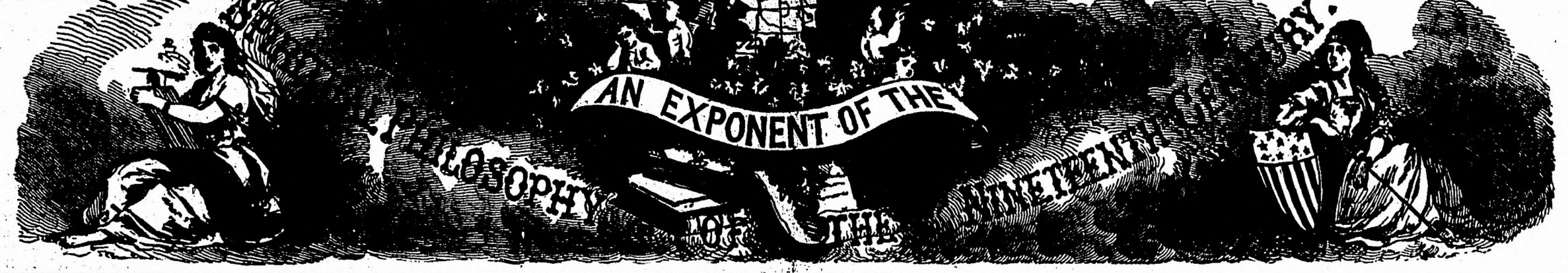


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The Spiritual Rostrum.

The Theistic Revelation of Spiritualism.

A Discourse Delivered Before the Society of Spiritualists in Providence, R. I.,
Nov. 11th 1883, by
PROF. HENRY KIDDLE.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

There is, perhaps, no feature of Spiritualism, especially as a religious movement, that has repelled so many persons from it, as the diversity of views presented by those who claim to be its exponents and advocates; because they attribute, quite naturally, to this diversity and contrariety to what has been called the "revelation of spiritualism." But Spiritualism, in abandoning ecclesiastical authority, and disowning the infallibility of all church creeds, has vindicated without qualification the exclusive authority of the individual judgment and conscience; and hence the revelation which it has brought is subservient to human reason, and does not dominate it.

To those who have associated the idea of infallibility with that of every spiritual revelation this is unintelligible; because they conceive all such revelations to come directly from the Infinite Source of knowledge—from him who, in his essential being, is Truth absolute. The believers in the Christian revelation look upon it as not only perfect but final. It is a complete scheme, beginning with the Fall of Man in Eden, and ending with the sacrificial atonement of the Son of God on Mount Calvary. All the "sins of the world" are said to have had their rise in the one event, and all the "sins of the world" were taken away by means of the other. It is impossible that they who accept this as revealed directly by God himself in the person of Jesus Christ, and through special mediums of inspiration, can believe in any supplementary or additional revelation. The work of man's salvation has been completed. God has been reconciled to man—his anger has been forever appeased. Thus the Jewish writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "Christ, when he had offered for sins one final sacrifice, sat down on the right hand of God"; and again: "By one offering he hath perfected forever those that are sanctified." Thus the idea of finality in the act of Christ's atonement, as well as in the revelation of the character, designs and will of God, bars the way against all progression in religious thought, and against the acceptance of any new spiritual revelation. It is true that these barriers are now being broken down quite rapidly and effectively; and a way is clearing for the admission of fresh ideas and the establishment of a more enlightened religious system—a system in which there is no doubt a more truthful and rational interpretation of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures will bear a part.

The Protestant principle of the right of private judgment in the interpretation of these Scriptures, which at the present time is exercised so freely by Orthodox clergymen, will greatly hasten this result. If the Roman Catholic church had succeeded in making the Bible a sealed book, causing that great ecclesiastical organization to rest exclusively upon the sacred traditions in its own keeping, supplementing them, from time to time, by expository decrees passed off upon the world as the offspring of an infallible inspiration, how much stronger it would have been, and would still be! Had it succeeded in doing this, Luther would never have troubled the church by setting up the right to construe the Scriptures in his own way, as he did before that great assembly at Worms, when he said, with admirable boldness: "If I am not convinced by proof from Holy Scripture, or by cogent reasons—if I am not satisfied by the very texts that I have cited, I neither can nor will retract anything; for I cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his conscience." Glorious words! which all those who claim to be Protestants should ever keep in mind, seeing that this was a vindication not only of the authority of a personal interpretation of Scripture, but of reason and conscience. The utterance of a fearless heretic, it was an emphatic protest against the very existence or possibility of heresy; for how can any one be a heretic if there is no authority but individual reason and conscience? And this is what Luther proclaimed. Have not some Protestant clergymen been placed by their churches in the very position in which the bold reformer stood at Worms? And have they not been told, as Luther was: "Give up your interpretation of Scripture; surrender your reason and conscience to the authority of the church; or be condemned as a heretic, and suffer excommunication from our church."

The authoritative revelation of the Roman Church claimed to be the canonized and exponent, was thus opposed by a revelation made to the mind of a single man; and the latter was accepted by millions. Said that the man who received it and made it so potent by the wonderful earnestness and purity of his own spirit should not always have granted to his fellowmen the right to receive a similar revelation, and be ruled by the dictates of their reason and conscience? But he was not, and so it has been with the Protestant followers of Luther down to this age. Let us be thankful, however, that such a right of private

judgment" is beginning to be proclaimed in Christian pulpits with new power and fervor, and that the outlook is so favorable for its establishment, involving the utter extinction of that monster, heresy—in the past a fiend of darkness and terror, of cruelty and death, but now really nothing but a miserable scarecrow which men set up to be hoisted at and despised.

When we speak of the revelation of Spiritualism, it is in no sense such as the Christian revelation is claimed to be—a direct unveiling of spiritual truth by God himself, through human intermediaries, and employing the agency of human words; but a revelation of spiritual truths by finite spirits in various grades of advancement, subject to the limitations and imperfections of all finite minds, and to be tested, before being received, by the reason and conscience of those to whom it is addressed, just as Luther claimed the revelation contained in Scripture is to be tested. That there should be diversity of views among Spiritualists is, therefore, no more surprising than there should be sectarian differences among Protestants. Both arise from the same cause—the "right of private judgment"; and that right is now rising in sanctity and inviolability. It is a Protestant clergyman that has said: "The developed spirit is its own spiritual touchstone for spirit-truths"; a principle which makes every man his own church and his own priest, and thus annihilates sacerdotalism and ecclesiasticism.

The spiritual revelation of this time does not come to substitute one form of mental despotism over mankind for another; but to set the human mind free; free to reason, to think, to speak, to accept or reject whatever is offered as truth from whatever source, and free also to act, with the one exclusive limitation that every man shall respect the rights and interests of others; shall do unto others as he would have them do unto him; shall, in this sense, love his neighbor as himself. This abrogates the right claimed by religious organizations to pronounce anathemas against those who refuse to assent to dogmas which they have accepted or set up as infallible truth; while it imposes the duty of instruction and persuasion on the one hand, and that of conscientious attention and humility on the other.

Spiritualism proclaims as a new revelation the open communion of spirits, with all that necessarily flows from that great fact. In this statement, the word opens is to be especially emphasized; because, in the past, that communion has been closed, to a greater or less extent, by the ignorance, wickedness and bigotry of mankind. It has been barred by legislation against what has been called sorcery, witchcraft, necromancy, or magic; and holding communications with the spirit world has been condemned as a heinous crime, and the practice repressed by judicial cruelty and murder. The record of this in medieval and even modern times presents the darkest pages of human history, from the burning of Angela de Labarre at Toulouse in the great auto da fe, in 1270, down to the last witch execution in England, in 1716, when a woman and her daughter, the latter only nine years old, were hanged for "selling their souls to the devil."

Ignorance in relation to the spirit-world—an ignorance fostered by the ecclesiastical institutions of the time, and confirmed by papal bulls, in conjunction with that most dreadful of all delusions, the belief in a personal devil—caused hundreds of thousands of innocent persons to be tortured, burned at the stake, or otherwise executed; children from one to six years old being condemned to be burned as witches by the authority of that church, the representatives of which are forever flouting in the faces of men its arrogant claims to infallibility and infallibility. Let it be borne in mind that the pontifical bulls of John XXII, Innocent VIII, and Adrian VI, against all spirit-intercourse have not been, and cannot be, repealed; and we shall see why the Spiritualism of these days is pronounced by Roman Catholic priests "devilism," and condemned as a heresy.

