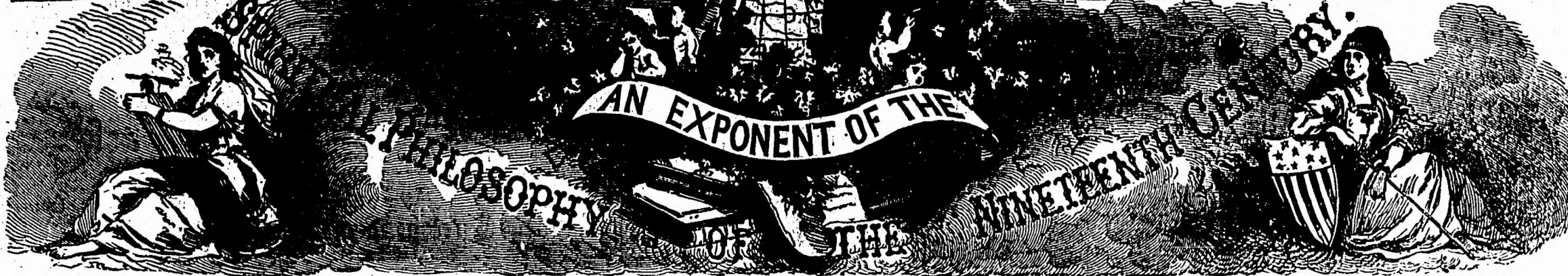


# BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. LIV.

COLBY & RICH,  
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1884.

{ \$3.00 Per Annum,  
Postage Free. }

NO. 16.

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## The Rostrum.

### MORAL EVOLUTION:

Through Soul-Involution, from Imposed Limitations to Absolute Self-Responsibility.

A Paper Read by

MR. FREDERICK F. COOK,

Before the Brooklyn Philosophical Society.

The Nineteenth Century man is irrevocably divorced from all antecedent cosmical concepts, and before the advent of the Twentieth Century, will have achieved a complete change in his point of view. This places him in the midst of a transition, and we are witnesses of the stress, the alternations of hope and fear, that are the inevitable concomitants of social transformations. Man lives to-day in one of those great epoch-making periods, when a new mental and moral adjustment is taking place. For ages his concepts were frozen into fixed theological images. All at once a new sun shines upon the earth, a sudden thaw takes place, the break-up is precipitate. One after another the standards to which he has looked with unquestioning faith for guidance disappear, and those that are set up in their places, if not wholly mistrusted, at best meet with only reluctant recognition. Altogether it is a time for serious reflection.

Before making any explicit attempt to forecast the future, let us inquire what it is that is passing away. Man is constrained to think in conformity with his experience, and however erroneous his conclusions, they have for him all the validity of Necessary Truths. There are exceptions, to be sure, to whom it is permitted to have what may be called a private view of other thought-orders; but these, nearly always, are prophets without honor in their own generation, and the masses are not influenced by their previsions until such time as patience has had its perfect work.

The order now passing away is unalterably grounded in Fiat and Miracle. In other words, there is in it no legitimate connection between effect and cause. Under the old concepts man is completely separated from the observed processes of nature. Under the new he is the crown of an all-embracing evolutionary integration. The Dispensation allied to the past is guided by a written law; the new is a law unto itself. In fine, the old is *bond*, the coming must be *free*.

Man is slowly rising to the full stature of mental and moral rectitude. The chief trouble now is that he is prone to strain his logic beyond his light. Science ought not to be cultivated at the expense of the higher philosophical insight. In room of the old theological limitations we are treated to equally restricted a priori scientific declarations of what is permissible. If it be assumed that the marvelous developments and adaptations that we witness in the world are the result of unfeeling process, and that there is no subjective order or aspect corresponding to the objective out-working, then I have no other word to say. It is a state of mind utterly unamenable to argument. To the highest truths it is totally blind. It recognizes no proofs outside the narrowest objectivism. It was to this class I referred when saying that they are prone to strain the logic of the new order beyond their light. Fortunately this logic does not shut one up to darkness, *no-lens volens*. The rather, no logic was ever more imperious in its insistence that no part of the universe, no recognized element in it, shall be excluded from the world-view to which it gives cohesion; and it has taken for its postulates such universal concepts as Indestructibility, Persistence, Continuity and their legitimate congeners. From premises so inclusive the conservation of subjective activities is an inevitable conclusion, and immortality is placed on grounds whence it cannot be dislodged. It is thus seen that the higher logic of science—that is to say, the philosophy of science—is a staunch friend of the Spiritualist.

