if our critic will be patient and faithfully observant, he will soon see that we are outgrowing the sins of being young as Spiritualists, and not fully freed yet from bondage to anti-Spiritualistic education.

Next comes an allegation that "many writers and lecturers on Spiritualism still speak of heat, electricity and magnetism as 'refined matter.'" In this do they widely differ from the mass of writers and lecturers on other subjects not specially scientific? We doubt it; and therefore question the propriety of slurring us because of courses which are common with non-Spiritualists. But why may we not still speak of heat and electricity as refined matter? Our critic says that "in the light of modern science," heat, electricity, &c., are but "modes of motion." We doubt whether vision in that light is always absolutely accurate and complete. Our teachers, and among them is Benjamin Franklin, an expert now in such matters, speak of mundane electricity as "refined matter," and of much which they above use, as "defecated electricity." Our relation to modern scientists, though friendly, is not always that of followers, but often of pioneers, opening for them pathways to new-found agents and forces which act important parts amid sublimary matter and affairs, unrecognized by physical scientists, whose data for reasoning consequently are deficient, and whose conclusions therefore must often be erroneous. Please, sir, suppressing sneer at our ignorance of what science is announcing, let us wait a little before we deny that heat and electricity are refined matter. These two are supposed to be very abundant in the bolt that rives and ignites the oak or the castle, and we would like to have the matter gathered up and analyzed, whose modes of motion they then manifest, and which is made to strike the shattering blow. When no less an electrician than Cromwell F. Varley states that the telegraph wire is essentially a hole bored through a solid rock of air, which lets electricity have free passage, we somehow find it difficult to conceive that electricity itself is nothing but a mode of motion either of or in the stationary wire. Please let us have time to think more of such matters, before we bow to the *ipse dixit* of the modern scientist. Considerable length of time may be desired, because the researches of Spiritualists are prosecuted more with a view to find for him agents, forces and facts not known to the modern scientist, than to ascertaining the sufficiency of the grounds of such conclusions as he draws while lacking acquaintance with some agents and forces pertinent to the field he explores and reports upon.

Mr. Underwood's strictures upon a metaphysical argument for immortality, and his statement of the materialist's positions upon matters of growth and death, are not applied specially to us, and we will pass them without comment.

He says that "Modern Spiritualism claims to have evidence of a direct experimental character, in unquestionable communications with and the reappearance of former inhabitants of the earth. These evidences are by no means new. All the so-called proofs of Modern Spiritualism were known to the ancients." Are our evidences weak because "known to the ancients"? and were spirits photographed of old? Be that as it may, the quoted assertion that our evidences are old is substantially correct, and the author is right in saying that "this is admitted by intelligent Spiritualists;" but when he adds that "the fact by no means makes the evidence either more or less valuable," we dissent. The evidences of to-day are more valuable because of their harmony with those of ancient times. Cumulative evidence having undergone the ordeal of time, and accreted from many centuries and lands, establishes facts more firmly than modern observation and statement of them could if unsupported by the past.

We are told by our critic that "the communications from spirits have not made much impression on scientific investigators." This literally may be true. The writer here obviously meant to restrict his language to the verbal utterances and the writings which have come through mediums. We fully agree with him that far; and add our own belief that such communications have not to any great extent given to Spiritualists themselves the primal impressions which generated their faith. Such "modes of motion" by tables, chairs, and other substances usually called inert, as have manifested action within or upon themselves of some force manipulated by an invisible operator, who was competent to comprehend questions put either orally or mentally, and make intelligible and pertinent responses, have generally been generators of the distinguishing faith of nearly all thinking, cultured, logical Spiritualists; and this class of phenomena has made much impression on a number of able scientific investigators—yes, probably upon a majority of the scientists who have patiently, protractedly and candidly investigated them. The value of communications as mental and literary productions is a consideration whose appropriate place is subsequent in time, and secondary in importance, to the question of the soul's survival of the body. The scientists referred to are naturally late, if not the latest of all men, to admit that there is action here by disembodied spirits, because their accustomed pursuits have trained them to very fixed and cramping habits of practically assuming that their knowledge embraces all cognizable agents

and forces that act upon man and matter, and spirits are not on their catalogues.

Their bases of reasoning do not embrace spirit agents and forces, and till they do, scientists can't be Spiritualists. Change or enlargement of base, and consequent change of inferences, seldom, if ever, is started inside of a profession, sect or class, but when change occurs it is forced into existence by pressure from without. Till the masses have obtained general conviction that spirits return and actuate living forms and inanimate matter, regard to popularity, to pecuniary and social interests, together with the chains of professional habits, combine in holding scientists back from such thorough investigation of modern marvels as might possibly make conscience command an open avowal of such belief as not only the worlds of culture and prevalent theology, but also a thoughtful materialist, openly disparage. Fixed notions and dread of consequences make science less competent to just estimate of spirit claims than is good common sense acting untrammelled. The preceding argument of the materialist, and his subsequent ones from and comments upon the "contradictory character of these communications," the defectiveness of "instruments," and from "clairvoyance," have as little applicability to the great questions of fact, viz., whether the soul survives the body and can, after severance from the latter, act intelligently upon mundane things, as have the common arguments from analogy, aspirations and desires, &c., which he, and not without reason, deems indicative of imperfect perception of what is needful to conclusive logic. Let him but pass over from his materialistic standpoint to the spiritualistic one, and he will see that his own shots go just about as wide of the mark ostensibly aimed at, as do those made by marksmen whose skill he deems very slight.

He next doubts whether any except "persons generally diseased in body and mind" ever see spirits. We suppose he means no more than that none but such are ever deluded into belief that they see spirits; because admission that even such persons ever actually do see bona fide spirits would necessarily knock from under his feet the materialistic ground on which he stands and is not ready to part with. What think you, reader, is his reason for his quibbles that spirits are ever seen? He says they "seem" who "see them in daylight, and with eyes wide open"—they, "I believe, are generally honest; and my conviction is quite as strong that they are in a state of chronic mental aberration, or on the verge of violent insanity." That conviction looks as though it were born of *I will*, in like manner as was born the non-belief of an intelligent man who recently addressed thus: "I believe your marvelous phenomena are genuine. I can't doubt them, but I don't believe that spirits produce them, and I suppose the only reason why is, because I won't."

People who see spirits in daylight, and with eyes wide open, are very numerous; the majority of them are in good faith, and many are not only very intelligent, but also are clear-headed logicians. The late J. W. Edmonds, of New York, during nearly a score of years, and while he was codifying the laws of New York State, and was a most eminent, busy and acute counselor-at-law, was accursed, as himself told us, to see and to converse with spirits very frequently, sometimes at his office, sometimes on the street, and also at home. Was he, during those many years, in state of chronic mental aberration? Dr. Bed, of New York, who deems himself a sub expert in pathological and physiological matters, says in an article upon *Trance*, under which he includes all the states that admit manifestation of the phenomena called spiritual, that trance is not a symptom of disease, and justifies the inference that mediums, as a class, are as healthy the average of population. The assumption of our critic surprise us; and who now can wonder that our mind queries whether he is not hilt "In a state of chronic aberration," since doubts the accuracy of honest people when by tell him of only what they see with their own eyes over and over again, and also fancied that there must be disease where an expert pathologist asserts that there need not be.

The allegations that Spiritualism "develops marvelousness," prices "domestic discord," and is "accompanying fraud and humbugger," we do not say, but do lament the facts which elicited it. But such matters as these involve nothing which either helps or hinders solution of the perplexing problem of Spiritualism, viz., do spirits return? If so, the fact is pregnant with a very important meaning, and its advocates, if correct that spirits do return, cannot justify self-deton of efforts to promulgate knowledge of even though publicans, harlots and sinners peck around it, and make themselves great odds to its respectability, and to its receptivity the worldly "wise and prudent."

