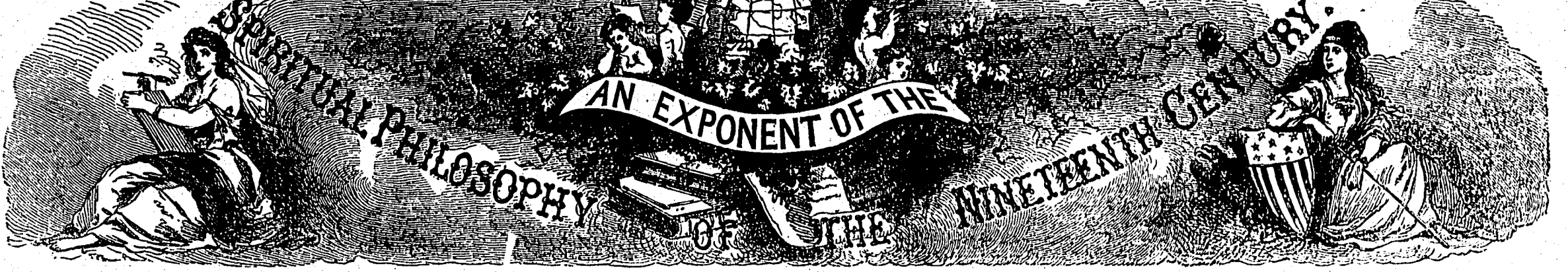


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Spiritualism Abroad.

REVIEW OF OUR FOREIGN SPIRITUALISTIC EXCHANGES.

Prepared expressly for the Banner of Light,
BY G. L. DITSON, M. D.

FRANCE.

Revue Spirite, Paris, for October. Passing over the able disquisition on "Philosophes et Savants," by M. Ch. Fauvel, and a beautiful spirit communication—to which our language could not do justice—from "Nusco," as well as another from "Bertha," a sweet poem delivered through the mediumship of Mme. d'Alési, I come to one of Mons. Alphonse Cahagnet's plain and forcible expositions of spirit and human power. Few writers have done more to place Spiritualism on a firm scientific basis than has Mons. Cahagnet. His mediums, Bruno and Adele, were all that could be desired in the realm of psychic phenomena, and their revelations were the acme of perspicuity and apparent conscientiousness. He now says (here much abridged): "I know some thirty years since two members of a circle of theosophists, who had a lucid, or medium, of great power through whom a spirit materialized, as with Mr. Crookes in the case of Katie King. The President of this group had this spirit for seven months at his table, but invisible, he taking his meals with the family. The plate on which the eatables were placed for him was dispossessed of its contents, little by little; also the glass filled with liquid, without any one being able to see what became of the substance. This spirit promised that two months later (and perhaps there was more purified spiritually in this than they apprehended) he could make himself visible to all; but the revolution of 1830 put an end to these mysterious unfoldments. The barricades and the fusillade dispersed the participants—ce fut une affaire manquée."

This group, however, with their preparations, would indicate that black magic was resorted to. A circle was drawn upon the floor divided into eight parts. The ninth, in the centre, was occupied by the chief. Each one bore the figure of the planet under which its occupant was born. Cabalistic characters were also drawn outside of the circle, while the chief held always in his hand a powerful talisman, etc., etc.; and all this to ward off the attacks, probably, of opposing influences which were made upon this assembly. The President was once told that if he would break a finger ring into two pieces it would be mended for him. The ring was broken, and placed in some earth in a pot upon the floor, where it was afterwards found so well mended the place of the joinings could not be discovered.

Mons. Cahagnet then cites a case as an example, in what is termed *la magie magnetique*, where a person is seen at the same hour at four different gates of the city of Moscow. To the argument that people are hallucinated, he begins by showing how perfectly the magnetized medium is under the control of the magnetizer, and if the reverse were the case how was it that spirit-photographs could be taken—of which he had one from Mr. Crookes. It would be even necessary to hallucinate the sensitive plate in its development of a figure. Still, there are some of these phenomena about which there is yet a mystery, and Mons. C. gives an account of an exhibition in Constantinople, reported by Mons. the Comte de Laborde, then ambassador near the Porte, which is briefly as follows: "A famous prestidigitateur announced that he would give an exhibition in the place in front of the Sultan's palace. All the court, and Mons. L. among them, were in attendance. The exhibitor came, formed a small enclosure

with a cord, and requested the spectators to keep strictly outside of it till ten minutes after the announcement that the exhibit was concluded. He then began to fill a medium sized pitcher with such articles as those around him would kindly loan to him—handkerchiefs, turbans, and even military arms; but as it was not filled, he feigned to put himself into it. He put in one foot with some difficulty, then the other, and, after a struggle, got his body in, which presently sunk out of sight. Ten minutes and more passed in impatience; then the crowd rushed in, the soldier to get his sword; &c., but the pitcher was absolutely empty, and all that had been loaned, with the juggler, had vanished."

Following the above is an excellent study of Swedenborg by Mons. René Caillé. Many avoid this great Swedish seer because there seems to be a mysticism about his writings not readily comprehended; but I think if there is anything in the English language plainer—say as soon as one is familiar with his peculiar phraseology, and which is not at all embarrassing—it will not be found in our libraries. That Christians, so called, and Spiritualists generally would be vastly benefited by an intimate acquaintance with Swedenborg's writings and his beautiful life, I have not the slightest doubt; and Mons. René Caillé is doing a kind service in bringing the attention of his people to them. "Swedenborg," he says, "may be considered as a precursor of Spiritualism. He was born in Stockholm in 1688 and died in London in 1772, aged eighty-four years. Kings and princesses called him into their councils. His first spirit-intercourse was when fifty-five years old. His works, numerous and learned, are very difficult to understand. He says the natural and spiritual worlds are interlinked as an interior and exterior, and consequently make one; but his doctrine of an eternal hell for some annihilates the goodness and mercy of God, etc." This everlasting punishment, however voluntary on the part of the recipient, is perhaps the sole offensive thing Spiritualists would encounter in this great seer's productions; though, of course, many will object to considering Christ as God. "Here, however," adds Mons. R., "one can find many things to corroborate his spiritual faith and to acquire a new intuition, or more complete, of the invisible world. The spirits, like us, are free and can have their systems and religious coteries, groups, families, as upon earth. Swedenborg is a grand figure, a man of vast erudition, and his memory will be attached to the history of Spiritualism."

Very high praise is given to Mons. Sauda, of Nogent-le-Roi, as a marvelous healer and as an abstemious, nobly benevolent, devout man. Mons. S. considers that there are two fluids within us: the blood and the nerves; the former, human; the second, divine. He says, also, that the body and the spirit are all that can be soiled by contact with the world; that the soul remains forever pure.

"How I became a Spiritualist." Mons. Charriat, under this heading, says: "At the age of thirteen I was taken to church to my first communion. I wondered then, and with aversion, why I should tell my sins to a mortal who could be equally culpable as myself. Growing up, I had a great love of God but a horror of priests, for in my neighborhood there were those of whom I could judge. Fortunately, under the same patron where I was employed there was a Mr. Chatelier, who spoke of our friends beyond the tomb, of Spiritualism in fact. I read then Allan Kardec's work, and I felt that there was a doctrine that should transform the terrestrial world. I rejected the infallibility of the Catholic Church and all its dogmas and ceremonies. When I die I wish a civil interment by my brethren in belief."

A touching discourse was pronounced at the grave of Mme. Morisse, who recently, at Rouen, departed this life. "To be born, to die, to be born again into eternal progress, such is the law. There is no mystery, and the supernatural does not exist. We are all equal before God, and all called to the same advancement and the same light." "These were the principles upon which she rested her soul, eager for the truth. Sustained by our venerable sister Lieutenant, Mme. Morisse became in her turn an eager propagator of our sublime doctrine; she aroused the indifferent, she consoled the unfortunate. Though losing her aid here, we gain it in another sphere." These are a few brief extracts from the address noticed above by Mons. Blot, President of the *Société Spirite* of Rouen.

Sr. Ernest Volpi, writing from Italy, says, that though an Italian, he was surprised to find in the ideas of Mazzini all the principles of our doctrine; and he quotes from his brochure, "addressed to the members of the last Roman Catholic Council: 'The Catholic dogma dies. The aurora of a new faith reveals to us the infinite ways of heaven, of boundless glory.'"

BELGIUM.

The *Moniteur*, of Brussels, 15th Nov., though containing several articles of much interest to Spiritualists—"Photographie Spirite," "Materializations," and "The Arguments of Dr. Sexton"—they are all from other publications; nothing original, though Brussels certainly does not lack either material or talent.

Le *Messageur*, of Liège, Nov. 15th, has a communication from a "Colaborateur" who enriches its pages each month with calm and judicious thoughts that cannot be too scrupulously heeded. His article in the present issue on our respect for the memory of the dead, shows that "all the world is in accord on this subject; and that there is an ingratitude in otherwise doing toward our parents and our

benefactors. And this obligation to think of our departed parents, is it not an obligation beneficial to ourselves? Without doubt. . . . We should preserve, too, a love for them even greater, if possible, than when they were in the flesh, for they may need it more than those who remain behind. And they must be occupied, for without that there would be a continual ennui, and existence would be like that of a criminal condemned to perpetual immobility. . . . A religion toward the dead is elevating to the soul, and carries with it the most ennobling sense of justice."

In "God and Creation," by Mons. Caillé, we have to follow into the stellar world, Herschel, Tycho-Brahé, Le Verrier and Bessel, "who wrote to Mons. de Humboldt that the time would come when, by the discovery of a new planet, the mysterious perturbations of Uranus might be solved."

"Spiritualism in Antiquity," by Dr. Wahn. The Doctor here deals with an "Exposure of the Chronology of Different Religions"; of "The Hebrews, receiving their Monotheism from the Egyptians; their advancement under David and Solomon; the Greek, Plato's and Aristotle's influence with other Hellenic writers; Bunsen's views," etc., which make an instructive chapter. Bunsen is quoted as saying: "Taking these together (Roman and Greek), the two developments, one can affirm in a certain order of manifestations, history shows us nothing equal in grandeur and in beauty, to the spiritualistic consciousness of God which antiquity had."

The "Anglican Council," recently held in England, had read before it quite a number of papers on Spiritualism, (published in a small pamphlet, with comments by M. A. (Oxon), and which should be very largely circulated in this country) that the *Journal de Bruxelles* undertook to reproduce; "but," says the *Messageur*, "did it stop at Dr. Thompson? Was there not Mr. Browne, Rev. Canon Wilberforce, Mr. Fowler, and others? Perhaps it would have deranged a line of conduct, imposed in certain matters, by its superiors, the ecclesiastics?"

The *Messageur* very kindly notices the enlargement of the *Banner of Light*, with its augmented price, under the able direction of Messrs. Colby & Rich. Mr. Crowell's *Two Worlds* is also mentioned.

SPAIN.

I miss this month that charming little paper, *La Luz*, of Barcelona, so ably conducted by that erudite writer, Mme. Domingo y Soler, and must content myself with *El Criterio Espiritista* of Madrid. The first six pages of *The Critic* are devoted to a discourse by the President of the "Spanish Society of Spiritualists," D. A. Gálvez Lopez, in which he speaks of the "school of Spiritualism which has demonstrated the grandest truths. . . . And it is not superstition to investigate, to learn whence comes this spirit and whither it is going, to follow its progressive evolutions in its union with matter in all its forms and states. . . . And spirit pertains to the category of forces in Nature, and it is that which informs us of the phenomena of life, in its material order as well as in its intellectual and moral," etc.

"Spiritualism is a Philosophy," "Epidemics" (referring especially to the cholera at Mecca, the effects of fear etc.); "Mediums in England"; "Equivocations" (in which the Bishop of Cuba is made to say that all our healings by the laying on of hands, etc., are by the power of the Devil); "Miscellaneous" and "Necrologia," are the other articles deserving a more especial notice; but space forbids.

The death of one of our brethren in belief, in Havana, Don Manuel Ubeda, is particularly noticed in *El Criterio*. Preserving to the last all his faculties, he recognized and reposed in the truths of Spiritualism. He was the honored father of a family, consecrated himself to good deeds, and will be greatly missed.

SOUTH AMERICA.

In the *Constancia*, of Buenos Ayres, we have quite a formidable magazine. The present issue (coming late to hand) has thirty-two pages, of double columns, that are especially admirable. "The Refutation of Sr. Hernandez" discusses, *seriatim*, "The enemies of Spiritualism"; "We are not to deduce from the antiquity of a thing that it does not exist"; "There is nothing new under the sun"; "Testimonies from the Orient"—from ancient writings; "Views of Pythagoras and Origen"; "Scientific experiments and the result," etc., etc.—these constituting in part the basis of a very lengthy and astute criticism on what the Catholic Church, and our opponents generally, have to say against our faith; while a brilliant array of evidence is adduced in our behalf from the sages of India and the illustrious savants of our own time, such as Messrs. Crookes, Flammarion, et alae. Mons. Cousin has said that "The history of the philosophy of India is the fountain of the philosophical history of the world."

"The religion of Valmiki in primitive India is founded on the unity of God, the immortality of man—his continued existence in a spiritual state where justice would be meted out to him," while in Book III. of Manu we read "that the spirits that have gone before us (*antepasados*), our ancestors, in an invisible state, accompany the Brahmanes (priests) in their funeral ceremonies; under an aerial form they follow them and stand by their side." . . . Further, also, in Book XII, "The soul is the likeness (*semejanza*) of God; the universe reposes in the supreme Soul." . . . But I must not follow this dissertation through its twenty pages, however agreeable it might be.

From an equally able and pleasing introduction to the above, I will quote an item which I have never seen referred to before: "In 1862 the *Illustracion Francesa* published a map of Europe, in which in every quarter the inhabit-

ants were represented as being engaged in materialistic dance."

It is agreeable also to find in the *Constancia* the following: "We take occasion to manifest our pleasure at the just tribute of admiration which the *Reclama*, of Paris, and the *Banner of Light*, of Boston, pay to the distinguished literary talent of the tireless writer (Mme. Domingo y Soler) who has contributed so largely toward the dissemination of our consoling, enlightening doctrine." "The importance of the *Banner of Light* in propagating our faith among twelve millions of believers, is further commented on."

A few words must now be given to the *Reclama Espiritista*, of Montevideo, for October. With the exception of one of those engaging communications from "The Guardian Angel," this number is almost wholly occupied by the pen of its editor, who writes of "God"; "If Spiritualism were an illusion it would have died ere this," and "Spiritual Teachings." It announces the reception of a new periodical: *Anales del Ateneo del Uruguay*; and that "They have put on sale in Rome the new work of the *ex-padre* Jesuit Curel. There are signs that this publication is soon to excite great interest in Italy. Space forbids further comment."

ITALY.

The *Annali Dello Spiritalismo*, of Turin, for November, considers in its conclusion of "Catholicism before the Time of Christ," the "Tendency of Religion," "Intolerance," "Signs of Decadence of Catholicism," the "Incompatibility of Priests with Civil Liberty," "Combating Errors," etc., and these are discussed with the known ability of Visconti Solanot. "The World of Spirits," (through a medium) which "though little understood is one of the most important of the new doctrines," says the spirit; Chapter IV. of the "Book of Cosmology"; that portion relating to the murder of Miss Stannard (with a notice of the Rev. Hayden), which Dr. Hunt gives as revealed to him by the invisible, and "Human Perfection," are also treated at some length in the *Annali*. This periodical quotes also an article in the *Bien Publico*, of Guatemala, in which it is said (names and data being given) that the poor Indians of Matagalpa are being shamefully cheated by the priests of that region; but it is hardly possible for these religionists to deal with them more unfairly and cruelly than does our Christian government with its so-called "wards." Mr. T. R. Hazard's devotion to our cause and his large experience are also noticed.

GERMANY.

The *Psychische Studien*, of Leipzig, for November: four numbers of *Der Sprechsaal*, (to Dec. 5th), also of Leipzig; and four numbers of *Licht, mehr Licht* (to Nov. 27th), of Paris—all in the German language—are in hand.

To those who have a taste for the highest expression of German culture, the *Psychische Studien* is doubtless to be much commended, for it has many able contributors. Among its minor items in the present issue is one on the enlargement of the *Banner of Light*, and commendatory of its contents.

Der Sprechsaal has a great variety of attractive articles that cannot fail to enlighten its readers, who will doubtless soon be numerous.

Licht, mehr Licht, beautifully printed in English type, is a host in itself, seeming to leave no branch of our faith unelucidated. The *Banner's* article on "Manifestations in Baltimore" is quoted.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Dutch *Op de Grenzen van Twee Werelden*, etc., Mme. Van Calcar, editress, is a neat magazine, and has its present pages largely devoted to the distinguished Russian Spiritualist, Alexander Aksakof. Spiritualism, ancient and modern, with its mediums, is then brought under review.

La Chaine Magnetique, Paris, for November, has a wood cut on its outside representing the Baron du Potet magnetizing a quantity of invalids seated before him in a garden at Montpellier; and within, M. Hausen standing on (the centre of) a magnetized person who only rests his head and feet upon chairs as far apart as possible for this experiment. It seems that in Germany M. Hausen's exhibitions have been prohibited. *La Chaine*, under the heading of "Causerie Scientifique," says: "Last Sunday there was a very interesting conference held at the park of Montsouris, for the consideration of alimentary reform. It is the first, we think, that was ever held in France by the Vegetarian Society outside of the Society's assembly-room. It was attended by the *élite*. 'Meat,' it was said, 'as one of the foremost of excitants, should be banished from our tables.' This in view of temperance reform; and this, ere long, will doubtless be one of the strong points put forth by the total abstinence advocates everywhere. *The useful animals eat no meat.*"

"THE BANNER OF LIGHT," (BOSTON, U. S. A.) (OCT. 15TH-NOV. 31ST).—We approach the massive pages of the *Banner of Light* with admiration, but with an utter sense of inability to do any justice to their contents. We can but give a general tribute of praise, and direct special attention to some among many good things. Dr. Ditson's "Reviews of Foreign Spiritual Journals" are as good as ever. W. J. Colville and Mrs. Richmond afford, as usual, instructive and eloquent teaching to the readers of the *Banner*. The enterprise that provides so much intellectual pabulum is most commendable. Various striking narratives of the "Presentation and Recognition of Materialized Forms" are given. The cumulative testimony, making every allowance for possible mistake, enthusiastic exaggeration, and imperfect conditions of observation, is very strong. The Editor-at-Large continues his useful work; and the "Message Department" is as provocative of wonder as ever.—*The Psychological Review*, London, Eng., for December.