Having taken a hasty survey of the field, and outlined the differences that divide the thinking world into opposing camps, let us now proceed to bring the combatants into clearer view. They are Science, Metaphysics, Morals, Religion and Philosophy. Each engages distinctive faculties of the mind, and to the extent that

there is lack of development as to any of these in man, there is incompleteness. And, conversely, when any one is developed at the expense of the others, there is painful deformity. Science is analysis of the concrete. Metaphysics is analysis of the abstract. Morals furnish a guide to conduct. Religion is the compass of our spiritual aspirations. Finally, it is in and through philosophy that any and all of these become in an intelligent sense a part of the web and woof of a comprehensive and logical world-order. Philosophy supplies no original data. It is the mirror in which the world to the extent that we know it is subjectively reflected. Or it may not inappropriately be compared to a clearing-house for the settlement of differences. Science is fact-gathering. From the facts philosophy deduces laws, and gives them a place in the cosmic evolution. The chief characteristics of science as a method of fact-gathering are Verification and Prevision. The first is the lower, the last the higher characteristic. Common knowledge differs from scientific knowledge in this, that it is the product of fallible conditions. It may be true, but it is always open to doubt. Much that passes for scientific knowledge is of the same class, but sooner or later it is always compelled to go to its own place. When you have knowledge of any phenomenon in the universe this knowledge becomes a contribution to science only when you are able to demonstrate or verify what you know. Therefore, when you have demonstrated that a certain thing is, are able to explain the conditions of its existence, and to state the laws of its recurrence, you have taken an important step, but it is one that as yet stands by itself. In other words, it is science by itself. On the other hand, when you have shown the subsistence of a relation between this and other things, you have lifted the phenomenon into a higher place, namely, to where science merges in philosophy. The greatest lights in science are philosophers rather than scientists, and nearly every experiment is undertaken with the intent to verify some deductive conclusion.

Science through philosophy deals with the laws of the phenomenal world. Metaphysics through philosophy concerns itself with the laws or forms under which we cognize phenomena. Science may tell you how you look at a thing with the eye, but it can never inform you how you perceive it with the mind. The grand subjective world is effectually closed to it. It is stopped from entering the inner domain by the very terms of its existence, and whence it is differentiated from other modes of inquiry. Philosophy is the organon by which we view the world as a whole. In some form it belongs to every estate. Science and metaphysics are methods which philosophy employs to arrive at higher, broader and more exact generalizations. They are not mistresses but most valuable handmaids. To raise them to the first position is to live either in the basement or the attic, with the best part of the house untenanted. It is in the realm of philosophy that science and metaphysics affect each other, because it is here that they are made aware of the partial character of their respective developments. Philosophy is always a whole. It may be a small whole, but that does not matter. Science and metaphysics are never more than halves, and neither is satisfactory to the rational mind unless complemented by the other, and held in equipoise by philosophy. Metaphysics is always first to explore the universe. It goes wrong, of course. Then science starts out in the opposite direction, and dogmatically assumes it is on the right track because the other is obviously on the wrong. Neither is willing to concede that the truth lies between them, and must be sought, if anywhere, in some Integral Philosophy, organically informed with the spirit of Progress and Adjustment.

Philosophy—in other words, man's world-view—has thus far acknowledged three masters. A fourth is patiently waiting its turn for dominion. First, man looked upon the world through the distorting spectacles of Theology. The next aspect was Metaphysical. The present form is Scientific. And what is to follow is a Moral Order. In the last analysis man and his relation to the universe is a Moral Problem, and it is in the realm of Morals that the final and crowning solution must be sought. What is built upon this Rock alone endures. It is here we anchor to the Everlasting and Eternal Verities. All else is unsubstantial and evanescent.

Science now dominant in the realm of philosophy has imposed on us the necessity of viewing the objective world under certain forms. We could not, if we would, escape from its logic. It now behooves metaphysics to accept these concepts and boldly apply them to its own field, the subjective world. This implies that it must give up its notion of *discrete Essences or Entities, and posit Being in Identity, expressed in terms of Experience, and represented as Character in a Primal, Conscious Substance*.

Scientifically speaking, whatever is primal is conserved. There is endless change, but not in the original substance. The concrete passes away, the abstract remains. The capital law of the Objective World is conservation. Can we say less for the Subjective World? Certain it is that we are cognizant of two distinct realms, one the counterpart of the other; and if there be an unbroken Objective chain, there must be an unbroken Subjective chain as well.

