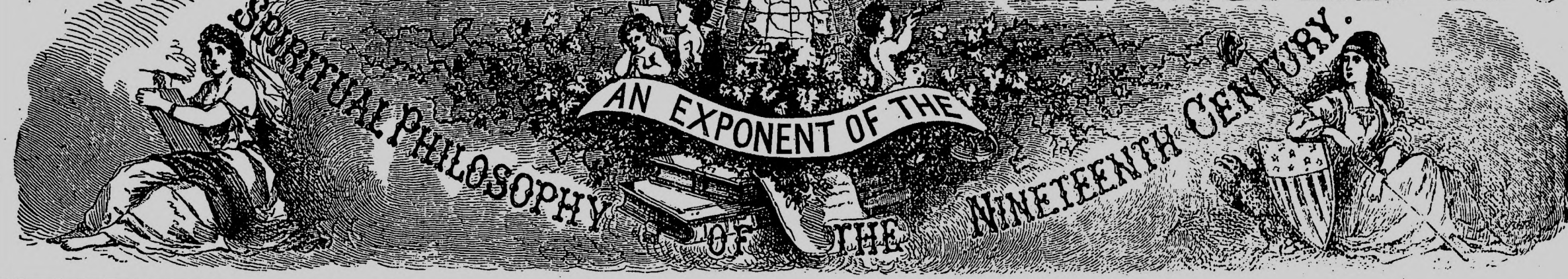


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The Rostrum.

PETER'S VISION FROM THE HOUSETOP.

A Lecture Delivered at Republican Hall, New York City, Sunday Evening, Dec. 15th, 1878, by MRS. NELLIE J. T. BRICHAM.

(Stenographically reported for the Banner of Light by William Innes.)

INVOCATION.

Oh, thou who art the presence of harmony divine, that spirit of Wisdom and of Love, our Heavenly Father, we bring our thoughts to thee, lifting them from that which burdens them, taking them out of the tangled places in life's great skein; and in the light of thy love we would find the inspiration which is the food of our spirits, our life, and the bread of heaven to our souls. Thou knowest, oh Father, how deep are the troubles that children bear; how dark the nights through which they wander, praying to thee. Thou knowest how oftentimes their hope grows pale and droops like a flower that the frost has touched. We need not bring before thee and number one by one our troubles and our crosses; for far better than we thou knowest how deep are the sorrows and how heavy are the burdens we bear. We need not tell thee of the waves and discords, but thou seest deep down into the water; thou knowest how far the darkness and the storm descend.

Oh, Father, trusting then in thy infinite knowledge, thy broadest comprehension, we pray to thee that something of thy heavenly harmony may flow into our lives like a blessed baptism of strength and understanding. We pray, oh Father, in our weakness that we may feel the strong arm which ever sustains; the clasping hand that will never loosen to allow us to slip away into everlasting loss and destruction. We pray to thee that that love which is unchanging, unflinching, wise and perfect forever, may be felt in our natures; but there are times, oh Father, thou knowest it well, when it seems to thy children that thy love is yet as far away from us, though it enfolds us, as the blue sky enfolds the earth. Oh, thou who givest light unto the very heart of the blossoms, thou who dost send light down, shimmering through the leaves of the forest, thou who dost come in all things in Nature with the touch of thy inspiration, may we feel that thy love is not only over us, and under us and around, but through us all, forever. Teach us, oh Father, thou who dost touch the angel lips with inspiration, thou who dost bring to the waters of life healing, teach us this, oh God, our Heavenly Father, that thy love cannot fail; that thy wisdom protects us; that we are to show ourselves more worthy of thy love and of thy protection by the love we bear each other. Teach us to be kind, to be charitable and to be forgiving and to be patient, and through all this life to find the good that lies beyond the shadows of earthly discord, to find the hidden good of manhood and of womanhood and to bring it into life and reality.

Teach us, oh God, how to work, so that we may help others; that the dark paths may be illuminated; that the vexed questions may be settled; that no longer doubts, dark and fearful, may lie in the pathway of thy children—between them and heaven. Help us to work together, and however small may be the good that we accomplish, oh Father, grant that there may be some good that we can do. So trusting thee, so praying for harmony, and patience, and charity, and peace, we would love thee, and seek to obey thee forever. Amen.

LECTURE.

You have heard announced the subject chosen for this evening, but unless that which precedes it and that which follows it is also as well-known, much of the meaning of that subject is lost. Therefore we will read to you from the tenth chapter of Acts:

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band. A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter.

He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually.

And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour.

And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance.

And he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descended unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

But Peter said, Not so, Lord: for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

This was done thrice: and the vessel was removed up again into heaven.

Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate.

And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

And as he sought to go down, he fell, and came to the earth: and he saw the four-footed beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the sea, and the vessels of the earth.

And he saw that all these things were cleansed, and that he was to eat of them.

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But suppose in one place you read, "God is love," and in another place "God is a consuming fire," what will you do with that? Suppose in one place you read, "Man hath no preeminence above a beast;" and then in another that "this mortal shall put on immortality," what will you do with that? Suppose in one place you read "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" then suppose you read in another, "If a man strike thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also," "Render good for evil, and blessings for curses," what will you do with that? Suppose in one place you read, "Moses talked to God face to face," and in another, "No man hath seen God at any time." Are these contradictions? It looks a little like it, but if you seek to understand, you will find that instead of being further from God, and from God's words, you come so close to him that through these ancient tests it appears as though you heard the bidding of your Father evermore bringing to you the manifestations of his truth and his love.

You read that God is merciful, that God is love. Is there anything plainer than that? And you find in this chapter which we have read to you, that God is no respecter of persons. Yet in the Old Testament you read, there was a certain ark prepared, the ark of the covenant, wherein in a certain sacred place (the holy of holies) the blessing of God rested. Now, it was deemed desirable to remove the ark from the place where it was to another place, where the Jews could bring to it their devotion; and while it was being moved from one place to another, it being drawn by oxen, one of the oxen stumbled, and the ark not resting securely tottered, and a man put forth his hand to stay it, wishing to keep it from falling—wishing to keep it from destruction, and you are told the wrath of God came upon that man, and smote him dead; that God—

—he who has written upon the tables of stone, "Thou shalt not kill,"—actually killed the man for it! For trying to save from injury that which was most sacred in the eyes of the Lord! Now, what would you think of such a thing as that?

Again you read of Jephthah, the one who seems prayed for victory, as any great general might, and who, when he was going forth to battle, promised God if he returned to him the victory that when he returned to his home, whatsoever came out first to greet him he would consecrate as a burnt offering to the Lord, because of the victory. When he returned rejoicing from his victory which God had given him, what came out to meet him? Was it a lamb? Was it a kid? Was it a dove? Was it a lamb? More than that, it was his child, his daughter, and the Bible tells you (it speaks of the whole matter in that way), that he kept her for ever which he had vowed unto the Lord. There is no condemnation in that word. What will you do with it? Why, with us to see what these things, but rather try a little. It seems to you that you have found a contradiction, you can straighten the tangled threads, if you only wish to do it, if you try and do it. But one says, is it not a waste of time? No, indeed. If you can take a tangled place from the skein of any person's thought, you are doing good.

If you can straighten any crooked path of faith you are doing good. It may be you understand them for yourselves, but there are others that do not, and that which they should understand is a stumbling block in the laws of progress. Help them! You can afford to do it; and it is the only way that you can repay Heaven for all it has done for you. By helping humanity you make the truest payment for all the good that has been showered upon your lives.

You say, "Before you proceed with this can you straighten these tangled places yourselves?" In the first place, when men said God, or the wrath of God, is a consuming fire, they judged by what they saw of God. They saw that which you call compensation. They did not see that under the bitter was the sweet; they did not see that under the thorns the rosebuds were unfolding. No! They only saw what they called anger; but anger was the human term which they laid, like a black cover, over God's love and on God's justice. That explains it. And when you read that no man hath seen God at any time, and that Moses saw God and talked to him, you can easily understand that the guardian angels came to mortals, and that they did not know the difference between them and God. Take this passage, or this chapter, which we have read a part of to you, and you find that when Cornelius had been told by the spirit, or the angel, or man, for it is one and the same thing, that came to him when Peter came to him, he was so full of superstitious adoration that the first thing he did was to fall down at his feet and worship him. Now, do you not see there was something in his nature, in his superstition, that made him believe Peter was more than a man—that he was a God. But Peter lifted him up and said: "I myself also am a man." So, in those olden days, when they saw the angels present with them, as Cornelius expressed it, they looked upon them—these messengers of heaven—and believed they had seen God and talked to him. Now, is it not better to say that it is the mere evidence that men did not understand; and, as we told you this morning, when they saw the servant of God in all the glory of his lustre they thought it must be the king. They did not know that this divine and limitless king can never be beheld by the finite, save as the finite can see parts or manifestations of God. Then when you read these olden narrations you can find how human superstition has destroyed many things; and then in what seems to you to be an error, or contradiction, if you look at it closely you will find the traces of humanity all along the paths of the past; and, by learning to discriminate, you will love the truth far more, because you understand it; and it is then, when you feel it in your reason and your thought, that you gain the full strength and benefit of the past.