We quote again: I can only add in conclusion that, while I am no Spiritualist, I think that Spiritualism in the present transitional stage of thought is doing work that is much needed. Why then, good sir, you join hands and labor with its disparager. Perhaps your answer will be, that you are bueching its advocates that they ought to throw weights that beset them and it; for you say its value "would be increased if through press and its influential advocates it could be brought to oppose, with righteous indignation the frauds and corruptions which now have action under its wing." That may be true; but must view matters. His, if it could, in the writer's apprehension that the work may be difficult. Obviously it is so,

And why? Partly, as extensively, because both materialists and sectarian religionists, yes, the non-spiritualistic world at large, are pleased when Spiritualism gets smothered, no matter by whom. Many are ready to lend a hand at blenching it. Probably our materialist critic himself has undesignedly done something toward rendering more difficult the very work he desires us to do if we can. We are willing to try by any method that in our judgment shall promise compensating success, but that judgment will be shaped somewhat by a belief that our wisest course is to act upon such matters in compliance with instructions and aid from unseen prompters and helpers, whose survey and cognizance of conditions, forces, and the currents of coming events, is much broader and more critical than our own can be. Wonder is often expressed, both by many Spiritualists and their opponents, that we do not forbid the adhesion of many who come to us; but our ways are not in all things, and we hope they never will be, copied from this world's usages, or prescribed by this world's wisdom. We are very forbearing, each among us demanding full freedom of speech and action—all of course need to be very tolerant. The fraudulent and corrupting are plenty among the people, and possibly their chances for reformation are as good among us as among any others.

Mr. Underwood says: "Making an allowance for deception and fraud, I do not question that there are unexplained phenomena under the name of Spiritualism." In other words, as we understand him, our critic does not question that some of our phenomena are both genuine and to him yet unexplained; he attaches no suspicion of deception or fraud to some of them which are marvelous, and are as yet unexplained to his satisfaction. This is frank and honorable. Scarcely any event in Nature can be fully explained. Who can tell all that pertains to the manifestation and growth of a blade of grass? The mental organism, culture and habits of different individuals vary so much that the same explanation of a marvel which fully satisfies one, will often fail to meet the demands of another. Therefore some phenomena which have been so explained, or which so explain themselves to us, that they become to us proofs that spirits produced them, our critic either has not seen, or has not had so explained to him as to be to him proofs of spirit agency. He confesses that there are some "unexplained phenomena" or spiritualism. His call and struggle, therefore, should be for more light. Perhaps he will yet be able to get more, and also to furnish a different account of Spiritualism from his recent one, when he shall have been enlightened by further explanation of those phenomena which he does not yet comprehend.

Both materialistic and scientific assailants of Spiritualism generally pursue courses better adapted to win applause from the public than to harm the vitals of the assailed. We have long looked, but thus far mostly in vain, for philosophical, scientific, manly efforts to scan and analyze extensively and candidly the varied physical manifestations, and thereby determine the possibility of tracing them all logically to specific competent agents who are something other than departed spirits. Nothing short of demonstration that certain other specified actors produce these marvelous and mighty works, can now upset or even weaken the claims of spirits to be their producers, whatever may be the weaknesses of Spiritualists, and the effects of their faith. Such claims have been before the world's court for more than twenty years—never yet refuted by the establishment of claims in favor of other agents, and, in the judgment of not only millions of common jurors, but also of a majority of the few eminent scientists who have carefully collected and weighed evidences, the claims of spirits have been allowed. Dr. Hare, William Crookes, Serjeant Cox, Cromwell F. Varley, the Investigating Committee of the London Dialectical Society, and various other persons scarcely less eminent, manifest the results of prolonged, thorough, exhaustive investigation upon the minds of first-class scientists. These concede the claims of the spirits. Each rolling year finds them more extensively conceded by the world, and also finds them more difficult to upset than before. However unwise and unskillful we may be in our presentation and advocacy of the claims of spirits, our opponents fully rival us in folly and blunders in their selection and pursuance of methods in opposition. They fail not only to effect, but even to aim at an overthrow of our basic facts, the nuclei of our very being; and spend their powder in riddling only some incidentals to our main positions.

Five miles above Orono, Maine, on an island opposite Oldtown, still lives the tribe of Penobscots, or Tarratines. This tribe held sway over all the territory of the Penobscot from its source to the sea. Its headquarters have been here since early in the last century. It had diminished at the time of the Revolution to four hundred warriors. It now numbers some four or five hundred souls. A great portion of them absent themselves in summer on tours for selling baskets and other Indian wares. Their village, with its white chapel, forms a neat little picture, as seen from the opposite side of the river. Orono was named from a Penobscot chieftain, who died in 1805, aged 113 years. He was our friend, and in 1775, four days after Bunker Hill, made a speech, at Boston, to a committee of the Provincial Congress, tendering the services of the Tarratines. He has the following epitaph:

Safe lodged within his blanket here below
Lie the last relics of old Orono;
Worn down with toil and care, he in a trice
Exchanged his wigwag for a paralytic.
(Cor. Boston Advertiser.)

A lady asked a pupil at a public school, "What was the sin of the Pharisees?" "Eating camels, marm," quickly replied the child. She had read that the Pharisees "strained at gnats and swallowed camels."

Free Thought.

WHO'S AFRAID?

"Art-Magic; or Mundane, Super-mundane, and Sub-mundane Spiritualism."

BY LITA BARNEY SAYLES.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The well and long-known talents, experience, acumen and mediumship of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, should be a guarantee to the Spiritualists of the United States of her good faith toward Spiritualism, and of her capability to discover knavery, if such existed, in the author of the above desirable book. In all our array of public men and women no name stands more prominently and acceptably forth as one who has been unwavering in her devotion to the sacred cause she espoused, under the tuition of the invisible world, long years ago, than hers; and none is a better voucher of the value of whatever work she undertakes; and the apprehension expressed by some, that she is a convert to Luxorism, and is working against Spiritualism, is so absurd in its impossibility that it would not be worth contradicting, except that many good people, and well disposed toward her, may receive what is said by these critics without any criticism on their own part, just as they used, when in attendance upon their church, to gulp down all the minister said. I should be glad if those who have accepted the forebodings of Dr. Bloede and others would receive also my little homeopathic pill, and hope it may act as an antidote to the "old school" doses they have so freely taken. I beg Mrs. Britten's pardon for intruding in this matter; she is able to defend herself if she considers a defence necessary when her whole life is a living defence in the eyes of those who have been long in our field of inquiry; but as one of her old friends I speak a few words, more, I suspect, to gratify my own sense of justice toward a long-tried worker, slandered by those for whom she has worked and is working, than because of any real necessity in the case.

If Spiritualism "be of God," if it has truth for its foundation stones, it cannot be destroyed; therefore are ye so afraid, oh ye of little faith? Do we suppose that we know all there is to be learned in this great science, when the oldest of us have been its students only for a quarter of one century? Our great aim should be to assure ourselves of the truth, and let nothing short of that satisfy us. If we have accepted some things as such, and they can be satisfactorily proved to be falsehoods, or referable to some other source than that we have supposed, the sooner we find it out the better. If this is not satisfactorily proved, then all the Art-Magic books ever printed are not going to harm us, more than have any other *exposés*. Let us hear all that can be said *pro and con*, and use our reason upon it. Whoever fears to undergo a thorough examination is surely aware of a sore spot somewhere, and weak-kneed Spiritualists that fear *exposés* and art-magic are only to be pitied because they are not stronger.

Dr. Bloede tries to be needlessly satirical upon one expression—that of "advanced thinkers," which he quotes from Mrs. Britten's circular. I should naturally suppose she used this very proper term to denote the people she expected would be sufficiently interested in such a book as she advertises to subscribe for it. Only those who have calmly taken up and thoroughly investigated each phase and condition of Spiritualism and Spiritualists, already presented, are expected to grasp new issues and ideas, and to fear them not. And these she designates as "advanced thinkers." There is nothing in the circular to intimate that those who subscribe for the book shall be catechized in any way, and I perceive nothing there to prevent the whole proposed five hundred volumes from falling into the hands of the most ignorant man in the world if he sends his order for them.