Jesus announced the close of the old dispensation when he said: "Ye have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' but I say unto you, resist not evil." In like manner Spiritualism says: Ye have heard that it was said, "Thou shalt not permit a witch (that is, a medium) to live"; but I say unto you, Listen to the voices of the spirits that speak through mediums; reject not rashly and presumptuously their messages; but bring all to the test of your enlightened reason and conscience. These messages cannot harm you except through your own sinfulness and wilful error. Cultivate the spirit of truth within your own souls, and invoke the spirits of truth in sincerity and humility. Then the light of spiritual truth will shine in constantly-increasing radiance around you. Believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether they be of God," as was said of old; for there are many false mediums, and mediums for the manifestation of deceitful spirits continually going out into the world. You will find spirits coming to you with evil suggestions, with fallacious notions, and with seductive doctrines that will gratify your passions and appetites, will flatter your pride, and pander to your vanity and self-importance. Beware of listening to them, except to repel or admonish them. By these communications you will learn the nature of spirits, and of their life beyond yours; you will learn the great fact of your own continued existence as a spirit after the change called death; and you will be made aware of the means required to make your entrance into that future life happy, and to avoid the misery consequent upon a mispent earthly life. All this knowledge is of the greatest importance; but it will be often gained by a sad experience. The windows that admit the vital air and sunshine also permit the poisonous miasma to enter your houses, and sow the seeds of disease and death. So, too, the spiritual windows that are opened now, let in the evil as well as the good. On you rests the obligation to discriminate, and thus avoid the snares of the wicked ones. You will sometimes yield to their seductions, through your own weakness; but the painful lesson will make you strong in the wisdom which you will have thus dearly bought. You will learn by this free and open intercourse with disembodied spirits, that purity of thought, unselfishness of purpose, and faithfulness in conduct, can alone secure you from the dangerous unseen influences around you, which exist and do their work whether you converse with them or not, affecting or controlling you according to those eternal laws which govern the relations of the two worlds—the world of matter and the world of spirit. It is true that different orders of spirits teach different doctrines. It will be for you to accept the true and reject the false, by the exercise of your reason and conscience, just as the Protestant Luther did in relation to papal dogmas and scriptural teachings, and just as all good and intelligent Christian people are learning to do in regard to ancient Scriptures presented to them as the Word of God. They find much that is contradictory in these old records; and they are no longer satisfied with blindly mistaking them; but feel that they are free to exercise their own spiritual intuition and common sense. When, for example, they read the Psalms attributed to King David, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," they see

cept that statement as a truth expressed in figurative language; but when they read: "In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" they reject it as an expression of error or ignorance; for they know that death does not bring forgetfulness, but intensifies memory. When David praises God for his mercy and loving kindness, every religious soul joins in the expression of thanksgiving; but when he curses his enemies, and calls upon God to destroy them, we perceive that he has lost the influence of the good spirit, and fallen into the possession of an evil one.

Thus we may learn the lesson of discrimination in dealing with modern mediums and the spirits who speak through them, by studying the sayings and writings of the ancient mediums. To both the same standard is to be applied, namely, that *truth* light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world," when he divests himself of pride and passion so that he may be enabled to see it. This is that "candle of the Lord" of which we read in the Psalms; which God, it is said, will light; and as indeed he will, through the ministrations of his holy spirits, who always come to the humble and devout seeker after truth and goodness.

Thus we see that the contradictions, conflicting statements and antagonistic precepts with which we are presented through spirit-intercourse, are not by any means as great a stumbling-block to the worthy and intelligent Spiritualist as the conflicting statements of the Bible must be to one who accepts that book as being the infallible "word of God." Let him read the "Psalms of David" without the exercise of his reason, and he will learn to curse his enemies, in opposition to Christ's precept: "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Certainly both those passages of Scripture did not come from God, directly or indirectly; and one or the other must be rejected. But let us apply the principle which I have endeavored to illustrate to Spiritualism as a theistic revelation—that is, a revelation of the existence of God, and his relations to his intelligent creatures. It is in this regard that Spiritualism has been most violently condemned, especially by Roman Catholics and particularly Jesuit writers and preachers. I quote an example: "If," says the *Catholic Quarterly Review*, "their (the spirits') revelations as to the nature and destiny of intelligent, responsible creatures, have any truth in them, there should be no contradictions in their doctrines about God; there can be no longer any excuse for such contradiction, no longer any reason save that of hatred, and in that event the examination of their revelations must end with an anathema—a curse upon them—as the arch-enemies of God and man." How true to its character is this so-called Church of Christ!—always ready with an anathema against those who resist its authority; always cursing and displaying the bitterest hatred in opposition to the Christian precept: "Bless and curse not." Why should the spirits know all about God, so as to be perfectly in accord in their theological doctrines? How can the finite mind know in any such way the Infinite? Does the infallible Church, with its infallible revelation, know all about God? Can it know more than Christ taught? And what was that? Only that God is our Father, and that it is our duty to love him. Jesus is reported as saying on one occasion: "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This is the sum and substance of Christian theism; and all else that has been taught by the churches is either Christian speculation or Christian fable or mythology; in addition to which there is, also, what is more worse—Christian perversion. For example, the teaching of God's wrath and vengeance upon the sinner; his implacability except by the cruel sacrifice of his son; and especially the doctrine of eternal damnation to all who do not believe in church dogmas. These constitute a theistic system absolutely opposed to the true Christian doctrine of God's fatherhood and love; for what father, possessing even a very limited share of love, could condemn all his family, except a few chosen favorites—the elect—to everlasting torture? Now, according to my experience, the spirits teach the same doctrine in this regard as Christ taught: "Love God, and love one another"; and this, they say, is the only true religion. Hatred of God, indeed? It is a priestly lie of the darkest dye. In answer to that asperation, let me quote a single passage from the spirit-communications published by Judge Edmonds. It is the language attributed to an advanced spirit, and is probably familiar to some of you:

"Raising one hand and pointing upward, the spirit says: 'A closer walk with God, to love alone that points the way—love for him, love for all the creatures he has made. What is the mighty power which has spoken into existence the countless worlds that roll before you with their myriads of immortal souls, but the demonstration of his love? Think you he has peopled these worlds, that thus roll for eternity through space, that they might be doomed to unappiness, that through eternity they should be miserable? Oh! no! no! no! His love spoke them into being. His love is a part of the spirit he casts from himself as the germ of their existence. We who roam far into the regions of space, amid countless worlds to you unknown, and far beyond the wildest flight of your imagination, see everywhere his love. We who, for ages countless to you, have lived near unto his presence, as we have advanced step by step, from our material nature, to a closer walk with him, have seen only his love.'"

This is but a small part of that sublime and beautiful communication, which is but a sample of tens of thousands of others that have emanated from the spirit-world during this modern dispensation, all serving to disprove the artful libel of the Romish church, that the Spiritualism of these times is the exclusive work of those whom they call "devils."

Let me give an additional illustration: Some time ago, sitting with a writing medium, almost entirely automatic, a lady of great purity and refinement of character, an ancient spirit communicated, who, seeming to address a spiritual audience as well as the mortals present, said: "My friends here present—both those in the body earthly and those in the spiritual body—let us bow down in spirit to the Lord our Maker." The following prayer was then written: "Thou, Lord Divine, Maker of the earth and the heavens, and of the soul of man with its sublime capacities, we bow before thee in adoration of thy boundless power, thanking thee that with it thou hast manifested so much love. Grant that we may set aside the mere intellectual powers and abide in thy love, allowing it to pervade our souls. Give us true humility, that we may be fitted to receive trustfully from the stores of thy wisdom. And to thy name be all glory. Amen."

The ideas in regard to the Supreme Being presented in the spirit messages of this time convey the loftiest spiritual conception of his nature and attributes, and the fullest realization of his presence to all who would commune with him. It is true he has not been described to our intellects, for the finite intellect cannot grasp the Infinite; and whatever progress the spirit may, in the course of ages, make toward a fuller intellectual comprehension of God, cannot be made intelligible to our comparatively infantile minds; and through our imperfect symbols of eloquence. But this

I think, we know: the most highly spiritualized minds, both on the earth and in the spirit-spheres beyond, have the strongest and most abiding sense of Deity. We are often referred to the "God of the Bible" by Christian clergymen; but the theistic revelation of Judaism was a shocking compound of mean and exalted ideas of God or Jehovah, as he was named. It was anthropomorphic in the worst sense, imputing to the Infinite and Holy One the infirmities and vile passions of human nature. The very first act imputed to him in regard to the human creation was one of utter imbecility, of which he is said to have repented. Blasphemously are we told, in this so-called revelation, that he afflicted the people of Egypt for the disobedience of Pharaoh, while he hardened his heart in order to make him disobedient; that he made the Jews his "chosen people," but could not secure their adoration; that he commanded the perpetration of the most revolting crimes; that he even suspended the laws of nature to facilitate the butcheries of Joshua and his blood-thirsty followers; and that he hardened the hearts of the Canaanites that they might fall a prey to these butchers. We are told that he is jealous, wrathful, merciless to his enemies, and deceitful. He puts a lying spirit into the mouths of his prophets. Ezekiel represents him as saying: "I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet." And again: "I gave them statutes that were not good." How dark is this as a theistic revelation compared to that of Spiritualism! What blasphemy to impute to God the crimes of humanity!

An examination and comparison of the statements of spirits through various mediums should be carefully made—and made impartially, not with the view to confirm any antecedent conclusion of the inquirer, but to find the truth. The character, mental condition, religious views, associations, and habits of the medium often form an important element in this inquiry, as do also those of the persons who receive the message. It is perfectly easy, as is well known, to obtain through mediums an endorsement by spirits of any doctrine, however false or monstrous, just as it has been always found possible to find texts of scripture to sustain the wildest errors and the most abominable systems and institutions. Human slavery was found its strongest apologists among the Christian clergy, who had an armory of scriptural weapons to defend it; while a Christian bishop was so zealous that he defended it with carnal weapons.