When Christianity came, when the word of Jesus of Nazareth had been done, and as these people had been instructed, how natural it was for them to carry out the old Jewish characteristics. You know the Jews believed themselves to be the peculiar people—the best on the face of the earth—in fact, the only people worth saving; and this egotism which characterized them does not characterize them alone, it seems to us, but we find it all through humanity; it is a certain element that goes to the surface almost everywhere. Now, when the Jews believed themselves to be marked by the Divine Presence and set apart from the rest of the earth, so when the Christians first gathered together in their small numbers, and with their limited strength, they believed that they were the only ones that heaven had vouchsafed its revelations to; and when, at last, Peter received this message upon the housetop, falling into a trance and receiving the vision from heaven, he was taught that God was no respecter of persons; he was taught that he must not call anything common or unclean that God had cleansed. He was taught this broad and beautiful esoteric and eclectic religion of which we have spoken to you so many times—not a narrowing religion. All that narrows humanity throws out the best of that life—it will keep the mean, you may be sure of that, but the best and the purest will be outside the limit. So it resulted that in the vision of Peter, strange as it was, yet heavenly in its design, he was taught to turn away from his Jewish exclusive-

ness and to go to those with whom the Jews would not naturally associate; and he was taught that heaven had regarded these people whom the sectarian Jew had once despised.

Now there is one other point to which we refer occasionally, and we would like to repeat to you now: you know there are persons who hold that angels can come back to mortals; but angels in their definition are intelligences who never lived on earth, but are beings specially created in another sphere or phase of existence and have certain prescribed duties. We say many persons hold this theory. We believe that the persons called Adventists generally believe it, and in fact many sectarians hold the same idea; they believe that angels are not the spirits of their sisters, brothers, husbands and wives, their little children, or their friends who have passed into the other world; and while they hold fast to this belief they forget that in the presence of Jesus, Peter, James and John, there appeared Moses and Elias who talked with Jesus, they forget that one of the prophets came back to John the revelator, they forget all these things. But in this chapter which we have read to you is one of the best expressions of this particular point that we can bring to you; it is this: you know first it is spoken of the presence that came to Peter as an angel; it is spoken of as an angel, and it is also spoken of as a man; now that is correct, for each term is correct, there is no contradiction in them; it was the spirit of man he is described as appearing in. Let any good psychometrist or clairvoyant speak to you of what they see, and they will tell you of a certain atmosphere or aura which surrounds a person, and if the person is good or true, that aura is bright. It has an outer brightness that transfigures them, even as Jesus was transfigured upon the mountain; if the person is evil, then the surrounding is like the shadowy twilight or the darkness of night. When you read of that olden parable of the wedding feast and of the one who had not that wedding garment on, who was taken and cast into outer darkness, the outer darkness spoken of is a literal thing; it is that which surrounds you while in the body, if your lives are degraded and sinful, and it is that which is apparent to those who can see a spirit after it has laid aside its outer garments of flesh. So when the Bible tells you that in the presence that came to Peter in his trance upon the housetop (and also to Cornelius previously) he (Peter) saw a spirit, we would call it a disembodied spirit, the spirit of man; and it was an angel—for an angel is only a messenger, and this certainly was a messenger. It seems that the whole meaning of the communication and of the vision was this: that men should not cultivate that narrow, sectarian exclusiveness, that they should not foster that aristocratic, narrow pride, which shuts out humble virtues, and gives to the Pharisee his prayer: "I thank Thee, that I am as praying; but ye men know not what ye speak."

Oh, friends, the meaning of that vision, the meaning of the inspiration which came to Peter, and when the spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles, ought to be with you to-day, written in your thought in letters of light. It seems that when in the house of this century the people had been gathered together to hear what Peter was to say, even then you read the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and they spake, these Gentiles, in different tongues. Then the Jews wondered much, for they did not believe this gift of mediumship could come to any one aside from the Jews. Then they remembered the olden words of prophecy, that John might indeed baptize them with water, but that they should afterward be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Now in that particular connection it means the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of Holiness; it means the inspiration of that particular form of mediumship which lifts human character, which makes the soul of man better and stronger in all that is noble, right, good and pure. But how was the vision remembered? Follow on the history of sectarianism through the past, the history of religion—understanding religion, however, to be something high and holy. Did you ever think, friends, of the wide difference in music oftentimes between the words and the strains in which they are rendered? You know how beautiful an anthem may be! You know how your soul may be lifted to heaven by music and the words it breathes; but you also know that some grand music in the world may be wedded to words that are trivial—words that are even degrading; but it always seems as though the music soared still in the heavens; the words could not drag the music down!

So in the past: religion and sectarianism have not been wedded in harmony; sometimes, if the sectarianism was broad enough, the true religion lifted it; but oftentimes the true religion soared in the light, and the narrow sectarianism trailed in the dust. So the past gives you its history. When the Catholic Church grew, through many an effort, into comparative strength, at first it had a certain element of humility; but when at last it forgot this humility, this wonderful light which should bind it to all human need—when it forgot that religion was so broad and bright and beautiful that no person could bind it and hold it and keep it all, then it grew to believe that its creed was alone right; that those who had it were the only ones to enter heaven; then it spoke of itself as the church, with special accent on that little word. When the Episcopal Church took its position, did it not have the same feeling? What other church it is, it considers itself as being right, and looks upon the others as having not the true path—as having a way that digresses, a winding way, not the straight and narrow path that leads direct to the kingdom of heaven. Now we do not mean that all churches are narrow in all things; but we do mean that sectarianism itself in its strength cultivates narrowness—having a certain element in it which causes its followers to feel that they alone are in the right. And yet when we look through them all—in the Catholic Church, in all the Protestant divisions in the land—we find there are silver chains running out under the walls. Do you know what the Evangelical Alliance meant a while ago? Do you know what great revivalist efforts were made when the different clergymen met together, laboring in the common cause? Do you know what the union, the meeting of men throughout the land to-day, the different alliances formed among those who are laboring as shepherds for the people, mean? Do you know what this golden spirit of charity means? Why, it is only an unconscious recognition of a certain unity that exists under the letter that killeth; a certain unity of feeling and of spirit under that element, cold as ice, which we call sectarianism. They are learning this: that there is good everywhere.

But, friends, the time is very near at hand when not only in Christian faith, as it is called, but among all religions, among all people, you will find, here and there, God's truth climbing out, and you will not call anything that God has blessed common or unclean. You know how great has been the effort of Christianity to help humanity. You know how missionaries have been sent forth to all the distant heathen lands. They have been to those who have worshipped the great spirit, Buddha, as it was called, to carry to them the elements of Christianity, and now the Buddhists are actually going among the Christians as missionaries, bringing

their elements of Buddhism. Can we say our religion alone is right while we look at other faiths? Among the savages, as we call the North American Indians, among those who dwell in the distant lands under tropical suns, all over the world, yes, and even in the paths of mythology, we find the outpourings of God's spirit, of God's truth, and we cannot call anything common or unclean that God has so blessed. Even among the Mohammedans there are elements of truth that stand strong and indestructible, as well as many which are of earth, earthly, trills that tower high to heaven, and, shining from them like the eternal snow upon the tops of the highest mountains, we find the light of God's love and the benediction of His Spirit forever!