Denver, Col., in ten years has become a city of 45,000 people, many of whom are Spiritualists.

Oration to Dr. Joseph Rodas Buchanan and Bride.

We noted in our last issue the wedding, on Dec. 12th, of Dr. J. R. Buchanan and Mrs. Cornelia Humphrey Decker, at the residence of Dr. R. C. Flower, 439 5th Avenue, New York City; and gave an abstract of what might be termed the *post prandial* remarks then and there participated in by prominent ladies and gentlemen in attendance. We have since received a *verbatim* report of these speeches, which we now place before our readers:

After the wedding guests had returned from the refreshment tables, they grouped around the bride and bridegroom, as they stood in the bay window by the statue of "Rebecca at the Well," and renewed their congratulations, which were eloquently expressed by old friends, the substance of whose remarks is here reproduced.

Mrs. E. L. Saxon, of New Orleans said: *Dear Friends*—It seems scarcely meet that I should first be called to speak, amid this array of talent, gathered to do honor to our friend. To me it seems appropriate from the one fact that Dr. Buchanan's life and philosophy have colored all my destiny, and enabled all that was noblest in me. When I was very young my dear father subscribed for and read his *Journal of Man*, and honored his fearless editor.

Thus early my own soul was invading the mysterious world of spirit, and from this *Journal* I gained faint glimmerings of the science of the soul. Later I read his Anthropology, and found that with one bold bound he had scaled the battlements of material science, and surpassing all predecessors, with fearless hand he parted the curtains of the hidden mysteries, and read the secrets of the soul, demonstrating the immortality of man beyond a shadow of a doubt to the intuitive mind.

In one chapter of his grand work of Anthropology he speaks as with the voice of prophecy, declares the divine possibilities of woman, and urges her to do what we see her here to-night, a glorious being—not a doll, but part and parcel of the great thinking, acting, living world.

I know I speak the sentiment of every woman here when I say our sex owe to him love, honor and reverence—not maidhood but royal sentiment, as woman's fearless and courageous friend. Two of the leading woman physicians of the Union have said to me, "I am grateful to Dr. Buchanan. He made it possible for me to be what I am to-day, a successful practitioner; and woman should honor him as the pioneer champion of her sex in this country."

Far back in the past, long before we knew each other personally, he was my correspondent. I named him then "Dear Mentor," for he was teacher, counselor and guide in all that was noble and lofty in life. Through him, by letters of introduction, I became friend and correspondent with many noble and eminent women, when isolated from intellectual life in my lonely southern home by its many duties and cares.

His was the fearless courage that pierced the dim forests of ignorance, holding aloft the undying flame of truth. Such men have ever been derided (being wiser than their kind), but coming generations ever bless and honor them. So when we shall have perished, the divine science of sciences, Psychometry, will be prized, and its discoverer honored and crowned as he is now blessed and loved.

It is indeed fitting that he should choose, in the glorious Indian summer of his life, the pure and noble woman whose soul so fully interprets the science of which he is the honored leader—who can by holding a bit of one's writing reveal character, interpret motives, and lay bare the mysteries of soul and conscience. May they live long, blessed and blessed, and when he passes to the higher and I remain on earth, if among the highest spirits and noblest spirits I can choose my spirit-guide, I'll turn from all and choose my loved and honored Mentor.

COL. ASHURB H. H. DAWSON, of New York, was called out and said:

Ladies and Gentlemen—This invitation to say something would surprise me if I was young enough to be surprised, but inasmuch as it is out of the abundance of the heart the most speaker, when the best things are said, I feel that I shall take but little risk in trusting impulse on this occasion. Even had I not listened spellbound to the felicitous flow of facts and feeling for which we are all indebted to the eloquent lips of Mrs. Saxon, all I would have to do to prepare myself to say something appropriate to the occasion would be to give the events of the last forty years, during which I have been an observer of the conduct and character, labors and achievements of Dr. Joseph Rodas Buchanan, a passing glance.

It will be proper to state that I am not a Spiritualist, that I never before attended a wedding in that church, and that I was not aware of the custom I am now expected to fill a *vide* in observing, but I am not here to dispute the right of Spiritualists to conduct sacred occasions as they do all other occasions in a way peculiar to themselves.

My testimony, however, to the grandeur of Dr. Buchanan's genius, the strength of his intellect, the breadth of his wisdom and the depth of his learning is not diminished in its value by the fact that I do not belong to his church, and am free from the influence of spiritualistic sympathies. I have often said, and say again, that I believe him to be one of the profoundest and altogether the boldest of modern thinkers.

He grasps his hatlet and plunges into the pathless depths of the forest of ignorance, and fearlessly places the blaze from its sharp edge on every oak he finds there that promises to answer his purpose as a landmark; and what has cost me a mingled disgust and surprise, is that the cowards who have timidly followed in his footsteps, guided by those blazes, lack the magnanimity to acknowledge their obligations to him, and are frequently guilty of the impudent trick of attempting to confuse his premises with their deductions or his deductions with their premises. Time will correct all such perversions of truth, and attempts to inflame upon lovers and shedders of light injustice, but they must cost an average piety a more or less trying test.

Independent of his claims upon the respect of strangers for the highest intellectual gifts which elevate and enable him, he has a claim upon the reverence and affection of those who know him more intimately none can command save the irreproachably virtuous and upright. The recent campaign for the Presidency was distinguished above any we ever had before, or if we change one of our candidates, will ever have again, by the fact that one of the candidates emerged from the contest without the smell of the gunpowder of scandal on his garments. It would have been a phenomenal event in any age, and if there is another man who could have emulated his success in that regard, ladies and gentlemen, (pointing to Dr. Buchanan,) there he stands.

And now, in conclusion, permit me addressing the [Continued on twelfth page.]

THREE BASKETS.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Bertha's basket: Maiden Bertha, with the merry dancing eyes
And the brow whereon a shadow would be such a rare surprise—
What has she within this dainty shell of rushes,
Sleek-lined,
Where so many maiden musings innocently are enshined?
Gayly mingling ends of worsted; beads that glitter silver-bright;
Fleece of Shetland, light and airy, lying there in waves of white;
Brodered linen, wrought for pastime in the dreamy summer hours;
And perhaps a poet's idyl, read amid the leaves and flowers.
Bertha's basket: Mother Bertha. Ah! serene light bath grown
In the thoughtful eyes; the forehead hath some fitting sorrow known
In the larger basket looking, other handiwork we find,
Where the woman's heart its pleasure, love and long-lug hath enshrined,
Little aprons; little dresses; little trowsers at the knee
Patched with tender art, that no one shall the mother's piece see;
Flannel worked with skill and patience; and an over-flowing store,
Every size of a little stockings, always needing one stitch more.
Bertha's basket: Grandmother Bertha; for the years have run their way,
And it seems in looking backward it was only yesterday
That the maiden tripped so lightly, that the matron had her care—
Age slips on so gently, gently, like an angel unawares,
Grandmother's work is contemplative. With the scull-lance of steel
Clean the needles, smooth with flashing oil the toe or round the heel.
Lesture days have found the lady; but her face is deeply lined,
And her heart is as a temple, where are hallowed memories shrined.
As along the dusty high-road rise the milestones one by one,
Telling here and there the distance, until all the way is done,
So a woman's basket marks her journey o'er the path of life,
Working dearest work for others, whether she be maid or wife.

Banner Correspondence.

California.

PASADENA.—E. A. Bonine writes: "I was exceedingly pleased with John Wetherbee's 'Conclusions,' and feel almost as though I ought to address my communication to him instead of the *Banner of Light*. I consider his article glibly edited; or, as a glass-maker would say, of good glass, 'double thick.' I was surprised to find his deductions after twenty-five years about the same as my own after an investigation of three years. I was soon thoroughly satisfied that spirits returned. The first medium I ever saw was an independent slate writer, who held a small frameless slate before me on which was lying a half inch pencil. The medium held the slate by two diagonal corners, and remarked, 'Cover the pencil with your hand,' which I did, my hand being close to and in contact with the slate, forming a small hollow in the centre of my hand, and thus not in contact with the pencil myself. We each asked the same question: I heard and felt a scratching on the slate, and raising up one side of my hand I read the word 'Cannol'—an intelligent answer to my question, but not what I asked nor expected. This sitting was in the presence of a friend, and in a room in which the sun was shining through the windows. Then we investigated other phases—rapping, trance, materialization, etc., etc., and we emphatically said, *they come back from the other shore*. The next question was how much to believe of what they said; and there came the rub. We had to turn over and twist, and take near views and long-range views; compare and deduct; multiply and subtract, and at last came to a conclusion; and that conclusion was—they are one link in advance of us in the chain of existence; but it is possible for a man to die and not know half as much as I myself; dying does not cause a rascal to turn up a first-class saint, nor make a man all-wise. A spirit, an old doctor, remarked to me once: 'People expect everything a spirit says to be good. There is none superlatively good but God.' And another remarked: 'We could tell you many things that might be of benefit to you, but if we told you everything where would you get your experience? would you be living out your individuality or ours?' I doubt if any spirit can positively say such and such will come to pass; but I find they reason on future events much as we do; and looking at things in every light in which they can, say such and such will happen; but sometimes a condition will come in which they did not foresee, and change the result. One thing seems strange to me—in all my investigations I cannot get positive evidence that I ever communicate with any of my personal friends in spirit. The fact is, I never look for them to come any more, as I did at first. I have seen the same spirit come many different times (materialize) to another. I learned to know its voice, its size and shape; I learned its individuality. I have heard words of wisdom and love, have had a thousand questions answered that no one else gave a satisfactory solution to; questions that my mind asked, and no answer was to be found; and so, though I do not know all about Spiritualism, and never expect to, still I have brought knowledge and peace, and I am so far satisfied that I look hopefully to the future and feel convinced that with the freedom of inquiry we have in this age, by-and-by we shall know much more about its philosophy. Ten thousand thousand minds are investigating. Many are trammelled with all manner of coils, others are as free to think and act as the bird that cleaves the air. One thing is sure—they who investigate this philosophy will learn to think for themselves; thus individualize themselves; and among spirits this is held in high esteem. Spiritualism makes the human soul the arbiter of every question. This is right. To my mind one thing is needful: men need to know that life is immortal; then, methinks, the cloud of selfishness and ignorance that hangs over men's minds like a shroud of darkness will disperse, and men will find their truest happiness in helping others."

SAN FRANCISCO.—Wm. Emmette Coleman writes that upon the arrival of Thomas Gales Forster and wife (when they were in California some time since) they were called upon by Mrs. Lena Clarke, who though never having seen them before, accurately described several of their spirit friends.
"A lady," said Mrs. C., "walks into the room, giving me the idea of much debility, characteristic of her condition before her departure, and she says she will recline upon the sofa, as was her wont." Mrs. C. then gave the name and exact description of a friend of the Forsters who left the form some ten years since, who invariably rested as above described, when visiting Mrs. F. before her decease. She likewise told Mrs. Forster the name of a relative in Philadelphia to whom she was writing a letter when

the medium called, the partly-written letter then lying upon the table in an adjoining room, and into which Mrs. C. did not enter during her visit. The spirit further very clearly identified herself by speaking with exactness of peculiar relations known to Mr. and Mrs. Forster, that had existed before her departure from the form between herself and the lady to whom Mrs. F. was writing. Mr. Coleman subsequently received many remarkable evidences of spirit presence through the mediumship of Mrs. Clarke. He gives in detail an account of slate-writing proceedings conducted without a pencil, and in a very satisfactory manner, remarking upon which he says:

"The facts of psychography and clairvoyance, upon which Mr. Epes Sargent predicated his 'Scientific Basis of Spiritualism,' were here strongly manifested. Both an unseen physical power and an unseen intelligent agent were exhibited—a power capable of writing on a slate so situated that no material hand could have guided the pencil, and an intelligence capable of piercing my thoughts, and of inditing a reply to unspoken questions. Some of the information contained in the slate-writing, it should be observed, could have been derived from my mind by mental sympathy or mind-reading, as it was present in my consciousness at the time; but some of the points alluded to were not in my thoughts when the writing took place, they being brought to my remembrance by the perusal of the writing."

Mr. Coleman alludes favorably to other mediums, Mrs. Breed, Mrs. Seales, Miss Mayo, Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. E. C. Morton, remarking of the last named, "Mrs. Morton is a lady of cultivated tastes, and richly endowed with sterling personal graces alike of head and heart, commanding the esteem of all for her unostentatious social and domestic virtues, as well as for her beneficent medial powers, as exemplified in clairvoyant, psychometric, healing, developing, and other phases. Though not specially claiming to be a test medium, so-called, striking tests of identity are often given through her; my own experience with her corresponding, as above, with that of the many consulting her for advice and counsel."

Wisconsin.

MILWAUKEE.—E. L. Swaney writes: "We have stopped with us at 470 East Water street, Mrs. Van Dusen, who returned to Milwaukee from Denver, Col., where she has been doing a noble work for the past two years, giving tests, healing and speaking. For the past five Sabbath she has given, to fine, intelligent audiences in Dickinson's Hall, many grand and beautiful truths. She describes spirits in the audience, answers questions, and improvises poetry. Her services were highly appreciated. While the population of our city is largely German, in which the materialistic element predominates, considerable interest is manifested in Spiritualism. Mrs. L. M. Spencer, who came here about two years ago, has been developed as a trance speaker, and is doing a good work at Boyington's Hall, every Sunday evening, being occasionally relieved by speakers passing through the city. Last Sunday evening Frank T. Ripley, who is on his return from the Quarterly Convention at Omro, gave us a good, stirring lecture. His audience, which was the largest of the season, was highly pleased. His description of spirits in the audience was very satisfactory."

While the earthly burdens we bear make us weary in body, we get soul-rest in the perusal of the *Banner of Light*. May it continue in the future, as in the past, to carry to earth's children those beautiful truths that the spirit of man so longs for."

OMRO.—Dr. J. C. Phillips writes, Dec. 5th: "We have just closed one of the most interesting and harmonious meetings ever held in this place. We were very fortunate in securing Mr. F. T. Ripley, whom we consider one of the best test mediums ever in this section. The attendance was large, and great interest was manifested. Prof. Lockwood gave one of his logical and concise lectures Sunday p.m., from the text, 'If a man die he shall live again.' The Professor, as our executive, has won hosts of friends for his geniality and kindness. The local society of this place was so well pleased with Mr. Ripley that he has been engaged for the Sundays of February and March next."

APPLETON.—L. D. Nickerson writes, Dec. 10th—in regard to the passing to the higher life of Miles Brown, of that place, at the age of seventy-five, on the evening of Nov. 27th, 1881—as follows: "Mr. Brown was endowed with a broad, generous and philanthropic nature which never could be confined to any narrow, selfish sphere. His sympathies embraced the world of mankind, and wherever want or sorrow or helplessness made appeal, his heart and hand were alike ready to respond to the extent of his ability; hence it was impossible for him not to take a decided position in the exciting struggles between bondage and freedom which, in the days of his early manhood, seemed either to quicken or deaden all hearts. Opposition on the part of the Church, as a Church, to the practical application, in our own country, of the principles of human rights as embraced in the Declaration of Independence, together with personal abuse and persecution by its members for the stand he took against oppression, had the effect to undermine in him the religious faith in which he had been educated, and for a period he seemed to have lost all faith and confidence in the Divine Government and immortality."

At about the year 1853, a remarkable opportunity being opened to him for investigating the so-called Spiritual Philosophy, he seemed like one born into a new world. He spared neither time nor money in testing its merits, and became fully convinced of an unseen power working from the Supernatural, through many souls, for the help of mankind. He regarded this new Philosophy as one of the grandest truths ever given to man, making this life worth living, robbing the grave of its victory, teaching him there is no death, revealing the mystery of the hitherto unknown, giving him bright glimpses of the 'gates ajar' of a better life beyond, and enabling him to hold sweet converse with loved ones gone before. All this our dear brother most fully verified in his actual life for almost thirty years, and in the passing hours of his final dissolution, was confident to the last that he should meet the dear departed ones on the banks of the hitherto dark river. So passed on this old veteran and pioneer, illustrating the sustaining power of implicit faith in a future life wrought in him by the investigation of the Spiritual Philosophy."

Vermont.

VERNON.—Chauncey Thayer writes: "I feel to rejoice that the *Banner of Light* has grown larger instead of smaller within the past year—just as I expected. And how the quality

of the reading matter increases with the quantity! I feel each year more and more as though I could not do without it; and as anxiously look for its weekly visits as I do for the return of the Sabbath-day of rest from daily labor, that I may enjoy a few hours of quiet repose and spiritual feasting."

Minnesota.

MINNEAPOLIS.—Believing that "an honest confession is good for the soul," Mr. E. A. Hodsdon writes: "For years I have been receiving the *Banner of Light* via San Francisco, Cal. It has been forwarded to me by the kindly hands of my only surviving sister—one who has long rejoiced in the peace-giving truths you enunciate. For a long time I took little interest in its contents. She knew this, but sent it all the same. Her persistence has now been rewarded, and I am sure she will be rejoiced to know the fact, and all the more to learn it from your light and life-giving pages."

The change has come over me slowly. Every step has been earnestly contested. If a medium was entranced, it was self-mesmerism; if the past was revealed to me, it was mind-reading; if persons and localities were described, that was clairvoyance, etc., etc. At last I discovered that even these phenomena are but phases of Spiritualism—its inchoate stages and forerunners—proving, as they do, the independent action of the spirit while still in the body."

Much that I saw in the 'Message Department' of the *Banner* seemed to me childish, not to say foolish—formulated by the medium from the death lists of newspapers. Even while arguing to this effect, there came to my mind with wonderful distinctness these words: 'My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith unto thee, wash and be clean.' (2 Kings, v: 13). We aim at truth, but too frequently overshoot the mark. Verily, 'God has chosen the weak to overcome the mighty; and the foolish things of this world to confound the wise.' To credit such eminent men as Hare, Howitt, Edmonds, Denton, Zöllner, on points of law, philosophy, science, and to ignore their testimony on the phenomena of Spiritualism, is not modest, to say the least."

