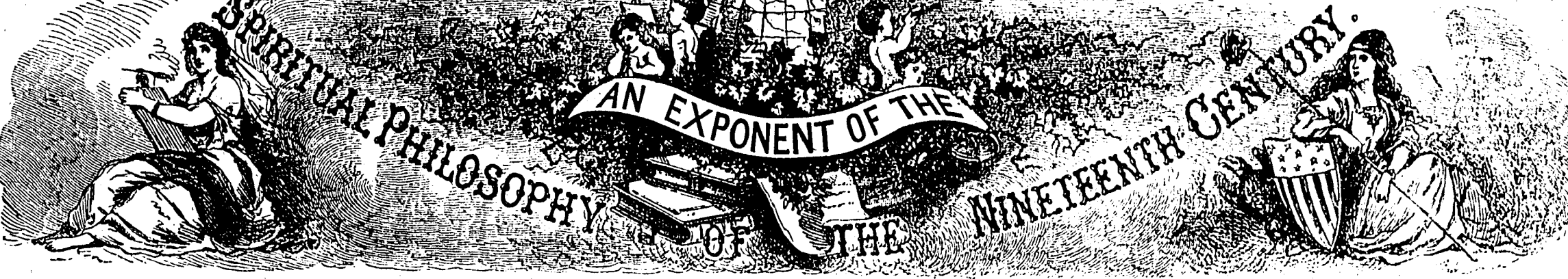


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Original Essay.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS. NUMBER TEN.

Written specially for the Banner of Light,
BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

Prophecy; or, The Power of Prevision.

There is no subject so universally exemplified, none so historical, as that of prevision. Whilst the history of all nations, peoples and individuals bears witness to the truth of prophecy, the want of some definite knowledge by which its facts could be explained, and the conclusions of inevitable fatalism to which it leads, create an inviolable prejudice against belief in its truth.

Granted that man's acceptance or rejection of divine truth makes no difference in the scheme, still we are all aiming to attain to a clear understanding of the laws which bind and fetter us, and however antagonistic these may be to our preconceived notions of what is or is not the providential plan, the part of wisdom is to discover that plan, and having abandoned theories which do not harmonize with the facts of creation, reverently set ourselves to adjust our lives and practices to the order of being as it is, rather than as we deem it ought to be.

If we were to begin disputing the facts of prophecy or the power of prevision, we should have to contend with the records of all history, sacred and profane, commencing with the Bible, attacking every classical authority, denying the witness of every European historian, and discarding an immense mass of fresh, living testimony afforded us by the daily enacting phenomena of Modern Spiritualism. So vast are our records on this subject, that in a necessarily brief paper of this description, our chief difficulty is to select the era of time or spot of earth from which to draw examples.

As the order of these writings has been chiefly directed toward the phenomena now so rife amongst us, we will observe the same course in treating of this subject, and notwithstanding the fact that ancient Chaldees, Jews, Egypt, India, Greece, Rome and Europe, during the mediæval ages, furnish us opportunities for penning volumes on the facts and philosophy of prevision, we presume we shall present a more acceptable phase of the subject if we limit our illustrations to our own time and place, rather than dive into those terrible dark ages and magical lands, of which so many of our readers seem to entertain such a holy horror. Popular arguments against the acceptance of prophetic truth, do not attack the verity or reliability of prophetic utterances.

Prophecy is too abundant to be disputed, too often reliable to be evaded; but the difficulty lies just where some excellent, though highly prejudiced persons with whom the author was recently conversing, placed the subject, representing the modern problems in the following terms: "If I believe that one event in the universe can be foreseen, then must I believe that the whole scheme is immutable. If I believe that, why then murders and all manner of crimes are as inevitable as all manner of good, and to accept of that proposition would know no moral responsibility, and that, you deny, no one can accede to." Whilst deeming the best answer to render to all such logicians is the author's favorite aphorism and life-long watchword of action—"The truth against the world," we acknowledge that we have the right, as we feel it to be our duty and privilege, to render up some reason for our belief, and independent of the stubborn array of facts which the history of the race records in favor of the certainty of prevision, we believe the revelations of Modern Spiritualism afford us items of philosophy which, candidly considered, will throw some light on the problems that so sorely perplex us. In the first place, we are to consider how the knowledge of the future can be obtained, and in what fashion it reaches us.

In the report of a series of sances held by Mrs. Hardinge in London before a body of scientific Spiritualists, the following question and answer on the subject of "prophecy" will be found.

As no change has occurred in the author's view of the subject since that report was issued, the most striking passages are herewith transcribed, preliminary to the statements to be found in this paper:

"QUESTION 6.—How is it possible that things future, and not depending on any necessary sequence of cause and effect, such, for instance, as the upsetting of a boat, can be foreseen or predicted?"

"ANSWER.—Because there is no time or space with the spirit, but all things in the universe are one universal present. Could you behold with infinite eye the vast panorama of eternity, you

would see successions of periods, and a ceaseless round of events, whose precession form the links in the chain of eternal cause and effect. All that is, or ever was, or can be, on the canvas of eternity, is fully represented. Could you behold this eternal totality, you would see one infinite present—no past, no future! But being finite, as you move through this unchanging panorama, you take cognizance only of that which your mortal eye enables you to perceive. Something of the past that you have left, you remember; something of the future to which you are advancing, you realize. No more. But imagine that your vision is more than mortal; imagine that you can behold a larger space in the panorama than is granted to the finite eye. It is merely a larger amount of vision of that which is—a wider perception of the infinite scheme. And now extend your vision still further, till you arrive at that knowledge which enables you to behold the full panoramic view of ages. Such is the condition of many of the inhabitants of spirit-land in proportion to their degree of development.

"As to the mode in which these perceptions reach you in the form of prophecy, spirits in sublimated spheres of existence, whose range of vision is so immense as to include almost boundless perceptions of the eternal scheme, as they approach others of a lower sphere communicate their intelligence in part to such as can receive it; and these again through successive gradations of descending realms impress their perceptions upon every order of being below them, until the last sphere of influence is earth, and the last recipient of the prophetic idea is some mediumistic mortal who chances to be in rapport or communion with a spirit who possesses the knowledge in question.