So when to-day Spiritualism comes like a billow to the land, it does not come with a new church, it does not come with a new creed, it does not come building a temple in the midst of people and saying: "I want to go forth and gather all the people together into this creed, this belief, this temple, that they shall worship God in our way." You know how men go into caves where there are stalactites and stalagmites with all their white crystals; now, if you go in without a light, all the whiteness is blackness, simply because you cannot see; but if you take light with you, all around you is the glory of that snowy beauty—the gleaming crystals everywhere. So Spiritualism stands in the world—the torch-bearer! It holds the light in its hand. It does not say we bring a new religion. No! It only holds the light, and from far-off southern oceans we find answers: from climes among the frozen Arctic hands come back the sparkle and the glitter; far over the wilds of the Western forests, across the wide plains, away to the sunset sea, everywhere comes to us the answering light, and all over the world we find these truths which God has implanted in humanity everywhere! Now, what are we to do to find the best? What are we to do that we may understand these truths? Why, learn to discriminate, learn to separate a fancy from a fact, learn to take reason, and logic, and the truth of spirituality, instead of blind superstition, which is so credulous and so utterly dead and blind to the new; learn this: that God is the God of the living, and that there are no dead; that the past, present and future all melt into the unity of God's being, and he is the God of all—no respecter of persons, but everywhere, to all humanity, according to the capacity of the individual to understand.

To this Modern Spiritualism, as it is called, we find there is a great deal of opposition from the outside world. There is a great deal of ridicule, a great deal of condemnation, a great deal of private and of public scorn. You know it, you read of it, you hear it everywhere—every one of you must be familiar with this—and yet, when we see or know of these things, never for a moment do we grow discouraged and despondent; people who are beneath it—who had not grown up to its level. And shall we have condemnation for them because they do not understand, and we are scorned and ridiculed? Rather we will try to forgive them, and, with a tender pity, lead them to comprehend what we mean. Be assured that as snowflakes melt in the warmth of sunlight, so their scorn, their ridicule, their opposition, will all melt away when they only come to understand. Some say, "If your Spiritualism is true, then why did not these manifestations come to Doctors of Divinity, to the scientists, the philosophers, the wise men, at first?" Because pride was in their heart; because they had their established positions, and they were afraid that in some manner they might be compromised by investigating the unknown or unpopular thing. So, when Spiritualism came, it merely proved once more the truth of the golden aphorism that God had kept these things at first "from the wise and prudent," and had "revealed them unto babes." Every truth is born in a manger, but it progresses from his humble estate—it does not remain forever in the narrowness and obscurity in which it is first seen.

Before we pass from this subject, which has so much significance to the thoughtful mind, we would say, that although the modern manifestations of Spiritualism are looked upon with so much scorn, this scorn would melt away, would depart entirely, if the people only understood the ancient Spiritualism; if they read their Bibles instead of shutting them up, and holding on to them, and saying, "Oh! you do not believe the Bible; you are trying to take it away from us." And so we say, friends, do not hold it so tight that you cannot get the covers apart; open and read it, and you will then understand the new when you understand the old. How easy to believe that in olden days God made the finger on Mt. Sinai to write for his passionate child, Moses, the ten commandments on the tables of stone, which were broken so quickly afterward—for you know Moses, in his anger, broke every one of the commandments at one time, and afterward had to retrace his steps to receive their duplicates from the Most High—how easy it is for some people to believe that, without ever a doubt; but if you say to such to-day: Friend, I certainly possess my senses, my sight, my hearing, and yet in the presence of other persons, who are equally intelligent or sensible, I have received through the mediumship of a certain person, upon a slate, fitted with hinges, shut and locked, securely bound even with cords and sealing-wax dropped upon the knots, a message in the handwriting of a friend, and signed by the name of one that men call dead, what is the result? Speak of this to the multitude and they will hold on to their glorious Bible and say: "Oh! you ask us to believe too much; we cling to the old, the truth, and nothing but the truth." We only repeat: Read and understand. It is so easy for persons to accept the past entirely, and, psychologized by an idea, as we might say, to believe it all sacred, and to shut their eyes to the present; but, friends, we ask to-day for thought, for reason, for investigation; the more thorough it is the better it is—the better for you, and the better it is for the truth. Did you ever think what honest investigation is; what real investigation is? You know when a beautiful statue is finished and is to be shown to the multitude, at first all the people are gathered together, and there is the statue veiled; but at last a signal that is given, or when the right time comes, the veil is taken away and the statue revealed. Now investigation stands by the side of the veiled statue of truth, and in its honest effort it only takes off the veil and shows the truth to the world. This, then, is what Spiritualism asks: that with honest investigation you shall discover that which will bring comfort to the mourner, understanding of the future to the skeptic—the proof of immortality, the proof of endless progression, yes, and of the reality of the Bible itself, the truth of religion; and this will come to you when the light of Spiritualism shines most brightly, as it should.

Among those who look upon Spiritualism oftentimes with scorn and derision, we find a class watching here and there for something which some medium has said, or some Spiritualist has written, which they feel to criticize. They say to the people, "Now listen! was there ever anything so absurd as that?" (and this perhaps may not be in connection with this peculiar chapter,) at a certain time a man rose at the close of a lecture given

Children's Department.

TALES OF THE EVERLASTING MOTHER.

Written down through the Mediumship of
ADELA, BARONESS VON VAY,
of Gombitz (in Styria), Austria, and translated spe-
cially for the Banner of Light.

THE DAY.

When the Angel of Day approaches he commences his watch over the earth during the heat, the storm and tumult of day. Then over all is motion and life. Only the nightingale is dumb during the heat of day; the rustling of the grasses and reeds ceases; and the branches of the trees idly slumber. The frogs and toads sun themselves, and look out of the bog at the bright rays of light, and the practices of the great and little world. They pass themselves off as weather-prophets, promise rain when it should not come, and are dumb when it is necessary. That they do only to tease and lead astray the stupidly superstitious. At mid-day all nature is silent. The sun absorbs all language into itself. It shines and shines, till all things are so filled with its rays that they grow quite still—even the poor people in yonder low room become so too. Yes, and you also, my loving-hearted child, so that you wait, longing for the cool night and its refreshing dreams. See! soon it will be evening, then night, then again day, and mid-day; and so it goes on and on, till at last you have grown into a toothless, bent old mother, that if we are to believe the frogs, must be put into the slough. Ah! no! that becomes a beautiful, pure sun-elf, happy and loving—the grasshoppers are right. Those that have most to relate of the day are surely the houseflies. What has not a fat, buzzing fly experienced? Impudently it settles on the white shoulders of your lady-love. You will drive it away. Ha! it tickles your nose. In vain you are angry, and try to catch it; it quietly buzzes further on. Such flies trouble themselves only about the day, when they torment men and beasts; they are no friends of the night. What chatter and twitter unweariedly on through the day, when flowers, trees and grasshoppers are still? The sparrows under the roof. Well, yes, but that is an old affair. And human beings? Some are croaking like frogs; here one chirps as cleverly as the grasshoppers; others rock themselves to and fro like the branches of the trees, or screech like owls, and slip about shy and frightened like bats; only a few sing so beautifully and clearly as the nightingale, and when they do, men think it over and experience it afterward. The Angel of Day is at last weary; he droops his wings, his eyes close, and so he lays himself on the rosy and golden clouds, his other bed, smiling once more to the Angel of Night, who comes floating along in his starry garments.

At yonder house a window is opened. "Oh! at last this day is over—his wedding day." So says the poor child as she awaits the night, trembling and praying. In the distance the violin and violoncello are still sounding, and the hum of voices and shouting is heard. All is going on merrily there. The dancers are turning round in a whirling dance. The lamps and lustres in the room rival the stars in the dark heavens. And she is so wretched, so wretched! "Again one night and again one day," says she. "How many more to come?"

THE BROKEN SPELL.

I knew a man who once loved a nymph. The tale is quite curious. I have heard it half from the stream that murmurs through the meadows and wood; half by the homely hearth of that house in the street there. This young man thought a great deal of spirits and magic. One day as he was walking lost in thought through the quiet beech-woods, he came to the spot where the mysterious nymphs live—where the stream rushes foaming and roaring between rocks and over stones, and broken branches. There he sat down and meditated and wished he could see spirits face to face, that he might extort from them the secrets that are so jealously veiled from the eye and sense of man. In the midst of his meditations he suddenly looked up. Ha! there she is before him, the teasing little nymph with the duck's feet! She made him a courtesy, and skipped murmuring into a misty shade, titling and laughing like a little brook. At this he sprang up, called to her, begged her to remain and answer him; but courtesying and titling she only dances, skips further, and in a moment she is gone! From this day the man wandered every evening to the same place, every evening to be greeted and teased by the nymph, who remained wild and untamable. Weary and exhausted, he became peevish and morose with his good old mother at home.