Among the lesser works on Spiritualism which I have read with great satisfaction, I may mention 'The Claims of Spiritualism, by a Medical Man,' 'Six Lectures,' by Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, and 'Is Spiritualism True?' by Prof. Denton. They are but low-priced pamphlets, to which my attention was called through the advertising department of the *Banner of Light*, but their contents will enchain the reader's attention from first to last; and if they do not convince him that Spiritualism is true, he will certainly find them very able helps in that direction."

Still, the *Banner* itself has proved the most efficient aid in my case, presenting as it has the various phases of Spiritualism from week to week, and thus constantly adding new truths, undermining old prejudices, and deepening impressions already made. Above all things, the newspaper is a power: it is not so elaborate as a book, but it presents more variety, and brings us face to face with the passing hour. It was the 'broken bread' that fed the multitude."

The rubicon is passed; theological mists are dispelled; the true light now shineth; there is no more death; the family chain is unbroken, and our dear departed live and love."

As the gods of Olympus fled before the risen glory of the crucified Jesus, so the dogmas of the Church are scattered by the brighter beams of the Harmonical Philosophy."

Other bibles are unearthed; other Christs are revealed; comparisons are instituted; opponents wax warm in debate; the question is decided, and Christna, Buddha, Zoroaster and Socrates range themselves beside the Nazarene. The essential manhood of each is admitted; there is no associate God; the myths and legends of a dead past make their bow and retire before the living present."

The wall of partition is broken down; the accredited ambassadors are admitted; treaties of amity and commerce between earth and heaven are duly signed, sealed, and delivered; angels fling out their banners, and man responds with joy triumphant. Thus Spiritualism is the outcome of all the religions of the past—the topmost flower—the ripened fruit of the 'Tree of Life.'"

The wall of the damned is hushed; cruel gods and their associate devils disappear with the miseries they generated. The gates of heaven are flung wide open! Our loved and lost return, crowned with immortality."

Earth wears a brighter garb; flowers shed sweeter perfume; waters leap in gladness; frolic; mountains nod approval; the trees clap their hands for joy."

Massachusetts.

HAVERTHILL.—W. L. Jack writes that great interest is manifest among all classes in the subject of Spiritualism. Many circles are being held even among church-going families, and a fair investigation is one of the things they are determined upon. The result of such a course is easily foreseen. Mrs. Sarah A. Byrnes has recently lectured, winning encomiums of praise from all who heard her eloquent words of truth, and our correspondent recommends all societies who may desire an able speaker upon their platform to secure her services."

EAST CUMMINGTON.—"L. C." writes: "It is seldom that we have the privilege of listening to spiritualistic lectures in this place, but we engaged the services of Miss Leslie N. Goodell for Nov. 27th, and were very much delighted with the two fine discourses she gave us. Her character-readings from photographs—some twenty in number—were a perfect success. She is an earnest, graceful and practical speaker, and has won many friends here who will be glad to welcome her again. She should be kept constantly at work."

The *Banner of Light* is an old friend here, and we could hardly keep house without it. Accept our cordial sympathy and best wishes."

New York.

WESTFIELD.—S. G. McEwen writes: "The enlargement of the *Banner of Light* we consider a great improvement in the right direction. It gives a class of matter now that it was not always able to do heretofore, for the want of space, which must please all who take it, and ought to add to your list of subscribers. This token of prosperity encourages us all; and we hope its interests will never wane."

Illinois.

HARVARD.—Charles George, upon remitting for a new subscriber, writes: "I am a firm believer in the truths of Spiritualism, and though over seventy-five years old employ my time in visiting the sick and healing those whom the regular doctors pronounce incurable."

Original Essays.

"CAN ANYBODY TELL ME WHO I AM?"

The sky was blue. The bright sun gave no token of an eclipse. The light, assuming crimson and purple hues as it passed through the stained windows of Mr. Chadwick's Church, on the morning of Nov. 27th, seemed to have found no grave; or was it indifferent to individuals in its certainty of the irresistible sweep of truth? Did it see some other hand ready to grasp the wavering standard? But, as I fancied, there was sadness in the organ's tones—for it was a very radical organ. Its undulating harmonies seemed to voice the feeling of the ocean, as its waters close over some stately ship, its pride. And flowers came and crept near the speaker—green and white, such as go to Greenwood."

It was a strange spectacle! Chadwick defending himself from O. B. Frothingham's speaking of "our friend's defection," deprecating his expressions as "painful reading," and complaining of his "serious indictment of radicalism." Frothingham had always impressed me as being as much of an iconoclast as any radical should desire. He could be relied on to get away from somewhere, if not to anywhere. Fascinating in his very destruction, so beautifully did he consign to the realm of myth hopes and beliefs endeared by the teachings of childhood and the associations of ages, that the wanderer from the fold soon learned to hush the appeals of his orthodox conscience, and to admire the hand that wrought ruin only to liberate."

The last time I saw that hand, it was closing the door forever (after him, upon the conclusion of his last address in the Masonic Temple, when he hinted at the failure of individualism, and foreshadowed the fall of Protestantism, leaving upon the field rationalism and Roman Catholicism, in the shadow of whose moss-grown walls the conservative would find refuge from the restless surge of modern thought—shelter from the bright glare of the sun of radicalism."

The glory of the Temple departed from it. No one was sought or found to assume the fallen mantle. Who could? And now, he cannot take up the thread of his work where he left it. "I would not be able to teach as I did." "I was wholly alone," he says, or is reported as saying. He who has the truth need never feel alone. He seems to regard his past labor as a work of reformation. But the church, in characterizing his work, would never have thought of that word, or have recognized the original after he had left it."

He thinks "it is the man, and not the truth behind the man, which keeps the materialist movement active at present among the people." But the truth, and the needs of the time, have much to do with the making of the man. Put Mr. Chadwick in a Methodist class-meeting, and Felix Adler in a Baptist pulpit, (or wrap him up in Episcopal vestments) and see what would become of them."

If Mr. Frothingham's independent church "was a sort of magnet" for "queer persons," this will perhaps be accounted for, in part, by the freedom of thought which he invited. If the evangelical churches enjoy immunity from this experience, an assertion I would by no means hazard, the mold in which church-members are required to run their beliefs suggests itself as an explanation. Better the various shades of belief reached through some process of reasoning, than uniformity of belief at the dictum of authority. An erroneous conclusion evolved through the bloody sweat of one's own brain is more to be respected than a servile opinion imposed by what has been called "the consensus of the competent." Stumble, if need be, but do try to walk. There is plenty of time in eternity, and somewhere, somehow, the tired spirit, if it will only question, will find rest in the truth."

The subject of these comments has recently been compared to one who should assume to take a ship full of passengers across the ocean, and then, abandoning it midway, say: "I thought I could take you across, but I find I don't understand navigation. I am going off in this small boat, and though I am sorry for you I can do no more for your welfare. Good-by." But whether Mr. Frothingham cross himself or not, if he has encouraged others to essay the voyage who shall cross and desert the continent of truth beyond, his spirit lives and is justified in the impulse which is crowned with triumph in another. To see the liberator chain himself and fall by the wayside while the throngs of the emancipated pass by, if a finality, were unutterably sad. But the wave of truth which may appear to strand the ship will not forget to return and, taking it up in its arms, bear it out to sea."

"Unbridled free thought" is one of the last things Mr. Frothingham might have been expected to disapprove. Waiving the question of the feasibility of putting a bridle upon free thought, it must be unbridled to be worth anything. No matter whether it leads to "dreary negation" or not. The comfort or discomfort of a belief is not to be considered a moment. "Is it true, or is it not true?" is the sole question to be asked. If one may not be free to think, how shall he himself feel assured of freedom to think that another shall not be free to think. But the sea which is invited beyond its barriers to irrigate the country, will laugh at the suggestion to "stop where I stop."

It is not so surprising if free thought has led to "dead materialism," in view of the modicum of evidence the churches have had to offer, disdaining as they have the proffered testimony of Spiritualism. Beautiful types of character, however, they have developed, and it is these which have made an impression upon Mr. Frothingham. His statement, if he made it, that "the opponents of revealed religion have made no headway during the last twenty years," and that "Evangelical religion was stronger and the churches better filled" when he withdrew from the Temple than twenty years ago, is extraordinary, and at variance with the confessions and lamentations of the clergy themselves. Mr. Chadwick justly answers that if this be so, it is "no reason for asking for a furlough," and that the popularity of a preacher is "largely in proportion" to his "modification" of the most conspicuous and offensive features of Orthodoxy, or "reticence" concerning them; and this fact Mr. Frothingham seems to recognize in his observation that "the religion of to-day is throwing off the accretions of ignorance."

Mr. Chadwick considers Dean Stanley, Robertson Smith and Stopford Brooke, and the waning influence of the Lutheran Church in Germany, among other signs of the times; as poor illustrations of the "no headway" idea, and says that "if the old standards were to be

enforced," and "the old doctrines distinctly preached," "men and women would tread upon each other in their haste to leave the sacred precincts for a breath of less asphyxiating and sulphurous air." Ife thinks that if Rip Van Winkle's experience could be reversed, he might have thought the subject of his criticisms had awakened twenty years ago."

Some of the most significant sentences in the report defining Mr. Frothingham's present position (or professedly aiming to do so) are these: "What is this power—the power behind revealed religion and the Romish priests? I cannot undertake to say. But it is there, and it may be that those persons who deny the essential truths of revealed religion are all wrong. At any rate, I for one do not care to go on denying the existence of such a force." "The creeds of to-day do not seem, in my eyes, to be so wholly groundless as they did" ten years ago. "The work I have been doing appears to lead to nothing, and may have been grounded upon mistaken premises." It has "occurred to me" that opinions hitherto entertained "do not contain the whole truth." But "I do not recant; I simply stop denying, and wait for more light." If he does not believe more, he doubts more."

When the Materialist finds nothing more to destroy, and wants more light, he may begin to discern that light which dawned upon the world thirty-three years ago. There is honesty in his confession, and light in his "growing suspicion that there might be something behind or below what we call revealed religion." While Talmage regards his [F's] present attitude as "the most stunning blow that infidelity has received in a quarter of a century," and congratulates him upon the "discovery in time that in order to be happy one must believe something, and believe it with all his heart," a correspondent of the Boston *Investigator* speaks of a "terrible heart-sickness," and even says, "we feel like saying, with sorrow, as if he were already dead: 'Peace to his ashes.'" But suppose we wait a little, and see what direction he finally takes, and let him elaborate his views in language of his own choosing, and which would therefore do him no injustice. It is no wonder if so lofty a headland is often shrouded with the mists of doubt and speculation."

We are reminded by Mr. Chadwick of Mr. Frothingham's peculiar question at the farewell meeting of friends tendered him before his departure for Europe—"Can anybody tell me who I am?" If he [F.] has been doubting and denying all his life, he must be ready by this time to begin to believe something. Indeed, he does a great deal, since, as he once said, "Every denial holds in its bosom an affirmation." "What does he believe?" is a question which has often been asked, with an answer by no means uniform. It was safer to tell what he did not believe. Horace Greeley once interrogated him upon this point, and in the discourse he delivered in reply he seemed to admit difficulty in answering, when he said: "If Christianity has had two thousand years in which to perfect a creed, surely we ought to have at least a generation."

Mr. Chadwick says Mr. Frothingham has "overtaxed himself," and Felix Adler seems to be inclined to relieve him of full responsibility for the utterances which have created such a sensation. "One public journal imagines it sees the 'index finger of his mind pointing to an absolute and dogmatic religion—that is, to Roman Catholicism.'" But this inference is hardly warranted. One might as soon expect Nature to reverse her processes, and the oak to shrink back contentedly within the acorn, as that he should repudiate his past life and enter a Church so overgrown with tradition and superstition."

A more natural issue out of his present state would be a recognition of the truths of Spiritualism, in which he would find the original he has been trying to "restore," and an explanation of the indefinable power which is coming to be "distinctly felt" by scientists, and which "mystifies philosophers." In Spiritualism science and the Church can meet, make mutual concessions and be reconciled. Spiritualism will give science a scientific religion, and to the church a religious science. It offers to the rationalist a system which he can accept without mutilating his reason, and to the Church that demonstrative power of spirit which has been so far lost in externalities that the Church is unable to meet the exactions of science. Mr. Frothingham is so inspirational and spiritual that the wonder is that the longings of his spirit did not find an answer in this Philosophy before."

J. GAYLORD.

New York City.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE FINE ARTS.

BY J. SHORE.

It is not to be expected that the above subject will be elaborately treated in the short space of this article. All that I can do is to touch upon the most important and salient points, leaving the rest for the present to the suggestions of the intelligent reader. At some future time, perhaps, I may enter more fully upon this interesting subject, and offer my remarks, profound or otherwise, to the discriminating public. True and enlightened Spiritualism will exert, no doubt, a powerful and ennobling influence upon the Fine Arts—an influence, I think, very much needed at the present time. Being an ardent lover of the beautiful, I cannot help but feel grieved at the degradation of true art as manifested in the works of our most eminent artists, and an almost utter disregard of whatever tends to purify and exalt human nature."

What are the subjects mostly chosen by artists as seen in the galleries or exhibitions of paintings? Even at the best, they are but of a trifling, if not immoral character, and I often wonder at the amount of real talent, severe study and pains-taking labor employed on subjects of no more importance than that of hunting wild geese. There is a lamentable waste of time, materials, and possibly of genius displayed in the works of modern artists, while the higher attributes and characteristics of humanity are almost wholly neglected, if not entirely ignored."

But the artist, perhaps, is not alone to blame in this matter. His very success and popularity depend on his fidelity to the spirit of the age in which he lives, and by which he is more or less controlled. If the public demand trifling and showy subjects, well, so be it. Such productions do not require serious study, and the picture, when finished, makes no large demands on the understanding of the beholder. This is an age of frivolity, and the people (God bless them!) want something to amuse, not to instruct them."

Spiritualism, in this as well as in other respects, is an iconoclast, and tends to destroy that frivolity. The true Spiritualist looks upon human life more seriously, and he is not satisfied with the mere outward show and sensual displays adopted by the world of fashion. He

a few shadows and I have seen many sunbeams. I feel that the sunshine more than compensates for the shadows. I lived to be very old on the earth: eighty years were mine, and of course the body grew feeble and bent with age; and now, as I come back from the spirit-world, something of the old infirmities press upon me. But I want my friends to know it is not so with me in the other life: I am strong and well and full of vigor. I am Charles M. Pierce.

Austin Sweetland.

[To the Chairman:] A year has not elapsed, sir, since I was summoned from the body, yet I have come back active and vigorous. I was very old, and had lived my allotted time. I have no complaint to make of being called from the mortal form, still I am glad to come back and interest myself in what is going on. I knew something of the affairs and business of my friends and neighbors; I was pleased, could I assist them by advice or otherwise, and that feeling still lingers with me, now that I am a spirit; I wish to look about me to see if I can be of service to any old neighbor and friend. I do feel that if I can impart some knowledge of the spirit-life as it is, and of the work spirits have to do, the power which is theirs of returning to earth and influencing mortals, to any old friend, I shall be doing a service; so I am here, seeking for information and experience how to proceed in the new line of work which I have taken up. For a long time I was postmaster of Rockport, Me., where I lived and where I was well known by many. I am not engaged in such business now, nor am I doing the same thing, but I am busy myself, seeking to do something which is of benefit to some one who is in need of assistance, spiritually speaking. I am not enlightened a great deal myself concerning these things, but what I have received I am anxious to give to those who know nothing of them. Austin Sweetland.

Col. William Vail.

[To the Chairman:] Good afternoon, sir. Like many others, I have a desire to take upon myself the experience of controlling a mind foreign to my own; and when that experience will provide me an opportunity of reaching my friends in the body, I am glad to avail myself of it. It does not seem to me that long time has passed by since I inhabited a corporeal frame, pursuing my business among my associates and fellows, having but little thought to give to death, the grave and the after-life, but concentrating my energies and powers in material ways; and yet I am now apart from the physical body, separated, to an extent, from the material concerns which were mine, and I am forced to look these things in the face and to understand and comprehend something of the after-life of the soul, since I find it has come upon me almost unawares; at least, I cannot say that I was prepared for the conditions which I have found. I cannot say that this new life is to me what I expected to realize; it is altogether more tangible, realistic and natural than I had any idea of, consequently I desire to call the attention of my friends—those who were very near to me first, then my friends and neighbors, and then the world at large—to the teachings, asking them to investigate for themselves, to receive whatever is given at its own value; and if they do find any light that will give unto them knowledge concerning things which were unexplained before, I trust they will receive it and let it stream down into their souls. I ask them to search for knowledge concerning spiritual things; and if that knowledge comes to them and they reject it, not, but accept it, and find their lives brightened and enlarged, and if they have ever been before; that is, if, in accepting the knowledge, they will be ready to follow the teachings of the spiritual, which are: to cultivate the inner man, and not allow the material to cramp and crowd the spirit.

You will desire to know who I am, sir, and I will say that I was known as Col. William Vail, of Providence, R. I.; that I was the president of the "Fremont Mutual Insurance Company"; that I am ready to receive a call from my business associates and will respond to that call when given, for I assure my friends I have something of importance to communicate, which they would not care to have me give in public, but which concerns their interests very closely. While I adjure them to seek for the spiritual gifts of life, to seek to understand something concerning the after-existence, to attain knowledge concerning the life they are to live and the life their friends who have passed on are now living, which is real and tangible, I also would have them look to their material interests, and I am here ready to assist them in both directions if they will give me a call.

Ichabod.

Well, now, I wanted to come. I don't know as I shall get along very well here, with this machine, but I made up my mind yesterday that I was going to come here and just say a few words. I thought it would be mighty good fun to come here and take my *Sheenie* by surprise, send her my love, and tell her that what she is, she is, and come to her eye work for something in the future, something for her benefit, and we are going to bring it about, just as sure as prechening. You know I like to come in quite often, and take hold of my *Sheenie*. Whenever I see anything good around, then I pop in and get a share of it. That's the way I do. At the same time I am learning things about the mediums, and about the way spirits operate; I am learning concerning things in the mortal, and at the same time I am bringing to her strength and nature from the spiritual world which she requires, physically and spiritually; we are pursuing a work through her which she knows but little of; so I just made up my mind I would come and speak a few words. The gentleman here said I could make a few words. My message will be received by the party whom I speak of. Please to say everything I am at right-side-up with care, and *Sheenie* need not be worried about anything, and certain little things look dark and shady, why that will all pass away, and everything will be bright and pleasant. My friends, some of them, are in New York and Providence, and some of them in other places, but my message will be received all right, I think, and you can just jot me down as Ichabod. My medium is my machine, so I call her *Sheenie*.