As for the fear that Jesuitism is seeking to gain a mastery over us by this method, I answer: *Print the book!* And I believe there are enough clear heads among us, aside from Mrs. Britten's, to see through their plans, if they are making any in that direction, and to send them to their proper place. Let them show their hand, and we will try to show our sense by standing on our own feet and critically examining whatever they have to offer. And, good "Spiritualists of the United States," don't be too much frightened at Dr. Bloede's "important cautions!" Subscribe for the book directly, as I have, and judge for yourselves, as I intend to do for myself. *Daysville, Conn., Oct. 17th, 1875.*

"TEST CONDITIONS."

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

For a long time I have been wishing to say something through your paper respecting the treatment of mediums as regards the humiliations they are subject to at the hands of those who entirely ignore the possession on the part of said media of principle, or even favorable social standing or culture, or any of the good things supposed to be held in common with other people.

Thus far, mediums have been dealt with as if they were wholly devoid of virtue, which Socrates tells us comprises all goodness, including high motive, honesty of purpose, purity of thought and life, and many another quality much lauded in ordinary persons—I say ordinary persons, because I think mediums are exceptional ones.

It does not seem possible that honorable men or women can consent to be continually doubted, and suspected of falsehood and deception, without serious injury to their self-respect. If it is assumed that a child utters untruths each

To Book-Buyers.

At our new location, No. 9 Montgomery Place, corner of Province street, Boston, we have a fine book-store on the ground floor of the Building, where we keep on sale a large stock of Spiritual, Reformatory and Miscellaneous Works, to which we invite your attention.

Orders accompanied by cash will receive prompt attention. We are prepared to forward any of the publications of the Book Trade at usual rates. We respectfully decline all business operations looking to the sale of Books on commission, or when cash does not accompany the order. Send for a free Catalogue of our Publications.

In reporting from the BANNER OF LIGHT, care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications (submitted or otherwise) of correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of important free thought; but we cannot undertake to endorse the varied shades of opinion to which our correspondents give utterance.

Banner of Light.

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PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

LETTER CARRIERS AND COMMUNICATIONS APPROPRIATE TO THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT OF THIS PAPER SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO COLBY & RICH, BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING CO., BOSTON, MASS.

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Issued Oct. 30—The Spirits' Book.

COLBY & RICH, No. 9 MONTGOMERY PLACE, BOSTON, have this day put forth an American edition (from English plates) of this fine work by Allan Kardec, which has been translated in a superior manner from the original French by Anna Blackwell, and is adorned with an excellent steel-plate portrait of the author.

Some idea of the important character of the new volume, and the popular interest which it has aroused in France, may be gathered from the fact that its circulation in that country had reached the extraordinary figure of 120,000 copies up to the date of its translation into English by Miss Blackwell.

This new book, to readers on this side of the Atlantic (as will be seen by reference to the announcement on our fifth page) treats of almost every conceivable question of interest to the human mind concerning death and the after-life, and is not the result of mere speculation, but is announced as being the product of the teachings of spirits of high degree, as transmitted through various mediums and collated by Kardec. It certainly deserves an extended reading by the American public.

Spiritualism not a Religion.

In some remarks in our last on one of Col. Olcott's letters, we endeavored to show how inconsistent it is with facts to call Spiritualism a *religion*. We may now add that it is hardly less an error to call it a *religion*. Properly speaking, we no more impart religion to a man by proving to him that he will continue to exist after the dissolution of his earth-body, than we should by proving to him, were that possible, that he would live fifty years after the age of thirty on this planet. It is merely a psychological or physiological fact, and has relations to religion only so far as we make the inspiring knowledge the germ of great aspirations and of devout gratitude to that sustaining Power of the universe whence all life and light proceed.

From certain quarters come complaints and revellings like these: "Are Spiritualists, with all their knowledge, any better than other people? Spiritualism has been more than a quarter of a century before the world, and it has given us nothing in the shape of a philosophy! Why is there not something like organization or general concert of action among Spiritualists? Why are there no great social results from Spiritualism?" &c., &c., &c.

Such are the iterations it has been the fashion of late to utter; but a little reflection will show any clear thinker how utterly irrelevant and irrational they are. If a practical knowledge of the great fact that when a man dies he shall live again is, of itself, enough to transfigure and transform a man's heart, life, and soul, why are not the Chinese, the North American Indians, and many savage tribes, among whom Spiritualism is accepted as an un doubted fact, elevated and reformed by the amazing knowledge?

Why are not the many mediums, to whom the fact of a future life is an assurance fixed and abiding, always persons of saintly lives, great aims, and beneficent acts? It is simply because Spiritualism *per se* no more introduces religion or principle into the mind of man than did the Copernican system of the universe, when it took the place of the Ptolemaic, and all creation "widened in man's view!"

A knowledge of the fact of Spiritualism can never be a substitute for those qualities of mind and heart, for that culture and discipline, which make the essential differences in the characters of men. A revelation of immortality made to the mind of a Jim Fisk would hardly be the power it would be when presented to the mind of a Pascal or a Channing. Certain mechanical facts, lying dead and fruitless in an ordinary mind, led, in the mind of James Watt, to the invention of the steam engine.

What folly is it then to talk of the "failure" of Spiritualism, because it has not proved "an angel of salvation" to all men indiscriminately, or because it has not "resulted in any organization of general concert of action for propagandism?" You cannot pour water into a bottle any faster than the nature of the vessel will allow; and you cannot make an instrument of power of Spiritualism until minds are in a state, not merely to receive it passively, but to appreciate it actively.

It is the glory of Spiritualism that it is spreading and leavening all creeds, and subtly preparing men for great social changes and reforms, without any of the ordinary devices of propagandism, or any of the threatening appeals and terrifying tricks of a religious revival. We need no Moody's and Sankeys to get up a false and fleeting excitement. We trust to the gradual silent operation of an immense truth—acting on some minds like an immediate inspiration, giving to life a new and vast significance, but entering

other minds simply as a commonplace fact which they are not yet in a state to appreciate and realize, but to the significance of which they may some day awaken.

The prospect of immortal life, coupled with the knowledge of the spiritual fact, supplies a basis for morality and religion, just as the earth-life supplies a basis for morality. Morality we regard as having relations to our own moral well-being and that of others, as involved in our own; and religion we regard as having relations to divine laws, to superior spiritual intelligences, and to Deity itself. But just as a man, in view of his limited earth-life, may ignore all the obligations of morality, so, in view of the life immortal, he may ignore all obligations of morality and religion combined. Truly does Bishop Butler remark: "That we are to live hereafter is just as reconcilable with the scheme of atheism, as well to be accounted for by it, as that we are now alive is."

How absurd is it then to speak of Spiritualism *per se* as a religion! On the contrary, it is just what we choose to make it: an incentive to a higher, diviner, more spiritual life, or a selfish brooding over possible aggrandizement, power, and enjoyment in the future, without love, without wise aspirations, and without faith in absolute goodness—that is to say, without faith in God.

When, therefore, the writers who represent the so-called "brotherhood of Luxor," and who vaunt the good things that are to come to us from Occultism, talk of the retrograde character of Spiritualists, of their inefficiency in propagandism, of their lack of an intelligible philosophy and a proper organization, of their straying off into heresies, and of their general insignificance and apathy, we can only regard the Luxorites as fighting with windmills.

Spiritualism is not a sect, a religion, or an organization. It is not even a philosophy, except as human life itself is a philosophy. It is simply, in one of its many senses, the distinction of a vast constituency of persons more or less impressed by the spiritual fact: the fact, namely, that there are spirits, that we are all spirits, now or soon to be such, and that spirits out of the flesh can communicate with those still flesh-bound.