"The youth has always such singular habits," said she to a neighbor. "I wish he would not go so often to the stream in the wood, where it is so damp, and then among those dark bushes it is dreadfully gloomy."

"Oh! if I only knew of some expedient," thought the son to himself at the same moment, as he was hastening to the wood, "to catch this wild, teasing nymph—to hold her fast—only to get her to speak one word to me."

But by commands, adjurations, harsh words, he attained nothing. Then he tried with kind, flattering words, bowing and smiling as she did. One day fatigued with longing he fell asleep on the mossy banks of the stream. As the nymph saw him slumbering so quietly she approached, shy and curious, in order to see more closely the strange being. Lightly she stepped up quite near to him, and he, feeling it in his half-sleep, was intoxicated with bliss. Her veil of mist waved like the sweet fragrance of violets around him; her gaze and her breath at length awoke him; and springing up in an ecstasy he would lay hold of her, but quickly she again disappeared. Now he knew the right spell. Every day with hollow cheeks but bright eyes he wandered into the deep woods, there to slumber, and daily the teasing nymph neared him, caressing and playing around him, and becoming ever more courageous and daring. One evening as the first moonbeam fell on the sleeping youth she even put her mouth to his ear and whispered softly the question:

"Who art thou?"

Wild thoughts and feelings rushed through him. He will, he must draw her to himself, but as he grasps after her again she is gone. He is alone in the damp, dark wood, only to return home disheartened. So it goes on from one warm July night to the other, and the youth is soon but a shadow. Once she carried her play almost too far. He was lying with his eyelids slightly closed, but with full consciousness and beating heart, watching her every movement. Now she was close to him; hot and glowing he opened his eyes and looked at her. She started, uttered, laid her little hands over his eyes, sur-

rounded him with her veil, and sang in a bell-like voice:

"Mortal, mortal, stay in the woods with me." Sweetly intoxicated by the tones, he felt that his senses were going. Shall he give himself up to these feelings and follow the nymph confidently? Is his love strong enough for that? No, no, he will love her, will take her to himself, will overcome her, will kiss her many thousand times warmly and passionately.

"Nymph, I love thee madly! Follow me—come thou with me!"

He shouted it, so that the still, dark wood quaked, and the screech-owls and bats were startled from their hiding-places. Wildly he would press her to his heart, but empty as ever remain his arms—the nymph is away. Now around and over him it thunders, lightens, crashes and roars; large, heavy drops fall from the sky. The nymph sings complacently from the opposite bank of the stream.

"Thou wicked mortal, wouldst thou not believe me? Thou wouldst take me by force, and therefore is thy charm broken. Go now forth into the wide world, overcome mortal women, subdue them to thy will, entrap their love. Here in the kingdom of spirits such force is neither right nor customary. But with only a little faith and hearty confidence, you might have attained all, my love and my fidelity."

Then there sounded through the woods a dismal howl, like loud sobbing and indignant murmuring. The unheeded hurried away from the disenchanted place of repose: the rain fell in torrents. Oh, how cold and wretched he felt! With clothes wet through and dripping hair he reaches the homely room.

"I said so; the youngster would injure himself in the damp wood," said the mother to the neighbor. "Now he lies there in a fever."

"One could almost believe," answered the neighbor, "that he had a secret rendezvous with a wood-nymph; he went there so constantly."

There he lies really in bed—our magician and self-hero—and he must perspire. That is not nymph-like. With a terrible cold and fever, counterpane and feather-bed up to the ears, the warming-jar at his feet, fragrant camomile tea standing before him—there he lies secretly imprecating the nymph and the wood together. He becomes again well. Do you believe that he again visits the wood? Do you think that he still has the desire to gain the pure love of a nymph? A year hence you see him with full cheeks and recovered strength already looking out for a bride. In the woods, do you ask? Oh! God forbid! In the town, where there are rich maidens.

(Continued in our next.)

Spiritual Phenomena.

A TEST THROUGH DR. MANSFIELD.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:
Would it be unlawful for me to give a test coming through my husband? It is so striking, with the circumstances which attended it, that it may do good to those who feel as I did when it was given. The spirit who came was a lady who, while in the body, visited me while waiting for Mr. Mansfield, and we had pleasant chats on spirit-communion before her departure. We did not know she had passed "over the river" until we recalled the name given in the communication. I have had so many friends go to the spirit-world with the promise of returning and giving their identity, and when they so endeavored to do, according to promise, it seemed so hard to recognize them, that I had become discouraged. In this instance the spirit proves all she promised, and demonstrates that we do retain our earth-faculties, however hard it may be at times to make our identity certain to those yet remaining in the form. I asked the lady to write the circumstances, that I might send the account to your paper. The following are her statements. Respectfully,

MARY H. MANSFIELD.

61 West 42d street, New York.

"A most singular experience has happened to me within a year, the relation of which may be of interest to the public: When a school-girl in Cincinnati, in 1840, I was devotedly attached to a young girl of my own age, and our intimacy continued years after our marriage. We separated, I going to Europe and she to New Orleans, and we did not hear of each other for many years, when one Sabbath, while I was seated in the 'Harvard Rooms' in this city, nearly two years ago, a lady took a seat beside me, asking questions regarding Spiritualism. Suddenly she exclaimed, 'Why, Mary, is this you?' I immediately recognized my old friend Esther, of Cincinnati, whom I had not seen since 1830. After the conference meeting was over she went home with me and we discussed Spiritualism. The next day she went to Dr. Mansfield, and for the first time was convinced of the great truth, coming away more comforted than she had been for years. The time arrived for her return to New Orleans to visit her children, and in parting with me she said, 'Now, Mary, if I die first I will come to you, through Dr. Mansfield, and tell you if there is truth in Spiritualism.' Leaving New York in December, she reached New Orleans early one Friday, and the evening of the same day she died. The following week I heard of her death, and I lost no time in going to Dr. Mansfield and asking him to answer my sealed question: 'Tell me of your sickness, where you died, and what you think of Spiritualism?'"

The following is a correct statement, which I consider the very best test I have ever had from any source whatever, and had I doubts, this alone would have convinced me of its truth. Truly yours, M. H. B.

"Heaven bless you, my dear, dear Mrs. B. Little did I think when I left you for New Orleans that I should so soon be talking with you from the spirit-land; but 'we know not what a day may bring forth.' My sickness was not of long duration. You and the Doctor were among my last thoughts. I was sensible that I was going, and I said to myself: 'Now I shall soon know if what you and I talked about, and what had been given me by or through the Doctor, was true or false. As life receded, the other or this world presented itself, and as I was on the wing for this beautiful clime my beloved son met me and said, 'Mother, have you come at last?' But more about this by-and-by. Will you tell Mr. Johnson that all that was told me, and of which he doubted, was true; the half was not told to me. Spiritualism is true, true! Do not ever again doubt."

I am your friend truly,

ESTHER EMMA J."

MRS. PICKERING'S SEANCES.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

This medium for the materialization phase of spirit manifestation, together with some other forms of its power, continues to hold her seances at her home in Rochester, N. H. On Thursday evening, Jan. 30th, a seance took place there of considerable interest. It was attended by several critical observers, not Spiritualists, together with others not less careful in their observation, who were fully satisfied, for themselves, of the presence and power of the phenomena in their varied manifestations.

This medium is at this time attracting considerable attention from a very substantial and reliable portion of the community, who pause for observation with something more than a

feeling of idle curiosity. At the last seance Mrs. Pickering, from her own selection, took her seat outside of the cabinet, with only a curtain of lace veiling her eyes, face and chest, leaving her form visible to all. Of the party was a very critical gentleman, whose seat was not more than seven or eight feet from the medium, who satisfied himself beyond a doubt that Mrs. Pickering remained in her position outside of the cabinet during the whole seance; and, through his very careful observation, that fact became additionally plain and clear to all who witnessed the manifestations.

The sitting extended through nearly three hours, during which time the medium was constantly visible and in a controlled state. The number of forms appearing was about twenty—male and female, of different ages and sizes. The very marked peculiarity of this seance was the appearance of two faces at the aperture at the same time, and very soon after the scene changed, when one face was shown there and a full form at the opening, while the medium was to be seen sitting outside of the curtain. All the manifestations were of interest and some of them peculiarly so.

Everhill, Mass.