(The following message was given Tuesday, Dec. 12th, and its publication advanced at request of the spirit.)

F. B. Frothingham.

[To the Chairman:] Scarcely two months have elapsed, sir, since I visited your Circle-Room, and was permitted to control and manifest myself. Again I am privileged to return, a privilege which seems not to be accorded to all spirits who desire to return, and for which I feel deeply and truly grateful.

I am exercised somewhat in spirit concerning one of whom I made mention in my former message, and to whom I would again send a few words, hoping to attract his attention to the spiritual cause and its phenomena, as well as the philosophy which it unfolds to mankind, and in this way be instrumental in bringing to his soul and to his intellect that light and knowledge for which he seeks, and for want of which he has not been provided.

I would say to that dear one, that individual so nearly allied to my spirit: The light is gleaming all around you; the shadows may be dispersed; you may behold that for which you yearn and for which you seek, if you will only endeavor to come into communication with those of your family, with those of your heart, who have passed beyond the shadow of death. I know very well that doubts have assailed you in the past, but now, when you are unspoken, yet had they sank deep into your heart, troubling you in spirit. I know very well that you have feared to step, because you beheld the dread, dark morass of materialism ahead. I have watched you, since passing to the spirit-world, and have beheld the thoughts which have assailed your mind. I have grown anxious to lead you through the darkness into the light, to guide you from the brink of materialism which you feared to encounter, to the glowing and glorious world of spiritual truth and light, where you could behold evidences of the future life, and of the destiny of man, and of the existence of those who have gone before. Therefore once more I return to speak more strongly, and to say: If you will seek out medi-

ums and enter their presence in order to learn something of the spiritual world and its conditions, those who knew and loved you in the past, who know and love you still, will be ready to transmit to you that knowledge for which you pine. We are waiting for you to open the doorway through which we may enter and cheer your spirit. We are earnestly waiting for you to turn toward the light, hoping that it may stream in upon you, and that you may still go forward as a grand and glorious teacher of liberal thought, in order that you may receive that knowledge concerning immortality which you desire to give to others.

Your father is awaiting a summons to your presence. He will come to you; if you seek him, and others will also come—those bound to you by the tender ties of fraternal relationship, and by affection and friendship. They are just outside the door; they only wait to hear you bid them welcome. And we request that you will, as time and opportunities are given to you, visit mediums, enter their presence resolved to receive whatever comes, and the elaborating in your mind, strain it through the reasoning processes of your spirit, and accept that which you know to be good; rejecting whatever you find untrue or erroneous. Not once or twice, but frequently, would we have you pursue this course. We know that the time will come when you will acknowledge that the true light has streamed in upon you, that the good, the great, the grand knowledge for which you sought, has been given you. The clearest and sweetest of all assurances—that of a future, never-ending existence, one that will be filled with practical work, and opportunities for its performance, will be given to you. And we know that you will rejoice in soul at the step thus taken.

This is all I have to say, Mr. Chairman. I do not think I shall come to the place again, but I thank you, and every friend in the spirit and in the mortal, who has given me this opportunity. My previous message was given to you upon the 15th of October. I am informed that it was published in your issue of November 19th. I will return again soon and give you information where to send both messages.

Once more I wait my fraternal greeting and love to all friends. But a few years since I passed to and fro in my daily business, meeting with my associates in Boston and vicinity. For many months I have been a resident of the spirit-world. I still delight to re-visit my old friends and associates of earth. I am F. B. Frothingham, of Jamaica Plain.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

Nov. 29.—Children's Day.—Arthur K. Hancock; Gracie H. Alden; Emma Partridge; Sadie Butler; Edgar S. Briggs; Annie Ellis; Maria Gertrude Richter; Charles Strong; Rosebud; Lotie; who spoke for John Henry George; William, Emil H., Nellie Fletcher, Naletia, Lucy, Cora Willett.

Dec. 2.—Jesse B. Ferguson; Mrs. Sarah H. M. Edmister; Mrs. L. W. Hunt; William Mitchell; Rosie Martin; Frank McNeil; Anna Tucker.

Dec. 6.—Charles Wesley; Mrs. Lucy Howe; Dr. James Keith; William H. Shumway; William Allen; B. D. Higgins; Charles Adams; Annie; Gilbert; George; James; Lydia Perkins; Sydney P. Hall; Mrs. Sarah E. McHenry; Katie; to Mary E. Clark; William W. Cooper.

Dec. 8.—Mrs. Anna E. Buxton; Charles Severance; Mrs. Mary Josephine Tracy; Samuel W. McDonald; J. A. Galt; Capt. David Keiser.

Dec. 10.—Hattie K. Kirtland; Bart Stanchfield; Eliza Warren; Rosa Higgins; Lyman Denison; Philip Tyler; Sarah Vinal.

Dec. 20.—William Graham; Henry W. Briggs; Orin Pardee; Lucy E. Penhaligon; Maria Horton; William Fisher; Capt. O. S. Ellis.

Spirit-Communication.

Mrs. Mary A. Hull and T. R. Hazard present. My Dear Child—I have to bring you the love of my soul. I would have you feel that your path in life has been marked out for you by a wiser and a more beneficent power than any finite minds can comprehend.

I wish you to feel and realize that you have done more, and more every day, by your existence and the power invested in you, to convince mankind of immortality than all the teachings of all the theological divines concentrated together. One manifestation of spirit-power, through your instrumentality, will do more to console the human heart and strengthen the spirit for the trials of earth than all my teachings (when on earth) could have possibly accomplished.

Therefore, my dear child, we would have you rest content. Try and feel that all things work together for good to those who follow the guidance of the angels. Even slander and persecution will grow gloriously bright under the inward consciousness of knowing we are doing the will of our Father.

Your dear mother sends her love. May the blessing of God rest upon you.

YOUR SPIRIT-FATHER.

Verification of a Spirit Message.

DR. WILLIAM DORRITY.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light: In the *Banner of Light* some time since there was a message from DR. WILLIAM DORRITY. In it he speaks of living in Hartford; also of meeting Fannie Felton in spirit-life. I became acquainted with him when he lived in Hadley, Mass. I went to Northampton to hear Fannie Felton lecture, and there met Dr. Dorrity for the first time. He very much admired Mrs. Felton as a lecturer. The Doctor was full of life at nearly eighty years, the time I knew him. He was not very wealthy so far as money was concerned, but was rich in that which money cannot buy—a firm, unwavering, happy Spiritualist. In his message he says instead of feeling like being ninety-five or one hundred years of age, he feels as though he was not more than sixteen. He also says if there is any one who knows him, he should be glad to have them call for him, think the message peculiarly characteristic of the Doctor.

ALDEN ADAMS.

Leicester, Mass., Dec. 18th, 1881.

New Publications.

FOUR-FOOTED LOVERS. By Frank Albertson. I. Bossy and Bunney; II. Squirrel Mischief; III. Bunn's Adventures; IV. Squirrel Wooing. Illustrated by Miss L. B. Humphrey. Square 16mo, boards, pp. 116. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

To a child fond of pets, and there are very few so unfortunate as not to be, this handsome volume with its attractive stories and charming engravings will be a most welcome gift, and one cannot choose a more acceptable present for their young friends. It relates the antics of a pair of frolicsome calves, the exploits of a couple of mischief-loving squirrels, the perplexities of a dog, and the troubles of a cat; all of them talking like a parcel of children let loose from school.

THE RADICAL PULPIT. Comprising Discourses by O. B. Frothingham and Prof. Felix Adler. 16mo, cloth, pp. 190. New York: D. M. Bennett, 141 8th street.

Of the fifteen discourses in this volume ten are by O. B. Frothingham, every one of which is well worth reading. Mr. Frothingham's present attitude in the world of religious thought will naturally cause the book to be read with more interest than it otherwise would, and his treatment of the following subjects will attract special attention: "The Consolations of Rationalism," "The New Song of Christmas," "The Sectarian Spirit," "The Dogma of Hell" and "Life as a Test of Creed."

Prof. Adler is a speaker and writer of great ability, whose merits are well known to the adherents of radical views in religion.

THE NURSERY. A Monthly Magazine for the Youngest Readers. Vol. XXIX, 12mo, cloth, pp. 380. The Nursery Publishing Co., 36 Bromfield street, Boston.

We have here, in elegant cloth-binding, all the numbers of a well-known favorite of the young folks for 1881. Its hundreds of charming stories, poems and anecdotes, each illustrated with the very best of engravings, and its dozen bright songs, with music adapted to the tastes and capabilities of the youngest of children, present attractions that will be found difficult for any one to resist who has a wish to make some young heart happy, not simply for a day but for many years.

In an album of photographs Alphonse Karr has written: "The first half of our lives we pass in desiring the second, and the second in regretting the first." In the same album Alexandre Dumas has written: "What is duty? It is what we exact of others."

Do not use stimulants, but nature's real brain and nerve food—Hop Bitters.

For the Banner of Light. A DREAM-VISION.

Oh! A gloomy, fearful river
Parts me from the hearts I love;
Its dark waters flow forever,
O'er that deluge broods no dove.
Yes! forever roll its waves,
And no rainbow shines above;
Rest thee—rest thee at the graves
Where lies buried all thy love.
By the margin of that stream,
Of that dark and gloomy river,
I was walking in a dream,
Sent by the Almighty diver.

From a grave came forth a maiden,
Whom I loved long years ago,
And her heart with love was laden,
But for whom I could not know.
And she wandered by each tomb,
Searching out each name of worth,
And where'er she came the gloom
Changed to splendor not of earth.

Long she wandered, sighing ever,
As she turned from many a grave,
"Will he never—never—never
Venture o'er death's solemn wave?"

And the splendor changed to gloom,
As she turned away in tears,
Seeking vainly for his tomb,
Whom she loved in early years.

At last, within a half-hill grove,
She saw a tomb, a new-made grave,
And there she found her early love
Was buried, and had crossed the wave.

"At length! at length!" she wildly cried,
And pressed her hands upon her heart,
"In heaven I shall be now his bride,
I come! I come! we never shall part!"

A splendor from the unknown sphere
Then hid that loved one from my sight,
For mortal man cannot draw near
To those who live in heaven's pure light.

With awe I went to see what tomb
Had brought that maiden such delight,
When in the early twilight gloom
I read my name in letters bright.

Lucerne, Switzerland. A. J. C.

Western Locals, Etc.

New York.

Waverly—Items of Interest.—Binghamton. The Work of Lyman C. Howe—A Discourse by Mrs. Nellie Brigham—Memoranda.

The Church is strongly entrenched in Waverly. The coming of Spiritualism created a marked sensation in the community. Discussion was the order of the day. A desperate effort was made to counteract the rapidly increasing influence of Spiritualism. Mrs. Mossop-Putnam, E. V. Wilson, Lyman C. Howe and other able speakers did all in their power to intensify the existing interest in the subject, and their labors were crowned with success.

For several years meetings were maintained regularly, and the foremost speakers in the field were invited to address the people.

The *Banner of Light* reporter was cordially welcomed by Mayor Stone, Editor Kinney, Dr. Lyon and other friends. A good audience listened to a detailed statement of the work of the *Banner of Light*. Attention was called to the catalogue of the publications of Colby & Rich, and private receptions were also held with several business men relative to advertising in the *Banner*.

The local Spiritualists displayed their zeal and good sense by subscribing for the *Banner* and purchasing works on Spiritualism, to be read during the long winter evenings.

The friends in Waverly should unite their forces and invite speakers and mediums to visit the place.

Binghamton.

There is a Spiritualist Society here—thanks to the energy of Lyman C. Howe and other self-sacrificing laborers in the cause of Spiritualism—J. F. Deane being the President, and Agnes Watson, Secretary. Meetings are held in a cozy hall and are well attended. Mr. Howe has been speaking for the Society, off and on, for some time. He is held in the highest esteem by the people. In fact, Mr. Howe is one of the veteran standard-bearers of Spiritualism; for years he has ministered to the friends in Western New York.

Joseph Caffray, the new medium, recently visited Binghamton and held several seances which were regarded as satisfactory.

Mrs. Nellie Brigham.

On Friday evening, Dec. 10th, Mrs. Brigham lectured in Binghamton to a large and enthusiastic audience. Lyman C. Howe and other prominent Spiritualists were present.

One of the subjects handed to the speaker was, "Abraham, Freeman and Giteau." Without the least hesitation, Mrs. Brigham proceeded to deliver a very interesting discourse on the evils of superstition. Among other things she said: Hypocrisy is a compliment paid to virtue. . . . The models for humanity are not in the past, but in the future. . . . The old notion of God is dying, and a nobler view of the Divine One is taking its place. . . . Beware of feeling that you have a mission. If you really have a mission, other people will tell you so; your gift will be discerned by those about you. . . . Freeman forgot that he lived in the nineteenth century. . . . Insanity does not necessarily overshadow one's whole personality. It may blight only a part. . . . We do not believe in capital punishment. Asylums should be provided for criminals.

Concluding, the lecturer exhorted the friends to unite in the work of advancing the truths of Spiritualism. Lyman C. Howe then made a few remarks highly commendatory of Mrs. Brigham's discourse; he also referred to the fact that there was a representative of the *Banner of Light* present, who was prepared to transact any business for the house of Colby & Rich.

The cause of Spiritualism in Binghamton seems to be on a firm and enduring basis.

CHIPS.

Mrs. Colby, the lecturer, and Mrs. Smith, the singer, have many friends in Western New York.

Mrs. Emma Taylor, of Johnson's Creek, N. Y., will answer calls to lecture and attend funerals.

Elmira Hill, of Binghamton, is a writing medium. Some of her productions are, to say the least, remarkable.

Dr. C. T. Lyon and family of Waverly kindly cared for the writer during his brief sojourn in that town. Thanks.

C. W. Stewart has been speaking in Kirksville, Mo., meeting with excellent success. He is a logical reasoner and a good thinker. Eastern societies should give him a call.

Capt. Jenks, of Waverly, is an excellent healer. He has made many remarkable cures. The afflicted should give him a call. Our friend will visit patients at a distance for a reasonable compensation.

Mrs. Nellie Brigham is certainly an earnest worker for Spiritualism. She is speaking constantly during the week, besides attending, with unwavering fidelity, to her regular Sunday labor in New York City.

Ion. J. G. Wait, of Sturgis, Michigan, is a Spiritualist of national repute. For years his home has been a resting-place for speakers and mediums. Recently his townsmen, representing various denominations, made him a formal social call and wished him continued peace and prosperity. Mrs. Samuels, the deservedly popular lecturer recited a fine poem which was highly appreciated.

The New Year! what is it in store for us? Ah! in a large sense that is for us to decide. Let us strive to so live that all enemies will die out; that holy friendships may increase; that the spiritual significance of things may be seen by us better than ever before; that people can trust us; that selfishness shall not be illustrated in our actions; and that the good on earth and in heaven shall find in us congenial companions.

A curious phenomenon: Who can explain why so many pieces of mutilated coin find their way into contribution boxes? Now here is a question which amounts to something! Why should people with two good, whole, intact twenty-five-cent pieces in their possession deliberately select a "punched" fifty-cent piece for the contribution box? Is this the result of a discourse on progress and justice, and against sectarianism and vicarious suffering? The "Hinerant" has consulted his professional brethren, but there is a howl of lamentation all around, and no philosophy. Come over and help us!

Ladies' Aid Fair.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light: The fair of the "Ladies' Aid Society," of Boston, which has been held at its rooms, for three weeks, closed on Saturday, the 21st. It has been well attended, and has proved quite successful. The managers were fortunate in finding the contiguous parlor of the same size untenant, for thus, without any disturbance of the fair, the regular Sunday and Friday meetings were continued; the latter day being for work in the afternoon and general reception in the evening, ending usually with more or less good talking, or music, or both.

There have been meetings and entertainments on other evenings during the week—one where Lucette Webster with her pupils interested a crowded audience with readings and recitations—which were given for the benefit of the Society.

Mr. Edgar W. Emerson, the popular test medium, of Manchester, N. H., has been in this city for a week or two, and has been a great acquisition to the meetings of the Society in his rôle of giving platform tests—being present on two successive Sundays, both afternoon and evening. He has also given a few evening seances in this contiguous parlor during his stay which have been very interesting and well attended. The writer of this notice has been present at most of them, and can testify to the interest manifested, and the unmistakable tests given.

Platform tests are getting to be a feature of many Spiritualist meetings; and they are of such interest that they rather put the talkers in the shade, people preferring phenomena to rhetoric. There are many who are deservedly popular in this phase: Mrs. Ireland, Mrs. Nelson and David Brown are frequently present in that capacity. It is hardly proper to draw any comparison where all are good, especially as some like one, and some like another, and so all are suited; but as Mr. Emerson is a stranger it is due to him to say that he has made a very favorable impression; there is, so to speak, no circumlocution in his method; it does seem as if he can give more tests in an hour than any other in twice the time, and he is reader with names and points than any one that this writer remembers.

Some remarkable cases of names and definite details have been given by him with great exactness, unexpected to the parties, who had no acquaintance with or had never seen the medium. This writer was among the favored ones, and although in some instances of spirits communicating they might not be considered tests, as some of his invisible environment is more or less public, but to keep the sacred fire alive and burning in his heart, some things came to him that were tests. F. A., an old man unmarried, dropped a word or two full of meaning to this writer, which inclined him afterwards to have a private sitting, which was both interesting and satisfactory. Francis Amory, an old friend who died last May, came as was expected from the "P. A." communication at the public meeting referred to, and seemed to have kept the run of the writer's current affairs; said some things in reference to the business that carried him to California, and was very encouraging and gave definite points of the matter then and since his return that were correct, and which the medium could not have known, and quite identified this old friend also.

It would hardly be in good taste to write out what was said, and would look, also, like saying too much on personal matters, but it moves him to remark quite strongly that this young gentleman is a remarkably good test-medium, and when he next visits this city, which will be during the latter part of March and under the auspices of this Society, those who are after tests had better visit him or attend any circles that he may give.