It is true, and I think sad as true, that there are persons preaching atheism as the offshoot of, or identical with, Modern Spiritualism. Recently a prominent spiritualist lecturer enunciated the atheistic principle that the "universe is a self-existing automatic machine," which is very far from, as I have found, the doctrine taught through the best mediums and inspirational speakers. On the contrary, the spirit utterances through these recognized God as a self-conscious being, having a personal relation to his intelligent, self-conscious creatures—that is, a parental relation. The attributes assigned to him are infinite love and wisdom, as well as ubiquity and omnipotence. The human mind, in the arrogance of its own intellectuality, may spurn these teachings; but still they are the teachings of the spirits who communicate through the purest and best mediums.

I have space for only a few examples; but the statement can be easily verified by an examination of the literature of Spiritualism.

Among the sentences written by the direct spirit-hand through the mediumship of Baron Guddenstube was the following: "The being of God is love; how, oh man, canst thou deny it? The rays of love shine even in hell. Oh, the infinite love of God!" Is not love an element of personality, or self-conscious individuality? The following was written on one occasion: "The germs of spirits dwell in the Divinity, whose will detaches them from his essence. When once separated, each acquires an independent individuality, which cannot perish; for God cannot and will not unmake what he has made." This sentence, it will be seen, contains a philosophical exposition of the nature of God's paternity. The invocations, inspirational addresses, and extemporaneous poems given Sunday after Sunday by Mrs. Brigham express the loftiest and purest theistic principles and sentiments. The utterances of the noted spiritual medium, Mr. Colville, are of a similar character in this respect. And the same may be said of the trance speakers I have ever listened to. It is the spirit that prevails at the Banner of Light, and which held every week, the proceedings being accompanied with a sublime invocation not to finite spirits, but to the Infinite Spirit of Truth and Love.

I have read or heard the delivery of at least fifty discourses of spirits through the inspirational gift of Mrs. Richmond; and I have never found a single utterance that conveyed the slightest idea akin to atheism, agnosticism, or pantheism. Her sublime invocations, breathing the deepest devotion, recognize the All-Father, both in his infinitude and his loving, self-conscious personality.

Let me cite a single passage from one of her numerous public discourses, by way of illustration: "There is a revelation of God in every human spirit. There is an innermost voice that tells you of this Supreme Existence; and if you have not this voice, and if you have no consciousness of this Presence, no power of the human intellect can give it—no mere intellectualism can establish it." Such being the case, and I believe that it is so, those who in spirit-life have reached a condition of clearer intuition must realize more fully the existence, presence and influence of the Father of all Spirits. Prof. Hare said, as the result of his extended investigations: "God is represented by the spirits of the upper spheres as all love, and is never named without the most zealous devotion." The religious nature of Dr. Hare was deeply moved by his study of Spiritualism. "It will give man," he said, "infinitely more exalted views of God, and bring him into closer union with the author of his being." Epes Sargent, whose mind leaned rather toward science than religion, yet says, in the last of his works: "The Supreme Being, if he has intelligence and will, must be also conscious, since there can be no knowledge without a consciousness of it, active in some state or other. Using the word *person* in its large and ultra-stemological sense, he must be also personal, since consciousness involves personality." Certainly the spirits had not made Mr. Sargent an atheist. Robert Dale Owen, enumerating "the great basic principles on which intelligent Spiritualists unite," says: "This is a world governed by a God of love and mercy, in which all things work together for good to those who reverently conform to his eternal laws." I refer especially to these, because they were men of no theological bias, and gained their impressions of deity by their investigation of Spiritualism, which proved to them, as it has to thousands of others, a glorious theistic revelation, not only giving them a conviction of the existence of their own deathless spirits, but kindling in their hearts a flame of love toward the Eternal Father of all spirits, and the Creator of the physical universe.

I cannot believe that any one was ever made an atheist by spiritual communication; if he or she is an

atheist after such experience, it must be through what the Romanists call "invincible ignorance"—that is, ignorance strengthened by determinate self-will. I admit that Spiritualists may be atheists, that there are even disembodied spirits who profess to know nothing of God. Dr. Peabody cites a communication from a French spirit, who said: "There is no God, nothing in the universe of being but matter, and the negative forces in matter." This is only a curious, but instructive example, of the persistency of earthly ideas and conditions. Who would base any opinion on such a statement?

But it is not necessary to deduce our knowledge of God from spirit-communications. The fact that they agree so thoroughly in this regard is an evidence of the spirits' belief in God, not of his existence. For that we have only to consult our own reason and spirit-intuition; but we must come to that question in the right spirit and frame of mind. Many cannot do that. The materialist cannot accept a belief in anything but what he calls "nature and its laws." The intelligent determination of the forces of nature makes no impression on his mind. He finds one word sufficient to solve every difficulty, and that is *law*. He can conceive of nothing back of the law. Evidently he uses this word in an unusual sense, otherwise he would be driven to the idea of a law-giver—an intelligent Being from whose positive and all-penetrating mind these laws have proceeded. Matter and its essential potencies may account for the physical universe, perhaps; but how are we to account for matter and its potencies? But the phenomena of life, self-activity, intelligence, sensibility, will and self-consciousness, cannot have their origin in that which evidently possesses none of these properties. We see them progressively unfolded through certain uniform, unerring processes, showing the most perfect adaptation of means to the end. Can matter possess this wondrous power of adaptation—this power even of creation, through what the materialist calls "environment," which is but another word for condition, or situation in regard to the varied affluents and forces of nature, all of which have to be accounted for? Oxygen and nitrogen, for example, play a great part in the operations of physical nature; but what gave them their peculiar properties? Who or what made them one positive and the other negative? Change the relative properties of these two so-called elements, and the physical universe could scarcely exist—it would undergo at least a revolutionary change. These properties fulfill a part of the general design which we see in the great scheme of things. *Chance* used to be the God of the materialists; but now it seems to be the newly-discovered fact or principle called "the survival of the fittest." After a million of failures and wrecks, at last something survives, and thus goes on evolving, or rather stumbling, into something better by the same system of successive failures. Thus we are to conceive that the atoms of matter for untold ages kept operating without any intelligent direction, till finally they settled into groups of definite proportions, thus forming themselves into the sixty-five elementary bodies of the chemists. Thus, too, were evolved all the forms of animal life and all the powers of intelligence, thought, sensibility and will, without any previous design or overruling intelligence. A "principle of selection" is admitted, but it has no author. Atoms came together and evolved it. Thus evolution is asserted, but previous involution denied; what is unfolded was never folded up. Is this logical? Does it not show a perversion of reason rather?

Those who believe in *spirit* as well as *matter*, even if they regard these as generically identical, attribute the phenomena of mind to the former; and they see in the physical universe the evidence of a great Positive Mind, from whom have emanated those immutable laws by which all the processes of nature are determined. The fact of invariable sequence, or law, proves the existence of such a mind. The wondrous order everywhere apparent in nature could not have come into existence by hap-hazard. There can be no order without intellect. This is suggested by the physical universe; but beneath the physical creation there is a spiritual creation underlying and controlling it. Material objects, it has been revealed to us, are only the fleeting expressions of their eternal spiritual archetypes. Form is not a material, but really a spiritual entity, coeval with the everlasting mind in which it dwells. "God," said Plato, "geometrizes." The flowers of the field beautifully illustrate this fact; for their parts are arranged in uniform numbers. Thus the nightshade family, to which the potato, the tomato, and the tobacco-plant belong, are arranged in five- or six-stamens, five divisions of the corol and also of the calyx. Some, as the lily, are arranged in sixes; some in threes; and others in tens, and so on. Does not this, like the wonderful forms in crystallography, show the mathematical principle in the Divine Mind? Will any one dare to say this is merely fortuitous? Why, take ten lilies, all with the same sextuple structure, and the chances against such a combination in those ten flowers, without intelligent design, are nearly as sixty millions to one; and yet every lily that ever grew has the same structure. What, then, must the chances amount to in the case of all the flowers of the field? The number defies all arithmetical expression.

When Kepler published the great harmonic law of the solar system—"the squares of the periods of times of the planets are in proportion to the cubes of their mean distances from the sun," he exclaimed: "I can afford to wait a century for a reader, when God himself has waited six thousand years for an observer of his works." The idea uppermost in his mind, on contemplating that beautiful law, was one of adoration of the Lawgiver, and of the Creator, who had endowed him with the mental powers required to explore and understand the sublime geometry of the planetary system. Hence, he brings his work on the laws of the planetary system to a close with the following devotional apostrophe: "I give thee thanks, Lord and Creator, that thou hast given me delight in thy creation, and I have exulted in the work of thy hands. I have revealed to mankind the glory of thy works, as far as my limited mind could take in that infinite glory. If I have given forth anything that is unworthy of thee, or if I have sought my own fame, gracious and merciful, forgive me!"

Only mind can "geometrize." The mind of a Newton or a Laplace, though feeble in comparison, is but an image of that of Deity. For can the child be mightier than the father? Does the former need a mind to explore and comprehend, and the latter none to create? Well does the modern seer of the Great Harmonia exclaim: "Although we are as nothing in the presence of that God who wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds, yet one human soul of the countless millions of our species is superior to all the worlds that God ever made or can make, for it inherits the divine attribute of reason. They never knew the sublime geometry of their own revolutions."