Mrs. C. B. Bliss at the National Capitol—Satisfactory Manifestations.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I know that you are always ready to publish in the dear old Banner all new and important advances of the phenomena of materialization, therefore I enclose a few extracts from a private letter I have just received from Mrs. Bliss, who has been and is at present giving sittings in Washington, D. C.:

"I gave a seance at Mrs. Elmer's last evening (Saturday). She is a friend of Mrs. P. F. Berry, and moves in the highest society in Washington. She has beautiful parlors, in which is a new cabinet, made of heavy brown paper in a frame. Among the most notable of the people in attendance were Generals Lippitt, Smith, Edwards, Kemp, and several others. It was a glorious seance—the best we ever had. All present were delighted. The manifestations are banishing all doubts of the after-life. Friends recognize friends, and are made happy by seeing them again in the materialized form."

The following, taken from a secular paper—the Sunday Herald, of Washington—shows a fairness that is seldom exhibited by the general press:

"MATERIALIZATIONS OF SPIRIT FORMS.—One of the most noted of mediums for these materializations, Mrs. James A. Bliss, of Philadelphia, has given several seances during the last week at the private residences of prominent Spiritualists in Washington, at which forms appeared which were recognized by those who knew them in life. It was positively asserted by spectators, after due examination, that there was no hidden or secret connection with the cabinet; while the forms appearing and dancing around the margin of the close vicinity of the audience were so entirely different from that of the medium in weight, size and height, as to preclude the possibility of their being represented by Mrs. Bliss. One purporting to be that of the actress, Miss Lucile Western, joined in singing. When other lips and other hearts, in a beautiful and clear voice, she came into the room and asked several to come closely to her and inspect her visually, which was done, and all perfectly satisfied that it was not the medium, whatever else it might be. The query is, What are materializations? It is contended by believers in the Spiritual Philosophy, and is taught by the so-called spirits, that 'spirit' is the great universal solvent; that disembodied spirits have power, which they are able to exert through the aura or atmosphere of certain sensitive or media, to gather from an interblended harmonious circle and from the atmosphere invisible atomic materials and mold them into forms which they have power to vitalize with the life principle of the medium. They also have the power to instantly dematerialize these forms or remanent them to their former elements. It is an interesting study to say the least."

Yours truly, JAMES A. BLISS,
713 Sanson street, Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 27, 1879.

The Bible of Bibles.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED RELATIVE THEREOF.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Several letters and cards have been received by the author of this work, propounding various queries relative to its claims and character, which it is presumed may be of interest to the readers of the Banner of Light who may entertain similar queries. A good brother who has no special relish for works embracing criticisms on the Bible, like "The Bible of Bibles," desires to know why a larger portion of the work is not occupied with valuable selections from the various Bibles therein named. Our first thought was to make it a work almost exclusively of this character, and we have ample material for the purpose. But we became strongly impressed that there is a much greater moral necessity for setting forth to the world the real character of the Christian Bible, and of portraying the evils and demoralization that are being inflicted upon the world, and especially upon heathen nations by the perverted use of that idolized book. Hundreds of facts daily coming to light furnish the most deplorable proof that mischief is being done by the churches, both in Christian and in heathen countries, by the wrong use of their Bible. Hence I became fully convinced of the great moral necessity of making "The Bible of Bibles" an instrumentally and agent in the accomplishment of the much needed work of arresting the march of this widespread evil. The nature and magnitude of this evil are fully explained in the book itself, "The Bible of Bibles." And the author rejoices to learn from letters and cards received from more than a score of readers of the work, that they most heartily approve of the policy he has adopted of confining the exposition of sacred books principally to the Christian Bible. Several correspondents state that they had supposed from the title of the work that it was made up principally of scraps from the various Bibles, but are very agreeably disappointed to learn that it is principally confined to a Bible in which we are much more interested. They recognize it as a fact that it is a matter of much greater importance to know the real character of our own Bible and to understand the influence it is exerting upon the world than to wade through the old musty ideas of pagan Bibles as a mere matter of pastime and amusement. Such an employment of time would be a matter of pleasure rather than of moral benefit. We are assured by many correspondents that we have adopted the policy and shaped the book so as to please and benefit a large majority of its readers, and so as to ensure it a much wider circulation than the adoption of any other policy or character for the work would have effected. One good brother writes: "You have shown up the real character of the Christian Bible from beginning to end as was never done before. You have most strikingly portrayed both its errors and its truths, and the book now stands before the world in its true light. And millions will yet thank you for this much needed labor you have performed, and millions would be benefited and blessed by the work if it could be placed in their hands. I think it will in the course of time have a world wide circulation."

It may be well to note here that some verbal errors may be found in the work, as is usually and perhaps always the case in the first edition of a book. But the errors are few and unimportant, and can readily be corrected by the reader. Most of the work was copied for the press by two ladies, from the author's very imperfectly written and illegible manuscripts, which accounts for a portion of the errors. *Gautama* on page thirty four should be *Salavahana*, *Budhas* on the same page should be *Autors*. "Assuming to be prophecies," page one hundred and twenty-two, should read, "Assumed to be prophecies," (for but few texts do assume to be prophecies.) A few more slight errors like these may be found, which will be corrected in subsequent editions of the work. The author will only add in conclusion that "The Bible of Bibles" is commanding a more rapid sale than he anticipated, under the extreme pressure of the times.

THE AUTHOR.

"In the various countries we can see indications, infinitely cheering to us, that mechanism is not always to be our hard taskmaster; but one day to be our pliant, obedient servant; that a new and brighter spiritual era is slowly revolving itself for all men!—Thomas Carlyle in 1829."

Written for the Banner of Light.
TO THE AUTHOR OF "THE RAVEN."

BY MILTON H. MARBLE.

Spirit bright, a life of sadness seemed thy earthly life, and no gladness

Came to cheer thee, thou wert lonely mourning for thy lost "Lenore;"

Deep within thy soul was burning such a nameless spirit-yearning

For thy fair Lenore's returning, that thy life was darkened o'er,

That thy loving heart was weaned, troubled, tortured, sad and sore,

Troubled here forevermore.

On this earth there seemed no blessing for thy heart, no fond caressing

For thy gentle troubled spirit, by dark grief assuaged

For; Oh! it seemed no sweet love-flowers, grown by earthly sun and showers,

Came to cheer thy lonely hours, then thou wept in anguish sore,

Saying, "Angels, bear me onward to the gentle maid "Lenore;"

"Nameless here forevermore."

Sad! 'neath thought! In sweet love-blossom on this wide earth for thy bosom,

Torn by anguish sad and dismal; then thy soul thou didst outpour,

Saying, "Father! Father! give me but one bright, pure heart to love me,

That my soul, like sons above me, may be happy evermore."

But it seemed no heart-food was there on this lone and dreary shore

For the friend of lost "Lenore."

Then thy heart was stung to madness; then essayed to soothe thy sadness

By the dark Lethian River, which with trouble runneth o'er;

Then its whirlwind bore thee downward in the path of mis'ry onward

From the path which leadeth onward to a bright and peaceful shore,

And an angel looked from heaven, yea, the gentle maid "Lenore,"

Whom thy spirit did adore!

And she said, "I come to cheer thee, I am ever, ever near thee,

Speaking words of comfort to thee, whom my spirit doth adore;

In his chains a fiend has bound thee; in his clutches I have found thee,

Scattering misery all around thee—raise thy soul above his power,

And the angels up in heaven, with thy loved and lost "Lenore."

Will thy triumph sing o'er more!"

But the cruel, sordid ravens, with a myriad host of cravens,

Kept thee chained to cruel passion, that thy spirit might not soar.

Then, thou, prostrate, broken-hearted, fell, bright visions all departed,

And thy soul with horror started, as it gazed thy life-path o'er!

Deeply longed to leave this cruel, wicked world for some bright shore,

To be troubled nevermore!

Then the angel, death released thee, and thy spirit-friend caressed thee;

Thy dear spirit-friend, the loving and the lost, but found "Lenore."

Then a darkness passed from thee, and all, all was bright before thee!

With a heart to adore thee, now thy spirit eye might soar.

Through the blissful home of angels, with the loving, loved "Lenore,"

And he troubled nevermore.

Oh! once said, now happy spirit; gone to joys which saints inherit!

Now thy heaven-quickened spirit has, upon a brighter shore,

Far within thy distant Aldenn, clasped thy "rare and radiant maiden."

And thy soul shall ne'er be laden with dark grief or sorrow more!