JOHN WETHEBEE.

Passed to Spirit-Life: From Waldoboro', Me., Sedona, wife of Augustus Wet, aged 71 years.

She was a pious and firm believer in the Spiritual Philosophy, a good wife and devoted mother. The poor wife has private debts of charity, for truly she was their friend. She possessed a progressive mind, and was a subscriber to the *Banner of Light* and *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. Lectures, mediums and many weary travelers always received a welcome at her home of plenty, some of whom have now welcomed her to their homes in the immortal world. The funeral was largely attended by many friends, who brought floral tributes of the harp, sickle and sheaf of wheat. The services were conducted by the writer, at request of the assembled sister, and by invitation prayer was offered by Rev. C. L. Haskell. Mourning she still lives to bless all for their tender devotion during a long illness, and to still continue her progressive career in the higher life.

On Thursday, Dec. 15th, suddenly, from disease of the heart, Mr. Luther Turner, aged 72 years. He was formerly from Maine (near Bangor), and an earnest Spiritualist for many years. He leaves an aged wife, children and grandchildren. He was beloved by family and friends. Funeral services Friday A. M., at 10 o'clock, at the residence of Mrs. L. K. Conkey, previous to the removal of the body to the old home in Maine.

From Westwood, Bergen Co., N. J., at the home of her brother, after a long and serious illness, Miss Hannah L. Marsh.

Miss Marsh was a woman of rare accomplishments. She had deep sympathy for her own sex, and was a philanthropist of extended views.

Nov. 10th, 1881, Ernie Orville Towers, aged 8 years 9 months.

The parents are staunch Spiritualists, and were gratified by receiving positive evidence through Mr. A. T. Hiley that their little boy still lived. J. C. PHILLIPS, M. D.

From Malone, N. Y., Dec. 4th, Julia L. Ballard, wife of H. W. Ballard, aged 71 years and 21 days.

Enlarged from Eight to Twelve Pages.

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SPECIAL NOTICES.
In quoting from the BANNER OF LIGHT, care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications (condensed or otherwise) of correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of important free thought, but we cannot undertake to endorse the varied theories of opinion which correspondents give utterance to. We do not read anonymous letters and communications. The name and address of the writer are in all cases indispensable as a guarantee of good faith, and in order to return or preserve manuscripts that are not used. When newspapers are forwarded which contain matter for our inspection, the reader will confer a favor by drawing a line around the article he desires specially to recommend for notice.
Noticed Spiritualist Meetings, in order to insure prompt insertion, must reach this office on Monday, as the BANNER OF LIGHT goes to press every Tuesday.

Banner of Light.

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THE WORK OF SPIRITUALISM is as broad as the universe. It extends from the highest spheres of angelic life to the lowest conditions of human ignorance. It is as broad as wisdom, as comprehensive as love, and its mission is to bless mankind.—John Pierpont.

Passed to the Higher Plane—Washington A. Danskin, of Baltimore: Sketch of his Life, his Labors and his Obsequies.

We last week recorded the fact that Col. Danskin, who has been so long and favorably known to our readers as a valued contributor, passed from the mortal, at the age of 70 years, on the afternoon of Dec. 20th, at his home, 481 North Gilmore street, Baltimore. Mr. Danskin has occupied for years a prominent position in that city, and the following sketch—necessarily imperfect as it is—of his experiences in material life will be read, we are sure, with interest by thousands who have never been privileged to personally meet the stout warrior for truth, and the genial and cultured gentleman, whose departure for the better land it is intended to commemorate.

Mr. Danskin was born in Baltimore on the 20th of November, 1812, of an old and well-known family. At a very early age he started into business for himself in the gentleman's furnishing line, and rapidly accumulated means. He also originated the first ready-made shirt manufactory in the State of Maryland. He has of late years been principally occupied in managing the medical practice of his wife, Mrs. Sarah A. Danskin. A short time ago he started the *Spirit Telephone*, a weekly newspaper, devoted to the interests of Spiritualism, which proved a success, and it is thought that the mental labor expended in the production of this journal, together with much other mental work, superinduced the attack that caused his demise.

Of his transition *The Morning Herald*, of Baltimore, for Dec. 20th, remarked editorially: "Mr. Danskin was one of the most popular and widely known men in the State, and greatly liked and respected by all who knew him regardless of his religious belief. He was one of the most charitably inclined men in the city, never refusing to extend assistance to any who solicited it of him. One of his peculiarities was his entire disregard for the fears of death, looking upon it as but a happy transition to a better life. This he tried to impress on all with whom he was acquainted, considering it the highest ambition of his life to rob King Death of his terrors."

Bro. Danskin's attention, if we mistake not, was first attracted to Spiritualism in 1833 or '54, through the instrumentality of Bro. Pierce (now Dr. A. P. Pierce, of Boston), who was one of the earliest itinerating mediums of our cause. His interest was very soon after converted into devotion through his own and his good wife's mediumship; and in part likewise it is to be presumed, through the astonishing evidences of spirit control exhibited through the organisms of Mrs. Foote and Mrs. Mary J. Morrell—two of the earliest mediumistic martyrs to the cause in Baltimore. A history of his efficient career thenceforward may be said well-nigh to be a history of Spiritualism in the Monumental City. Early after the glorious light of angel ministrations broke upon his own mind, he determined upon aiding by every means in his power the bestowal and extension of this great benediction to others. He organized an Association for the further promulgation of the truths of the skies, by means of lectures and other public demonstrations. His house was open for years to mediums and visitors; whilst the mediumistic services of his noble wife were in constant and most unobtrusive exercise.

Possessed of wonderful executive ability, and of the most attractive conversational powers—together with fine inspirational capacity on the rostrum—and aided by a number of other noble adherents of the cause, his efforts in behalf of the cause of Spiritualism in Baltimore very soon commanded respectful attention; so that when he called in the aid of speakers from other portions of the country, the largest halls in Baltimore were often crowded, and continued well-filled for years. Among the speakers invited to Baltimore prior to 1860—some of them being repeatedly recalled—were Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, Mrs. Emma J. Dullene, and Bro. Thomas Gales Forster, with a brief engagement with Mrs. Augusta Currier, whose beatified spirit passed to her long cherished home some years since.

During these years, also, he invited to Baltimore some of our best test and physical mediums. Dr. J. V. Mansfield did much valuable service there; also Dr. Newton, the healer; the Davenport Brothers; the long-since-departed but not forgotten Bro. Conklin and others. Under his admirable management, for the time mentioned, the intensest interest was aroused; and a great accumulation of numerical strength

was the consequence. Bro. Danskin continued the efficient leader and most judicious presiding officer during the whole time, and indeed for years afterwards—a most thankless and difficult position to fill, as almost testify who are familiar with the spiritual movement since its inception.

Immediately preceding, and for nearly a year after the commencement of the late civil war, owing to the excitement and commotion incident thereto, there was a subsidence, not of devotion to Spiritualism itself, but a falling off of interest in the public gatherings, so that in Baltimore, as well as elsewhere, Sunday meetings ceased for a time. Circles, however, continued to be held, and notably Bro. Danskin's; and his good wife, ever faithful to humanity and to the spirit-world, still continued her services.

When he conceived the proper time had arrived, Bro. Danskin again commenced holding public meetings—in which movement he was aided by a number of faithful souls of Baltimore, who had cooperated with him in the earlier organization. He again engaged the services of Bro. Forster as speaker, who was then residing in Washington. This arrangement continued something over a year, if we mistake not, when Mr. Forster's services being more imperiously demanded in Washington, Mrs. F. O. Hyzer was engaged early in 1863 by Bro. Danskin as a permanent speaker. Under his energetic management and Mrs. Hyzer's wonderfully beautiful and eloquent ministrations, the attendance increased largely, and she remained the regular speaker for more than five years.

Since then have occurred in Baltimore those strange ebbs and flows incidental to our cause in well-nigh all localities, resulting in the organization and abandonment of a number of movements, looking to the public promulgation of spiritualistic principles. During all of these changes, however, whether sympathized with or otherwise, Bro. Danskin remained the firm, uncompromising advocate of the cause, never wearying, never ceasing in his labors, whenever and wherever in his own judgment he could best apply his efforts. He was thus brought frequently into its advocacy through the columns of the secular press as well as through our own papers; and even his enemies, if he had any, could but admit that he wielded a trenchant and logical pen, contributing largely, as was his earnest desire, to the placing of Spiritualism before the public as a system of high moral and intellectual worth. True, like unto all men of high-toned sensibilities and unflinching decision of character, he found those who opposed him at times; but although warm in his friendships and judicious in his sympathies, neither friend nor foe could cause him to swerve from what he believed to be right.

Mr. Danskin informed us (when we visited him at Baltimore in Nov. last in the course of a pleasant conversation) that he had been united in marriage with Mrs. Danskin forty-two years, and during that entire period not an inharmonious word ever passed between them. Mrs. D. being present, corroborated the statement of her husband. So remarkable a case of conjugal felicity is seldom to be met with, and therefore deserves to be placed on record. Mr. Danskin also gave us an account of his public controversy with Rev. Dr. Bond, of Baltimore, some years ago; and of the bringing out of his (D.'s) work: "How and Why I Became a Spiritualist."

Bro. Danskin was a good clairaudient. As an instance in point the following may be noted: When attending the Providence Convention, in 1866, his spirit father approached, and told him to go home at once, as he was wanted. He left immediately, at considerable social sacrifice, but on arriving at home found Mrs. Danskin in a condition from which she could not have recovered had it not been for his magnetic strength and help.

The following excerpt from *The Herald*, of Baltimore, gives another striking proof of his mediumship, and at the same time of the marked interest which the invisibles ever have in the affairs of their loved ones yet in the flesh—an interest which under favorable conditions they are able in our day, especially, to recognize most keenly known among men:

"A most remarkable case of premonitory warning of death is involved in Mr. Danskin's illness. As is well known, he has for many years been closely connected with the spiritualistic cause in this city as President of the First Spiritualist Congregation. His wife, Mrs. Sarah A. Danskin, is the well-known physician of the new school, and medium. A few days prior to this attack, Mr. Danskin received through his wife a communication purporting to come from his father in the spirit-world, warning him of approaching dissolution, and advising that he had best prepare for the same. Mr. Danskin at once took the advice, made his will, and settled his affairs. The night before he was taken ill, he again received through his wife another communication from his father, informing him that if he had left unfinished any of his affairs to complete them before morning, which was accordingly done. Mr. Danskin working far into the night, and, singular to relate, it was at 7 o'clock on the following morning that, without a moment's warning, he received the stroke that (eventually) deprived him of his life."

The funeral exercises took place on the afternoon of Dec. 21st, at his late residence. There were present a large number of relatives and friends of the deceased, including prominent Spiritualists and others. Among those present belonging to the Private Spiritualistic Circle, of which Colonel Danskin was President, were: Dr. L. Z. Lyons and wife, Mr. Jones, Mr. Krueger, Mr. Wheelock and wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Childs. Others present were: General James M. Anderson, Messrs. Samuel T. Adams, Thos. M. Latham, John Berry, Joseph Clement and B. B. Snyder. The services, which were very simple, consisted of the singing of the hymn "Nearer, My God, to Thee," by the members of the Circle, and an address by Mrs. F. O. Hyzer, the well-known lecturer. She said the deceased was impressed years ago to promulgate and disseminate the wonderful power of the Spiritualistic doctrine. When he first enlisted in the cause of our divine philosophy, he had done so with the greatest earnestness, and with that same spirit he continued working, and disseminating this belief. The speaker could not approximate the quantity of work he had done. Day by day, with the energy of a devoted character and the strength of a man he had been building a monument to his memory that will outlive the perishable things of earth.

She had received on the morning of the 21st a communication from his spirit, in which he said that he was content with the change which had come to him; and that he should soon again rejoin his loved ones. This Spiritualistic philosophy does not teach us to weep or mourn. It says: "Weep not, mourn not." While we have human feeling, we will realize the pangs of separation; but while we are given the power to suffer, we are given an antidote for every suffering, a balm for every wound. One moment he was with you, the strong, earthly friend;

another walking in the valley of transition, and the next in the other world, nestling down among the beloved who were waiting there. We need not weep and mourn over the senseless clay. If the dead one should be laid in the cold ground, and there await a future day of judgment, then we would have cause for sorrow; but the grave is not the place to look to. Turn your heads away from that spot. The spirit-world is the real world; this but a pale, insignificant shadow.

Eighteen years ago the speaker was first called to Baltimore by him to disseminate the new Gospel; since then there have been twenty golden sheaves resurrected of those who first began the great work, and but one or two now remain among those who began with him. Every time the portals have been opened, it has added new hope and aspiration to us waiting here.

At the conclusion of the eulogy, the remains, borne by the following pall-bearers, were placed in the hearse, and interred at Greenmount Cemetery: William Leonard, O. M. Mathiot, Dr. L. Z. Lyons, John F. Knapp, Dr. T. E. Kirby and Adam Duncan. The *Baltimore American* of the 22d, to which we are indebted for this report of the obsequies, remarks that on this occasion "The solemn black was not worn, and the crape upon the door was of a light color," the appointments being thus in practical endorsement of the sentiment of the beautiful poem, "There is no Death," with selections from which Mrs. Hyzer closed her eloquent discourse.

With a great love for Spiritualism, and with the most pronounced indefatigability, Bro. Danskin continued his labors to the last, finally falling in the great battle-field of ideas with his harness on. But he has only fallen for the moment, to rise again with renewed vigor and strength, and with reenergized and enhanced capacities of beauty and truth, to continue his labors for the benefit of the cause he revered, and the comfort and condolence of those he loved.

The Congregationalist vs. Capt. Adams.

The recent announcement by the son of the late Dr. Adams, for thirty-five years pastor of the Union Congregationalist Church (Orthodox) of this city, that he had become wholly emancipated from the sway of the current Christian theology, has not only the *Congregationalist*, the Orthodox organ published in this city, to extended comment on his statement and his general views on religious belief. Its editor says that Capt. Adams takes pains not merely to dissociate himself from the faith in which he was educated, but even to use language implying his present intense reaction from the main features of his father's creed. The *Congregationalist* speaks of it as if it were almost an act of patricide.

The facts in the case are these: After long and careful study of the Bible and theology, Capt. Adams has finally been led to a radical change of belief—holding the ground that all religions are of human origin. The Bible he regards as a merely human compilation, and thinks that "its atrocities, inequities and incomprehensible dogmas are of the earth." He holds that morality is independent of religion, being the result of universal experience; and that the doctrine of evolution furnishes the key to all things. In miracles he puts no faith. "The result to myself," of his present emancipation from creedal repression, Capt. Adams says, "is that I am rid of the awful depression and gloom of the doctrine of hell; the nagging of conscience to pry into men's minds and know if they are saved; the perplexing defense of the Hebrew Deity, who ordered slaughter and rapine; the contempt of this life; and the Pharisaic conceit of the 'elect.' I now want to live to enjoy what nature, art and civilization supply, but all to the end of advancing humanity to a higher plane of virtue, knowledge and happiness. I have lost nothing in motives to be good and do good, but have gained in freedom, hope and gladness."

Well, that cannot be called a bad announcement by any man. It is made in the form and body of a Letter to Orthodox Friends. The *Congregationalist*, in reviewing it, feels constrained to say, in the light it has, that it appears to be characterized in nearly equal degree by "inconsistency, unfair statement, and hasty inference." But to our mind the editor of the *Congregationalist* exposes himself most freely to the very same charge. He quotes (or epitomizes) Capt. Adams as remarking: "The Bible says the world was made in six days by magic; man was perfect, but sinned; Christ died to save a few; and soon God will destroy the world and punish the vast majority of men forever in hell"; and then proceeds to reply that he (the editor) has studied the Bible for years with earnest care, but he had never found either of these statements in it, and he knows of none among Orthodox men who would be willing to accept either as true. This is a denial that Orthodox do not openly make, and such as nobody ever heard it make before! If none of the above points are pressed to be found by it in the Bible, then it has not the fragment of a creed to stand upon.

The *Congregationalist* asserts that Orthodoxy, or, as it now prefers to style it, "the higher influence which the gospel is designed and calculated to exercise upon human life," goes far beyond the desire of Capt. Adams "to live to enjoy what nature, art and civilization supply, all to the end of advancing humanity to a higher plane of virtue, knowledge and happiness." It is very strange, then, that there is so much insanity, that there are so many suicides, and generally that there is so much melancholy, doubt, questioning and canting pharisaism among the professing believers in creeds. We should rather expect to see them the happiest of all people in the world, which notoriously they are not. It is the first time we have heard that the best condition in which to enjoy what nature, art and civilization supply for advancing humanity to a higher plane of virtue is secured by embracing Orthodoxy. When an Orthodox minister once visited a wealthy brother at his luxurious home, his oft-quoted exclamation was: "All this, and heaven too!" Showing that Orthodoxy considers the enjoyment of these things sinful.

And the editor roundly denies, too, that Christianity (meaning Orthodoxy) demands of him that he trample on his intellect. If it did so demand of Capt. Adams, he says, it made a demand on him (A.) which it never made on any other human being. Now nothing is better known than that ecclesiasticism has always sought to curb and restrain knowledge, with the design of making it subservient to itself. The history of Christianity is profusely illustrated with proofs of this; and the one fear constantly entertained by it is that the human intellect will, in its development and growth, cast off these ecclesiastical restraints altogether.

It does not know how to deal with materialism because of this very fear.

The *Congregationalist* asks Capt. Adams also how he knows that the Holy Spirit leads praying men to different and opposing views—alluding in part to the result of prayer in his (A.'s) own case, and further to what he had remarked in his letter regarding the conflicting sects and their multifarious dogmas, all of which are claimed by their followers to have been drawn from the Bible by souls which were illuminated by the Holy Spirit. It questions him as to his knowledge that it is the Holy Spirit. But why may he not know as well as a group of ministers? Or do they mean that he must come to them to find out when it is and is not the Holy Spirit? It is a very lame and impotent examination of his letter that the editor makes—even puerile in part, and petty in argument. And the canting snaffle with which he concludes is the best corroboration of the truth of what the letter so freely asseverates: It does not show that the editor's intellect has ever enjoyed very much of his boasted free use and play.