"The prophecy may not always be directly communicated. It may be sufficient that a guardian spirit entertains the thought, which as he comes into rapport with a mortal may be impressed by induction on that mortal's brain and affect it in the form of a vision or the sudden tendency to proclaim it in unmediated speech. "One thing is certain, prophecy is not calculation. All the power of calculating cause and effect which you possess, would not enable any one of you to determine that you should ever quit this room alive; as the phrase of mortality runs, 'Which of you could determine that you will still remain in mortal form until the moment that you must pass from hence?' To calculate this accurately, you must thoroughly understand the stability of this building, possess a correct knowledge of every source of danger that may assail you, and a perfect realization of your own sources of life, health, and the entire order of influence that surround you. But you have not this knowledge; you cannot determine even that the flower you plant in spring shall blossom in summer, unless you know the various causes that may affect its growth or decay. Prophecy is not the knowledge of cause and effect; it is the perception of that which is—it is the rapport which receptive beings on earth sustain to those who live in the spheres of knowledge, that enables mortals to prophecy."

Again it was asked:

"If prophecy is reliable, why are not all human beings endowed with prevision?"

"Ans.—We have already shown you that whilst the power of prevision exists in the spirit-world, its exercise is dependent chiefly upon the exalted condition of the spirits who behold the scheme of creation unfolded. Its communication to mortals depends upon the mediumistic faculties of the individual whom prophetic spirits control, and besides the necessary conditions of receptivity, so long as our perceptions of God's infinite wisdom are bounded by ignorance; and man cannot recognize how very good, wise and beneficent are all His lessons. The veil of mortality is wisely drawn across our human eyes to shield us from the view of coming events too mighty in their influence upon our minds for us to bear, at least until we shall have become more spiritualized and better acquainted with the wonderful wisdom in which the whole scheme of destiny is ordered. Still, as we become better fitted for the revelation, the veil which hides our view waxing more and more transparent, until we may hope the day is not far distant when mortals, like their spirit-guardians, shall be enabled to contemplate the sublime arena of the providential plan in such calm appreciation of its wisdom that they shall be prepared to say of the darkness as of the light, 'He doeth all things well.'"

If it may be urged that this view of human destiny makes no provision for what certain philosophers are pleased to call "man's free agency," and involves the fixity of events which must happen if they can be prophesied of, the author can only reply that a fully demonstrated truth should be more acceptable than a favorite though erroneous theory. That the power of prophesying future events exists, the history of ages bears witness to, whilst the experiences of Modern Spiritualism reaffirm the testimony of the past by thousands of well-attested instances.

The examples cited in this paper must either be willfully discredited, or else they of themselves prove the existence of prophetic power, and unless we can show free agency to be the law of life, and the fixity of certain events the exception of that law rather than the rule, prophecy is sufficient in its unbroken and continuous career of evidence to prove the fact that all things are ordained from the beginning—that life is one vast and eternal present—and the past and future are only the succession of views which we obtain of the eternal scheme as we move through it; in short, that we are the only moving objects in the picture, and that as we pass on our pilgrimage from one stage in eternity to another, we designate the scenes we have left "the past," the point we have gained "the present," and the distant objects we are yet to reach "the future."

To a question propounded on the subject of free agency, and why some believed in and others rejected this proposition, the writer's spirit-rejects gave responses too long to quote, but the following sentences may be cited as illustrations of the view the controlling spirits entertained on this vexed question:

"All material objects are the subjects of fixed law and immutable principles.

"Spirit is governed by a different class of laws to those which control matter, and in comparison with matter, spirit seems to be all freedom and boundless power, matter all hedged in by immutable limitations of law.

"Man as a dual being, composed both of matter and spirit, realizes the tendency of both elements. In his physical system and bodily pow-

ers he is wholly bound by immutable law; in his grander and more exalted spiritual nature he is all aspiration and illimitable power. Yet whilst the spirit is associated with the body as in mortal life, it is fettered by the physical hindrances of the body, limited as it were by the prison bars of matter, and feeling its yearning aspirations toward higher powers and more extended liberty than it at present enjoys, it feels itself to be both bound and free.

"Man partaking on earth of the dual nature of matter and spirit, realizes instinctively the attributes of both—now bending beneath the immutable laws which govern physical existence, and now aspiring in the boundless liberty of spiritual being. Feeling the limitations of both states without being able to understand their separate functions, he conceives himself alternately bound and free. Reasoning from the sensuous demonstrations of his material surroundings, he believes in immutable law. When he suffers the testimony of his free spirit to sway his opinions, he feels his freedom even whilst he knows his bondage.

"It is the strife between man's material and spiritual existence which perplexes the question of 'free agency' and predestination."

Having entered as fully upon the metaphysical explanation of prophecy as the form of these brief writings will permit, we shall now proceed to cite some authentic illustrations of prophetic revelations:

Some twenty years since, Mr. Morse, toll-gatherer of the bridge which spans the Merrimack and connects "Rock's Village," Haverhill, with the ancient town of Newbury, Mass., announced to his friends that he had seen a vision of such strange and portentous character that it left him with an abiding impression of impending evil. His first communication was with his most intimate friends, who attempted to persuade him that his vision was nothing more than a troubled dream, induced by some slight physical derangement, and as such unworthy of further thought. But finding all their efforts unavailing, and that the impression, instead of gradually fading from his mind, actually grew stronger, the pastor of the Calvinistic Baptist Church, of which Mr. Morse was a zealous member, granted him permission to occupy the desk of the East Haverhill Calvinistic Church, and there relate the nature of the painful spiritual impression.

A very large audience was assembled on the occasion, and many then present can remember and bear witness to the solemn impression produced by the recital of Mr. Morse's vision, which he gave in simple, earnest language to a following effect: He said he was sitting at the door of his house, about the middle of autumn, one afternoon; the sun was shining brightly over the broad expanse of meadows, and on the dancing waters of the beautiful river flowing between, when suddenly the light became obscured, and thick darkness settled over the scene. For a brief interval the darkness was so great that he could discern nothing, not even the nearest objects; but it gradually gave place to a lurid, yellow glare, partaking of neither day nor night, and attended with a stillness that was awfully oppressive. As the toll-gatherer sat entranced by this wild scene, he heard, swelling out on the silence, the notes of a trumpet. The sound was familiar; it was the signal-horn of an approaching vessel, and he must rise and raise the draw for her passage. But vain were his efforts; he was spell-bound to his seat. Again and again the horn pealed louder and nearer, and now, looming above the bordering trees, appeared the belling topsails of the swift coming vessel; and, mingled with the frequent trumpet-blows, came other sounds and familiar. There could be no mistake, the clank of those great chains of the hoisting screaming of those reluctant hinges. Somebody was raising the draw!