"This fact may lie very dormant and inactive in many minds. That it does so, we see every day. There are many thousands of Spiritualists, so heedless, or so immersed in secular preoccupations, that they do not care to see a spiritual newspaper from one year's end to the other, or to help the cause of truth in any way that would involve the slightest expenditure of money or of trouble. These people may wake up by-and-by before their life-opportunities are closed. We hope they will. But what would be thought of the good sense of the critic who should blame Spiritualism for the apathy and shortcomings of Spiritualists? As well blame the Divine Love and Wisdom, because we are not all receptive of them in like measure!"

Would we therefore palliate or excuse anything like sluggishness, indifference, or lack of interest and cooperation among Spiritualists? Far from it! It is a source of constant wonder to us that persons, convinced of the great fact of spirit-existence and intercourse, are not more wide awake, more eager to prosecute investigations, and more willing to impart results. We hail all intelligent researches and efforts to systematize, verify, and coordinate the facts and phenomena which have justified the spiritual hypothesis. We welcome all such valuable contributions as that of Prof. Denton in his recent experimental moldings of spirit-hands; and that of Messrs. Timkens and Cunningham, at St. Louis, in the rifle shot test of firing at a spirit form. And we welcome all researches into Spiritualism, on its mental and moral side. We thank even those enterprising students who are trying to learn how much of truth there is in the works of the old Cabalists, Occultists, alchemists, and magicians. We are glad to see societies formed and meetings instituted for the discussion and elucidation of facts. The more of these the better.

But the critics and the carpers may rest assured that Spiritualism itself is a fact too divine and infinite to be fenced in by any sectarian, religious, or organization lines; and those persons who look for any such result will be doomed to continual disappointment. The subject is broad as humanity—nay, as broad as humanity and the spirit-world combined; and it cannot be mapped out, engineered and regulated by any human convention, organization, or body of managers. It spurns all limits except those known to Omnipotence alone. We may make approximations to its truths, but the finality is not for this life, and probably not for the next. "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"

"The Nursery."

This charming little monthly magazine, to which we have frequently called the attention of such of our readers as have children to please and instruct, seems more thriving than ever, if we may judge from the plebeian and artistic attractions of the last four or five numbers. Some of the best American artists are engaged in illustrating its pages. The drawings by Merrill are especially deserving of commendation. The literary part of the Nursery is always admirable. It never has a line that is sectarian, and yet never a line that the strictest moralist would not approve. The language, while it is level to the child's comprehension, and delightfully quaint, is never silly or in bad taste. It is simple and childlike, but never childish. A corps of excellent contributors seem to do their best to keep up the high reputation of the work, and their labors are evidently labors of love. The original music by Crampton, a London composer, who has taken a deep interest in the Nursery, is always excellent and wonderfully well adapted to the playful little songs which it illustrates. The Nursery is published monthly by John L. Shorey, Boston, at \$1.00 a year, (including postage), and is now entering on the eighth year of its prosperous existence. A new volume will commence with the January number. We advise all parents and guardians to subscribe for it.

An Excitable Idiot.

Lucius Smith, Brownville, Windsor Co., Vt., throws out the following hint to Spiritualists in the country, as to an easily available means of shedding much light upon the communities where they reside, as well as benefiting themselves: "Why not," he says, "join in purchasing a few good Spiritualist books which all can read, at small expense, and thus, with a few dollars, do a vast amount of good? Would not many such little libraries cheer and bless a great multitude? I would like to give five dollars to start with. Who will second the motion?"

The Search into Spiritualism.

The present time seems to be what may be called a transition one for Spiritualism; by which we mean that there is a sort of pause in the public mind, to see whether it is or is not the thing for which unsatisfied souls are yearning with such impatience. It might with the greater truth be said that it is a transition period for creeds and churches, since in order to save them their advocates are obliged to invent new libels against Spiritualism and to intensify their hatred of it by every possible manifestation. But let the case be stated as it may, it is plain that Spiritualism is at present being subjected to a new test before the public, and its characteristic points are being questioned as never before, regarding their truth.

The fact, plainly stated, is that Spiritualism challenges Orthodoxy to establish its claims to any other authority over the human mind. And the answer which the latter makes is angry abuse. It was expected that the time would certainly come for this test, for that was the very point toward which Spiritualism has for a quarter of a century been working. And now that the test is presented, it should not shrink from all that it involves. Having truth on its side, it need not fear discomfiture; and if it were the refuge for falsehood, all genuine Spiritualists would be foremost in wishing to see it exposed. But no exposure or disclosure can take place save in the cause of truth. Orthodoxy seeks to make one for it in the spirit of partisanship. It hates Spiritualism for this above all other reasons, that the latter undermines its authority, lets the clear light in upon its assumptions, shows up its temper to the public contempt, and dethrones in a summary manner its many idols.

This present temper of the general mind is to be thoughtfully noted by all those who believe that the revelations of Spiritualism contain the truth for which mankind has yearned to this day. Orthodoxy, feeling that the end of the reign of terrorism is at hand, gathers up its wrath and disappointment and resolves to concentrate all its aroused power in one final effort for an assault. Hence the concerted attacks which are to be seen on all sides to-day; from a pulpit at one time, in the columns of a religious newspaper at another, by its secular agents that would be thought pious because they are ready to do church work, and in the mean poisoning of current literature with prejudices which no really religious body would entertain. Let Spiritualists realize that the day of contest is at hand for them, and be ready to meet it.

The wheat in Spiritualism itself will surely be winnowed from the chaff in this prolonged trial of the claims of the contestants. Nothing that is false or worthless on either side is to be permitted to stand. It is certain that true Spiritualists wish to defend nothing in their own faith that is artificial or false, that has not the stamp of genuine truth. Can angry Orthodoxy say the same? Mrs. Britten speaks the right word when she urges Spiritualists to prepare themselves for this struggle with the authority and power of the creeds by first paying all possible respect to the cause to which they profess to be wedded; make family circles more the order of the day; to form societies everywhere for calm and deliberate investigation; to sternly discountenance every appearance of trickery and fraud; and to manifest more gratitude to Heaven for this precious mission of Spiritualism.

If it can be done, ecclesiasticism is bound to overthrow every claim of our holy cause to the credit of man. It sees and feels it to be its own worst obstacle to continued usurpation. If Orthodoxy were more spiritual, it would choose only spiritual weapons; but they are the ones it discards, preferring to trust its case to power, passion and violence as its most effective allies. And they are the very forces which will betray it to its destruction. But Spiritualists ought to be the more careful to commit no such error. Their part is that of sincerity, humility and truthfulness. These forces are sufficiently powerful to prevail against all the worldly weapons which failing faith has chosen. It is these that ought to conquer. No one of the right mind can wish to witness the triumph of any other: Spiritualism has a vastly wider future before it than has yet been realized, and all its believers must be ready for the calls upon them.

The Indian Business.

Determined movements are on foot in New York for the holding of public meetings that shall in a fit manner and a proper spirit give expression to the feeling that prevails in the popular mind in reference to the management of Indian affairs. By this time the people are persuaded that gross wrongs and abuses have been practiced by those who are appointed to deal directly with the tribes for the Government, and there is a distinct desire to make a thorough investigation of the matter, and, if it be possible, to bring the truth to the surface. It is high time it was done. The country cannot afford to suffer such a disgrace to drag on much longer. This covering-up business has been followed until the covering has become too scant for the accumulated abuses underneath.

The assault on the Indian Ring was made in the columns of the Banner long before the press generally would consent to turn its attention to it; now we see, as the fruits of it, a continuous fire upon the corruption and fraud that are known to exist, and the unwilling resignation of a Secretary of the Interior. This is bringing down high game. These shots have not, it seems, been random ones. There is real fire under all this smoke.

But a few years ago, and a very few, the cost to the country for maintaining the Indian tribes in their relations to the Government amounted to not much over two millions of dollars; now it is upwards of eight millions. What should cause such a great difference? The tribes do not number more than half what they did before the war of the rebellion, yet the cost of their support is so much greater. Is not the fact a convincing one, that the rings that exist fatten on these superfluous millions, and in order to furnish the necessary excuse for spending the money incite frequent wars, cheat and defraud the red men, supply to them cattle of undeveloped, measly pork, rotten beef, sour flour, vile tobacco and blankets and other things on the same scale of swindling? The public is just beginning to find out that they are paying millions every year to stir up bad blood among the Indians, and to defraud them so grossly as to make their condition unendurable.