By some God has been pronounced the *Unknowable*. So is man the unknowable; so are all things in their essence. We know nothing of the objects of nature except phenomenally—by their manifestations and activities; and thus, too, we know God. We know

him, however, better than that: we know him in two ways—objectively in his manifestations, and subjectively in the intuitions of our own souls. Thus the deepest thinkers have seemed to know him best. Intellectually he cannot be denied; spiritually he can be felt. "I had rather," said Lord Bacon, "believe in the fables in the Legend and the Talmud and the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a mind;" and he adds: "God never wrought a miracle to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it." While the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederated and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."

It has been said that man has created God, not God man. It is true that man evolves from his own consciousness—his ideal of Deity; and it is also true that that ideal is the measure of the man's spiritual and intellectual unfoldment. Man can never know God except by knowing himself; but does any man truly know himself? Has any one ever sounded the depths and measured the heights of his own being? No one begins to know even his own physical nature and capabilities; much less can he know his spiritual origin, constitution, capacities or destiny. As he grows in the knowledge of himself he grows in the knowledge of God. The more thorough his appreciation of his own wonderful faculties, the greater his comprehension of the Being who endowed him with those faculties. Of all these faculties, the one that gives him precedence of all animated beings is his self-consciousness—his ability to know the ego—the me and the not me. Without this he could have no intelligence of the brute; he could not possess the sublime mentality of the man, which enables him to explore the works of creation, to discover its principles and laws, its complex relations, and the sublime unity and harmony of its structure—"to look through nature up to its God." It is man's self-consciousness that makes him, as it were, a god above all things below him; and can self-consciousness, then, be denied to him who is God over all? Would not that be putting the Creator below man, and on a level with the brute creation, or with stocks and stones?

But it may be said, can we attribute personality to the Great First Cause? Dare we deny it? I ask. What is personality? Is it not essentially self-consciousness, as far as the individual is concerned, and objective characteristics only to others? It is not, necessarily, form, size, color, external appearance or peculiarity of structure. These are accidental, not essential. They are not essential to personal identity, for in the case of every human being they are constantly changing; while the self-conscious ego remains without change. Does man know himself to be man? and does not God know himself to be God? God is a spirit, and we are spirits. Now we do not know in what the personality of a spirit consists, nor what changes it undergoes; but we know, both by reason and revelation, that the individuality is indestructible and eternal, and that the earthly and spiritual personality contributes in some way to the development of that individuality, the essence of which is self-consciousness. How many personalities, or phases of personality, have we all assumed in our progress from infancy to old age? And how many more shall we assume as we pass on in the path of endless spiritual progression? This change of personality is incidental to man's unfoldment. God's personality is immutable; it is synonymous with his individuality. His is, indeed, the only perfect personality. As your personality grows more like that of God you will know him better and comprehend more fully what he is and what you are. If man had no divinity in himself he could never attain to any conception of the Deity; and if a man's nature is so gross and undeveloped as to lower him almost to the level of the animal, his ideas cannot rise above the animal or materialistic nature. The materialistic intellect cannot conceive of God at all, for "God is a spirit." To understand the divine nature we must realize our spiritual nature. There is no goal for the human spirit but to know God—to come more and more into communion with him; in the language of Jesus, in the Fourth Gospel, "to be one with him."

Is this anthropomorphism? Yes, in a certain sense. Man, as a spirit, is made in God's image; and hence man must conceive of God in his own image. To the savage he is a warrior; to the saint a spirit of love ineffable and ineffable. "Oh, God, who art the Truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love!" This is the prayer of the author of the "Imitation of Christ," perhaps the truest and most comprehensive prayer ever uttered. To know God perfectly would be to know all Truth in its essence; to be one with him—that is, spiritually to be in harmony with him—is to transcend all human excellence. The external manifestations of God are seen in nature; the spiritual manifestations are in our own souls. This has been, and must be, the teaching of Spiritualism in all ages. But, it may be asked, does not this idea of a self-conscious God imply limitation? I do not think it does; but if it does, the limitations of spirit are unknown to us. We could not be created as individual beings without being discredited, or separated, from the parent source. We could not be the children of God, except by the All-Father's separation of his individuality from ours. He lets us go; but he holds us still by his laws. We cannot abuse the personal freedom he has given us without suffering; and thus we are recalled to Him. It will be said, if we are not God, that is, if God is separated from us in his individuality, he is not infinite. But the leaves of the tree are individualized, though they form a part of the tree. God may be likened to a tree the leaves of which are human souls.

We know, in our inmost souls, that our relation to the God of the universe is a personal one. It is that of the child to its parent, but infinitely nearer than that of any human paternity. God lets us all, in the exercise of our own will, go away from Him, until we can find and feel the blessedness of coming back to him, without the loss of any of our free agency; for upon this depends the development of our individuality. Can man then be away from God? Yes, spiritually; I refer to no special distance. The spirit—I do not mean the spirit-body—knows no space; and God, the Infinite spirit, is omnipresent in a sense that is incomprehensible except to those who know the nature of spirit more fully than can be learned in this rudimentary stage.

Spiritualism, like Christianity, teaches the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. One involves the other; and each requires us to conceive of God under a personal relation to ourselves. Certainly, if God is to be recognized as our father, he is to be conceived as a self-conscious personality, not as an abstract principle, nor a blind, unintelligent, senseless, unconscious force.

Does any one say, why not look beyond God, and inquire as to his origin or cause, I answer with Andrew Jackson Davis: "In the works of material nature, the transient manifestations pass immediately before our eyes; and therefore we must, in spite of ourselves, attempt to account for them. No one but a fool will ever ask, What was before the Eternal? What is greater than the Infinite? But every one endowed with one pale ray of human reason cannot help but ask, What caused the transient? What is above the Infinite?"

Spiritualism, in demonstrating the existence of spirits and the spirit-life, has saved the human mind from utter materialism, and given it better and larger views not only of God, but of his moral and spiritual government. In this respect it has been a true theology, or vindication of the love, wisdom and justice of the Creator, against what may be rightly called theological blasphemy. If there are any who, in the study of matters pertaining to the spirit, have failed to discern the outstretched arms of the Everlasting Father, it can be only for a brief time. No one can long remain satisfied to live in spiritual orphanage. All feel the need of earthly friends, and many now know the blessedness of having spirit friends; but above all it is best to feel that the all-loving, the all-wise and the all-good is our friend—that notwithstanding all our weakness and our shortcomings, all our unworthiness measured by his infinite purity, we have not lost, and cannot lose, his inextinguishable love. He who has that feeling may, indeed, bid adieu to every fear; for, in the words of the Harmonial seer, "What is there to harm him in the presence of his Almighty Father, in a universe of brethren?"

And when the "last of earth" arrives—when we feel that our mortal career of trial and temptation, of mingled failure and triumph, is drawing to a close, and

the great change approaches, and we are to be ushered into scenes that no revelation even of angels can render bright but mysterious to the sons of earth—then must a sense of the divine paternity be to us the surest and strongest support and solace, as, indeed, it has ever been to the loftiest and most spiritualized minds; for then it seems as if the sense of childhood, with all its gentleness and simple dependence, came back to the soul, while escaping from the thrall of mortal habits and temptations; and it turns to its spirit Father as the flower to the sun. Then may it say, in the sweet words of Whitier:

"As on my day of life the night is falling,
And in the winds from unsummed spaces blown,
I hear far voices out of darkness calling
My feet to paths unknown;
Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,
Leave not thy tenant when his walls decay,
Oh, love divine! Oh, helper ever present!
Be thou my strength and stay!"

BURNS AND HIS HIGHLAND MARY.

The following beautiful poem was originally printed in the *Banner of Light*, March 27th, 1838. We have since frequently been requested to reprint it. It first appeared with the following introduction:

Mrs. Frances O. Hlyzer of Montpelier, Vt., is sometimes influenced to write both poetry and prose, purporting to emanate from departed spirits. She had one day been reading some of these productions to a lady visitor, who asked her if Robert Burns (the lady's favorite poet) had ever communicated to her. She replied that she had never been conscious of his presence, nor was she familiar with his writings. The lady remarked that she hoped he would sometime make known his presence and answer a question she had in her mind, which question she did not express.

A few days subsequently Mrs. Hlyzer felt impelled, by spirit-influence, to pen the following, which, on being shown to the lady, was found to be an appropriate reply to the query she had in her mind:

Fair lady, that I come to you
A stranger-bard, full well I ken;
For ye've known naught of me, save through
The lays I've pour'd forth Scotia's glen;
But when I speak of gliding Ayr,
O' hawthorn shades and fragrant ferns,
O' Doon and Highland Mary fair,
Mayhap ye'll think o' Robert Burns.
I am the lad—and why I'm here,
I heard the guide-dame when she said
She'd know, in joyous spirit-sphere,
If Burns was wif his Mary wed:
I sought to tell her o' our joy—
No muckle impress could I make;
And, lady, I have flown to see
If ye'd my message to her take.
Tell her that when I pass'd her cairn,
My angel-lasse, crown'd wif flowers,
Met me wif glowing love-lit torch,
And led me to the nuptial bower;
That all we'd dream'd o' wedded bliss,
And more, was meted to us there;
And sweeter was my dearie's kiss
Than on the flow'ry banks o' Ayr.
Where love's celestial fountains play'd,
And rosebuds burst, and seraphs sang,
And myrtle twined, our couch to shade,
I clasped the love I'd mourn'd as lang;
And while by angel-harps were play'd
The bonnie "bride's serenade,"
Though na gowd priest the kirk-rite said,
Burns was wif Highland Mary wed!
There's na destroying death-frost here,
To nip the hope-buds ere they bloom;
The bride-trail is through the spheres,
Eternity the "honeymoon."
And now, my lady, if ye'll bear
These words unto the anxious dame,
I think I can ye so reward
Ye'll ne'er be sorry that I came.