"I turned," said Mr. M., "and looked toward the draw, which was slowly rising, and distinctly saw, turning the great key, the exact figure and likeness of myself! Horror-stricken, I watched the operation of my phantom self. When the draw was about half raised, the spectre suddenly ceased winding, the awful pallor of death spread over the features, and the figure fell heavily upon the bridge. In an instant the scene changed—the apparition, the vessel, the darkness, all disappeared together; the sun was shining brightly, and all looked the same as before the passage of the fearful panorama."

The following paragraph, which appeared in the Essex Gazette about six weeks later, gives the sequel of the vision:

"We regret to learn that Mr. Morse, toll-gatherer at Rock's Bridge, died almost instantly yesterday morning, while in the act of raising the draw for the passage of schooner 'Jase,' of Thomaston, Me. It is supposed that in fitting and ponderous key he ruptured a blood-vessel, which occasioned death. We understand that Mr. M. had a singular vision a few months since, in which every particular attending his death was faithfully represented."

Amongst two hundred and sixty-nine well-authenticated cases supplied to the author by Mr. Charles Partridge, of New York, for insertion in a forthcoming second volume of Modern American Spiritualism, we select the following, which occurred in the experience of one of the author's personal friends. We give the narrative in Mr. Partridge's own words. The narrative is dated 1860:

"One of two young ladies who had always lived together like sisters, was some time since about to depart on a journey. As the hour of departure approached, she became exceedingly sad, and commenced weeping bitterly, and when asked to explain the cause, she told the other young lady and her mother that she was impressed she was now about to leave and see them no more again in this world. They tried to persuade her that this was a mere hysterical fancy, but instead of succeeding, this same impression soon seized first the other young lady, and then the mother, and they all three wept heartily until the carriage came for the one about to depart. The absentee, after being gone some time, at length took sick and died without pre-

viously seeing the friends she had left, as above stated. Not long after this, however, the spirit of the departed one began to make her appearance to the young lady who had been her intimate companion. The spirit would come daily and sit by the other as she was engaged at her sewing, appearing as plainly as she had done while in the material body. Though no attempt was made to communicate with her, the presence of the spirit-form seemed to have a remarkable effect in developing the faculty of prescience in the other, inasmuch as she soon acquired the power of describing, days beforehand, particular events that would occur at a certain specified time. For instance, she would say, 'On such and such a day a person answering to such and such an appearance will come here, and that at precisely such an hour and minute by the clock.'

"At first these predictions were disregarded, but when they continued to be verified day after day, and finally year after year, in numerous instances, the family were compelled to regard them as oracular, and now they never cease to obey the monitions they may receive through this source."

"As recently as a week ago," adds Mr. Partridge, "circumstances again of an accidental character inducing me to turn aside from my road quite suddenly to make a call at the residence of this lady's mother, I found a knife, fork and plate laid for me, and dinner actually waiting, the family prophesying having declared that at ten minutes past the dinner hour a friend of the family's, one corresponding in all respects to my appearance, would call, whom the family would be glad to invite to dinner."

Mr. Partridge also furnished the following incident, subsequently verified by the author:

"Mr. Hector McDonald, of Canada, was recently on a visit to Boston. When he left home his family were enjoying good health, and he anticipated a pleasant journey. The second morning after his arrival in Boston, when leaving his bed to dress for breakfast, he saw reflected in a mirror the corpse of a woman lying in the bed from which he had just risen. Spellbound he gazed with intense feeling, and tried to recognize the features of the corpse, but in vain; he could not even move his eyelids, and felt for the moment deprived of action. He was at last startled by ringing of the bell for breakfast, and sprang to the bed to satisfy himself if what he had seen reflected in the mirror was real or an illusion. He found the bed as he had left it, and on looking again into the mirror, only saw the empty bed reflected. During the day he thought much upon the illusion, and determined the next morning to rub his eyes and feel perfectly sure that he was wide awake before he left his bed. But notwithstanding these precautions, the vision was repeated, with this addition, that he thought he recognized in the corpse some resemblance to the features of his wife."

"In the course of the second day he received a letter from his wife, in which she stated that she was quite well, and hoped he was enjoying himself among his friends. As he was devotedly attached to her, and always anxious for her safety, he supposed his morbid fears had conjured up the vision he had seen, and went about his business as cheerfully as usual. On the morning of the third day, after he had dressed, he found himself in thought in his own house leaning over the coffin of his wife. His friends were assembled, the minister was performing the funeral services, his children wept—he was in the house of death. He followed the corpse to the grave; he heard the earth rumble upon the coffin, he saw the grave filled, and green sods covered over it; yet by some strange power, he could see through the ground the entire form of his wife as she lay in her coffin."

"He looked in the faces of those around him, but no one seemed to notice him; he tried to weep, but the tears refused to flow; his heart felt as hard as a rock. Enraged at his own want of feeling, he determined to throw himself upon the grave, and lie there till his heart should break, when he was recalled to consciousness by a friend who entered the room to call him to breakfast. He started as if awake from a profound sleep, though he was standing before the mirror with a hair-brush in his hand."

"After composing himself, he related to his friend what he had seen, and both concluded that a good breakfast only was wanting to dissipate his unpleasant impressions. A few days afterwards, however, he received the melancholy intelligence that his wife had died suddenly, and the time corresponded with the day he had been startled by the first vision in the mirror. When he returned home he described minutely all the details of the funeral he had seen in the vision, and they corresponded in every item with the facts."

"This case was also reported in the Boston Traveller by a friend of Mr. McDonald's, who, it should be added, knows nothing of Modern Spiritualism or clairvoyance, as most of his life has been spent upon a farm and among forests. It may not be amiss to state that his father, who was a Scotch Highlander, had the gift of second sight."

Few individuals could afford more striking tests of prevision than the author of these papers, whose whole life has been a constant subject of prophetic power, both in her own person, and that of others connected with her. Amongst a vast number of well-authenticated cases in which the circumstances of the prophetic utterance were made known to many witnesses, some of whom are now living, and can testify to the truth of the narrative, the following example is selected as an incontrovertible proof of prophetic power.

About the summer of 1856 the author paid a short visit to an estimable couple residing on their own estate in Long Island, N. Y.

Mr. and Mrs. R. had married late in life, the lady having attained her fortieth year, and her companion being some seven or eight years her senior before their union took place.