No wonder that secretaries resign suddenly and flee, in the face of such wicked disclosures; that investigating committees take months to classify the accumulated proofs of ring guilt; that there is a flutter of excitement, culminating

in undisguised fear, in the Department of the Interior and among its purloins; that the better portion of the public press is rousing itself to the disgrace and shame of the situation and the sense of wrong done the Indians; and that public meetings are being called in the large centres of intelligence and influence, as in New York, to denounce a state of affairs that can be continued only at the deserved cost of the national reputation. Let this work go on until it is thoroughly completed. It is due to the honest white population as much as the Indians.

Costs of Spirit Hands.

This most satisfactory phase of the materialization phenomena continues to occur in presence of Mrs. Mary M. Hardy, at the sances held at her residence, No. 4 Concord Square, Boston, and all spectators who have thus far been privileged to attend, have expressed the highest degree of attention at the results compassed. Below we give what the representative of the Boston Evening Transcript says in the issue of that journal for Thursday, Oct. 21st, concerning a sitting of this nature which he witnessed:

"MATERIALIZATION.—One of the most surprising and inexplicable evidences of the growing facility at materialization exhibited by the spirits so familiarly frequenting the sances of modern Spiritualists, was tested yesterday at the residence of Mrs. Hardy, the well-known medium, at No. 4 Concord Square. A place of paraffin, a sort of fine liquid wax, was placed under a table, where it was concealed by a curtain tacked to the under side of the table. In the course of an hour, during which time several different 'spirit hands,' (one of them black,) were thrust forth from an aperture in the table, touching the hands reached to them of those sitting in the circle, snatching a handkerchief, one corner of which was placed within the aperture, ringing bells handed to them, etc., raps were heard signaling for the removal of the curtain, and two wax molds of human hands were found lying beside the pall. *Once these wax hands were made, a third finger, and one of the mysterious hands that had been thrust through the aperture, was also seen by several present to have a finger missing.* This materialization has first been accomplished at Mrs. Hardy's within the past week or ten days, but is now of almost daily occurrence. It is proposed, in time, to offer to the spirits a bath tub filled with the molding mixture, to see if the whole body of a spirit cannot be secured in the same manner as the hand. The molded hand, with one finger missing, was recognized by some present."

The hand thus spoken of was declared by several persons at the sance to be a cast of one of P. B. Randolph, (the well-known lecturer and author, lately deceased,) and we are informed that inquiries are being made to verify the assertion.

Mrs. Hardy, in consequence of urgent calls from friends at a distance, will make a few engagements to visit some of the towns within one or two hundred miles of Boston, to enable them to witness these remarkable manifestations. For terms, &c., apply personally or by letter to No. 4 Concord Square, Boston.

A New Physical Medium in Maine.

A letter from Mr. Joseph Penney, of East Eddington, Me., furnishes us a detailed account of the physical manifestations witnessed through the mediumship of a son of Mr. Levi Penney, of South Hancock, Me., recently developed. At first the raps came in a decisive manner, and under circumstances that rebuked all suspicion of trickery; then the table tipped, and, answering the call of the alphabet, would spell out words. The medium was afterwards tied securely, cranberries put into his hands, and then placed in a dark room alone—every necessary precaution having previously been taken to prevent collusion; in three minutes' time he came forth freed from the ropes. He then returned into the cabinet with the ropes, and in a short time was furnished, by invisible agency, in a very intricate manner. A skeptical neighbor, who thought he could tie him so securely that he could never get released without human aid, after exhausting his tying ingeniously, pronounced him secure; but in a few minutes after the medium entered the cabinet, he came out again, freed from the ropes, which had been untied. The affair is creating quite a sensation, being an unlooked-for and unwished-for innovation on the strict-laced Orthodoxy of that little town.

Lectures in Brooklyn, N. Y.

George W. Young writes from this place that on Sunday, Oct. 17th, Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan and Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten most acceptably addressed the Spiritualist society of that city, a large audience assembling to listen to their discourses. Mr. Young is confident, from the signs of the times, that good work for the advancement of the cause may be expected in Brooklyn in the future. He further says: "Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan will address our Brooklyn society again next Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. This will be the third and last lecture she will deliver for some time in Brooklyn, as she soon goes to California for her health. Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten will speak for us in the evening, as usual, at 7 1/2 o'clock. Subject, 'What can I do to be saved?'"
Brooklyn, Oct. 24th, 1875.

The New Age.

Number 1, Volume I, of this new venture upon the sea of periodical literature has arrived at our office. The paper—which is well gotten up typographically—is issued weekly at 233 Washington street, Boston, Mass., and is edited by John M. L. Babcock, assisted by A. W. Stevens. "Our purpose (says its salutatory) is to convene in these columns a Congress of all sections and representatives of human progress. The point we aim at is to make all classes of society understand and apply the principles under the operation of which all antagonisms will ultimately disappear." The paper will thus endeavor to present a sort of kaleidoscopic view of all the reform questions of the day. Spiritualism is represented among the rest, in the present number, by an article from the pen of William Denton, on "The Spiritualistic Philosophy of Life."

Our Thanks are Due.

And are hereby soulfully extended, to Bro. S. S. Jones, editor and proprietor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal, of Chicago, for the kind and cheering words with which, in his issue for Oct. 23d, he welcomed the new volume of the Banner of Light. His expressions of good will, and hopes for its continued prosperity, as also his fraternal words of encouragement toward itself, are appreciated to the uttermost, and we in turn wish for him and his excellent paper added prosperity and pleasant length of days.

Test Charles H. Foster, the justly celebrated test medium, and Frank T. Ripley, of Boston, held a well-attended sance at Lyric Hall, Baltimore, Md., on the evening of Thursday, Oct. 21st. Mr. Foster is at present stopping at the Eutaw House in that city.

Sunday Meetings in Baltimore.

We attended a spiritual meeting on Sunday evening last at Lyric Hall and listened to able addresses from Mr. Washington A. Danskin, the manager, and Thomas Gales Forster, the veteran Spiritualist lecturer. Mr. Danskin made the interesting announcement that meetings had been carried on by him in Baltimore for seventeen years, the last ten of which had been in a duly organized form. He paid a just tribute to many of the earlier advocates of the cause, and among others referred to several who had been identified with that platform, in which connection he instanced Cora Hatch, R. P. Ambler, Emma Jay, Lottie Beebe, Thomas Gales Forster and Mrs. Hyzer. In a feeling manner he then referred to the presence of several representative friends of the movement from different sections of the country, whom he named, which he interpreted as an omen of "good to the cause." "Indeed," said the speaker, "I believe that from this centre, to-night, will radiate a spiritual influence that will result in lessening the radicalism of the North as well as in mellowing the conservatism of the South." He then read a highly instructive message, inspirationally given through his own hand some time since, by spirit Theodore Parker, which we shall publish at a future day.

Brother Thomas Gales Forster was then introduced, and gave an able discourse on the spiritual philosophy, in which he demonstrated the great superiority of its teachings over those of old theology. Universal instinct he affirmed to be transcendental law. No one instinct in all the realm of nature points more directly or clearly than does the instinct of immortality. He said one of the greatest anomalies of the present time was, after over a quarter of a century of the promulgation of the spiritual doctrine, which had conclusively demonstrated the fact that our spirit friends do communicate with us, that there should be those who undertook to affirm that our spirit friends were but elementary beings, who had had no existence in the earth-life. He scouted such an idea as preposterous. Spiritualism, he said, refuses to be gauged by the idiosyncrasies of individuals; it is a fundamental truth, based upon the affections. Spiritualism would therefore live as long as love endures. The greatest anomaly of Christendom was that Spiritualism, which comes to demonstrate what the ecclesiastical systems theoretically teach, should be denounced by the viceregents and exponents of these very religious systems as something so wicked as not to be tolerated by Christians for one moment; and concluded his remarks by urging upon his hearers the importance of casting off the superstitious teachings of the past and embracing the beautiful truths inculcated by Spiritualism, that had already found an abiding place in the hearts of millions of the inhabitants of earth.