A Singular Case.

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*:

It may interest some of your readers to know there is a gentleman in the city of New York who, until lately, was one of its most able as well as its most respectable merchants. Loss of mental faculties is a frequent consequence of long-continued application to a single subject, but in this case there is a peculiarity of affection that may interest many readers of the *Banner*: Notwithstanding the complete decay of this gentleman's mental faculties, he writes as wise and sensible letters of business to-day as he ever did, and this, although he is utterly incapable of reading what he has written; a description of a case of this kind is unprecedented, so far as this writer has witnessed. That this gentleman is a "spiritual medium," few who are familiar with the subject of mediumship will be likely to doubt; but his relation to the spiritual world as such seems to be peculiar, inasmuch as his relation to the spirits that write through his agency seems to be that of the pen to any ordinary writer who uses it; that is, the "mechanical type" of the party who has learned how to use the pen, or of the piano to a person who may be called a "key."

This gentleman and his family probably have relations and friends who are interested in the subject of Spiritualism. Perhaps some of them may be permitted to have access to this case, and possibly to report results. J. P. II.

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*:

Will you permit me to draw the attention of your readers to a good work I am undertaking on behalf of the poorest little children of the East End of London?

My intention is to publish a volume concerning my late visit to some members of the German royal family at their summer residence on the Rhine, the entire proceeds of which are to be devoted to charitable purposes; the first, a treat at the forthcoming Merrie Christmas time, by way of a good tea, a Christmas tree, presents of useful articles of warm clothing, and a bright new penny as a memento of this little oasis in the desert of their dreary young lives. The idea occurred to me when visiting my kind and estimable friends, the Baron and Baroness (Adelina) Von Vay in Styria last summer, from that of my host who, by the publication of her *Diary* when a child, *Tagebuch eines Kleinen Mädchens*, realized a considerable sum toward founding a branch hospital of the Red Cross at Gonoitz. Now, my last work, *My Visit to Styria*, having proved a great success, I am encouraged to hope something by this means may be done to cheer the hearts and give warmth and comfort to a few, at least, of these "little ones."

My book, *Rhineland*, will be published at the low price of 2s. 6d., and I shall be most happy to enter the name and receive subscriptions from any kind-hearted friends in America who would help me in this good work. Already subscriptions, donations and contributions have freely come in, and for the last week or two I have sent a list of my supporters to the *Medium*.

My heart is in the cause, so I have no fear of failure. All I would ask is cooperation, in ever so small a way. I myself am working hard with correspondence and making up garments for the poor children, besides having given my pet work, *Rhineland*, which will be out shortly before Christmas, and will, I am sure, give interest and pleasure to all.

Scorplings, I trust, will be forwarded (without loss of time, as I will organize the charitable purpose according to means and supply) to
3 St. Thomas's Square, Hackney, London, Eng.

One Suffering Soul Happy.

"If I can send one suffering soul to you," writes James Corbin, of Washburn, Ill., "I will be happy. *Samarin* cured me, and will cure all cases of fits." \$1.50.

Literary Department.

Written for the *Banner of Light*.

THE OLD MAN'S STORY.

BY HARRY A. LEON.

He was not mad—ah, no!—nor was he the sport of strange, delusive fancies such as often sway those who are in other respects most practical. Men saw nothing out of place in his conduct. Women never called him a dreamer or an enthusiast. All honored and respected him; thus much can truthfully be said. Some, perhaps, loved him. These, his friends, believed him to be fond of solitude; they thought that he cared nothing for society, except to deal justly with those who composed it. How should even these have known that those hours of his which they called lonely were brightened by the presence of her—one of the angels of God!

In his youth he may have been dreamful, romantic. I will not deny that he was. Nor do I deny that the stern realities of life—and life was real and earnest to this poor and almost friendless boy—never served to free him quite from the illusions which he cherished. Did I say illusions? The world would have called them such: For he believed in the good faith of man, and the perfect truth of woman. A comforting belief it was. Shaken many times it may have been, but never quite broken, thank God! It strengthened into the certainty which is born of conviction when he met her.

She, too, was imaginative, trustful. I think she lived—this dear, true heart—in an ideal world. It was peopled with brave men, noble women, who held duty the supremest pleasure, who met the petty annoyances of life without a murmur, and who passed gladly, if need came, to the martyr's stake. She shared their aspirations and voiced their thoughts. Ay, more, and lived their lives.

They met and loved. Time, in its flight, carried away nothing of the pleasure which each found in the other. Their walk beneath the elms ever echoed the same fond words of confidence which it had heard from them at the first. They knew each other; they trusted each other; where there was no concealment, there could be only trust. Thus happily they waited for that day, soon to come, they thought, when together they should dare the mysteries of life.

But that day never came. Fate, law—or that union of both, that always and inevitably working destiny which we call Providence—separated them. They clearly saw, while others were blind, that the parting must take place. She whose lot it was to go, did not fear. He who was to remain, did not repine. "If no atom of matter perishes," they reasoned, "can spirit fail? And God, the all-wise, the all-kind, the just, will he confine the freed soul whose work is on earth, within the narrow limits of some far-off heaven? No; we shall meet again." Thus they talked with each other; upon this they based their fondest hopes.

"If you are absent from it, our walk beneath the elms will be very lonely," he said to her. "You will meet me there?"

"I will come!" she said—and passed within the veil.

"I will come!" As he once more trod that familiar pathway, consecrated by the memory of their affection, her words returned to comfort him. And not alone her words: herself! Was this white-robed form, which lingered by the old seat, a creature of the imagination? He believed—ay, more, he knew!—that he did not mistake. She did not speak; that full-toned voice which had so often whispered love and hope, it was not his happiness to hear; yet what need of speech, when eyes are radiant with love, when hope is urged in every glance and movement? He could speak to her: She listened, and she understood!

"Happiness!" What purer happiness than that which springs from well-done duty? What more serene content than that which God's approval brings—approval smiled by her? Did the men and maidens all around him—sometimes he wondered—did they pity the lonely man, a young man, too, who waited under the old elms and looked out across the sea? Did they think of him as of one who cherished the memory of a great sorrow? One whose recollection of what had been, and passed, chained him to that silent spot? How sadly must they be deceived! How little need of sympathy had he to whom came heaven's messenger!

And thus he went nightly to their trysting place; and thus it became for him the very gate of heaven. Did he ever remember, with bitter agony, that he had hoped they might live and die together? and that he could meet her now only as one removed far from him? Yes, these thoughts came to him. But how could they endure to trouble him when he saw her face? She was not lost; she had not even gone before: she was to be won, that was all. How pure must be his thought, how true his deed, that he might come at last to possess his saint!

Let me confess it: there were days of discouragement; times when it seemed to him that he could not wait. Had not his probation tried him sorely enough? Would not the All-Father, who had shown that these his children were to be reunited, would not he reunite them now? Would he separate the waiting one from the one who awaited him if he rendered this fleshly mantle with his own hand? If he might only know!

"Life is not sweet, my darling," he said to his other-bride. "This life, the avenue to the other life, is hard to tread. May I not find you near me if I end my journey?"

She gazed at him fixedly, and shook her head. Her eyes filled with an unknown dread. He had his answer!

"I will wait!" he cried, while the light of a great purpose shone in his face. "Yes; I will wait until you tell me that I may come to you. Forgive me, and trust me to be patient to the end!"

Then they rose and walked together under the midnight sky. He told her, as in other days, of his weaknesses, his troubles and discouragements, and her tender looks uplifted him above them; and the burden fell from him, and the new Faith for the Future sang in his soul the song of peace!

Thus he lived on to be an old man. And the world was glad because of him, and he rejoiced that he was in the world. So much he saw to do! so many wrongs to be righted! so many sad lives to be brightened! so many bruised hearts to be medicated; that eternity, he thought, would scarce suffice for the completion of his work. And she saw him! She knew that he labored for the sake of her; and she gave the reward, "success!" What pleasures inhered in riches or fame! He knew no hap-

piness but in the toll which her approval lightened, whose good result it blessed!

And children loved him, and the old and young spoke his name with tearful reverence, and heard his words with overwelling thankfulness. Not as a harsh, censorious judge he heard their pleas for aid; he was all men's friend—and all men knew that he deserved their trust.

But that his work brought forgetfulness—who shall say that? Shall we not rather say—do we not know—that he could never forget? Could he wish to efface, even for a moment, the recollection of that mortal who, become immortal, awaited the time when he should once more claim her hand? The strong soul is not always swayed by the griefs of the past; and the great Father shall give back to us all the joys which we had mourned as lost!