A Nearly Fatal Medical Blunder.

As before stated, our friend and correspondent, Charles E. Taylor, of St. Thomas, D. W. I., has had a complaint preferred against him for practicing his gift of healing and dispensing homeopathic preparations, though he has thereby saved many lives and never in any instance made a charge for his services. The complaint was made by the apothecary of St. Thomas, and it now appears that this same apothecary, who is granted by law certain privileges, among them the exclusive right to sell medicine in that place, is about to be subjected to a lawsuit instituted by the government for a blunder in his practice which well-nigh caused the death of a wife of one of his customers.

The *St. Thomas Times* of Nov. 16th contains a communication from I. C. D'Azevedo, in which he states that his wife being in a very weak and exhausted condition, he applied for relief to an allopathic M. D., who ordered the application of six leeches, though he at the same time admitted that no blood should be drawn, the patient actually requiring an increase rather than a diminution. The leeches were applied, and the effect was to seriously endanger her life. So critical was her condition that the doctor upon calling pronounced it "alarming" and asked to see the leeches, part of which had dropped, the others being withdrawn. Upon looking at them he asked in blank astonishment if those were furnished upon the prescription he left. Being told that they were he said a gross mistake, imperiling life, had been made, for they were "horse leeches."

Investigation proved that the apothecary who had sought to subject to fine and imprisonment one of the best of his fellow-citizens, for healing the sick, had himself, under the shelter of a medical law for the protection (h) of the people, administered that which, but for the timely discovery of the possibility of fatal results, would have ended in death.

The case has fairly aroused the people to a consideration regarding the justice of the law, that will undoubtedly lead to its repeal or modification.

The Council Fire.

Col. A. B. Meacham's paper, *The Council Fire*, begins its fifth yearly volume with January, changed to a 32-page magazine, and enlarged in its scope of subjects. Hereafter one half of its space will be devoted to the Indian question proper, and the other half to the advocacy of arbitration as a remedy for war among nations. It is to be the representative organ of the "National Arbitration League of America." All who wish to aid it in its efforts to compass its laudable object should send one dollar and receive it for a year—or forward three cents and obtain a sample copy—to A. B. Meacham, box 718, Washington, D. C.

The Appeal of "Farmer Mary"

Will be found in another column, and to it and the project it outlines the attention of the reader is earnestly called. E. V. Wilson did much and good service for Spiritualism while in the mortal, and has since his transition to spirit-life, not been idle, as his published remarks through various trance mediums conclusively show. His widow and son—the latter a hopeless invalid—have strong claims upon the Spiritualist public; and the request for pecuniary assistance as a secured investment, which is made in her "Appeal" to which we refer, is worthy of a generous answer.

Note to Correspondents.

Monday, Dec. 26th, being generally observed in this city as a holiday, the *Banner of Light* printing office was closed, as well as the Bookstore. Therefore two-days' mail came to hand for treatment by its editor and composers on Tuesday, 27th. In order to accommodate various important matters, we have therefore been obliged, necessarily, to abbreviate our local reports, also accounts of meetings held elsewhere. Correspondents who see their matter thus condensed for the present week will, by a perusal of this notice, understand the cause.

The foreign spiritualistic exchanges—those in the English language we do not, strictly speaking, consider *foreign*—which we place in the hands of Dr. G. L. Ditson for review in the *Banner of Light*, are often sent for by several of our readers, and the accommodating Doctor has been in the habit of forwarding them, as earnestly requested; but he very justly thinks that the recipients should have the politeness to acknowledge their receipt. He recently sent eight papers in one package to Wisconsin, and two packages to Salt Lake City, but does not know whether they arrived at their destinations or not. We coincide with him fully in thinking that paper and postage are worth some acknowledgment. But the good Doctor fails to perceive that this is an exceedingly selfish world; and we would advise him to send off no more papers of the class referred to, unless the parties requesting them forward in advance the requisite postage-stamps.

Gen. Edwin B. Babbitt, U. S. A., the uncle of Edwin D. Babbitt, D. M. (who was named after him), departed this life on Dec. 10th, at Fortress Monroe. This noble man found his chief joy in his old age in caring for the poor and promoting benevolent causes, while his home-circle was so refined and harmonious as to be a true example of what a family may become.

Our thanks are tendered to Mr. H. S. Williams for a "Common Sense Binder," a simple, durable and practical device for filing and binding papers, periodicals, letters, etc. Manufactured by Shipman & Sons, 10 Murray street, New York.

Holiday Books.

The Holiday Season is now in full tide of progress, and gifts of all kinds are being prepared on every hand as the indices of friendly feeling.

What is better than the offering of a good book for such a purpose? It will tell its tale of loving recollection, and deliver its practical moral, long after the holiday it came to commemorate is numbered among the things that were.

Colby & Rich therefore take pleasure in calling the attention of all lovers of spiritualistic free thought and miscellaneous literature, who may contemplate the making of Holiday Gifts, to the fine stock of published works by eminent authors, (some of which are noted in advertisements on our third, ninth and twelfth pages), which they offer for sale at the *Banner of Light Bookstore*, No. 9 Montgomery Place, Boston: confident that all who may purchase therefrom, either by personal call or by order, will be satisfied with their action, and confer a lasting pleasure upon those on whom the volumes are bestowed.

A thoughtful correspondent writes as follows regarding the books we have on sale:

"Many of them furnish a standing rebuke to as well as a rebuttal of the statement that has been echoed so often by those who write against Spiritualism, that it has never produced anything of literary value. You would have, for instance, to search long among the verbiage of modern literature before you would find anything to equal in beauty of poetic expression, splendor of thought, or wide and profound grasp of the vital facts of our being, some of the practical productions of spiritualistic literature, emanating from mediumistic sources; and the same is true concerning the philosophic depth and acumen, and the stern logic vitalized by intuition, of many fine works which grace the earlier as well as later literature of Modern Spiritualism, and which will live in the world's literary history and exert an influence long after much that is now popular in general literature is forgotten."

A COMPLETE CATALOGUE of all their publications sent by mail to any one on application.

Good Things to Come.

We shall commence the New Year with the next issue; and in honor of the event shall give to our readers a choice collation of literary matter, embracing a lecture by W. J. Colville; an overwhelming reply from Prof. S. B. Brittan, Editor-at-Large, to the strictures urged by a Vermont bigot against Spiritualism; a poem by Miss M. T. Shellamer; an original essay on the Rev. O. B. Frothingham and his present position, by Dr. Fred L. H. Willis, (a grand production); brief correspondence from all parts of the country; reports of phenomena; interesting spirit messages, etc., etc.

We have on hand and shall soon commence the publication of a continued story, spiritual in its aim, and remarkably attractive in its treatment, entitled: "Old Grip; or, What Came of a Wooden Wedding," which has been written specially for our columns by the popular authoress, Grace Leland.

The Rev. Leonard Bacon, D.D., LL.D., passed to the spirit-world from his late residence in New Haven, Conn., on Saturday morning last. He was born in Michigan, Feb. 10th, 1802, and would have been eighty years old in about six weeks. Dr. Bacon, in connection with the Rev. Drs. Storrs and Thompson, founded, and edited for a long time, the *New York Independent*. He will now have ample opportunity of learning the divine truths of Modern Spiritualism.

The *Christian Banner* remembers how the Unitarian Association used to snub, dodge, circumvent and show its hate to Theodore Parker thirty years ago. To-day it pronounces Parker to be as great an influence in the Unitarian body as Channing was a generation since. "Recent church history," remarks the *Boston Herald*, "does not show another triumph so radical and so nearly complete as that of Theodore Parker."

M. Search, the independent slate-writing medium, was in Joplin, Mo., on the 14th, surprising all with wonderful evidences of the nearness of the spirit-world to this, and the ability of its inhabitants to communicate with their friends on earth. A reporter from the *Herald* of that place attended several of his sittings, and gave an account of occurrences in which he was much interested, the mystery to him being greater than he could fathom.

Henry B. Allen (better known as the "Allen Boy"), a physical medium whose development is beyond question as to its genuineness, will, about the first of January, be ready to accept calls to visit localities where his services are desired. His plans include a movement toward New York, to be supplemented by a Western tour. He can be addressed for the present at Northampton, Mass.

We received on Tuesday last a very pleasant call from that old and staunch Spiritualist, Judge Nelson Cross, of New York City. We found him a pleasant and highly intelligent conversationalist, and one who evidently had the best interest of the cause at heart. May he long be spared to work in his own way for the advancement of the new dispensation.

Our Western friends are informed that there is no organization in Boston known to us as "THE UNITED SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS," a fact that it will be well for all communities to bear in mind when visited by any one professing to be travelling under the auspices of such an institution.

The Spiritualist meetings held regularly in Temple of Honor Hall, Newburyport, Mass., are, we are informed, of sustained interest. Mr. E. W. Wallis spoke in this course on Sunday afternoon and evening, Dec. 25th, to good audiences, and also favored the people with some fine vocal selections.

A correspondent writes: "Will Prof. Phelps please discourse on Matthew x: 25th; Matt. xii: 28th; Matt. xii: 31st, with translations according to the new version, or the revision?"

Mrs. Sarah A. Danskin informs us that her address hereafter will be 481 North Gilmore street, Baltimore, Md., instead of 68 North Charles street, as heretofore.

Dr. W. L. Jack is a fine trance medium. For his Boston address see advertisement in another column.

Berkeley Hall.

The Tares and the Wheat.

An Inspirational Discourse delivered by
W. J. COLVILLE,
In Berkeley Hall, Boston, Sunday Morning,
Nov. 27th, 1881.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

We are to call your attention this morning to one of the most profound and deeply suggestive parables, embodying a vast amount of spiritual truth, in one of those figurative narratives, so many of which have come down to the present day as precious heirlooms from those times and countries when and where all great teachers have been wont to convey deep spiritual teaching by the use of simple and even commonplace similitudes. The further we travel Eastward the nearer do we come to those climes and peoples where and among whom illustration is almost the sole method employed for the conveyance of instruction. Primitive people and Orientals are very like children in many respects; they take in ideas more readily through the eye than through the ear; and this accounts for the highly symbolical character of their worship and the multiplicity of the images and parables employed by them.

The Northern and Western races are far from emotional and childlike when contrasted with the dwellers in Southern and Eastern climes. The brain of the earth is situated only a few degrees south of the North pole, to which the needle of the compass ever faithfully points, not to the pole itself. This brain of the earth is the great centre of magnetic forces, and the superabundance of magnetism generated there is one great cause of the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights. As men live nearer to this brain of the earth they become less poetical, romantic and visionary, and more intellectual. The dwellers in the temperate zone are far more prosaic, literal, matter-of-fact people than the dwellers in the tropics; and thus all religions which have originated in Asia or Africa are far more deeply couched in symbol than any systems which are the outgrowth of more Northern thought.

Religion itself is the same everywhere, and so great is the similarity in the teachings of all the great moralists of the world that we can only with extreme difficulty approximate toward a discrimination between the teachings of one and another of the world's very greatest moral exemplars. Preaching in India among the Buddhists is often scholarly and eloquent; but the Buddhist lecturer or priest relies almost entirely upon illustration to give point to his argument. The tales often told of the Orientals and their legends, though very wonderful, are rarely exaggerations; eye witnesses are neither few nor far between who are willing to stake their reputation as men and women of honor in making positive statements concerning the wonderful feats performed by Fakirs, Derwishes, and others in Oriental climes. Jugglers, legerdemain, and every form of imposture has at times surrounded Oriental occultism, as the fungi surround the rocks, or as the barnacles cling to them; and yet the rocks themselves are solid realities, existing for centuries, and destined to live on and on, no matter how veiled from the gaze of the passer-by they may be by their attachments.

In every age, in every system, tares and wheat have grown together in the field of the world, and so utterly impossible is it for ordinary people to root up the tares without plucking up some wheat at the same time, that all great teachers have unanimously voted in favor of letting the tares and wheat grow together until the harvest; but in the harvest hour angels will know full well how to discriminate between the precious and the vile, and will always be found competent to eliminate all chaff from the spiritual field.

Before entering directly upon the subject immediately before us—the harvest of the earth—allow us to offer a few of our reasons for our faith in the spiritual or esoteric side of ancient records. One of our mottoes has always been, Let every man be ready to give a reason for the faith that is in him to any who may ask. Unreasoning faith is apt to be destructive of morality, and is certainly a foe to all intellectual progress; but intelligent faith is always belief founded upon knowledge. If you know the character of one of your comrades you rely upon his word, even though you have no immediate opportunity of verifying his statements; while the man whom you know to be a liar cannot enlist your confidence even when you have no evidence that he is not speaking the truth.

To give a reason for our faith in the science of correspondences we will offer the following remarks: In the first place, it is a well-known fact among all students of ancient history that the only influential people among the Egyptians, Persians, Hindus, Chinamen, Jews and other nationalities in bygone days, were both civil and ecclesiastical rulers. The priests in Egypt were mostly men of high birth, and, indeed, all members of royal families were also members of the priesthood. In Asia, among the Brahmins, the higher caste alone included the educated people, and all Brahmins of the highest caste were influential priests; these priests and learned people were not only ministers of religion, but also physicians, lawyers, men in charge of the weights and measures, &c. These learned men had a language of their own; they formed themselves into secret societies, and from these very ancient Orders the Freemasons and Oddfellows of to-day have descended. Freemasons usually claim to trace the history of Masonry among the Jews, as far back as to the date of the building of Solomon's Temple, 1150 B. C., which marvelous edifice they regard as a Masonic structure. Egyptologists are now, many of them, tracing the history of Masonry still further back, at least to the date of the building of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in the delta of the Nile, which cannot have been later than 2750 B. C., while various Hindu explorers trace the existence of secret Orders in India much further back than all historic periods.

A sign-language is far older than a written one; the strange story of the Tower of Babel and the confounding of tongues is, in our opinion, a myth or legend, framed to account to the ignorant for the breaking away of the nations from the original universal sign-language, and the adoption by different peoples of various written languages. In the opinion of many modern philologists, the English language is destined to become the universal written language of the future. It is a tendency of nature to return to her former attainments in this manner—that, as the music of nature is being performed on the instrument of any world or organism, the harmonies repeat themselves an octave higher than when they were first sounded. Nature makes no single retrograde move-

ment; but as along the musical scale the fingers may pass from lower C to higher C, striking again the same note, but an octave higher as the melody ascends, so in all human attainments we come apparently back again to positions formerly occupied by the inhabitants of earth, while, in reality, we have reached a new elevation, and are sounding our notes higher than they have ever been sounded by us before. If the world has ever known a universal language of sign and symbol in days gone by, it will attain to a state in which it will possess a universal language again; but this language of the future will be the language of the living tongue, rather than of the dead stone. The manuscript is constantly superseding the laborious method of engraving hieroglyphics, and as the human eye and ear become equally trained to observe, speaking will be as powerful as acting, and tongues will be understood as readily as symbols.

In infancy the eye drinks in information previous to the day when the child can understand sounds, and the very last sound which the child really fully comprehends is the language of the human voice when it undertakes to become the vehicle for the expression of ideas. Object-lessons are often far more valuable than written or spoken ones; the child or person who can neither read nor write can understand a great deal that pictures teach. The eye is so large a door, and so open a window in the human organism, that, through this most important member, the soul can both portray its inmost emotions and receive knowledge of the external things surrounding its house, the body. Anecdotes are more frequently remembered than arguments; because anecdotes always relate to real life, while many an argument leaves us in the realm of abstractions. The abstract is always hazy and indefinite; and thus the greatest sinners enjoy hearing sin condemned in the abstract, but so soon as the moralist dares to particularize, to bring his subject down to the level of every-day life, his auditors are offended; he is personal, and personalities are vulgar and objectionable, so they say; while without personalities it is often impossible to rectify an error or expose a crime.

Abraham Lincoln has been severely criticised by reason of his exceedingly free use of the illustrative method. When persons pressed for time, and boiling over with an important theme, called upon Garfield's brave old friend, our first martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, he was often known to exclaim, on listening to the burning utterance of his intrepid visitor: "It reminds me of an anecdote," and then proceed to relate some simple incident which bore a life-like resemblance to the fact immediately brought before his notice; and in this way he often found the solution of many a knotty problem, and quelled the impetuous zeal, while he did not attempt to dampen the praiseworthy enthusiasm of the great men who so constantly surrounded this brave and illustrious hero. The old proverb says, "Discretion is the better part of valor," and so it is in many instances; but we always remember that to be cautious we need not be cowardly and deceitful, as many very cautious people are. Cowardice and deceit are altogether alien to cautiousness, as cautiousness and conscientiousness are often well developed in the same brain. It would be easy and interesting to linger a long while over the meaning of ancient symbols, and we could easily deliver a long course of lectures, or fill several volumes, if the time was at our disposal with which to dwell on symbolism, its origin and uses.

The Stage exerts a greater influence to-day, in many cities, than the Pulpit, and no words can be truer or more deeply needed to-day than those of Rev. James Freeman Clarke in his admirable treatise, "Self-Culture," where he urges the truly moral people in the community to elevate amusements and not discard them, and, by liberally patronizing good plays, to induce managers to exclude everything whose tendency can, with any show of truth, be said to be demoralizing. The Passion Play of Ober-Ammergau, in Germany, presented only once in ten years and occupying a whole day, has no doubt done more to impress upon the hearts and brains of the spectators the leading incidents in the story of the sufferings of Jesus than all the sermons and books of hundreds of scholarly divines put together. To them Christ is there on the boards of that enormous theatre, condemned after his betrayal by a false friend, and crucified between two malefactors. To the overwrought multitude the tragedy of Palestine is re-enacted, and their faith in a living Christ is strengthened as it could be in no other way. And is there not always a Christ in the world, in some guise, and is not the Spirit of Truth ever spurred by the great mass of mankind, when it first reveals some new fact of beauty? But erewhile those very Pharisees and Sadducees and Scribes, who shouted after the representative of Truth, "Crucify him!" are ready to deify and worship the prophet whom they have crucified or stoned. Every truth and all its disciples and exponents can afford to wait, for days of judgment are sure to come, no matter how long they tarry, and the searching fire is sure to try everything; and while it will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire the reaping angels will gather every golden ear of wheat, and safely garner it in celestial storehouses.