Although Mrs. R. entertained the most exalted views of maternity, and anxiously desired to participate in its blessings, it seemed improbable that she should realize her wishes in this respect, hence it was with equal surprise and regret that Mrs. Hardinge heard on the occasion of her visit that this lady, "already well stricken in years," had just buried her first, and, as she believed, her only child of promise, and that the form of a sweet babe who had been lent to the mature mother but a single moment of brief blessed earthly existence lay beneath a little mound of wild thyme in the prairie garden which surrounded the dwelling.

Whilst Mrs. R. was expatiating to her visitor

upon the bitterness which death in this case had infused into her blighted heart, and even as they stood beside the little grave of the lamented babe, Mrs. Hardinge beheld the vision of a wondrously fair child of the age of two years and a half. It was a little girl with sunny hair, rosy cheeks, sweet violet eyes, and a remarkably fine and well developed form, such in fact as might have belonged to an older child, only the secret *know spiritually* that the age was no more than stated above. The fair vision seeming to approach Mrs. R., pulled her dress, and with the most winning tone and gesture looked up into her face and repeated several times "Mamma;" after which she disappeared, leaving the indelible impression on the mind of the seeress that a female child would be born to the mother of precisely such an appearance; that she would live to the age of two years and a half, and then, without decay or change in the vigor of her form or the beauty of her feature, suddenly and almost instantly pass away, disappearing like a quenched lamp—a sunbeam shut out by the irrevocable pall of untimely death.

All this the author communicated unreservedly to the lady, whose well-balanced mind received the prophecy without emotion or excitement.

In the course of the next few days the prediction was communicated to Mr. R. and several members of his family. Those who like himself believed in Spiritualism, attached some importance to its utterance, but Mrs. R., not realizing the full faith of her husband, treated the matter as a pleasant jest, the fulfillment of which was, if not actually impossible, at least one of the wildest improbabilities.

Shortly after this event the family removed to Massachusetts, and on a charming estate some ten miles from Boston (where they at present reside), Mrs. F., the author's only surviving parent, became an inmate of their household.

The prediction above narrated was not forgotten—in fact, it was repeated to so many friends and neighbors that it was known to a large circle of witnesses. Fourteen months after its enunciation, as above detailed, Mrs. F. wrote to her daughter, then lecturing in the West:

"This day the child of your prophecy is born; it is a girl, and will be named Emma. I pray to heaven, for the sake of the glad mother, that the remaining part of the prediction may not be fulfilled."

As time wore on, and the little one grew into singular beauty and intelligence, her appearance more and more fully displayed the specialities of her visionary prototype. Notwithstanding the fact that the mother was a brunette of a marked type, the golden locks and violet eyes of the daughter proved obedience to the spiritual rather than the physiological law, and her whole form manifested the most accurate embodiment of the prophetic promise.

The author frequently saw and learned to love this radiant creature, but in answer to the queries of her attached father and many interested friends and relatives, who began to marvel at the accomplishment of such a vision, she invariably persisted in warning them to prepare for the change which *must* remove her at the period allotted to close her brief but beautiful existence on earth.

The mother never in the most remote way alluded to the prophecy, and seemed to avoid the subject with scrupulous care, and as the little one displayed a more than common vigor of constitution, and never once suffered from the infantile weaknesses that afflict other children, her sanguine friends began to hope the seeds of early corruption could not exist in so fair a bud.

To these pleasing anticipations the prophet of woe invariably but sadly answered: "At two years and a half old this star will disappear from the firmament of mortality forever."

For some two or three months before the fatal period, Mrs. Hardinge had been engaged in a lecturing tour in Western New York, accompanied by her mother, and the excitement consequent upon her occupations and surroundings had entirely banished the child and her destiny from memory until the period arrived for Mrs. F.'s return home, when her daughter proposed to accompany her for a few days' visit.

To make the necessary preparations the author wrote to Mrs. R., and whilst doing so she was suddenly startled by a vision of little Emma standing before her eyes in all her young and healthful beauty, but wearing a bandage round her head, which contrasted strangely with her smiling face and rosy cheeks.

This sight reminded the seeress that the fatal time was approaching and within a week or two of completion, but the picture of the sweet child, seemingly so full of health and vigor, inspired her with courage, and in expressing wishes for the health of the family she wrote: "As to little Emma, I know she is in full health and beauty; she is already an angel."

This letter was received by Mrs. R. at the hour when with deep anguish she was laying the form of her idol in that little casket that contained all that remained of the Child of Prophecy—the now a mere handful of dust and ashes! The morning before, in the pride of rude health and life, the little girl had bounded into the garden to her usual sports. In an hour she was seized with a strong convulsive fit, and without any apparent cause, or the least discoverable symptom of disease or injury, expired in a quick, short spasm, and—that was all. The circumstances of this narrative are known to the whole family circle of Mr. and Mrs. R., besides many others who will readily attest its truth.

A careful consideration of all the circumstances is urged upon the reader, as their totality forms one of the strongest proofs of prophetic revelation, under the most improbable circumstances

its third edition.

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The Anniversary.

The Twenty-Eighth Anniversary of the Advent of Modern Spiritualism: Speech of Dr. H. T. Child at the Celebration in Philadelphia; Exercises at Rochester, N. Y.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

Address by Henry T. Child, M. D.

These Anniversaries of Modern Spiritualism, which in the swift rolling tide of time come to us so rapidly, are fit opportunities for reviewing its history, as well as considering its present condition and prospects.

Spiritualism has proved to be a demonstration that man is a spirit, hence its record is the history of man, not alone from the time of his inception on this little globe, but the history of man on the most ancient of all worlds, far beyond our finite conceptions. This history has been written by the finger of the Infinite upon the tablets of the human soul, and we may read the fragments that belong to our own experiences, or have come to us from others.

We propose giving a brief chapter of this history prior to the advent of Modern Spiritualism, which is distinguished from Ancient Spiritualism by the fact that it is capable of being evoked, since we have learned the necessary conditions—because it is more intelligent, and better understood, because it speaks for itself and answers many of our questions; but here, as in all departments of knowledge, that which we do not know far exceeds that which we do. We date the history of Modern Spiritualism twenty-eight years ago to-night, that being the time in which the first intelligent answers were received, and a regular system of communication adopted. Long before this there had been numerous efforts made to introduce this subject, both on the Eastern and Western continents. One of the most striking of these was that which occurred in this country about the year 1840, and which is familiarly known as Salem Witherell. Those who are acquainted with Modern Spiritualism will readily perceive that this was an effort on the part of spirits to introduce a more intelligent communion between the two worlds. But history shows that it was premature—that it was not at all understood—that the ignorance and bigotry of the people led to such fierce persecutions, imprisonments, tortures and executions, that it was determined by the exiles in spirit life to postpone the attempt until a future and more auspicious period.