This meeting was one of the most harmonious assemblies we ever attended, and it seemed indeed as though the angel of love and peace had descended into its very midst. Mr. Danskin is a sincere and devoted worker in the good cause, and deserves the amplest encouragement and aid from the friends in Baltimore.

On the morning of the same day Dr. T. B. Taylor and Thomas Gales Forster addressed the Spiritualist meeting at Lyceum Hall. Dr. Taylor has been hired for one year by the society meeting at this place. Mr. Frank T. Ripley's test sances are pronounced by the citizens as very satisfactory.

The Force of Habit.

When will the old materialistic notions that identify the individual with the earth-clothe he manifests himself through in this life, be wedded out of literature, and the true spiritual idea be always expressed when death is referred to? Even Longfellow, who, if we may believe he was sincere in many of his poetical utterances, is a Spiritualist, though he does not like to say so to the world, falls into the old pagan style in the following sonnet in his last volume:

"River that stealest with such silent pace
Around the City of the Dead, where lies
A friend who bore thy name, and whom these eyes
Shall see no more, and whose accented place
Linger and fold him in thy soft embrace.
And say good night, for now the western skies
Are red with sunset, and gray mists arise
Like damp that gather on a dead man's face.
Good night! I good night! as we so oft have said
Beneath this roof, at midnight, in the days
That are no more, and when no more,
Thou hast but taken thy lamp and gone to bed;
I stay a little longer, as one stays
To cover up the embers that still burn."

Here Charles Sumner is referred to as lying in Mount Auburn; not his physical remains merely, not the earthly husk, composed of changing gases, ashes, and material atoms, but Charles Sumner, the individual, whom Longfellow knew and loved. He calls upon the river to linger and fold "him" in its soft embrace; and then, with a most unpoetical and belittling metaphor, he compares the gray mists of the landscape to the "damp that gather on a dead man's face!" An example of bathos wholly unworthy the good taste of the poet, and not in keeping with the general tenderness and beauty of the lines.

If Mr. Longfellow had taken into his thought the sentiment of the following lines, he would never have presented to us such an image as that of Charles Sumner, the departed friend, lying wrapt in the sods of Mount Auburn:

"Oh, hearts that never cease to yearn!
Oh, brains that never cease to mourn!
The dead, though they depart, return
As if they had not died!
The living are the only dead,
The dead live—never more to die;
And often when we mourn them dead
They never were so nigh."

There will come the great poet by-and-by, who, giving us grand utterances in this vein, will purge literature of that odor of the charnel house which too many writers have imparted to it; and then such passages as we have quoted from Longfellow will be regarded as the relics of a bygone barbarism, to be consigned, with the doctrine of vicarious atonement and infant damnation, to the curiosity-shop of exploded monstrosities. Longfellow deserves the rap we have given him, for he really knows better.

Lectures at Paine Hall.

A course of eight lectures will be commenced at this hall, which is situated in the Paine Memorial Building, Appleton street, Boston, on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 7th, by William Denton; he will also speak there in the evening of the same day, and continue the course at 2 1/2 and 7 1/2 o'clock p. m. on each Sunday of November. Should the attendance warrant, these meetings will be maintained in some form at this hall during the winter. See advertisement on our fifth page for subjects of lectures, and other details.

Robert Dale Owen is now sufficiently renovated in health to enable him to resume his literary labors. He lectured a few days ago at the law school in Bloomington, Ind., on "Villainage."

Message Department.

For the Banner of Light.
Inspiration Messages.
 WRITTEN IN THE PRESENCE OF THOMAS R. HAZARD, THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MRS. J. STAATS.

I meet you this morning, the appointment being made by ourselves. We are always ready to fulfill, it being a great pleasure to us, and perhaps we shall never be able to know all of the joys which are in store for us until we meet here, where the spirit will put on more of its real life, and enjoy still more of the glorious, radiant, and great and loving Father has in store for those who desire to know more of him. The blessing of Spiritualism, my dear one, is not confined to the few conditions of life. That taught in our youth served for a few emergencies, and we hardly dare to feel that it was possible to draw from the spiritual life more than that which was positively and absolutely required to hold us to our sectarian forms, for plain as they were, we see them now as binding and restraining the spirit from its more full development. In this life-renewal we find everything that the soul desires, and know that we can ask no more, for material things will follow, and all these harmonies will be felt about us. We know not how much good we can do if we only know how to do it. Spirits teach how to do good. That is the highest mission of spirits. We always preach to you, and often use up much of the time in that way, but it is of some importance to be able to tell others that Spiritualism reaches every demand of the body, soul and spirit. Be sure, my dear one, to continue in faith, truth and love. I know that you will, and in being that, you will be all things. I want you to be sure, and tell them all at home that I shall be there plain and more palpable than ever during the coming summer. As we gain strength we will make such manifestations as will be best adapted to the care and comfort of home. Fear not, but be quiet and happy in yourself, and so shed out from the soul and spirit all that the angels bring to you. There are a number of spirits about you, and I see that many are anxious to write you. I am delighted with the place and progress which is enjoying, and I shall through you convey light, life and strength to all our children. I see their thoughts, and know their needs, and through you will help them to a peaceful and useful life on earth, so that when they enter here they will have finished the duties of the earthly sphere, and enjoy the reward which is before them. We are all here, but it may not be possible for us all to write. We shall be with you in all that you do, and you will know your faithful wife, children, and many friends all in the circle of truth and love, with your faithful wife, FANNY.

I did not mean to intrude upon others, but I cannot let you go without saying a few words about home in the spirit and home in the earth. We are all happy in watching over your spiritual life and progress, and in seeing all that is near and dear to you made beautiful and holy, thus giving you back a harvest of rich faith annexed with constant evidences of more power and strength of the intercourse that is so rapidly spreading all over the world. Father dear, I have much to tell you, and in good time you shall know more of our beautiful home, and how we pass the time. Sit in a circle at home. A. S. will go with me there, and you will know our united care over all the dear ones. Dear father, when I look out upon the earth life and mingle with it, I almost long to be back again where I can do more good and inspire humanity to be more faithful, truthful and loving to each other; and thus draw nearer to God, and live in the love which belongs to the spirit. I love to linger near my dear brother, and aid him in the life duties. Pure, beautiful and good, as I bless him always in love and peace. We are always your loving children, ANNA AND MARY.

We will meet you at home, my friend, and will help you to know my presence. In all that you do, fear not, but live as ever in the truth. I will write you from your own mediumship, or rather from your own impressions, when you will let me. I want only the opportunity to do so, and to know that our united love will be for many things which the world is reaching out for. Never think, my friend, that your labor is lost, or that what you do amounts to but little in this cause. Be assured it will be well received and will record it in the home where good deeds make the habitation of the spirit more beautiful. Your friend, ACHSA SPRAGUE.

It is well, my dear husband, to make an engagement and come to keep it, from the fact that it prepares us to be here to meet you. There are many spirits around this morning, who, having known that you were to be here, entered before us to await your coming. We see that you are prepared for us, and that charges the medium with the influence that we can control, sometimes, advantageously, and again we find it difficult to do more than our united love will be for many things which the world is reaching out for. Never think, my friend, that your labor is lost, or that what you do amounts to but little in this cause. Be assured it will be well received and will record it in the home where good deeds make the habitation of the spirit more beautiful. Your friend, ACHSA SPRAGUE.

With loving children and friends.

how great is the power of the spirit world over mortals. I am

Dr. J. GRUNNELL.

Talk to us, friend; let us see if there is anything we can do for them. We are the living ones, and men who heed not truth are the dead. JOHN WOOLMAN.