As we look over the world to-day we see the wheat and tares growing up together, sometimes scarcely distinguishable the one from the other; but the appearances of tares are only temporarily deceitful; while they are young they all look so much like the offspring of the good seed that it would be well nigh impossible to uproot the bad without plucking up some wholesome wheat with them; this the iconoclast often does; and while a destructive as well as a constructive work may be needed to be done in this age, and in this state of society, new developments of thought are sometimes in reality specious sophistries, though they appear at first sight like new revelations from above; while on the other hand, many a truth looks like a falsehood while it is in the bud, but so soon as it begins to flower its beauty and majesty are self-evident. Our advice to all men and women everywhere, with reference to the attitude they should assume toward all novelties, is this: Have no opinion until you have knowledge concerning that about which an opinion is to be formed; remember that all new things are not true, and that all truths are not new, and be careful to let no preconceptions war against your calm and careful scrutiny of all that is presented to you, ever bearing in mind that that which is destined to accomplish great results is usually of slow growth, while the mushroom that springs up in a night may only live a day. Large bodies move slowly, and great organisms take many years to mature, and thus "until the harvest" it is frequently impossible to distinguish correctly between the

tares and the wheat, as by their fruits alone can we judge of their nature and worth.

On this day we celebrate one of nature's own festivals, the ingathering of the crops literally. Physically speaking, in this land certainly the harvest of the earth is now ripe; the fruits have been gathered in ere the commencement of the winter quarter; and this ingathering of the fruits of the soil must ever suggest to the contemplative mind that greater harvest of the earth in which we are all vitally and immortally interested. In every life crises arrive; "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"—an assertion the truth of which can never be denied while experience remains to testify to the fact of effect ever following cause in the history of men and nations, mortals and immortals.

There are many, young persons especially, who think slightly of little sins, or the beginnings of evil. The Romish Church has always made a distinction between mortal and venial sins; this distinction is sometimes just, but at other times unwarrantable; for, unless every sin be regarded as deadly which is committed against light intentionally, and every offence venial which is committed in ignorance, we shall make unwarrantable distinctions between offences equally grave, but in various stages of development. In the harvest of human life all stages of growth are passed through; by every habit, good and bad, by all that produces the results both of sickness and health, weal and woe, it is ever in the history of the development of all things—first the blade, then the ear, and at length the full corn in the ear. Practices are like seeds deposited in the bosom of the earth. At this season you can walk through vast acres of sown land and utterly fail to discriminate between it and uncultivated soil; the earth is brown and bare; not a vestige of vegetation is to be seen in either place, and winter covers both fields with her mantle of ermine. So you may outwardly gaze upon two boys or girls, young men or women; both are outwardly healthy, happy and prosperous; but all the while one is sowing the seeds of life and happiness, and the other of death and misery in his or her constitution, by the constant practice of open and secret virtues or vices. The harvest time of maturer life will display either a crop of wild oats or a harvest of nutritious grain.

It is not with immediate results that we should be always most concerned; the wise man always looks ahead, and like the busy ant, lays up a store of provisions for winter use during the long, bright summer days, while food is plentiful; or like the busy bee, who industriously employs every summer hour in flitting from flower to flower and gathering in a sweet repast and ample provision for coming cheerless days, when flowers lie dead and skies are leaden. Even though an ant-hill is sometimes discovered by a company of merciless boys, and the little creatures forced to rudely quit their shelter, and though the bees often have their honey taken from them, still, every philosopher will admit that wisdom persuades us rather to make provision for a want that may never be felt, than leave ourselves utterly destitute in case of emergency; and even though there be no future use for the goods we have collected in our youthful and prosperous hours, the very act of working is in itself enjoyable.

All life is motion; nothing can live even a moment after it ceases to move; light and heat are generated by the movements of atoms; without friction there could be neither warmth nor brilliancy in the universe; without motion neither sound nor color could exist, as forms and sounds and colors are all alike the result of movements causing vibration, and as all nature is ever in motion and it is impossible to live without doing something, all our actions are simply, if we be free agents in any sense, a choice between working in obedience to our higher or our lower instincts. Even if there were no conscious hereafter for man it would be worth while to live here, for the peace and joy arising from the approval of conscience are so intense and soul-satisfying, that any one having once really experienced them would gladly barter all that the world calls wealth and happiness for one sweet hour of perfect peace of mind.

The importance of forming good habits in early life can never be overestimated. It is thought by many experienced men that what a child learns before he is five years of age he never forgets. The earliest impressions every one knows are always the hardest to erase; and is it not frequently the case with a very old person that, while he forgets almost every incident of his middle life, he remembers perfectly the scenes and experiences connected with his early childhood? Every parent and guardian should feel it a bounden duty to be as kind and courteous (if possible even more so) to a child than to an older person; words, acts, and even thoughts which would do no harm to a person of mature mind and body, are deadly in their influence upon a little one. Ask your children to open the window or close the door; to fetch your slippers or run to the post; to pass plates at the table and bring articles from an adjoining room, in just as polite tones as you would employ when addressing an honored guest. Children are highly impressionable, extremely sensitive, and often very knowing. They understand and institute comparisons when older people think them entirely unobservant; they think it manly or womanly to imitate their elders, and unfortunately while they are not born totally depraved, we all know they come into the world with conflicting tendencies—some leading in the direction of a heaven of virtue, and others on the road to a hell of vice. The care bestowed upon the young is entirely insufficient to meet the demands of the age. The sophistries indulged in to save trouble and expense are often too base to merit a moment's countenance. To allow children or youths to form bad habits, to indulge vicious propensities "moderately," is to violate every known law of nature; and when you begin to run down hill it is often impossible to arrest your progress, though a yawning precipice gapes below. Your only safety lies in not taking the first step in that direction.

Young men learning to smoke and unaccustomed to the taste of liquor, usually detest and are made sick by their first cigars and glasses of intoxicants; but having overcome their primary antipathy, it is no hard thing for them to become inveterate smokers or inebriates. If the enemy, the adversary of all happiness and virtue, be allowed to sow the tares in the field of your lives in your early days, you may never be able to uproot them until your harvest hour arrives, when, summoned from earth to unseen spheres, you will be confronted with your own life and all its consequences. If the building you have erected be composed of hay and stubble and other refuse, then the fire attacking your work will consume it, and you will suffer loss. Spirits who have lived frivolous and

wicked lives on earth, caring only for self-gratification, on entering the spirit-world find themselves despoiled of all their possessions, stripped of all their garments, and, like persons burned out of house and home by some dread conflagration occurring in the dead of a winter's night, wander about houseless and forlorn, seeking rest but finding none. These spirits are the unhappy "ghosts" who have given rise to weird stories and legends in every age and among all peoples. Whenever and wherever interrogated they announce themselves as the misers and egotists of earth, who, like the rich man in the parable, needed fierce torture beyond the grave to awaken within them the long-dormant sense of obligation to others. Young men and women who trifle with edged tools and imagine you can leave off injuring yourselves and others at any moment, be warned in time, and remember that for you in early bloom and vigor of life, more than for any other class, NOW is the accepted time, the day during which to secure salvation from error and its sequences.

Wishing to say a few words upon the parable and its inner meaning directly, not only to extract from it the hidden marrow of which it is full, but also to combat, and if possible overthrow a popular and terribly wide-spread delusion concerning it, we shall at once, without any apology or introduction, characterize the inferences usually drawn therefrom as utterly opposed to the plain teaching of the parable itself, as well as thoroughly repugnant to common sense and the highest feelings of human nature. You are, no doubt, all of you, so well acquainted with the Orthodox interpretation that we need not employ any time in stating what that interpretation is. You have all, no doubt, heard or read some of those glowing and frightful descriptions of the last judgment, which have formed the painter's as well as the preacher's theme, in your early days; many of you, no doubt, frightened nearly to the verge of insanity by reading or listening to sermons informing you on the authority of a book designated "holy," that the wheat signified all those who had washed their souls in the blood of the lamb, through faith in the atoning merits of Jesus; while the tares were all who had rejected the atonement. You were told that on a day which was to dawn as suddenly as the coming of a thief in the night, the harvest of the earth would be gathered in, and that yourselves, and all human souls, would either be accounted ripe and precious grain, worthy a place in the everlasting granary of heaven, or worthless tares, only fit to be burned with unquenchable fire.

It is obvious that no such doctrine was ever in the mind of the author of the metaphor. As if human souls were some of them tares and others wheat, they would have been spoken of as of equal age, and from the commencement of the history of the field which is the world, we should have been introduced to wheat and tares planted in that field at one time. But the parable says that only the wheat existed there at first; good seed only was sown by the Master of the vineyard, afterwards cometh the enemy or wicked one and soweth tares; and we are also told that while men slept the enemy came and sowed the tares, showing plainly to every intelligent and unprejudiced reader that the tares are not men themselves, but something introduced into their lives and spheres by an adverse power while they slumber. This slumber which gives the adversary an opportunity cannot signify the natural rest of the wearied frame after the work of the day; it must mean that torpid indifference to all that is really worth living for, which is so frequently called sleep in the Bible. Satan always finds mischief for idle hands and limbs to do. Satan, to us, is not a mighty archfiend, the rival of the Infinite, but the lower instincts in man, the aggregate of undeveloped spirits, in and out of the form, who tempt the unwary to evil, and all that in the world is as yet crude and inharmonious.

It is nothing short of blasphemy and grossest inhumanity to entertain the thought of our Great Evolver bringing some of us into existence to damn us for all eternity. We are as we are born; we cannot be hopelessly bad unless there is something hopelessly evil in the Great First Cause from which we sprang. All our energies, our powers of spirit, mind and body must in and of themselves be good, and only evil when perverted. If the Originator of our being is not infinitely pure (and the greatest argument of all that have ever been produced in favor of the existence of a perfectly good God is based upon the historic and self-evident fact that every generation witnesses some improvement in man, as well as in the earth which we inhabit); if we did not proceed from a perfectly noble fount, nobility would not be increasingly manifest in every succeeding age.

The views of Solomon and David would be regarded as intolerable to-day, and yet they were respectively called the wisest monarch of the East and the man after God's own heart in the days when they existed on earth. So great has been the development of human nature since those days, that a high average standard of goodness in those days is about on a par with the lowest moral condition of society at this hour. Facts everywhere show that the world is daily growing better and more beautiful, morally as well as materially, and the very complaint of the pessimist, who fears and thinks that things are growing worse, is a manifestation itself of the increasing moral sensitiveness of all leading communities. To us the tares and the wheat are not two great sections of the human family; but they are the rival powers of selfish vice and unselfish virtue ever prevalent in society, each struggling incessantly for the mastery.

The Bible is a cabalistic work; the Vedas, Puranas, Zendavesta, Hermetic writings, and, indeed, all ancient scriptures, are also cabalistic. Swedenborg was undeniably correct in his statement that all scriptures had an esoteric as well as an exoteric meaning and value. He considered that since the days of Job the science of correspondences was lost to the knowledge of men until it was re-discovered by himself, and given out to the world in his published volumes in 1757. Had he been more thoroughly acquainted with the real state of affairs he would have known that no truth ever revealed to the earth can ever leave it; it may be lost sight of by the multitude, it may be entombed in solitary and unthought-of places, it may be recognized only by a few initiated ones; but no art or science is ever wholly lost to the world. All over the Orient secret societies have existed from time immemorial; they exist at this day; there are individuals connected with them in this very city; indeed, in every part of the globe; but the very existence of these mystic Orders is kept a profound secret from the public, as the Cabalists have had for their watchword in all ages—"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls be-

fore swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." To them all are dogs or swine who are unwilling to undergo the necessary discipline enabling a man who has successfully passed through all initiatory degrees to become an adept, or master magician.

Freemasonry to-day possesses, deeply veiled beneath external symbolism, and hidden deep from the knowledge of all who merely take the three degrees possible in England and America, the profoundest secrets of days of yore; six other and higher degrees passed by many in India are unknown to those Western peoples who merely recognize an external form of Masonry, and an establishment of a convenient brotherhood of mutual protection. To believe in the interior sense of the Scripture, is only to recognize a fact demonstrated to all really learned men who know anything at all of history, and the condition of the Orient to-day. In olden times, as you are aware, only a very few persons were educated, and these all belonged to a privileged caste, both royal and priestly. When it was only with great difficulty and at enormous expense anything could be recorded, it would be entirely out of place to write a history filled with trifling incidents. Only very important events were registered, and these were always employed as a veil to conceal deeper truths which only the initiated ones were privileged to comprehend.

The great triumph of man in the fast-approaching era even now coming, will be the opening of every lodge-gate, extending the advantage of brotherhood to all humanity; the proclamation upon the house-tops of mysteries formerly only whispered into the ears in secret of a few specially elect ones; and when science has explored further than the eyes of men penetrated into the mysteries of ancient lands, the people at large will meet face to face a gigantic system of philosophy in which will be found the key to the most august and usually impenetrable wonders of nature. In that day, when men everywhere shall have interpreted the wisdom of the ages by the light of a living inspiration, neither Bibles nor churches nor priests will have any power to work upon the fears of men; no knowledge will develop which is not positive facts overturn all vague hypotheses.

The work of the spiritual messenger to-day is to reconcile all facts and prove to men how, in obedience to the laws of nature, events mis-called supernatural have taken place in every age and among all nations. The parables of Jesus are especially representative of the figurative mode of conveying instruction; and by watching children's movements, and seeing with what avidity they grasp the New Testament to read the stories which are so much highlighted they are with Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and similar allegories, we need no argument to convince us that parabolic teaching is the most effective among childlike people. In this allegory of the tares and the wheat we are introduced to man as he is; his nature itself in all its parts is originally divine. The Author of all being sows only wheat in his field; every talent is calculated to bring forth fruit if only properly employed. The adversary comes in the form of pride and sensuality, and inordinant self-esteem, and the fall of man does not by any means necessarily date back six thousand years; a man, woman or child falls from innocence into sin the first moment he is conscious of a struggle between the lower and higher natures which he possesses.

Swedenborg in his "Arcana Celestia" alludes to the six days mentioned in Genesis as referring to six stages of regeneration through which every soul must pass ere it can reach the Sabbath of rest from all toil and sin. Many ministers of Swedenborgian churches are evolutionists; and while they believe that certain books of the Bible contain an interior sense and are the divine word, they acknowledge that the literal sense is not out of harmony with the ignorance of the multitude in the days when the books were written. Any one knowing anything at all of the secrecy attending all spiritual communications, the "Ordnings" of the Church, will not be at all surprised to hear that Moses, a great law-giver, priest, and reputed son of a monarch's daughter, should, while versed in the knowledge and customs of the Egyptians, have established among the Jews a Masonic Order, having preserved most carefully all the inner meanings common to Egyptian writers. One of the ablest arguments in favor of evolution we have ever listened to, forming a greater part of a sermon delivered on Sunday morning in the New Jerusalem Church, Argyle Square, London, Eng., Rev. Maurice Davies, a firm Spiritualist, though a clergyman in the Church of England, in his highly interesting and authentic work, "Unorthodox London," alludes to a similar incident.

We should not perhaps dwell so much upon the necessity of searching for truth beneath the letter of the Bible, when we are so frequently accosted by persons of culture who come in desire to arrive at truth, but who cling with a tenacity nothing can destroy to the Bible of their forefathers. The curious old book lives; it cannot be crushed out of existence; it has got into the hearts of a people who venerate it blindly and will not discard it. Let them understand it and it will be their blessing; let them remain blinded by priests, not perceiving its real meaning, and it will be a stumbling-block and rock of offence. People of this kind are persuaded that the Bible really does not teach the horrible doctrines which they have been taught to hold, will not cling to them any longer, as a biblical sanction is all that supports them. If the Bible teaches everlasting punishment, then Christendom will not forego the belief; and thus we owe a deep debt of gratitude to those scholars of the Universalist denomination who have most laboriously struggled to convince the world that everything which is in the Bible is in the sacred text. To us it is a matter of small moment what the Bible sanctions, as we always gladly turn from the written to the living word, and no more expect to be sustained spiritually by the inspirations which blessed the ancients than we expect you to sustain your physical bodies on the food you ate yesterday, without eating a fresh supply to-day; but just as your life and power to act and do good you have received from former meals, even so in like manner does the receptive state of humanity to-day bear witness to the good accomplished by olden outpourings of the spirit.

Turn to the one hundred and ninth Psalm, and read David's frightful imprecations. Literally speaking, nothing more atrocious has ever been encountered in profane literature. In the latter part of the words are blasphemous; the vilest forms of cursing and swearing are here employed, and no attempt to lessen the enormity of the language has ever been successful; but spiritualize the psalm, and it becomes entirely changed. The enemies of David are lusts and passions, impersonal evils; the children of the daughter of Babylon who are to be dashed against the stones are falsities which need to be broken in pieces as they are thrust against the rock of truth. And so the tares in the parable destined to be utterly consumed in the great day of judgment are the individual and nation vices which are to be utterly consumed in the searching fire of universal enlightenment.

May we not employ the words of the Apocalypse, "Cast in thy sharp sickle, for the harvest of the earth is ripe," to the present day? A dispensation is almost ended; a cycle is nearly completed; the great pyramid speaks eloquently in stone concerning portentous events now at hand; the state of every nation upon earth corroborates the testimony of the pyramid; France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, England, Ireland, India—look at any one or all of these countries and tell us if it is not clearly shown to you that a crisis is at hand. All that is good in government, in religion, in social life, will be gathered into the granary of a new nation. The tares of injustice, despotism and falsity must be burned with unquenchable fire. If we are entered into the great day, we shall be entered into greater bliss and larger liberty, as the earth becomes more suited to our wants. If we sow the tares of craft and selfishness, then, when the crisis comes, the bitter discipline of seeing our treasures consumed, and we left desolate, will be our necessary discipline to fit us eventually to be bearers of golden sheaves; no soul ever becoming a tare.

Pearls.

And quoted odes, and jewels, and words long,
That, on the stretched fore-finger of all time,
Sparkle forever.

LOVE.

Farewell, remembered song! In heaven above
The angels call thee—Universal Love!

—[S. T. Clark.]

A delicate thought is a flower of the mind—
Colburn.

DOES IT ALL.

As lamps burn still with unconscious light;
So modest ease in beauty shines most bright;
Unadorned charms with edge resistless fall,
And she who means no mischief does it all.

—[Lyon Hill.]