Not so, kind watchers at my bedside! I have not dreamed that a long life has been brightened by a dead smile; that an honorable ambition has strengthened at the clasp of a hand which has been dust these many years. A dream! I am that man whose dear one has so often come to him—and yet again she comes! The tender eyes look still more fondly into mine; the fresh lips part—to speak to me at last! My hand, my own love! Take my hand, and let us walk together!

Letter from Dr. Babbitt.

The Terrors of Vaccination—Dr. L. Parsons Britt—Medical Despotism—The Old Contrasted with the New Philosophy of Cure—A New and Wonderful Planet Revealed by Spirits.

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*:

I have often been thankful that the *Banner of Light* has taken such a deep interest in the subject of vaccination and medical reform, as the shortest pathway to spiritual exaltation is the upbuilding of the bodily forces, a fact which our Orthodox friends do not seem to understand.

If I had time I think I could show how it is that so impure a substance as the vaccine virus may at times repel and prevent smallpox by filling the system with similar impurities, on the chemical principle that "similars repel," just as a person may fill himself full of opium by gradual processes until he can endure an amount of a similar poison that would kill an ordinary healthy person. I think any one of common sense, however, ought to see without much trouble, that such a method is running a great risk to avoid a much smaller risk, or as Mr. Evans would say, it is casting out devils by help of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. It is better to keep the system pure and positive against all impurities, or if in some cases smallpox may succeed in gaining some hold of a person, to adopt those heating, or sweating, or hot bath processes which will draw the virus outward, and prevent all danger to the vital organs.

I have just received a letter from Dr. L. Parsons Britt, a physician of forty years' standing, twenty of which were spent in St. Louis. The first circles ever held in St. Louis were held in his house, and his wife became a famous medium and spiritual lecturer. His home is now at Springfield, Ill., and I will quote a part of his letter, leaving out his over-estimate of my discoveries. His example and words are encouraging, and his experiences with vaccinated patients will show the miseries resulting from that perverting system:

"In the wonderful changes I have passed through within the last twenty-five years, and feel that we are on the verge of a new era, and have long been living in the spirit. There is no swine's flesh, tea or coffee, whiskey or beer, or any unnatural stimulus of any kind, in my body. I am nearly seventy years old, feel youthful like one rejuvenated, and see more to live for to-day than in any former period of my life. The future looks bright and beautiful. I seem to see a new heaven and a new earth dawning, and feel that we are standing on the threshold of a great and grand epoch, the junction of the two worlds, the eternal union of spirit and matter on this planet, lifting humanity into a higher stratum in which justice, mercy and charity will usher in a universal sisterhood and brotherhood."

I see and realize the importance of your Solarium in connection with the (magnetic) healing power, and it would enable me to cure my patients in the case of blood and skin diseases, cured in St. Louis a case of blood poisoning, but it took me six months to do it most effectually. This was that of a lady twenty-two years of age, who was poisoned by vaccination when four years old, and this poison had been lurking in her system ever since, breaking out every little while, causing the scalp and ears to become a solid scab.

I have been called upon within the last few days to treat another case. This is a middle-aged lady, a school teacher, who is very beautiful, educated and highly accomplished. About two years ago the edict went forth from the great Sanhedrim and fountain-head of bigotry, the State Board of Health of Illinois, that all teachers must be vaccinated or lose their situations. She, knowing the danger of impure vaccination, took the precaution to send to the State Board of Health to get a genuine article, and with the result as herein stated: Her arm became inflamed, the poison became diffused through her whole system, a protracted sickness of months in bed took place, and finally the virus broke out in pustules on her beautiful face, in which condition she has been ever since, although she is a widow and has a family to support. To add insult to injury, the "Regular" fraternity fed her on poisonous drugs, until she is beggared in purse and poor in body and spirit.

Now what is to be done with this inhuman, poisonous, compulsory vaccination law, which originated in ignorance and the basest quackery, that has made countless millions mourn. You scientific men who have influence, and you who are spending your life in sympathy with suffering humanity, in devising ways for eradicating this ill, that the spirit may develop in harmony, should buckle on your armor anew, go on the war-path and fight this inhuman monster until it and its twin brother, the unjust medical law, is expunged from the statutes of every State in the Union."

To this appeal of this earnest soul every true co-worker with the angels in reforming this suffering world will exclaim: "Yes, we will fight all such laws to the death, and proclaim the new era of refined and pure forces. If these medical men, who are clearly behind the demands of the age, will thus force their poisons upon us, we will offer the people those instruments for utilizing light, color and steam in a way to destroy and eliminate poisonous germs. If they torture and inflame the internal organs by rude and coarse drugs, we will rouse and animate the external organs by means of magnetic manipulation, and sunlight, so as to draw the interior congestions outward and set the blood into a harmonious movement throughout the whole system. In fact, these better methods are curing so many severe cases which utterly baffle the old styles of treatment that the people are fast waking up to their importance, and physicians must inevitably adopt them, or, as our western people say very expressively, "get left." Dio Lewis's *Monthly* is coming out nobly in favor of sun-healing and other natural methods, and the old-school men, seeing what cures the magnetists are making, are compromising matters by advocating *Massage*, by which term they seemingly hope to escape the name

of imitating magnetic physicians. Well, even then they do not imitate the true, first-class magnetist, who, acting under a higher and wiser power, will have his hands moved and his own psychic forces intensified in a way to be far more scientific and effective than any merely mechanical manipulator who is devoid of inspirational power.

Before closing this letter I want to say that my spirit-guides have announced to me the existence of a very distant and wonderful world, far beyond the orbit of Neptune, which, as my readers will remember, is the most distant planet of which the astronomers at present have any knowledge. It is described as having no moon, as being several times the size of our earth, with a year equal to between two and three of our centuries. It is said to be by far the ripest and oldest world of the solar system, while the development of the people, so far as material worlds are concerned, is probably the most marvelous thing that has ever entered the conception of man. For a number of weeks back I have been receiving, through my hand-telegraph, accounts of that world, its institutions, its society, its homes, its mechanics, its methods of travel, of living, eating, sleeping, etc., purporting to be given by two exalted spirits, a male and a female, who have come from that world itself. As I have been under the guidance of Dr. Elliottson's spirit for many years back, and have never been able to detect the least sign of deception or falsehood in him or in other spirits whom he has permitted to address me, and especially as the description thus given is probably the most complete and beautiful portrayal of a perfect world ever presented to mankind, I have every reason to believe in its thorough truthfulness. Dr. Elliottson is of the opinion that astronomers will discover this planet before the close of this century.

Respectfully,
E. D. BABBITT.

American Health Company,
143 Cutter street, Cincinnati, O.

(From the Voices of Angels.)

GENESIS: The Miracles and the Predictions According to Spiritualism. By Allan Kardec. Translated by the Spirit-Guides of W. J. Colville.

Such is the title of a book of about five hundred pages, recently published by Colby & Rich, Boston, Price \$1.50. Without claiming competency, or having intention to furnish an extended and just account of this work, a perusal of it prompts me to speak briefly as to some of its merits. Mr. Colville's confidence in the ability and skill of his helping guides, as translators, gives him firm conviction that this translation (which is very good English) puts forth with a very near approach to perfect accuracy the ideas of spirits, which were expressed in French through Kardec.

The work treats of the origin, growth and prospective destiny of worlds, and of their varied occupants—of man especially. The literature of Spiritualism contains not many books which outrank this in breadth of view, depth of thought and clearness of statement. Not all minds—perhaps relatively a few only—will be ready to accept many of the views therein put forth; and yet they are statements which most readers will enjoy, and perhaps profit by, whether they give full credence to their import or not. These pages are very lucid in presentation of broad and comprehensive views of man's origin, position, duties and destiny.

The spirit pervading the work is calm and kind, while its method is logical, scientific, philosophical. Some assumptions and opinions of course are found; but generally the reader is informed that they are such, and to be taken for only what they may seem worth.

Much kindness and discrimination pervades its comments upon our world's many religions, and, viewing them spiritually as allegories, it finds more fact and truth in the Mosal or Biblical Genesis, and more that is extraordinary in the mission or advent of Jesus, than do most of our mundane scientists at the present day, whose reading is of the letter only, and not the spiritual import of the biblical language.

The work claims that man came upon the earth millions of years ago, and just as early as the earth had melted into conditions which could give sustenance to such a being. This could not do till many orders of vegetables and animals had refined its atmosphere and products. At first, men were but little above some brutes, and lived much as the higher classes of the latter did. Thousands of generations have intervened, between the first of our race and who are here to-day. The belief is put forth that there were several first pairs of mortals—some of them parents of the African or negro race, others of the Mongolian, others of Indian, etc. How these first pairs came into being, here is not revealed. If germs of men and women entered into and were born of monkeys, whom the first ones closely resembled, whence came the monkey?

Adam is used to signify not an individual man but a numerous race, called the Adamic race. This work assigns to them a reason, and a process of obtaining a home on this globe, which to me seems nearly, if not quite novel, though something resembling it slightly is contained in a work on Spiritualism by Rev. Charles Beecher.