Thine is a bright and blissful future, far above heaven's starry floor,

Whither thy spirit-bride Lenore!

SPIRITUALIST LECTURERS.

[To be useful, this list should be reliable. It therefore believes those immediately interested to promptly notify of any changes of appointments, whenever and wherever they occur.]

REV. WILLIAM ALCOCK, Swift River, Cumberland, Me.; J. MADISON ALLEN, Middlebury, Me., box 25; Mrs. N. K. ANDRUS, France, speaker, Detroit, Wis.; F. ANNIE ALLEN, Somerville, Mass.; STEPHEN A. ANDRUS, 25 Broadway, New York; Mrs. M. A. ADAMS, France, speaker, Brattleboro', Vt.; Mrs. D. M. A. AMPHLET, care Dr. C. Bradley, Dayton, Ohio;

MRS. R. AUGUSTA ANTHONY, Alder, Mich.; Mrs. M. C. ALDER, inspirational, Dorsey Line, Vt.; Wm. A. ANDRUS, M. D., Iowa Falls, Ia.; Mrs. EMMA HARRINGE BRITTON, care W. H. Terry, St. Russell street, Melbourne, Aus.

REV. J. B. BARNES, care Dr. C. Bradley, Dayton, Mass.; Mrs. NELLIE J. T. BRIGMAN, Cohasset, Mass.; Mrs. W. W. SCOTT BRIGGS, West Whitfield, N. Y.; Mrs. A. ANDRUS, M. D., Iowa Falls, Ia.; Mrs. EMMA HARRINGE BRITTON, care W. H. Terry, St. Russell street, Melbourne, Aus.

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BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1879.

with fraud by hasty and incompetent observers

soon after the book was published, and select from its pages many passages that read like premonitions.—*New York World, Feb. 9th.*

BRIEF PARAGRAPHS.

It is reported that immense beds of mineral wax have been found in Southern Utah and Arizona. In the opinion of some experts this remarkable discovery is of greater importance than was that of petroleum in Pennsylvania. Mineral wax is found in European countries, but only in small quantities. In the localities above named the deposits are said to be twenty feet thick, and to extend over many square miles.

Self-made men have generally a great deal to say in praise of their architects.

An old ram, owned by a family in East Whitehall, entered the kitchen during the absence of the servant girl and ate up all the pancake batter, and now the family say that they "don't like their batter-in-ram."—*Whitehall Times*.

The baby-carriage is condemned by the Berlin physicians in cases where the little ones sit facing their nurses and are pushed backward. The natural desire of the eye is to draw nearer to what it sees, and the practice of reversing this normal order of things and causing surrounding objects to recede is liable to affect injuriously the development of both sight and brain.

Talmage's smile would make a good cover for a circus tent.—*Detroit Free Press*.

A painstaking artist delivers himself of the following concerning a popular painting: "The artist has attempted the difficult task of foregrounding the body of Manfred, on a background in oblique perspective, and the result is not wholly successful." We should suppose not—why do men undertake such foolhardy enterprises?

A WINTER MORNING.
The snow-drifts pile the window-ledge,
The frost is keen, the air is still;
The lane that lies below the hill
Is drifted even with the hedge;
Gray skies, and dark trees shaken bare,
Blue smoke that rises straight in air;
And down the west a yellow glare
Is driven like a wedge.
—[Frank Towner, in *Middleton Scribner*.]

Drawing a moral from a lying hist horror familiar to the schoolboy, a paragraph says: "It is never too late to mend. Even the 'Devil' has his Darning-Needle."

In Russia there is a religious sect called the "Helpers." Their peculiarity is that they avoid lying, stealing and getting into debt. A similar society exists in this country, too; but they are not called "Helpers." They are called Editors.—*Figaro*.

Another defalcation in Massachusetts. This time at Easthampton, \$12,000 the amount. The defaulter is Moses H. Leonard. He is a deacon in the Payson Congregational church. Had he been a Spiritualist instead of a Congregationalist, what a noise the church organs would have made over the event! But with Bro. Leonard it was only a "financial irregularity."

"New departures" are very like the snow; They often come, and yet as quickly go—
To "Dave Jones's locker."

A late *attaché* of a Philadelphia theatre bequeathed his head to the house to be used as the skull in "Hamlet," and yet there are people who deny that the American stage is getting ahead.—*New York Herald*.

In Russia the dreaded plague has at last made its appearance at Wyssakow, a town near Moscow. The accounts from the infected districts are very distressing. People are dying like rotten sheep, and business is at a perfect standstill. The means for medical and sanitary relief are extremely limited and imperfect, and the suffering is heartrending. A frightful sickness has broken out among the Russian troops at Adrianople, and reports say this is also the plague. The excitement amounting almost to a panic among neighboring nationalities is hourly on the increase. No one can read of the awful ravages of this Russian plague without a shock to his sensibilities. Only five out of a hundred of those attacked survive. What would Boston people say if their streets were filled with the dead, four hundred corpses in a single street, and with no knowledge even whence relief could be obtained?

A Protestant Premier is at the head of the government of Catholic France, and a Jew Premier holds the helm of Protestant England. As Galileo observed: "The world does move."

"Do you think," writes a young student of human anatomy, "do you think the human race is decaying?" Not at all, not at all. Part of it is not decaying because it is yet alive, and the portion of it that is dead, doesn't decay because the medical student don't give it a chance. Oh, no, the human race was never, in all its history, so well protected against decay as at present. Be thankful that you live in an age when the grave has been so short of its power that it can't hold a man so long as a slave would hold a spoonful of quicksilver."

THE DEATHS OF OLD PEOPLE.—It has been calculated that about one death in each nine thousand of human beings may be regarded as in every occasion and feature of it strictly a natural death, coming not from any disease, or shock, or change, or critical experience, but from the ripening, maturing and consummating of all the natural processes which minister to and terminate life. When one dies this natural death, it is as when ripened fruit, without a worm in it, and with no shaking of the tree, falls to the ground. It is because it is ripe.

Blossed is the healthy nature. In the harmonious adjustment and play of all the faculties, the just balance of oneself gives a just feeling toward all men and all things. Glad light from within radiates outward, and enlightens and embellishes.—*Thomas Carlyle*.

A heart that ever overflows
With love for all its kind,
And pitying weak humanity,
To errors oft is blind;
A hand that in the cause of right
Is lifted, not for greed—
These two, combined with a clear head,
Make just the men we need.

E. P. Goodrich, M. D., Boston, writes as follows to Edwin D. Abbott, D. M., author of "The Principles of Light and Color":

"I think your work one of the greatest and most valuable of this century. So far as I know you occupy the field alone. All nature is dual, and mankind therefore have tried to explain the visible or material side."

It is perfectly safe to have some men owe you a grudge, for they never pay anything.

The "God-in-the-Constitution" lunatics are at it again.—*The Chicago Alliance*.

BASE INGRATITUDE.
When dormant snakes are warned to active life,
They feed on grub made from domestic strife,
And as they crawl, and crawl, and hiss, and slink,
Those who have warned them they will often slink.

A north-end boy has a dog named Peru. He might be called a "quintine" animal, as he manufactures enough Peruvian bark to cure all the ague in the country.

The *Hawkeye* must have been studying the Bible, as it reports from the four corners of the globe. Nowhere else can we learn that the globe has any corners.—*Santa Barbara Independent*.

A Cape Town (So. Africa) despatch states that on the 21st ult. a British column, consisting of a portion of the Twenty-fourth Regiment, a battery of artillery and 600 native auxiliaries, was utterly annihilated near the Tugela river by 20,000 Zulus, who captured a valuable convoy of 100 wagons, 1000 oxen, 2 cannon, 400 shot and shell, 1000 rifles, 250,000 rounds of ammunition, 60,000 pounds weight of provisions and the colors of the Twenty-fourth Regiment. It is estimated that 5000 Zulus were killed and wounded in the battle. Fifty English officers were killed. Several attacks made subsequent to the 21st were repulsed by the British, but they were finally compelled to withdraw their forces across the border, and will await reinforcements before again taking the offensive.

There is a land where every pulse is thrilling
With rapture that earth's children may not know;
Where sweet repose the storm-tossed heart is stilling,
And harmonies celestial ever flow.

The following explanation of a legal term is offered by a Teutonic member of the police force: "Ven I git me out a habeas corpus, I can chust so well catch a man where he aint as where he is."