The history of this country, as well as that of other nations, abounds with illustrations of these manifestations, interesting accounts of some of which will be found in the work entitled, "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," by our friend Robert Dale Owen.

We design calling attention to an antecedent chapter that occurred among the Shakers, a peculiar people, living in secluded communities, having but little intercourse with the world, and being less known to it. In the year 1830, Frederick W. Evans was so well satisfied of the truths of Spiritualism, as they existed among these people, that he renounced Materialism and Infidelity and joined them, and has been for a long time a prominent Elder among them.

Spiritual manifestations had occurred in the Shaker societies from their origin, as they have in the commencement of almost all religious societies; but in the autumn of 1827, two young women, Eliza Gibbs and Ann Mariah Goff, at Waterbury, near the city of Albany, N. Y., were entranced, and described wonderful visions of spirits and spirit life; many others soon became entranced in the same manner. These trances lasted for hours, and sometimes days; they saw and described the spirit world, its inhabitants, their dwellings, employments, pleasures and pains. All the ordinary phenomena of trance mediumship, now so common, were manifested by these, in their descriptions of the spirit land, which they called the heavens; they would impudently exhort all by standards to free themselves from sin, as an appropriate work for entrance into these beautiful habitations.

"Soon," says Elder Giles B. Avery, from whom we have the above account, "the work spread throughout the eighteen societies of believers in the second coming of Christ, in the female. Its general character was manifested in extraordinary operations of the physical bodies affecting all the faculties; sometimes administering remarkable gifts of healing to the body; at others producing such strength as to enable the subject to endure the most severe and protracted exertions; sometimes taking away the power of speech for weeks, and at others enabling them to speak in several different tongues, entirely unknown to them. Thousands of curious songs were given by the spirits, the poetry and music sometimes really impressive and very interesting.

"After a time multitudes of spirits of different nations appeared, and spoke and wrote in their own languages, and caused the mediums to present the habits of the different nationalities. These manifestations were so real and lifelike that none could dispute them. We found great difficulty in controlling the manifestations and keeping them in proper bounds, for many undeveloped spirits came.

In the year 1827 a series of communications were received, some of which have been published under the name of "The Roll Book," which contains some very excellent articles, bearing the most emphatic testimony against sin, the lusts of the flesh and worldly pride. "Great purification of the people was the general result of the spirit manifestations. For several years before Modern Spiritualism appeared these manifestations were mostly closed in all the societies. Prophecies had been made that in a short time similar manifestations would appear among the world's people. These have been abundantly and strikingly verified. It was prophesied that the climax of the work in the world would be marvelous admonitions to sinners, discriminating revelations to the ungodly who revel in unrighteousness, attended with great conviction for sin and repentance of the same. Multitudes are the prophecies that have been and are being fulfilled, both national and local, that were given among the Shakers during this period."

Another writer among these people, Chaney Dibble, remarks: "I can say in honor to Spiritualism among us, it has produced pure and holy teachings, free from all immorality. Our books of inspiration are repetitions of Christian principles, all having reference to purity, temperance, industry, peace and love. The manifestations were different, proving that 'the spirit of the prophets,' as in olden times, 'was subject to the prophets,' and that the character of the medium had an influence upon the communications coming through them."

Their experiences were the same as those which we as Spiritualists have had: ignorant and undeveloped spirits came in great numbers, and controlled the mediums, as well as the wise and good. Brother Dibble continues, "We have had no table-tipping, moving of materials or materializations, no dark circles; every proceeding was subjected to the severest criticism, in open view. Between the years 1827 and 1844 most of these manifestations occurred. We were told that the spirit manifestations then amongst us would go out into the earth with mighty power; that the whole community would be agitated by that power; it has gone out as was predicted. We put very little confidence in native spirits, or those on the earthly plane, yet we received them as forerunners of a better class of elevated spirits and angels who came revealing the secrets of our hearts, and searching us by the light of truth, so that we often trembled. The query arose in our minds, shall we condemn Spiritualism and all its productions, because some mediums have proved false? The answer was: No! There are eternal truths written in these manuscripts that are self-evident and undeniable, although mingled with error. So we learned the great lesson that spirits, like mortals, are not infallible; but truth is mighty and worthy to be acknowledged, let it come from what source it may. This was qualifying us to accept the true and reject the false in all human productions both ancient and modern, so far as by living the Christian life we have gained wisdom and spiritual discernment; for none can judge truly, while under the influence of any evil passion, whether they be in the body or out of it. The inspiration must be of primitive Christianity; therefore all that conflicts with the principles of love, peace, purity, industry, temperance, patience, hope and charity is absolutely erroneous. It is only those whose constant aim and practice is to walk in the light who learn to see truly spiritual things."

We have quoted largely from these writers, and we can understand that they would rejoice in the fulfillment of the predictions made among them. It must be evident to all that there were advantages in introducing Spiritualism through such conditions as these communities presented, where the mediums, even if they were not understood, would be guarded from the rude assaults of those who were entirely ignorant of conditions; such a school as this was of the highest importance.

Let us now turn to the present condition of Spiritualism. During these twenty-eight years it has moved on, undulating waves, but its progress has always been onward, and one wave of manifestation has rolled over humanity after another, until to-day millions of earth's children rejoice to sit under its broad canopy, in the consciousness that life here and hereafter is one and the same, continuous and unbroken, that nothing can ever be lost from it. All the loved ones who have gone out from our midst, the old and the young, the beautiful, or those in the middle walks of life, are "not lost, but gone before."

Thousands there are to-day, the whole of whose souls would have gone out in darkness if it had not been for the blessed revelations which are constantly coming from the land of the hereafter. The sting of death has been removed, and in the light of the new revelation millions look calmly upon the change, which has been so long dreaded, as the means which shall unite again the severed ties of earthly kindreds and friendships. Mediumship has been extended in all directions, new recruits are constantly coming forward to join the ranks of earth's redeemers, the little measure of fraud incident to the conditions of humanity is slowly but surely melting away beneath the sunlight of truth and the advancing revelations. In the language of Thomas Starr King, through Katie B. Robinson, "They that have waited patiently and have watched earnestly for the light of this truth that has dawned upon the people, will be rewarded. They that have been persecuted, and have passed through trials, and sickness, and sorrow, will be rewarded. They that believe in the Divine Spirit that breathes over his children to-day shall be rewarded by seeing and knowing that their angels, pure and good, are walking in their midst, even as their Father, has prepared a home for them, shall be rewarded by coming into a knowledge of that home of beauty, peace and love, and there they will learn that those who have suffered most in this life have rejoiced more beautifully for the other."