The allegation is that at a revolutionizing epoch, on some other and more advanced planet, there was a day of judgment, or a separation of the less worthy from the good, and the faulty ones were sentenced to migrate to earth—a dismal home compared with what they had theretofore enjoyed. Since these were unfolded in intellect and advanced in the arts of civilization, they were required to become teachers and stimulators of the ignorant, rude and barbarous men upon this earth; and so far as they should individually be faithful in such work, they might grow into "better states and regain entrance into their 'Paradise Lost.'" A tenet, early advanced and tenaciously held to throughout the work, is that of "reincarnation"—reincarnation after reincarnation through a countless series of years. It implies that each mortal may already have lived many lives on this or some other planet; also been many times and for long, vastly long periods, in spirit-spheres, unnumbered by the shackles of flesh. The spirit teacher argues that God subjects each soul to all the varied experiences which are needful to purify and lift it into angelhood; that all souls, in their primitive state, are alike and equal in their capabilities, and that each is required, at some time, to work out its unfoldment into states which fit it to bask in peace, in the perceived presence of its Heavenly Father.

The foregoing is in no proper sense a review of the work, but only a brief presentation of a few points on which most persons prone to seek knowledge of their origin and destiny, may be glad to learn what an able spirit has said. The work is worthy of personal perusal.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

91 West Brookline street, Boston.

There is nothing repulsive about a gold watch, yet when Sheppard, the actor, took one from his mother's hand, as her birthday gift, he shuddered, without knowing why, except that he felt it was destined to bring him misfortune. He wore it, however, for years, until, when he was playing at the "National Theatre," Philadelphia, the house took fire, while he was on the stage. Sheppard got safely into the street, and then remembered that his watch was in his dressing-room, unwilling to lose the memento of his dead mother, he went back to the theatre and was never seen alive again. His charred body was found the next day under the ruins of the theatre, and his watch was in his pocket. The story is presented in a picture of "Framed Reminiscences," which "tells" the "story" of "Mrs. Brownrigg," as the executioner was doing the last office save one for the wretched woman, an expression of horror came over her face, causing the clergyman to ask what new temptation assailed her. "Have, many times," she said, "passed by this place, and always when near this spot of ground a dreadful horror seized me, for I felt that some day or other I should come here; and the recollection terrified me exceedingly."

"The Voyage of Life."

In "The Orphan's Rescue," and "Life's Morning and Evening," painted by Joseph John and engraved on steel by J. A. J. Wilcox, we have an epitomized voyage of life in which an guardianship is beautifully and artistically pictured. They are effective and lasting missionary aids. Thousands of spiritual homes have already welcomed them, and have introduced them to their friends. Now is a favorable opportunity for others to secure them, and "The Dawning Light" and other works of art which are still offered as free premiums with the *Banner of Light*. Notice particularly in advertising department, and observe that when more than one engraving is ordered the price is very low.

In the December issue of his popular and useful *Monthly*, Dr. Dio Lewis has an editorial article on "Vivisection, or the Act of Opening or Dissecting Living Animals," which deserves to be read by millions; and should be brought out in tract form by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, for gratuitous distribution everywhere. The details given by the Doctor (and he says he has by no means given all or the worst features of this horrible practice) are shocking enough to stir with indignation the very soul-fibers of every reader possessing the least degree of human feeling. It is a disgrace on humanity that such cruelties exist, and a ten-fold disgrace that they are perpetrated in the name of "science." If this is the result of civilization, mankind had far better have remained in barbarism; for the most unenlightened of the aboriginal tribes never inflicted such prolonged and excruciating torture upon their enemies, under the all-absorbing excitement of warfare, as the medical students of the "Regular" school are shown to have visited upon harmless, defenseless, and in some cases loving animal companions. Did the least good result from these horrors, even then the attainment of it by such means would be questionable; but no good comes from the constant repetition of an agonizing experiment by which the curious and heartless John Smiths of one class of "Regular" students seek for the thousandth time to discover if the varied phenomena of misery which the John Smiths of previous classes have wrung from suffering creatures will be duplicated for them.

"The sacred name of religion," says the *New York Telegram*, "has never been more deeply profaned than by those bands sent over here from London, and known as the Salvation Army. Their outrageous conduct has brought them into collision with the law everywhere, and their peculiar mode of evangelizing seems to be to trample decency under foot. Such deadly weapons as a tambourine, a concertina, a cornet and a banjo in their hands, are calculated to drive the most peaceably disposed to an ungovernable pitch of fury. A salvation hymn with a banjo or a tambourine accompaniment is anything but pleasant to contemplate, and when presented by some pretended convert from the slums of the British capital, it becomes a fit subject for police interference." The aristocratic churches, with their \$12,000 and \$15,000 salaries, it seems do not like their business interfered with by these poor democratic Salvationists, forgetting that similar methods were adopted by the humble Nazarene, whose teachings they so fully endorse.

One of the grandest lectures ever printed in the *Banner of Light*—and we have published many good ones—is that in our last number, recently delivered in San Francisco by Mrs. E. L. Watson, entitled "The Utility of Spiritualistic Ideas, and their Application to Every-day Life." For beauty of language and clearness of thought it is unsurpassed. Mrs. Milton Rathbun's, printed the week before, is also a fine production.

A gentleman residing in Ligonier, Ind., who has been an invalid for the past fifteen years—and considered incurable by the Regulars in medicine—has recently been restored to health by an "irregular" in Boston; and, full of gratitude, remarks as follows to that practitioner under date of Dec. 4th: "Entire medical freedom must be maintained in this country."

A dispatch from Washington says: Mrs. Mary A. Miller, of New Orleans, has applied for a license as master of a steamboat. The Supervising Inspector of the District reports her competent, but debar her because of sex. The case is referred to the Solicitor of the Treasury.

We are in receipt of a specimen of Sorghum sugar manufactured at the U. S. Agricultural grounds in Washington. Our thanks are returned to the donor. Carried utilized it.

Read the announcement made in another column by James A. Bliss, regarding the forthcoming séances to be given in Providence, R. I., by James R. Cooke.

Do not fail to peruse Prof. Henry Kidde's fine address on "The Theistic Revelation of Spiritualism," which appears on our first page.

The Spiritualists of Saratoga, N. Y., have perfected a legal organization.

College Lectures in January.

The lectures of the College of Therapeutics at Wells Memorial Hall, beginning Monday, Jan. 7th, 1884, at 10 A. M., will be highly interesting, to all progressive minds, and the public generally are invited to attend on the first three days, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, between the hours of 10 A. M. and 2 P. M. Prof. Buchanan will present the Science of Life and the Nervous System; Prof. Wellington, the Principles of Hydropathy, and Professors Gray and Swan, the Recent Improvements in the *Materia Medica*.

God's Poor Fund.

Since our last report it gives us great pleasure to announce that we have received the following sums in aid of the destitute poor whom the spirit friends bring to our notice for relief:

From "Friend," Boston, \$2.00; J. D. A. Danvers, Mass., \$5.00; Joseph Kuhn, \$1.00; Mrs. E. H. Davis, \$2.00; "Friend," \$1.00; Mrs. L. M. Smith, 15 cents.

Mrs. L. A. Coffin, as will be seen by her card on seventh page, has returned from her western tour and located in Somerville, Mass. She is a reliable psychometric reader of character, etc.

Dr. Lewis's *Monthly*.—The December number contains papers of more than ordinary interest and value, the most prominent of which is by the editor, "Vivisection" (to which we refer elsewhere). Some of the other articles that will attract special attention are: "That Far-Off Look," "A Bally Mule," and "Camp-Life in California," by L. D. B. "Recent Woman Suffrage Convention," by Geo. H. Bundy; "My Insane Woman Experience," by Geo. H. Bundy; several short stories, and "Hygiene of the Brain," by Dr. M. L. Holbrook. Of *The Herald of Health*, with a portrait. New York: Frank Seaman, 68-71 Bible House.

ALL SORTS OF PARAGRAPHS.

Matthew Arnold of England wrote: "A monstrous, dead, unprofitable world"; but this was before he made two thousand dollars in Boston, reading his old magazine articles as original lectures!

Musical notes had been in use over four hundred years when Luther wrote his great hymn, "Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott." Their invention dates back to 1025, being first rectangular in form, and in 1338 changed and perfected as in their present shape.

We must be as courteous to a man as we are to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light.—Emerson.

The Treasury Department has decided that the word "ton," wherever used in the tariff acts, should be construed to be the ton avoirdupois—that is, 2,240 pounds.

The season's navigation on the great lakes shows disastrous results. One hundred craft of all descriptions have proved total losses, involving nearly two hundred lives and \$3,000,000.

Be noble; and the nobleness that lies in other men, sleeping, but never dead, Will rise in majesty to meet thee here.—J. B. Lowell.

The Constitution of Michigan prohibits any form of religious service in either house of her Legislature.

The English fishing fleet now carry oil to be thrown upon the sea when in peril during violent storms, and a large steamer in course of construction at Dundee is being fitted with a tank to contain one hundred and twenty gallons of oil, to be used when passing through a heavy sea, lowering a life-boat, or other emergencies. A grand idea.

The magneto insoles manufactured by the Chicago Magneto Shield Co., at 270 West Madison street, will keep the feet warm. We know this fact by actual test.

The November gales played sad havoc among the Gloucester, Mass., fishing fleet—nine vessels and one hundred and twenty men having been lost, and the sad total is not yet complete, it is feared.

Though winter howl at the gate, In our hearts 'tis summer still.—Ezra Sargent.