It is one of the precious mysteries of sorrow that it
finds solace in unselfish thought.—James A. Garfield.

FORGIVENESS.

The fairest action of our human life
Is according to revenge an injury;
For who forgives without a further strife,
His adversary's heart to him doth lie;
And 'tis a former conquest, truly said,
To win the heart that overthrew the head.

—[Lady Elizabeth Carey: "Marianne"]

Life grows dark as we go on, till only one clear light
is left shining on it, and that is faith.—Madame
Sevichine.

SPIRIT FRIENDS.

Laugh you, who never had
Your dead come back, but do not take from me
The harmless comfort of my foolish dream
That these our mortal eyes,
Which outwardly reflect the earth and skies,
Do inwardly upon eternity—
And that the shapes you deem
Imaginations, just as clearly fall,
Each from its own divine original,
And through some subtle element of light,
Upon the inward, spiritual eye,
As do the things which round about them lie,
Gross and material, on the external sight.

—[Miss Corp.]

There is something among men more capable of
shaking, despotism than lightning, whirlwind or
earthquake; that is, the threatened indignation of
the whole civilized world.—Daniel Webster.

A. E. Newton on Organization.

We received last week an extended account
by our correspondent, S. B. Nichols, Esq.,
President of the Brooklyn, N. Y., Spiritual Fraternity—of the regular meeting of that body,
and cited from it the names of speakers, etc.,
being prevented at that time from doing more
through lack of space. We here present from
Mr. Nichols' report the substance of Bro. A.
E. Newton's remarks on Organization, with
which the exercises of that meeting were intro-
duced:

"The third of a century that has elapsed since
the first mass at Rochester summoned the atten-
tion of mankind to the opening of a new era,
has seen the growth and development of millions
of souls in this and other lands have been
emancipated from the thralldom of a gloomy
and harsh theology, while rational and cheer-
ful views of the future life and its relations to
the present have in a large extent leavened the
public mind. Yet the fact remains that the
grand revolution then initiated is still in a
great measure unfulfilled to the masses and un-
utilized, and its realizations meagre and unsat-
isfying as compared with the number of its
allied friends. A cursory survey of the field
shows that while Modern Spiritualism claims
to have nearly twice the number of adherents in
this country that are enumerated by any other
over-estimate, probably while Methodism,
the largest and most powerful religious
body, claims but about six millions, yet for any
practical, operative effort Spiritualism is per-
haps the weakest of them all. It has not the
control, through any organized or representa-
tive body, of a single publishing or benevolent
institution of any character in the land. The
chief public effort in which Spiritualists as
such engage is maintaining Sunday lectures in
our principal cities and some larger towns; but
these for the most part, for want of any general
cooperation, are sustained by individual enter-
prise and by means of a vast and expensive
system of itinerancy, extensive to both speakers
and hearers of what the railroad corporations
reap the main profits; and these efforts are
in constant danger of degenerating into
mere sensational displays by a limited number
of 'star' performers. The educational move-
ment known as the 'Children's Progressive
Lectures' which promised so much for the rising
generation, and was at one time entered
upon with enthusiasm and vigor in many
places, has languished, and to a great extent died out,
chiefly for the want of leaders possessing any
definite idea of what or how to teach, or any
earnest devotion to the selfless work required.
Meanwhile the yearnings of our souls, of
every expanded and cultured soul which has
outgrown the sphere of antagonism and dispu-
tation, and begun to feel the powers of an inner
and deeper life, and to yearn for sympathy in
the profound depths of our being, for that moral
support and strength, which are born of mutual
confidence and unity in great and noble pur-
poses, for the inner and higher fraternal com-
munion which comes only of the deepest sincer-
ity and most earnest aspiration for self-improvement—these yearnings are met to but a small
degree in any of our associations. We lack a
definite and unifying system of mental and spir-
itual culture suited to the higher wants of the
soul. The atmosphere of our lecture-rooms
and assemblies is too often rigid, frivolous,
and coldly intellectual; too sharply critical and
harshly disputatious, consequently numbers of
spiritually illumined and quickened souls are
repelled therefrom, and more strongly at-
tracted to colder church organizations, where
something like spiritual culture, despite their
conservatism and blindness, is still to be found.
And as to any effort to apply the fraternal
and angelic lessons of Spiritualism to human
society on any extended scale, by the improve-
ment of social and political institutions, by an
attempt to adjust the grand problem of capital
and labor, or by the introduction of improved
methods of domestic life, of education, of indus-
try, or of exchange of products, or even by any
attempts to learn what are the demands in this
direction of that Brotherhood which we all
profess to recognize—these momentous mat-
ters have as yet received but a small share of
attention; while, on the other hand, a large
amount of valuable time, learning and talent
has been expended in the discussion of such
barren questions as Pre-existence, Re-incarnation,
the Hollow Globe Theory, &c., &c., and
which are of small practical consequence to
earth's suffering millions, whether true or false.
What matters it to the toiling masses groaning
under oppressions of capital and greed, whether
they have existed in some unknown condition
through all past eternity? or what consolation
can there be to be told that they are destined
to endure this earthly experience over again
for nobody knows how many times? or what
comfort to a man with an earthly stomach to
know that the globe is as hollow as his own
bread-basket? Unless we can present to these
toilers a more valuable gospel of life, we had
better not distract them from their toil.

In view of these and other considerations
which need not be mentioned, it would seem
there is plainly needed the infusion of some new
element into the general movement, or at least
of a new accession of force—a 'new departure'
of some kind. What shall it be?
While there can be no question that in a rev-
olution so broad and radical as Spiritualism is to
work in human society, the stage of disintegra-
tion, demolitions, individualizations, and that
in a very thorough manner, must precede the
era of construction, yet the conviction which

now seems generally prevalent and instinctively
manifesting itself on every hand, that there
should be a more general cooperation among
Spiritualists for practical ends, is an indication
that that stage is nearing its close, the mission
of the Destroyer nearly ended, and the day of
the Builder draws near.

The speaker showed clearly and at length that
the mere fact of a belief in a future life or of
the presence and communion with the spirit-
world was not sufficient to bind men and women
together for the practical work of life; that
men must grow into that condition spiri-
tually, by which they could realize the needs of
humanity and which would culminate in a true
fraternal brotherhood, and argued that when
Spiritualists had grown into a spiritual state
that led them into this fraternal cooperation
they would become a power for the up-building
of a nobler civilization—a humanity broad and
comprehensive and one that would culminate
in deeds of mercy, charity, kindness and love.
The lecturer asked the question, "Does Modern
Spiritualism supply such convictions and in-
spire such purposes as are requisite?" and in
answer said:

"This depends upon what Spiritualism means
to the individual receiver. If we organize for
theory-promulgation only, we but add another
to the barren sects which already exist, to
quarrel endlessly over abstractions, and eat out
the substance of the people without positively
leading them to a whither or a happier life.
No! what we want is not a body of theorists
and talkers, but of true believers and earnest
workers. The Church of the future, or whatever
takes its place, must seize hold upon and wield
the affairs of daily life, making home more
sweet, toil more cheerful, trade more honest,
and society in all its aspects more fraternal.
Its pastors, the true shepherds, will not be sen-
sational preachers to sentimental crowds, but
men and women capable of organizing and
directing the forces of society to nobler and
fraternal ends. The mere facts of Spiritualism
will spread, as they have done, without orga-
nized effort for the purpose, from their own in-
trinsic interest, as people feel the need of them,
and much of the 'philosophy,' so-called, had bet-
ter not be spread at all. I mean these ideas which
lead to concatenate the mortal nature and con-
fuse all perceptions of right and wrong. At all
events the most efficient way to promulgate
any truth in the world is by believers LIVING
IT THEMSELVES; showing its superior excel-
lence by supra-excellent daily lives and pur-
poses of life. The most important use of orga-
nization is to render each other mutual assist-
ance in living true lives.

But if Spiritualism means to us something
more than a merely clerical or religious phenom-
ena calculated to excite our wonder and give a
free rein to fanciful speculations; if it has de-
monstrated to us the momentous fact of man's
spiritual nature and immortal destiny; if it has
quickened in us the growth of spirituality and
thus developed the love of truth and right for
their own sakes; if it has emboldened us as a
burning aspiration to subordinate the earthly
and selfish of our own natures to the spiritual
and the great and noble aims of humanity, and
if it has set our souls ablaze with a divine en-
thusiasm of humanity because it has led us to
more fully recognize in all human beings our
brothers and sisters, children of the same Father-
Spirit and heirs of one destiny; if Spiritualism
is all this to any of us, then it furnishes
abundant motives of the strongest power to
fraternal cooperative action.

And are not these the prominent ideas or
truths that are legitimately involved in Spiritu-
alism? Let us look at them a little more in
detail, with some corollaries.

1st. The demonstrated reality of a future life
to which the present is preparatory; and hence
the importance of making the best possible use
of the present life. Does any Spiritualist ques-
tion this?

2d. The possibility of unlimited progress or
increase in knowledge, wisdom, beauty of char-
acter, usefulness and consequent happiness in
this life as well as in that which is to come;
hence the privilege and duty of so living that
each to-morrow may find us further than to-
day. Does any one doubt this?

3d. The necessity of the ascendancy of the
spiritual, that is, the rational and fraternal ele-
ments of our natures, over the animal and self-
ish as the condition of our harmony and pro-
gress. Can any one question this?

4th. The divinity or sacredness of all truth
and the right and responsibility to each indi-
vidual to determine for himself what is truth
and what is duty. Are we not all agreed in this?

5th. The inexorable law of consequence,
which makes joy or suffering the inevitable re-
sult of right or of wrong doing. Is there any
difference on this point?

6th. The grand unity of the Brotherhood and
Sisterhood of all humanity, or the solidarity of
our race, whether embodied or disembodied—
from which it follows not only that injury
inflicted on one is an injury to all, and to the
wrong-doer most of all, but that our highest
interest as well as duty requires us in all
things to live for the good of all; a grand
truth when fully comprehended; its power felt
and applied in all the relations of life, will ban-
ish all oppression, wrong and misery from hu-
man society, secure freedom and peace to all
in that does not harm another, and bring in-
deed a heaven on earth. Who has any doubt of
this?

7th. And lastly, that other grand conception,
the Fatherhood of God, or, as more philosophi-
cally expressed, that the universe is pervaded
and controlled by a beneficent Power and wise
Intelligence, sustaining to all individual intel-
ligence in some sense the intimate relation of
Parent—one Father and one Mother—who
such calls forth our highest veneration and love;
of whose being, works and ways we claim
to know but little, but would learn all that
may be known; to whose kindly will, so far as
ascertained, we aspire to be fully conformed as
our greatest good; whose authorized revela-
tion is nature, and whose interpreters are Science
and Intuition, and who are worshipped by
love and service to our fellow-creatures.

Such are the grand truths which Spiritualism
offers as incentives to action in place of the
errors and superstitions of the older sects. And
are they not worthy the regard of intelligent
and rational beings? If there are persons call-
ing themselves Spiritualists who fail to feel the
power of such truths, lifting them into nobler
and worthier lives, it seems plain that they
have mistaken their proper designation. Some
of us, at least, are fully convinced of this truth,
and it may prove that those only who feel it,
softening, fusing power, can long a-ree to work
together in very close organic relations. Of
course, an earnest movement in this direction
may be expected to call forth the determined
hostility of all devotees of conservatism on the
one hand, and all mere destructive iconoclasts
on the other. Nevertheless, this radical re-
construction, on the basis of truth, Liberty,
Equality and Fraternity, as interpreted in the
light of man's spiritual nature and relations,
is the grand demand of the age, and the grand
purpose of the spiritual movement of the nine-
teenth century. Only as we thus apprehend it
and participate intelligently and efficiently in
the work, shall we become entitled to the gra-
titude of posterity as spiritual reformers.

We are living, we are dwelling
In a grand, eventful time,
In an age on ages telling
To be living is sublime!
Hark! the waking up of nations!
Truth and error to the fray;
Hark! what soundeth? 'Tis creation
Groaning for its latter day!
Will ye play, then? will ye dally
With your music and your wine?
Will ye play, then? will ye dally
God's own arm hath need of thine!
Hark! the onset! will ye fold your
Faith-clad arms in lazy lock?
Up! up! up! thou drowsy soldier!
Worlds are charging to the shock!
Worlds are charging—heaven beholding;
Thou hast but an hour to fight!
Now the trumpet soundeth clear,
On, right onward, for the right!
Oh, let all the soul within you
For the truth's sake go abroad!
Strike! let every nerve and sinew
Tell on ages—tell for God!

There is a great deal of religion in this world that
is like a life-preserver, only put on at the moment of
immediate danger, and then half the time put on blind
before.—Josh Billings.

Spiritual Phenomena.

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA—DR. F. W.
MONCK.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

By invitation the writer attended a circle at
the residence of a friend in our city, on the eve-
ning of Dec. 15th. Dr. F. W. Monck, who had
been treating a large number of patients at this
house during the day, had left and gone over to
New York City to visit a patient, but had prom-
ised to return, which he did at 10:30 p. m. The
friends who were assembled had not received
any manifestations of importance previous to
the arrival of Dr. M., which they said was un-
usual, as at their circles phenomena of varied
character occurred without delay. The writer
suggested that as he and his wife were new to
the circles we might be the "Jonahs" that pre-
vented any phenomena, and I also said that the
hour was so late we would go home. They all
said "No," and that Dr. M. would be back, and
if not too tired he would sit with us. When he
arrived at the house he sat down at the table
near to, but not next to me. We were sitting
with hands joined; he reached his right hand
to me, and requested me to grasp it, which I
did. The lady of the house, Mrs. S., and Judge
Abram H. Dalley held his left hand; the doors
were closed, and we sat in darkness; immedi-
ately raps came on the floor, and the guitar that
was on the table was fingered, and sounds pro-
duced. The guitar was lifted, and several mem-
bers of the circle were touched with it. I was
touched several times by it on my arm, head,
&c., and during the rest of the evening I
was touched at different times, in different places,
with hands that varied in size and strength. I
had requested that a hand might be placed upon
my head; this was done, and it was apparently
a large heavy hand, and a human one, although
no human hand could have touched my head, as
all in the circle were sitting with locked or
joined hands. A very large and beautiful music
box, weighing forty or fifty pounds, was moved
and played upon, tunes different, it was said,
from what it was arranged to play. This music
box, some twenty by ten inches, was taken
from a small table in a corner to the right where
I sat, placed under the table, and finally left on
top of it, and my hand, joined with Dr. Monck's,
rested upon it, and it continued to play.

Judge Dalley was frequently touched by the
hand of his spirit-child, "Gracie," his coat-
collar pulled, and other manifestations of her
presence were given. The coat of Dr. Monck
was taken from his back and folded and placed
on my face and head. A light was called for,
and a chair which had been pulled out from
Mrs. S. was found suspended on her arm, which
was firmly grasping that of Dr. Monck. She
said that she had firmly held the hand of Dr.
M. all through the séance. I know that I did
not let go of his right hand from the time he
sat down to the circle, at 10:30 p. m., until 12:10,
when the light was brought in and our séance
closed. I know that Dr. Monck did not move
out of his chair, and that, had he been so in-
clined, he could not have taken off his coat
without my freeing his right arm. What power
did it, I am unable to say, unless it was that of
a disembodied intelligence. I think every per-
son present was satisfied as to Dr. Monck's hon-
esty. He said he was averse to sitting in dark
circles, but did so to oblige his friends, some-
times, as he had for this evening. Dr. Monck
possesses almost miraculous powers as a healer,
by simple touch; and it seems to me that it
would be far better for him to reserve all his
powers and forces exclusively to heal the sick
and suffering of earth, and also to request his
spirit-friends to cease to fise him for any other
purpose than as a healer. I make this brief
statement of facts occurring in my presence
through Dr. Monck's mediumship in justice to
him, and say that so far as I am able to judge,
I believe him to be honest and sincere; and I
bid him a hearty God-speed in his work.

S. B. NICHOLS.

357 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.,
Dec. 16th, 1881.

A VISIT WITH DR. J. V. MANSFIELD.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

After spending an hour looking over a part of
the eight thousand curiosities which Bro. M.
has collected from all parts of the world and
from all ages of the earth's living history—
which I do not hesitate to say cannot be equalled
as a private cabinet of curiosities in the United
States—I sat down and wrote a brief note to
each of the following friends. The notes were
secretly folded and pasted utterly out of sight,
and I then, through his hand, received a most
cordial greeting and characteristic communi-
cation from each: Dr. George Haskell, Mrs. H.
F. M. Brown, Benjamin Todd and Mary P.
Clase. The latter, my spirit-wife, was so care-
ful lest a lingering doubt of her identity should
remain in my mind, that she cited several in-
stances of our early acquaintance unknown to
any but ourselves, and long since forgotten by
me till renewed in memory by her.

I do not hesitate to say that, under similar
circumstances, no candid and intelligent person
could fail to be convinced of the origin of such
communications. Having known Dr. Mansfield
for twenty-five years, and occasionally met him,
and always found him a most reliable, honest
and correct medium in every instance where I
have tested him, or where my friends have, I
am glad to bear my testimony in his behalf.

WARREN CHASE.

New York City, Dec. 20th, 1881.

Newspaper Supplements in the Mails.

Acting Postmaster-General Hatton has au-
thorized the following ruling: No newspaper
supplement containing any advertisements
whatever can be allowed in the mails at the
second-class rates unless the publisher makes
affidavit that the same rates are paid to him
for the advertisements contained in the supple-
ment as for those in the body of the paper it-
self. But the making of this affidavit will not
secure the admittance of hand bills or posters
or advertisements in a form intended for cir-
culation independent of the paper itself, or
without the date issue; nor will it authorize
the use of cuts or illustrations which would not
be admitted in the body of the paper. The sup-
plement must contain matter which is printed
in the supplement for no other reason than for
want of room in the body of the paper itself,
and which would have been so published but
for this reason; and, therefore, the advertise-
ments contained therein must be of the class of
matter, style of illustration and display common
to the entire paper. Postmasters will be held
strictly responsible for the mailing of any mat-
ter in violation of this ruling, and are required
to report all such violations coming under their
notice.

A pure or holy state of anything is that in which all its
parts are helpful or consistent. The highest and first
law of the universe and the other name of life is, there-
fore, "help." The other name of death is "separation."
—John Ruskin.

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