The time is approaching when all honest mediums will demand that they shall be tested, and they will not be willing to submit to the influence of spirits unless they are able to give such evidence as will satisfy the honest inquirers after truth. When this is the case, then will the manifestations come in broad daylight, and in such a manner as to remove all doubt, and establish the fact that the revelations are as they profess to be, from the spirit-world. The time is near at hand when the intercourse of spirits with mortals shall become such a tangible reality that there will no longer be any reasonable ground for doubt; your loved ones shall walk in your midst, realized and recognized in the most absolute manner, giving you such satisfactory evidence that all may learn the truth.

Beautiful thoughts! sanguine prophecy! yet who shall say it is not true? The revelations of the last half century are but the beginning of the grand work which is going on. Spirits and mortals are working together, and as there is a steady progress on the part of both, these things must inevitably follow. Let us, then, with earnestness of purpose continue our part of the work, and our experiences will be like those of the Shakers, that the highest teachings of the spirits consist in calling on us to show our love to God by our love to our fellow-man. We will close with one of their songs:

Pure love, pure love,
Blessed seal of discipleship,
In time we feel the members
Of the world to come.

We feel that the angel hosts are near,
Lifting us up to a higher sphere;
Hence we seek to purify the earth,
Into a new and heavenly birth.

Rochester, N. Y.

The meeting—which occurred at the residence of Mrs. Amy Post—was called to order by Mr. C. Austin. Rev. Mr. Ottoway was chosen President, and Sarah A. Burtis, Secretary. An able address was then given by Mrs. Helen Millington, an extract from which is herewith subjoined. After listening to the address, the President and several others made appropriate remarks in regard to the dawning of this light in Rochester, when, by request, Mrs. Post gave the reason why the term of the "Rochester Knockings" had so generally obtained.

The meeting closed with an inspirational invocation by Mrs. Eliza Allen and an original poem by Mrs. L. C. Smith.

SARAH A. BURTON, Sec'y.
Rochester, April 10th, 1876.

EXTRACTS FROM OPENING ADDRESS BY MRS. HELEN MILLINGTON.

"Progression is the unchangeable fiat of Deity; order is Heaven's first law. There are no clogging wheels in Nature's revolutions, but wheel within wheel, circle within circle, sphere within sphere, all things finite in Nature move together in such divine harmony as prove to us the infiniteness of our Great Creator. All things tend upward, toward heavenward. There is no end, still in Nature. Turn our eyes whither we may, we find her mile-posts marking time's cycles and earth's progression. In the early dawn of creation, when the bright morning stars sang together, earth was one vast, arid wilderness. Sons upon sons have come and gone since that first dawn of light, 'Let there be light!' and in response, from the quickened womb of chaos, the primal sun burst upon the darkened earth and opened wide the gates of day. The east grew rosy in his embrace; shadows and darkness disappeared, warmth and brightness filled all space; with his coming the skies were penciled with matchless blue and spangled with glowing stars; earth's bare, brown bosom became tinted with emerald and studied with bloom. Over all reigned that divine stillness which makes silence eloquent. Onward rolled the wheels of time, until man came upon the stage of being, and whether he sprang upon the earth at a bound, or whether through many and varied evolutions and re-incarnations he has grown into being, it matters not in this connection, since we find upon his brow the signet of God, the seal of sonship, the stamp of divinity."

Tracing the absurd ideas of God, she compared the sun-worshippers to the blind followers of the so-called Christian religion, and yielded to the Pagan palm of reason, declaring that the first duty of Spiritualists was "to dissipate the old false teachings of theology—that we are but dust, are worms of the earth, unworthy God's notice—and to teach man in their stead that he is divine; that instead of a groveling worm, he is an inspiring emanation of divinity, originating from that Infinite Centre of Life, and that he must return at last to that source from whence he sprang; though the way be rough and thorny, though he grope in a mental darkness worse than Egypt's night, the day dawneth at last, and like poor wandering sons and daughters, prodigals from every clime, we will gather together under the old roof tree, where the roof is the bright

blue sky, the homestead is God's universe, the members are the human family."

Treating all teaching in the light of reason, the speaker said: "This is an age of thought, ay, the age of reason. Thought is the grandest force of our day, and it is a privilege to live in these grand progressive times; the inspirations and revelations of today are as naturally imbibed and appropriated by many of us, as babies do the mother's milk. The consequence is growth, expansion, free thought. The cobwebs of ignorance are being swept from our mental horoscope, floods of light are pouring in upon us. The iron hammer of materialism is shattering theological idols; the sword of fanaticism is cleaving right and left, regardless whether the clasp be belong to the high priest's servant, or the high priest himself."

Speaking of the ladder of love which Jacob saw, and which had never been withdrawn, she adverted to the many beautiful spiritual truths as the messages of glad tidings which spirits are bringing to earth: to the transition of our friends into spirit-life, and their return to us; to the decision in which skeptics hold our beautiful philosophy, pitying us for our delusion, and said: "As well may the little star which twinkles in the blue vault of night, pity the bright golden beams of that orb of light, the sun, by whose effulgence their own feeble rays are eclipsed. As well may the little rivulet pity the mighty ocean to which it is wending its way to be lost therein."

Referring to the many "Incidents and Illustrations in sacred history of Spiritualism, of communion and ministrations by spirits," she asked what the Bible would be without these facts and incidents? A dry, tasteless, lifeless husk, that is as worthless as the shells we burn when we have extracted the rich kernels therefrom. She declared, "It is only by the aid of Modern Spiritualism that the richly laden pages of past inspiration can be understood."

Speaking of the rapid spread of Modern Spiritualism, she asserted that the wings of the morning, under spirit direction, had borne the truth onward, that it was so selective and contagious, as the churches charged, because it was a natural religion, a religion suited to the needs of humanity; it had not only won the best men and women, people of highest thought and culture—had not only swept through the halls of the great palaces of the rich, but beyond to the peasant's cot, and was still sweeping onward like a mighty, relentless avalanche, overleaping barriers, spurning obstacles, laughing at impossibilities, and would yet throw the clearest light on the dark sayings of Scripture.