Queen Victoria has made Tennyson a Baron. It is a barren honor.

A New York clergyman lectured on the slippery text of "Orange Peel on the Sidewalk." He treated it metaphorically. The *Herald* of that city avers that, not to be outdone, another clergyman seeks to increase his popularity by announcing a discourse upon "How Jonah Fell When the Whale Swallowed Him." The splendid editor of that paper states, however, that, to his mind, "How the Whale Fell When He Swallowed Jonah," would be a better theme.

A certain country clergyman used to tell a good story of his going to a new parish and asking a parsonage. "The man repeth," he said, "and that are you?" The clergyman answered that he was the village parson, whereupon the rat-catcher was good enough to observe that he supposed "we must all get a living somehow!"—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

George Elliot once very positively declared that she was not an optimist, but she asserted her willingness to be known as a meliorist.

There is no use in telescoping a train of cars. The people on board cannot see it.—*New Orleans Picayune*.

A London physician says that last February 1000 people died in that city from the effects of the irritating and dehydrating smoke.

Grief is a queer passion. It increases the sighs, and still causes one to pine away.—*Marathon Independent*.

The United States Supreme Court holds that Indian tribes have a right to try and punish their own people for offences against their own laws and customs, without interference from the United States. This refers to the sentence of death imposed on Crow Dog of the Sioux tribe, who killed Spotted Tail.

First snow of the season hereabout—Monday, 17th.

"Don't rail at alleged quacks," recently said an old doctor; "they concentrate their energies on one subject, and after they have killed a good many people they strike the remedy for a special disease and we regularly adopt it immediately. All our treatment is more or less an experiment."—*Boston Globe*.

O'Donnell, the slayer of Carey, was executed by the British government on the 17th inst.

France and China seem to have reached a pass when war may be said to be almost impossible of escape with honor to all parties.

Professor, to class in surgery: "The right leg of the patient, as you see, is shorter than the left in comparison of which he limps. Now, what would you do in a case of this kind?" Bright student: "Limp, too!"—*German Joke*.

Kiley & Co., dealers in Boys' and Children's Clothing, at 21, 23 and 25 Dock Square, Boston, make to order gentlemen's dress suits, using the very best goods in the market, at least one-third cheaper in price than can be had at any of the up-town establishments.

A Mr. Drum of Cass Co., Nebraska, beat a retreat lately after he had attempted to shave a mule. He now carries his arm in a sling. Had he employed the average barber the mule would be the disabled and suffering party.

A sacred burden is this life we bear; Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly. Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly. Fall not for sorrow, falter not for sin. But onward, upward, till the goal is won.—*Frances Kemble*.

Our good friend Tony has a wagtail in his composition. He observed the other evening on a Winter-Hill horse-car a lady fondling a pet lap-dog, and audibly remarked to Mac: "Do you know that the female orang-outang at the dime-museum has formed an attachment for a small dog and constantly fondles it?" The lady of course looked daggers, but dropped the dog.

The present hour is always wealthiest when it is poorer than the future ones, as that is the pleasantest site which affords the pleasantest prospect.—*Thoreau*.

The maladroit conduct of some people, combined with their ambidexterity, is so shockingly apparent as to disgust every intelligent mind.

When Eve upon the first of men "The apple pressed with specious cant, Oh! what a thousand plagues then sent That Adam was not Adam!"—*Thomas Hood*.

An exchange speaks of a fatal murder. The fiend who would commit fatal murder would do more; he would kill a man.

Never before were so many murders committed in the like time, as in the last three months. If hanging was a preventive of murder, it would seem as though we had hung enough to render life safe.—*The Valley Visitor, Newburyport*.

Boston has twenty-one hundred bar-rooms.

A plant has been discovered in Tonquin which it is asserted not only cures the bites of reptiles, but is a certain remedy for hydrophobia.

To Correspondents.

No attention is paid to anonymous communications. Name and address of writer in all cases indispensable as guaranty of good faith. We cannot undertake to preserve or return communications not used.

J. S. M. WESTFORD, MASS.—You desire us to explain what in the opinion of Spiritualists should be the attitude and relation of Modern Spiritualism and the Liberal Church toward each other. That attitude, we are convinced, should be one of tolerance and friendliness on both sides. The Liberal Church and Modern Spiritualism each has a work to do, and the one prepares the way for the advent of the other. Spiritualism is the latest and highest aspect of liberal religion.

A. S. SHAWANO, WIS.—The singular writing you forward indicates mediumistic power acted upon by spirits. You might continue to sit for development, and decide after a time messages would be written that could be understood.

Movements of Lecturers and Mediums.

(Matter for this Department should reach our office by Tuesday morning to insure insertion the same week.)

Hon. Warren Chase may be engaged to speak at the camp-meetings in New England during July, August and September next, if applied to soon. Address Vineyard, N. J., 111 Dec. 23d, after that, 517 Market street, Trenton, N. J., 111 Jan. 1st; during January, 1724 7th street, Washington, D. C.

Dr. L. K. Connelley will accept calls to lecture wherever his services are desired. Address No. 6 Emerson street, Haverhill, Mass.

Susan E. May, of England, addressed the friends at Worcester, Mass., on Sunday, Dec. 16th, to good acceptance.

Miss Carrie E. Downer—whose address is Baldwinville, N. Y.—has been engaged in lecturing and improving poems in Ashabula, O., and vicinity, to large and appreciative audiences.

In Hartford, Conn., Prof. W. W. Clayton was the speaker in Whitteley's Hall, Dec. 16th; J. W. Fletcher the 18th, and Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham the 19th. It is expected that Mr. Fletcher will occupy the platform Dec. 24th and 31st, and January 30th, and Capt. H. H. Brown, Dec. 30th.

The Lectinater, Mass., Spiritualists reorganized Nov. 13th, and elected the following list of officers: President, O. T. Wilder; Vice-President, J. C. Sanborn; Treasurer, F. L. Haskell; Secretary, Mrs. Fannie Wilder.

Mrs. M. A. Howes has returned from the West, and is to remain in Boston for the present.

Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham will speak in the Union meeting-house at Emerson's Corners, N. Y., Wednesday, January 8th, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. "Any person," says the *Saratoga Eagle*, "who desires to have Mrs. Brigham answer any theological, biblical or spiritual question is requested to put such question upon paper and hand it to the speaker just before she begins to speak. This timely notice is given so as to give a chance to prepare questions."

CHRISTMAS NUMBERS.—We have received from the International News Company, 29 and 31 Beekman street, New York City, the Christmas issues of *The Illustrated London News* (186 Strand, W. O.), and *The Graphic*, also of London (100 Strand). The *News* has among its many attractions two beautiful two-page chromos, entitled respectively, "Mills," from a painting by Edwin Long, R. A.; and "Tiss Me!" from a picture by Kate Greenaway; striking pictures of "Christmas Bell-Ringers," "The Father of the Regiment," etc., etc., are interspersed with reading matter of a high order of fitness and interest. The *Graphic's* chromos are numerous and beautiful; among them may be noted "The Order of the Bath," from the picture by C. Burton Barber; "Mother Hubbard," from the picture by Briton Riviere, R. A.; and "Olivia," from the picture by R. J. Gordon. Those who wish to peruse an illustrated sketch, which, however far age may have led them from the fresher feelings of youth will be sure to stir the deepest founts of the domestic and home sentiment within them, will find such a sketch in "Diana Wood's Wedding." (In this number of the *Graphic*), which is in this regard beyond all praise, combining in itself a poem in colors, and a dainty breath in letter-press: from the "gone away" days of an earlier time.

NEW ENGLAND MANUFACTURERS' AND MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—As our readers are well aware, a highly successful Exposition was held the last fall (1883) by this enterprising organization, at its Building on Huntington Avenue, Boston, under the direction of a committee, of which Mr. John M. Little was chairman. We are in receipt of the official catalogue (from the press of A. B. Turner, New York) of the Art Department of that Exposition, of which Frank T. Robinson was Director. The excellently-printed pages of this work will be found on perusal provocative of thoughtful interest, not only by students but by the general public. The copious illustrations from original drawings, which are given in the form of etchings, Albertypes, Photo-engravings, etc., some of them full-page, lend an added charm to this marvel of the book-maker's art. Copies of this Catalogue are on sale by Mr. Little, at his office, Hotel Pelham, Tremont and Boylston streets, Boston.

"Mother Swan's Worm Syrup," for "feverishness, restlessness, worms, constipation, flatulency, 25c."

CLAIRVOYANT EXAMINATIONS by look of hair, giving a clear and pointed diagnosis of your condition, either of body or mind. Enclose look of hair and one dollar, giving name and age. Address Dr. E. F. BUTTERFIELD, Syracuse, N. Y. Dec. 1.—13w.

Special Notice.

The date of the expiration of every subscription to the *BANNER OF LIGHT* is plainly marked on the address. The paper is discontinued at that time unless the subscription is previously renewed. Subscribers intending to renew will save much trouble, and the possible loss of a paper or two, by sending in the money for renewal before the expiration of their present subscription. It is the earnest desire of the publishers to give the *BANNER OF LIGHT* the circulation to which its merits entitle it, and they look with confidence to the friends of the paper throughout the world to assist them in the work. COLBY & RICH, Publishers.

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