About "Departures."

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:
There is considerable stir in our ranks over what may be called "departures." Herbert Spencer's law of evolution from homogeneity to heterogeneity is in fullest force. A process of sifting and sorting has begun. What is of the spirit remains; what is of man departs. *Bon voyage*.

We are yet living in an age of heroes. The sacrifice of self for the good of the whole, is still a living principle. All honor to this ancient and sublime of virtues! The "departure"—not from the unfolding flesh but the rarer spiritual vestment—of our late brother, Andrew Jackson Davis, seems a surprise to some good folk; it is not so to me. The act is in fullest harmony with his character—it is his sweetest inspiration. Again Christ suffers on the cross; again Socrates drains the fatal cup of hemlock; again a man dies—figuratively speaking—that the truth may live.

It is painful to reflect that his fate has been forced on our late lamented brother—that the sacrifice is of his own seeking—that his martyrdom was not a choice but a necessity. Oh, these friends of ours—what sins have they not to account for?

What man more unoffending than Andrew Jackson Davis? For years he labored to multiply books. It was almost his only source of enjoyment. He asked for none other, and was fully contented to die a book-maker.

It was an evil hour that brought him friends who imagined that they discovered a universal philosophy, a dispensation, a sort of Alpha and Omega, in his writings. They have given him no rest. Their enthusiasm has sealed his fate.

What could our late brother do? None knew better than he the delusion under which they were laboring. None has ever placed a lower estimate on his writings than our deceased brother himself—none has ever more deprecated leadership. But his friends would have it otherwise. In and out of season they have paraded him as the source of all truth—as the central sun of divine inspiration—as the foundation and the plumb-line of philosophy.

Hence this sad immolation! Wherefore this meekest of all men gave himself bravely for sacrifice! He died—again I speak figuratively—for the cause he most loved.

"I will set myself apart," quoth he, "and then these foolish friends of mine will see their mistake. I will separate myself from the spiritual, and they cannot fail to recognize that I am, as other men, of the earth earthy; that in myself there is nothing; that out of me and beside me and beyond me is everything. I will teach them that a single grain does not fill a bushel measure; that a drop does not make an ocean. The lesson that spirit is not man and man not spirit must be taught over again—that progress halts not in time, and moves forever through eternity."

I will make candid confession that our figuratively deceased brother had little inspiration for me. It was not his fault but mine. Still, I always gave him a warm place in my heart for his pleasant ways, his unassuming manner, his genial soulfulness. But now I adore him. What he could not be to me living he is to me dead. I have added another saint to my calendar. Another Man-God has mounted to Olympus.

I wish it were in my power to hasten other "departures." My saint's calendar is yet open. On the heights of Olympus there is room and to spare. I suspect that others are waiting to go, if not already gone. There is a "high authority" deeded in the east-of-gate garments of aristocracy and majesty—sweet names to roll under one's tongue—busily engaged in purging English Spiritualism. When he is done I suspect he will find that the vomit has turned against him, and that it is himself who is cast out. I feel convinced that a chapter recounting something of this sort will in the near future figure among his "Unpublished Incidents." This individual is altogether too good for the company he deigns to keep. Let none restrain him from making a "departure" at the earliest moment possible.

I could extend this list, but will desist. The signs of "departures" are many, and those who run may read. Then what a tumbling there will be of "high authorities!" Let us be warned and stand under.

Oh, these phlegms, who imagine that, as individuals, they are of any account in this world's ebbing movement! Oh, this thirsoy egotism, that makes mountains of mole-hills! By all means let us have more sacrifices. The sooner the better. Let the deck be cleared for action. There is no room for puppets on the spiritual stage. Unselfish, individualized men are wanted. The spirit-world is one; we, too, must be one. There are no reserved seats in the amphitheatre of Spiritualism, no private boxes, no lines of demarcation whatsoever. It includes all—the high, the low, the pure and impure, the king on his throne, the murderer on the gallows—all are one in the sight of the spirit-world—all are brothers, wearily plodding along life's rough highway.

There are millions of bleeding feet to bind, there are millions of wounded hearts to heal. It is for these—above all for these—that Spiritualism is come. It spurns so-called "respectability," even as "respectability" denies its brother man. It is Christ come again, saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." *FREDERICK F. COOK.*

Chicago, Ill., Jan. 17th, 1879.

Written for the Banner of Light.

SOLOMON FRY.

Mr. Solomon Fry was a pretty good man,
He believed in doing the best that he could,
In living his life on a righteous plan—
So he would if he could, and he could if he would.
But, somehow or other, things got askew,
He looked awry at those that existed,
And thought that a brother to peace inclined
Should be taken and shaken, and cuffed, and fisted.
So he pulled and he hewed,
And he jeered and he jawed;
Blustered and flustered,
His angers mustered,
Swore the true was the false, and the false was the true,
And the end of it all was, this Solomon Fry
Got into a stew.

At length, one day, 'twas the seventeenth of June,
Something occurred that created a laugh—
Solomon found that the man he would hit,
Wouldn't hit back worth a cent-and-a-half.
So he thought and he sneezed,
Then he mused and he wheezed,
"Oh dear, I'm in a most pitiable plight!
What would a Kilkenny cat have done
If no other Kilkenny cat would fight?"
"Fought with itself," said a voice in the clouds.
And, though Solomon heard neither whisper nor groan,
He suddenly jumped to his feet, and cried,
"I'll battle it out, if I fight it alone."
So, at it he went; he pummeled and pounded,
First up and then down like a rubber-ball bounded.
Got the worst every time, yet would never say die,
Till, at length, there was vacancy where he stood,
And that was the end of Solomon Fry. *JO COSE.*

New Publications.

WIDE AWAKE for February—D. Lothrop & Co., publishers, 30 and 32 Franklin street, Boston—has for its frontispiece, "Kiss me, Katie." Among its chief attractions may be cited, "Aunt Ruth's Valentine"; "Some Children's Books in Old Times" (which latter is a reproduction of specimens of the quaint illustrations which gladdened the eyes of our grandfathers, and even earlier generations); "The Dog-berry Bunch"; "Sunshine in Winter"; and "Don Quixote, Jr." Too much praise cannot be awarded the installment (No. 2) of the new series, entitled, "Our American Artists." Albert F. Bellows is the subject this time, and a fine likeness of this gentleman, a picture of his studio, and an excellent representation of one of his paintings, entitled, "Stage Coaching in New England," are given. "The Story of English Literature for Young People" treats of Alexander Pope and his friends, and is a worthy continuation of a valuable collection of papers. The "Dog Department" merits close reading by all lovers of that faithful friend of humanity. Music, poetry, etc., are afforded the "Wide Awake" patrons, and the little ones are not forgotten, "Planting a Puss-y" appealing directly to their appreciation.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON for February—Issued at Springfield, Mass.—has a story by James T. McKay for the

pioneer in its table of contents—the narration being accompanied by "Paper Roses," by Sarah O. Jewett, and "Katak-Uchi—The Avenger of Blood," by William Elliot Griffis, as short sketches. Among the essays may be enumerated "A Conventional Conscience," "What Is Conscience?" "Ministers and Hobbies," etc. A writer in its pages exhibits his fossil proclivities by an attack on the Sunday newspapers, which to his pachydermatous mind exert an influence strongly conducive to the "Continental Sunday," as his class term the literal following out which is getting to be so common now-a-days of that truly reprehensible saying of Jesus (if the bigots are correct in their enunciations) "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The poetry, departments, etc., are of sustained interest.

GOODY'S LADY'S BOOK—published by a company of the same name at 1008 Chestnut street, Philadelphia, Pa.—has a well-timed steel-plate picture, "St. Valentine's Day," as the initial number in its table of contents. A fine fashion plate colored, a succession of patterns, diagrams, hints as to dress, music, a Galop by Carl Faust, poetry, stories, "Fun for the Fireside," etc., etc., fill up its well printed pages. This magazine is well calculated to be indeed "a welcome guest" in every household.

THE PNEUMOLOGICAL JOURNAL—S. E. WOOD & Co., publishers, 79 Broadway, New York City, is received for February. Senator John P. Jones, of Nevada, receives biographical and other treatment; portraits and sketches of Bayard Taylor, the Marquis de Lorne, Princess Louise, etc., are also given. The departments are excellent, and "A Difference" bears within it a sound and healthy moral.