She then made an earnest appeal in behalf of our poor persecuted media, who had been chastened and fitted by their terrible crucifixions, and forced through fiery furnaces into the ranks of the world's workers and saviors. Alluding to this anniversary, she said the so-called Christian religion was eighteen centuries old, while Modern Spiritualism had reached to the Isles of the South Sea, and she declared that the Christian religion had been waiting, this babe of twenty-eight years, yet in its swaddling clothes, had gained a firm foothold; and it seemed fitting that Rochester Spiritualists should meet here to commemorate this day, under the roof of two able and faithful workers in this grand and glorious cause. "When our beautiful philosophy was a by-word and reproach our hosts and her ascended husband became its firm adherents, and ever after bore their testimony to its truth, despite the world's sneer or frown. Together in this home they lived and wrought as noble, self-sacrificing toilers in the good work."

Need I tell you of the many rebuffs the scornful world gave them for their devotion to spiritual truth and light? How this home has ever been the refuge of the tempest-tossed media? how by kind words and willing hands they have ministered unto them, and sent them on strengthened and girded to renew their work? Need I tell you of the going forth of Mrs. Post with the Fox sisters, and that here in Corinthian Hall, where another countless, fearless woman has lately poured forth eloquently unpopular truths, she, our hostess, and the timid young sisters, barely escaped injury from the maddened, jeering populace, and must be guarded to her own door by the city police? I would gladly rehearse these facts, which have now become historical, but I cannot. A more eloquent tongue than mine must do justice to this theme. I can only remind you, friends, that the home in which we meet is consecrated ground; that, as far as the teachings and history of Modern Spiritualism have gone, the homes of Isaac and Amy Post are known, loved and honored."

PSYCHOGRAPHS.

BY ALLEN PUTNAM.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I hasten to inform you that last evening, April 17th, five out of eight trials at Mr. B. P. Brown's room, 863 Washington street, for obtaining pictures in total darkness, were successful. He and myself were the only visible persons present. Preliminary to each trial he took a plate from my hand, selected, examined and rubbed by me, and in my presence he prepared it for reception of a photograph. At each trial we went to the camera in company, and I seated myself at the front, or tube end of the instrument, and he at the other end. The cap of the tube was under my sole and immediate inspection and care, and I know that it was on the tube throughout the entire period of the trials—two hours—from 8 to 10 P. M. Therefore no light could possibly enter the camera.

The first, second and third trials for ferro-types, barely induced to further efforts. The fourth gave the head and shoulders of what may be a flat-head Indian. The fifth also was a burlesque upon humanity, full-length, nude, tall, with both arms and one leg—both uplifted and half formed—face distinct, uplifted and gazing at some object above, in form like a spread umbrella. The sixth was dim, but apparently like two youthful heads resting against each other. The seventh was on glass, was a distinct and expressive face of a female of middle age, but the negative was not fit to print from. The eighth, also on glass, presented a beautiful female in early womanhood in great distinctness. The negative is good, and copies are to be worked off. That some pictures are not photographs, and may be called psychographs, was proved last evening.

April 18, 1876.

New Publications.

THE HOPES OF THE HUMAN RACE, HEREAFTER AND HERE, by Frances Power Cobbe, is a volume from a distinguished English authoress, containing a preface referring specially to Mr. Mill's Essay on Religion, The Life after Death, in two parts, an address entitled, Doomed to be Saved, and the Evolution of the Social Sentiment. Three of the above papers are reprints from The Theological Review, and all are the powerful productions of an original mind, that is gifted with rare insight, possesses thoroughly trained powers, and has a facility and force of expression which are rivaled by those of few even eminent writers on liberal subjects. For sale by James Campbell, Boston.

Among "Loring's Tales of the Day" IS THE LUCKY DISAPPOINTMENT, by Florence Murray, which is a tale in fact for rapid and desultory reading, on the sofa, or in the car.

WATER WOLF, a story of the Revolution, by Elizabeth S. Thayer, is a tale founded on incidents connected with the battle of Trenton, and is published in a very neat style by Claxton, Remsen & Heflinger, of Philadelphia.

HEAVEN is the title of volume two of the "Swedenborg Library," from the same house, and in condensed and consecutive chapters embodies the complete doctrine of Heaven as set forth in the visions of the famous seer, Emanuel Swedenborg. The popularity of this series is richly deserved by the pains taken by the editor, B. F. Barrett, and by the taste and skill manifested by the enterprising publishers.

PHOENIX, and other Poems, by Henry Pride, published by J. Burns, London, is a collection of verses of wonderful power. Spiritualism receives in them striking illustration. The volume is richly decorated by Gerald Massey, the author publishing, in his preface, "to bring nearer to the time when Spiritualism shall have the close study of the best."

Mrs. Seaver's Seances.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Sunday evening I attended a seance at Mrs. Seaver's, 31 Bromley Park, at which an unusual manifestation (to me at least) occurred. The Indian, Honeymoon, came out of the cabinet in an entirely new attitude from what I ever saw her assume before, looking sick, and moving about slowly and as if in pain. Her feet were swollen, and altogether she presented a very forlorn appearance as she appealed to us for sympathy in behalf of her especial medium, Mrs. H—, who I learned was then confined to her house, through illness, some distance off. Mr. Brightman, the conductor, told us that since Honeymoon's medium had been sick the spirit had always presented herself in this way, and that his own feet had become swollen after some of these visits, wherein Honeymoon had made passes from her own crippled limbs in the direction of his.

The spirit of a lady I had known in New York, who had passed away some forty years ago, beckoned me to come to her at the window of the cabinet, and after a pretty certain recognition, she came out twice in full view of the company. She was most elaborately dressed from head to foot in what appeared to be, both to the sight and touch, the richest kind of material, resembling black silk velvet, heavily embroidered and trimmed with costly lace. Her hat was also very tastefully and richly ornamented.

This was in exact accordance with the earthly tastes and appearance of the lady, who was a reigning beauty in New York, and dressed very expensively and in exquisite taste. To have purchased such a dress as she exhibited Sunday evening I think would have exhausted a much fuller exchequer than Mrs. Seaver possesses, or ever possessed. This spirit lady was less in height than the medium, and more embonpoint in form, which was characteristic of her in life—but still, like most spirits who manifest at Mrs. Seaver's, I thought I could detect a slight resemblance in her features to those of the medium from whom the elements of materialization were no doubt largely drawn.