The Rostrum.

The John A. Andrew Hall Lecture Course.

As our readers are well aware, a course of Spiritualist free meetings has for several years been carried on at this place (corner Chauncy and Essex streets, Boston,) by Mrs. Sarah A. Floyd as trance speaker, Mr. Samuel Carter, who has proved to be a generous financial supporter, and Chester M. Huggins, who has acted as chairman at each meeting. These services have been well attended, and have accomplished a special work in a field which has been entered by few other laborers for the cause in Boston, as many of the people frequenting them have been of the skeptical or inquiring order, rather than believers, and we have received from time to time assurances that goodly numbers have been led to take wider views of life and its lessons by going to this hall.

The meetings are held on the afternoon and evening of each Sunday, and the time is occupied by singing by the choir, remarks by the controlling intelligence, replies to the questions propounded by the audience, and in some cases by the answering of sealed letters by the medium.

On the afternoon of Sunday, Oct. 17th, the intelligence entrancing Mrs. Floyd gave an able answer to the question so often asked in the light of the present season of crime: "Why do not media name the murderer, and, if spirits have the knowledge and power they claim, be the means of bringing him to justice?" She said that even if the world would give the media the necessary protection, the spirits had too much pity for the erring man to bring him into our so-called courts of justice, which are too often but a shallow mockery. The criminals know it all a sham, for they read the papers as well as the more intelligent, and are aware that in eight cases out of every ten the jury disagree, and that nine out of ten who are imprisoned for life escape, either by breaking their bars or by the pardon—judicious or otherwise—of the next governor. Religion cries out to the criminal concerning the fear of God and future punishment—never the fear of life and its certain recompense for wrong doing.

Spirits will hardly, however, favor capital punishment, having no desire to be the means of increasing the number of "wicked" or undeveloped souls among them, knowing, as they do, what an effect the disembodied spirit sent by man into soul-life has upon those of earth; for by the laws of soul-return it goes out of its earthly tenement uneducated and filled with unkind feelings toward humanity, and often with the irresistible power of murder still upon it, and knowing it still has life it will compel others to commit deeds of crime, and thus increase rather than diminish the evil sought to be escaped from. We are not, said the speaker, looking at the root of the evil, or obeying or teaching the law in its highest sense. Parents are not living a life children can respect, and without a higher standard their future must be degraded.

The exercises of this meeting were much enhanced as to interest by the choice music from the regular choir.

In the evening of the same day the hall was well filled, and the subject of the afternoon was continued by the intelligence controlling Mrs. Floyd, who also denied the triumphant declaration (born rather from the wish than the fact) which the churches of the day were putting forth—that Spiritualism was experiencing the effect of sure decadence, and that the proof of the same was to be seen everywhere. It might be thought by the obstinate stickler for the Christian method of Sabbath observance that the consideration of anything like the operations of courts of law, etc., was out of place on that Sunday which should properly be devoted to the proclaiming of the gospel of Christ, and that, therefore, the teaching of the spirits, in this regard at least, was blasphemous; but she called the attention of such an objector to the fact that life and its issues were of the most importance to humanity, and spirits who had passed the bounds of material existence, and gained wider views in the premises, could not refrain from returning through every avenue of communion which was offered them, and making known to those yet in the form the truths which, if accepted, would be to them of such lasting benefit; by so doing they fulfilled the duty which the giving of these truths to them by intelligences higher than themselves laid upon them as spirits, whether humanity would believe in them or not.

Spiritualism proclaimed every day of the week to be a Sunday—every day to be a Sabbath where in the soul worshiped that which was pure, beautiful and good. The eternal law of life instinct with knowledge, took precedence of the mere human law, based as it was in ignorance. God demanded honest justice—not forms and ceremonies in courts of jurisprudence intended for its direct defeat. No such complication of means, resulting practically in the nullity of the very ends for which they were ordained, characterized spirit-life as it did that in material. It was the aim of Modern Spiritualism to unveil all the corruptions and shortcomings of mortal life, that men might be led, with kind hand, from under the overbrooding presence of theological mysteries regarding life here and hereafter, and placed under the regnant beams of truth's wider growing day! It strove to reform human life, from the starting-point of motherhood, on through all its varied experiences, and to give to the race, in place of the emburied machinery of the present courts of justice, a system of pure, spiritualized, royal laws which would be worthy the acceptance of man, so that mankind might compass the idea of that true brotherly sympathy which, exercised to the full toward one another, would bring to this jarring sphere of material toil the sweet harmony of the spirit realm.

If retreating spirits found fault with the systems of human jurisprudence, it was because these systems needed reform; if they arranged the existing creeds and forms of theology, it was because they would not allow mankind to behold the dawning light of the new truth, but compelled their adherence to a succession of self-elected shallow mockeries.

Secularism declared that Spiritualism was dying out; that the world was becoming tired of it; that the people were once more returning back to the fold of the churches, and following a "false light" no more; that its public lecture

halls were being closed, its platforms deserted, and that many of its most popular workers were sounding its death chant. But such was not the fact. There never had been a time when the great cause of spirit return and communion had gone on better than at present; Spiritualism was making its mark on society; its illuminating beams were reaching the hearts of millions struggling in the darkness of the crowds, and despite the church wishes, which clothed themselves in the form of prophecies, such would be the case in coming time. The cause was onward, and not in retrograde. It was true that some societies might discontinue meetings, some weary workers might seek for rest; but these meetings would be again reopened with new interest, and renewed power would be breathed upon the toilers for the truth. The speaker referred to the fact that though the avenue once open to the world of souls through which thousands of spirits had been enabled to return, bringing joy and gladness to their friends left behind, had been closed by the physical change of the much loved instrument, Mrs. J. H. Conant, yet the unseen world was preparing a medium to occupy the vacant post, whose health and life and strength would be given to the work, even as had hers in the past, and once more in coming days would the blessed sheet—the Banner of Light—go out to the world laden with those messages from spirit-life which many of its readers loved so well!

Not only on the mental plane would the cause be hereafter advanced, but the physical manifestations would increase in interest among men, and bring yet more minds to a consideration of the claims of the combined phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism; great voices proclaiming the knowledge of that system of eternal truth within whose stronghold the Almighty has set up his standard would come to the children of earth.

God's truths were always in order, and therefore efforts like those which she (the speaker) was making to sow their seeds, were always in order—no matter on what day of the week. She closed by saying that the unseen toilers for the truth sought to widen among men a practical knowledge of justice tempered with mercy, a religion which would establish peace on earth in the stead of war, and lead men to respect their fellow-men as the souls in eternity respected each other.

The lecture being ended, Mr. Huggins announced that any proper query from the audience would be answered by the intelligence controlling Mrs. Floyd, and the following results were obtained:

To a question as to whether the soul of man exists in individual identity before it comes into the possession of a physical body, the speaker replied: No; not until it receives its birthright—the physical machinery of life—till it is encased in a form of flesh. We possess no distinguishing knowledge of life which is not founded on experience; and the physical body is necessary to the attainment of that experience. Having so attained, the soul will never for a single moment lose itself, but will forever enjoy a continued conscious existence after the change called death.

To a question as to whether the infusion of the female element into the profession of law and the active machinery of the courts of justice would not tend to work improvement in these directions, the reply was given that the spirit then controlling the medium, while it acknowledged the refining power of noble womanhood wherever exerted, and considered that the union of men and women in the legal and other professions might be productive of good results in the premises, yet thought that the nobility of woman was much better exhibited in the sphere of home, where she could exert an ennobling influence upon man in all the duties of existence, tempering his strength with mercy, and leading him to work out the effects produced by her upon him in his every day life. The great truths unfolded by Spiritualism were destined to bring to the world a religion under whose benign influence the highest types of manhood and womanhood would be attained.