THE HERALD OF HEALTH for February—published at 13 and 15 Light street, New York, by M. L. Holbrook, M. D.—has an interesting table of contents on the hygienic plane. Among the articles printed is a sketch of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, the father of modern German gymnastics. It also speaks a good word for "The Psycho-Physiological Sciences and their Assailants," which we shall reprint at no distant day.

THE MAGAZINE OF ART, issued by Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 56 Broadway, New York City, is a notable publication, and deserves the support of all lovers of good pictures, and pointed art criticism.

RECEIVER: THE SHAKER MAN for February, official monthly, G. A. Lomas, Editor. Published by the United Societies, at Shakers, N. Y.

VICK'S FLORAL GUIDE, James Vick, Rochester, N. Y.; one hundred pages and numerous illustrations.

THE definite contract first issued in 1877, by the Union Mutual Life Insurance Company, under the Maine non-forfeiture law, has received a substantial endorsement by the Southern Mutual Life Insurance Company of Kentucky, which has recently adopted the plan of the Union Mutual, and will hereafter issue a similar policy to new insurers. The Southern mutual is not a new company, but commenced business in 1865, and has nearly one million dollars assets, including a good surplus, and its action indicates that the efforts of President DeWitt to introduce a definite life insurance contract, touching the question of forfeiture, is meeting with the success it deserves, and its adoption by other companies shows that the well-considered and practical reform introduced by the Union Mutual was demanded by the insuring public, and is necessary to the continued success of the business of life insurance.

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Spiritualist Meetings in Boston.

PARKER MEMORIAL HALL. Spiritualist meetings will be held at this hall, in Parker Memorial Building, corner Appleton and Berkeley streets, Boston, on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 17th, at 2 o'clock. Good lectures and excellent music. The public are invited to attend free of charge. J. A. Cavell will lecture during February. John Wetherill, Chairman; George A. Bacon, Secretary.

INVESTIGATOR HALL, PAINE MEMORIAL BUILDING, APPLETON STREET. W. J. Cavell will lecture during February. Good lectures and excellent music. The public are invited to attend free of charge. J. A. Cavell will lecture during February. John Wetherill, Chairman; George A. Bacon, Secretary.

AMORY HALL. Children's Progressive Lyceum No. 1, 100 West Washington street, Boston, on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 17th, at 2 o'clock. The public cordially invited. D. N. Ford, Conductor.

PETHAN HALL. The People's Spiritual Meeting (formerly held at Eagle Hall) is removed to Pethan Hall, 120 Tremont street. Services every Sunday morning and afternoon, and on Wednesdays.

EAGLE HALL. Spiritual Meetings for speaking and tests are held at this hall, 606 Washington street, every Sunday, at 10 A. M. and 7 P. M. Excellent quartette singing provided.

PARKER MEMORIAL PARLORS. The Spiritualist Ladies' Aid Society will meet at this place, Parker Memorial Building, Berkeley, corner of Appleton street, every Wednesday afternoon, at 2 o'clock. John Wetherill, President; Miss M. L. Barrett, Secretary.

ABRINGTON HALL. Meetings are held in this hall, Waverley Building, Charlestown District, every Sunday evening, under direction of C. B. Marsh.

Amory Hall.—The threatening aspect of the weather did not prevent a full attendance at this place to-day. The question of the session was: "What is True Friendship?" The answers were excellent and to the point. And right here I would like to give a few thoughts suggested by it: We have a manifestation of it in the many kindly and gratuitous services rendered our Lyceum by its hosts of friends. To Prof. Fisher, of Cambridge Conservatory, of Music, and his pupils, Miss Adams and Mr. Howlett, to Mr. Sullivan, Mme. Usnell and others, we owe grateful acknowledgments for their repeated kindnesses. To the dear old *Banner of Light*, which has always spread its folds around us, and its courteous editor and proprietors, we owe a thousand thanks, for through its columns we are permitted *gratuitously* to give a synopsis of our entertainments every week, thereby creating an interest we could not otherwise obtain, and through it means of enlarging our audience and increasing our usefulness many fold. We cannot particularize, but desire every one who in any way contributes to our Lyceum, by talent or means, to feel that we fully appreciate this manifestation of unselfish friendship.

The exercises of the morning were as follows: Selection by orchestra, singing, responses and *Banner March*; remarks and farewell song (*Le-tan-ty*); Mme. Usnell: answers to question, "What is True Friendship?" by Prof. Fisher; recitations: "The First Snowfall," Jennie Lathrop, "Be Kind," Jennie Smith, "My Old Man and Me," Afta Peabody, "What is Love?" Charlie Lathrop; song by Mr. Charles Sullivan; recitation: "What was his Creed?" Jennie Biennell; duet (encored), "Miserere," Miss Adams and Mr. Howlett, accompanied on piano by Prof. Fisher, of Cambridge; reading, "Fool in your Arms, Loved Angels," Helen M. L. song, "I might have been a Fairy," May Waters; Miss Florence Danforth; reading, "The Factory Girl," Hattie E. Collier; songs, "Sweet Spirit, Hear my Prayer," Mr. Howlett, "O'er the Distant Mountains," Miss Adams; Wing movements led by Mr. Ford; closing with the Target March. W. D. Rockwood, Cor. Sec.

Children's Progressive Lyceum No. 1.

Pythian Hall.—The announcement of a conference for development called out quite an increase of attendance at this hall last Sunday. The morning meeting was opened by the reading of the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians, "concerning spiritual gifts," with comments thereon by the manager of the meetings, and invocation and remarks by Dr. Charles Court. A very interesting conference was then kept up until some time past the usual hour for closing by Messrs. Crowell, Norris, Hall, Downs, Ricker, Huggins, Plummer and Crocker.

In the afternoon (the test medium advertised failing to keep engagement) Dr. Court kindly consented to take the platform, and allow himself to be used as mouthpiece for the invisibles, and gave an excellent trance address upon "Progression," choosing as a text the passage of Scripture which speaks of "Jesus preaching to spirits in prison." It was listened to with strict attention, and was evidently enjoyed by all present.

These conferences for development of speaking mediums will be continued on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 17th, at 2 o'clock, and will have some variations for lectures or tests, as circumstances may favor.

Charlestown District—Abbotts Hall.—Sunday evening, Feb. 9th, an interesting meeting was held in this place. The exercises commenced by singing by the choir, after which

Mrs. E. M. Hickok made a few very appropriate remarks. After another song Mrs. M. C. Bagley, test-medium, occupied nearly one hour in speaking and giving tests, which services were pleasing to all. The speaker or medium for next Sunday evening, Feb. 16th, will be announced in the Saturday and Sunday papers. C. B. M.

Blindness Cured.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., Jan. 26th, 1879.
DR. STOKES—Dear Sir: For your encouragement and the benefit of persons suffering as I have, I wish to make the following statement: All my life I have suffered from a scrofulous affection, which at times has caused me great suffering, and which all ordinary remedies failed to cure. In August, 1877, I grew rapidly worse until I was incapacitated, and from intense suffering in my head I was considered on the verge of insanity, and finally lost the sight of my right eye and was in a fair way to lose the other from the effects of the disease. I had intense pain in the chest and a hacking cough. It seemed evident that my lungs were also attacked. I consulted a prominent oculist, who, after careful examination of my eye, decided that the optic nerve was dead, and nothing could be done for it. I afterwards doctored with two different physicians, whose remedies failed to give me any permanent relief, and when in September last I consulted you I was in a most helpless condition. Indeed, I was in a condition of weakness, and I had lost all confidence in myself. On the strength of your encouragement I commenced taking the condensed air treatment. In three weeks I had regained my eyesight—proving, I think, that the optic nerve, instead of being dead, was under pressure of accumulated matter, which, being absorbed by the treatment, relieved it, and sight was naturally restored. I can now thread a fine needle with that eye alone. My whole system has been thoroughly made over, and I am enjoying a degree of health that is surprising to myself and all my friends, who thought so short a time ago that my days were few. I cannot find words to express the gratitude I feel to God, the Bestower of all blessings, who has through your wonderful air cure restored to me my precious eyesight and almost robust health.

I wish further to state that I ceased taking the condensed air treatment on the 15th of October, and have since then been able to do without it, and I am enjoying a degree of health that is surprising to myself and all my friends, who thought so short a time ago that my days were few. I cannot find words to express the gratitude I feel to God, the Bestower of all blessings, who has through your wonderful air cure restored to me my precious eyesight and almost robust health.

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