In conversation with John King (the conductor of the circle on the spirit side,) through the mediumship of little Willie, who speaks through Mrs. Seaver, I learned that he was willing that professional skeptics should examine all the surroundings of the circle-room and cabinet provided some truthful Spiritualist was with them at the time; and further, that he would permit them to be present at the seances if they would occupy positions outside of the circle, apart from the wire, and permit themselves, after being searched, to be securely tied hands and feet and placed in a strong wire cage with a rope or small chain put tightly about their neck, and fastened to an iron ring in the wall. King said that the magnetism of such persons operated on the powers of the spirits, and weakened and confused the manifestations very much the same as the presence of a venomous reptile coiled at his feet might well be supposed would effect a lecturer in his exposition of any of the sciences.

This I have no doubt is true, as many of us have learned that thought meets spirit out of the form, with like injurious effect that a threat or blow does whilst it exists in the body.

Even when confined, as described, Willie said malignant influences might be brought to bear on the medium, that would prove more or less disastrous to the manifestations, though in a less degree than if the professional testers were left loose, and thus keep the medium and her guides under constant apprehension of an attack, or other mischievous device.

I have myself noticed (as Mr. Brightman told me was formerly always the case) that when the Indian spirits first present themselves at the opening of the cabinet, preparatory to coming outside, they frequently cast a keen, searching glance into the faces of some who are present in the circle, as if striving to divine their real character and thoughts, before they ventured forth—as in case of being violently laid hands upon, with a strong malignant will-force to back the assault, great injury, and perhaps the death of their medium, might be the result. Hence the necessity of the wire netting and ring in the wall.

Since the above was written on the 17th inst., I have attended another seance at Mrs. Seaver's held on Tuesday, the 18th inst., where a very harmonious circle of ten persons had convened. As on Sunday, many spirit-forms presented themselves very distinctly; among others an attending Indian female spirit, who purported to be (and was recognized as such,) the familiar attendant of a young man medium, who was present. The Indian was much shorter and lighter in form than the medium, and was remarkably agile and graceful in her movements, and shook hands with me twice, as naturally as any one in the form could have done. Two little children from three to five years old, a boy and girl that had appeared on Sunday evening, again opened the aperture in the curtain and peered into the faces of those present and retired. "Willie" said they were burned in a fire at Chicago, and came alone to look for their parents, and always cried when they had to go away without finding them. Two spirits purporting to be daughters of mine showed their faces and busts at the window quite plainly, though the materialization was not perfect as regarded their features. The sailor boy came dressed as usual in his blue middie uniform, and walked out boldly, slapping several of our hands with his, with boyish, frolicsome energy. The light of the room was about equal to that given by the half moon in a clear atmosphere. Upon the whole, as on Sunday evening, there was on Tuesday afternoon more logical evidence of a future existence, and a clearer elucidation of its character conveyed to the minds present, than has probably emanated from all the pulpits in Christendom during the century.

In conclusion, let me say that I believe Spiritualism cannot be again banished from earth, but that if it ever is, it will be in consequence of the insane attempts that are now so widely indulged in by both friends and foes in relation to testing mediums by physical contrivances, which places it, in the language of Scripture, in the power of the "violent to take the kingdom of heaven by force" in very many instances, wherein apparent or real frauds are induced by virtue of laws not yet comprehended, through the presence of those who are seeking for falsehood rather than truth. These occasional failures are heralded to the world in every secular and religious journal in the land, whilst the genuine manifestations that go to establish the truth in ten or hundredfold instances, are carefully excluded from their columns. The fact is that the strongest spiritual tests are always to be found at seances where no tests are sought for. THOMAS R. HAZARD.

Parker House, Boston, April 19th, 1876.

Spiritualist Meetings in Boston.

ROCHESTER HALL.—Children's Progressive Lyceum No. 1 holds its sessions every Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock, 720 Washington street, commencing at 10 o'clock. The public are cordially invited. J. B. Hatch, Conductor; Julia M. Carpenter, Sec'y.

The Ladies' Aid Society will until further notice hold its meetings at Rochester Hall, on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday evening, each week, Mrs. John Woods, President; Miss M. L. Barrett, Secretary.

LUTHERIAN HALL.—Free Public Circle are held at this hall, No. 3 Winter street, every Sunday at 10 o'clock A. M., and 2 o'clock P. M., by many of the best test mediums and speakers in the city. Good music provided. Admittance free.

RAYMOND HALL.—Spiritual Meetings are held at this hall, 172 Main street, clear away from District, Sunday afternoons, at 3 o'clock. These exercises consist of speaking and tests by different mediums. Admittance free.

Rochester Hall.—The Children's Lyceum regularly meet at this place, will hold a May-day festival. Particulars next week.

The Lyceum convened as usual on Sunday, April 15th. There was a good attendance, and general interest was manifested. The speakers and readers for the occasion were Mr. Mann, Ernestine Eldridge, Fredly Bowman, Mabel Edison, Alice Bond, Johnny Balch, Lizzie Thomson, Ludwig Gerhardt, He' on M. Dill, Florence Hall and Carrie Osgood. A song by Mr. Fairbanks and a piano solo by Nellie Thomson, gave increased interest to the exercises. Mr. Currier and Prof. Carpenter made brief addresses to the children, and Mr. Hatch added a few words which were full of earnestness and feeling. The session was a pleasant one. JULIA M. CARPENTER, Cor. Sec'y.

Paine Hall.—Dr. Dewey was announced to lecture at this hall on the subject "After Spiritualism, What?" on the morning of the 10th, but ill health prevented his fulfilling the engagement, and the audience which met to listen resolved itself into an active conference, which proved so interesting that it was continued in the afternoon. The remarks of the speakers were fashioned in reply to the question expressed in the lecture subject above given, and the exercises were participated in by Dr. H. F. Gardner, Horace Seaver (Editor of the Boston Investigator), Miss Eliza Allen, Robert Cooper, Messrs. Row, Bradford, Verity, Kirkwood, and others. Miss Hattie W. Harrington also evinced the morning meeting with the voice of song.

Charleston District.—Raymond Hall.—Sunday afternoon, April 16, a very interesting meeting was held in this place. Several very fine tests were given, which were recognized by persons in the audience who were strangers to the mediums, Miss Clara Mayo, of Wakefield, and Mrs. Balch, of Somerville. Miss Clara Mayo, who is only 17 years of age, and who has been known to the public for but a few months, is one of the most reliable mediums now before the people. As she is about to leave her native State for California, we can recommend her to all who may wish to secure the services of a good one for another meeting in the city, at 3 P. M., when Mrs. Balch and other good mediums will be present. C. R. M.

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