The service concluded with the answer by the speaker of a question concerning the nature of obsession, the statement having been made in her afternoon discourse that the majority of crimes committed in society were wrought while under the temporary possession of the subject by undeveloped intelligences. To this the answer was returned that such was the case, and was the result of the coming to the spirit-world of the uneducated and unenlightened spirits of those who, while on earth, failed, through any reason, to attain to true ideas of life and its duties; such spirits, unweaned from material things, returned to earth in order to obtain, through negative temperaments the gratification of their undeveloped desires; and such spirits found plenty of the requisite negative subjects to yield to them. Now if the murderer, for instance, were hanged, the spirit was not killed, but, filled with revenge, would return to wreak its will among the crowded ranks of human life through such instrumentalities as it could command. It is earthly, when it is launched forth from the quivering body, and unto earth it must return. The abandonment of capital punishment was the best defence for society against this danger, while the individual members in the mass of humanity were counselled to be positive to whatever approached them of an impure or wrongful nature; a negative condition in this regard might open the door to untold evil, while a positive would induce a condition under which these undeveloped souls could have no power upon the man or the woman whom they sought to affect. We blame you mortals, after all (said the speaker), for the crime on earth; you open the door, through want of definite resolution, to the uneducated in spirit-life, you close the door when such a spirit has entered, and do not let it out till the crime is committed. If you would study the law of life, and comprehend that never for a single moment are you alone, you would be extremely careful in this regard. There are thousands, ay, millions of noble souls in the spirit-world, who will aid you if you will call on them, and help to bear you upward from temptation and sin, but you must yourselves first shut the door against the wrong, and call upon the pure for strength.

During this session the following programme was fully rendered by the John A. Andrew Hall choir, consisting of Mrs. L. C. Clapp (soprano), Miss Moore (alto), and Mr. Bell (tenor): "Triumphant Memory"—Leslie; solo and trio—"When the mists have rolled away," Clark; hymn—"Peace be thine" (tune "Trivoli"); soprano and tenor duet—"How dear to me the hour"—Kleber; also solo—"Grand old ocean," Millard.

I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue; he approaches nearest to the gods who knows how to be silent even though he is in the right.—Cato.

TEMPORA MUTANTUR.

The world turns mild; democracy, they say, rounds the sharp knobs of character away; And no great harm, unless at grave expense Of man or race is on the downward path. For many of our people are on the downward path. And these fibre grows too soft for honest wrath, And there's a subtle influence that springs From words to modify our sense of things. A plain distinction is obscured of late: Men, if they will, may pardon, but the State Forgets its function if not fixed as fate. So thought our sires; a hundred years ago, If men were knaves, why, people called them so, And crime could see the prisonportal bend Its brow severe at no long vista's end; In those days for plain things plain words would serve;

Men had not learned to admire the graceful swerve Wherewith the Esthetic Nature's genial mood Makes public duty slope to private good; No muddled conscience raised the saving doubt; A soldier proved unworthy was drummed out; An officer cashiered, a civil servant (No matter though his pety were fervent) Disgracefully dismissed; and through the land Each bore for life a stigma from the brand, Whose far-herd hiss made others more averse To take the facile step from bad to worse. But how that "Statesmanship" is just a way. To dodge the primal cause and make it pay; Since Office means a kind of patent drill To force an entrance to the Nation's till, And peculation something rather less Risky than if you spelt it with an s; Now that to stand by law is grown an art, Who roques the sires, their milder sons call swerve.

And "slightly irregular" dilutes the shame Of what had once a somewhat blunter name; With generous curve we draw the moral line; Our swindlers are permitted to resign; Their guilt is wrapped in deferential names, And twenty sympathize for one that blames. Add national disgrace to private crime, Confront mankind with brazen front sublime, Steal but enough, the world is unsevered—Tweed is a statesman, Fisk a financier; Invent a mine and be—the Lord knows what, Secure, at any rate, with what you've got. The public servant who has stolen or lied, If called on, may resign with honest pride; As unjust favor put him in, why doubt Disfavored just has turned him out? Even if indicted, he is that but judge To him who counted in the elective judge? Whitewashed, he quits the politician's strife, At ease in mind, with pockets filled for life; His lady glares with gems whose vulgar blaze The poor man through his heightened taxes pays; Himself content if one huge Kohlnoor Bulge from a shirt-front ampler than before—But not too candid, lest it help tend To rouse suspicion of the People's Friend;

A public meeting, treated at his cost, Resolves him back more virtue than he lost; With character regit, he counts his gains; What's gone was air, the solid good remains; Or what is good except what friend and foe Saw both unanimous in thinking so. The stocks and bonds which in our age of loans Replace the stupid pagan's stocks and stones? With choker white, wherein no cynic eye Dares see idealized a hempen tie. At parish meetings he conducts in prayer, And pays for missions—to be sent elsewhere; On "Change respected, to his friends endeared, Add but a Sunday-school class, he's revered, And his too early tomb will not be dumb To point a moral for our youth to come.—[James Russell Lowell, in The Nation.]

Improving the Species.

AN INTERESTING TALK ON AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT BY SOME FRANKLIN COUNTY FARMERS.

At the annual dinner, says the Springfield Union, of the Franklin County Agricultural Society at Greenfield, Mass., a number of short speeches were made, but none more notable than that of ex-County Commissioner R. N. Oakman, of Montague. He said that we have societies whose object is the propagation of cattle, and what we now need is a society for the propagation of our own species. We have our stock shows; let us have our baby shows. The Yankee race is running out because the duty of propagation is shirked. He referred to the new insane asylum at Worcester, spoke of the rapid increase of such institutions in this State, and said they were full, and so were many private institutions besides, because of ignorance or defiance of the laws of propagation. In one school district in Wendell, sixty yokes of cattle used to be employed in the winter breaking out the roads, and sixty or seventy rugged boys and girls went to that school. Now there is not one yoke of cattle in that district, nor a boy nor a girl. The hill towns are becoming depopulated, but not because they are growing barren for lack of soil. It is because the farmers there do not raise large families of children to be educated, and to take an interest in the old places. Mr. Oakman further deprecated the modern lack of fecundity in modest but most earnest and straightforward terms.

President Brown then called upon D. O. Fiske of Shelburne, as being qualified to speak further on this question. Mr. Fiske is not yet an old man, but is father of seven sons and eleven children. After complimenting the society on its new plan of making its members do the annual talking instead of getting a professional theorist to do it, and after praising his boys for their faithfulness and efficiency on his farms, he took up Mr. Oakman's cue. He didn't believe in farmers giving their daughters to white faced store clerks instead of to the awkward two-fisted farmer boys, who would make worthy men, even if they could not so gracefully trip the light fantastic toe. And then turning to the ladies, of whom a large number were present, he said: "Girls, there will not be five thousand old maids in Massachusetts when you get over your foolish idea of regarding motherhood, and cease to think that one miserable, despicable little infant is all you can afford to have about the premises." Mr. Fiske berated the extravagant ideas of the day, which, while young men long for a home and wife and family, prevent them from taking up the duties of their manhood. He closed by quoting a distinguished advocate of the old-fashioned sentiment that a good, cultivated, virtuous woman could have no higher sphere than as the mother of a large and thrifty household. "I think so," said Mr. Fiske, "and my wife thinks so, too."

The first of this memoir, Orrin Matthews, was born in the town of Northampton, N. Y., at an early day in the life of the American Republic. He was the son of a farmer, and spent his early years on the farm. He was educated in the common schools of his native town, and at the State University at Albany. He was a member of the New York State Legislature, and was a prominent member of the New York State Bar. He was a man of great energy and ability, and was a successful lawyer and politician. He died in 1875, at the age of 60.

Spiritual Reunion.

The Spiritualists of Auburn and vicinity will hold a reunion at the Auburn Hotel, on Sunday, Oct. 30th, 1875, and continue during the following day and evening. A. A. White, late editor of the Auburn Journal, will be the guest of honor. He will deliver a lecture on "The Spiritual World," and will also read a paper on "The History of Spiritualism." The reunion will be held in the evening, and will be a most interesting and profitable one. Tickets are free, and will be distributed at the door.

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