The universe is a progressive out-working. There is no longer any room for miracle in the old sense—of something made out of Nothing. Whatever it is that informs us, it must be conceived under the notion of a universal principle. Thanks to science, philosophy is now shut up to this concept: Objective phenomena appear, disappear and reappear. If we are to believe only that of which the senses give report, then our plight is pitiable indeed. Of course

man breaks through this cordon of sense, and it is not until he reaches a place where nothing is, so to speak, where the entire outside is turned inside, that he has any satisfaction. The most matter-of-fact person lives nine-tenths of the time, both while awake and when asleep, in an unseen universe—a pure mind-fabric.

I posit the world in Consciousness. It is in this Universal Consciousness that all mental states realize themselves. In respect of any formal meaning there is no individual or distinct consciousness—no more than any particular thought we have is distinct from the synthetic consciousness that distinguishes man as Ego. In the last analysis individuality is associated states of mind. Hence to the extent that experience is associated it is Egoistic—it constitutes One. When we forget any experience it is no longer a part of our Egoistic Synthesis—as we know it. We foolishly assume it to be lost, when, as a matter of fact, it has yet a two-fold existence. As experience it has retired from the outer to the inner aspect of man, but as character it still remains. We ordinarily realize ourselves under two subjective aspects; the one is constituted of memory, the other of motive. The first is the superficial and more earthly form under which we cognize self. The last is the deeper, the more significant realization, and constitutes the real man, the soul unit—Character. Memory is a thing to juggle with. It is an irresponsible caprice. But the impression that events and experiences make upon the soul are indelible. It is far less memory than motive that constitutes our real selves. Let me remind you that, under spiritual conditions, all formal distinctions become meaningless. Hence the necessity, if we would understand ourselves at all, to do so under abstract notions. Except as we are able to do this we are perforce shut out from any commensurate spiritual world-order.

When we speak of immortality, what do we mean? To what does immortality apply? Is it to the Organic or Inorganic? If to the Inorganic, what is it we connote by this term? Alongside of Objective Persistence I have posited Subjective Persistence. But what is it that persists? Metaphysics is in error when it speaks of man as an Entity rather than an Identity in consciousness. The Entity, as Rosinhi has most admirably pointed out, is an intuition merely. We have the sense or notion of Being, but the sum and substance of Being eludes all analysis or formal representation. In what terms is Life to be expressed, then? Why, in terms of Experience and Character. In other words, in terms of Action and Reaction. Action may be the expression of character, but does not in any way go to build it up. That is the work of Reaction—and so far-reaching is the process brought to notice that I have been led to formulate the law of progress as Reaction. Success is blind. It is through failure only that man is taught any valuable lesson. In the long run, all other things being equal, the winner loses and the loser wins. Character is the backbone of the Universe. It is the one thing in it that stands by itself. It is above all conditions. It is soul. Character is of the absolute positive. It is the eternal verity that gives us the measure of the man. All else fades away. We care not how he looked, nor what in any way were his outward circumstances. Our better self prompts us to look for the real Identity—the grand residuum. When experience is translated into character, man views himself under the form of principles. It is in the first degree false to say "I am governed by such and such principles and motives." The true way to say it is that you are constituted of them. In fine, they are YOU. Take them away and nothing remains—not a scintilla.

The world rests in Consciousness. It is the subjective universal made discrete through imposition into objectivity that constitutes what we call individuality. All discreteness is constituted of differences in experience, and nothing else. If your experiences and mine were exactly alike all the way along, you and I would be the same, for the reason that there would be nothing by which to distinguish one from the other. Remember that the organic differences under which we cognize ourselves have no subjective counterparts. The inner life is not functional. It is wholly composed of attributes, and these are present to the Ego only to the extent that they have been called into activity by experience. All spiritual growth is dependent of the reaction of antithetical conditions. Growth out of hand, so to speak, is opposed to the inevitable law of cause and effect. To express action without reaction is to state the law of inertia.

Science is driving metaphysics into a corner from whence it must not be permitted to escape. I use the word metaphysics here in its largest possible sense, as covering the entire domain of psychical as well as ontological speculation. The Ego, as a miracle, is forever discredited. Now what is to take its place? In the future, whatever conception of a spiritual world-order is to displace the one now rapidly disappearing, must be in accord with the comprehensive concepts that underlie the philosophy of science. For example: Life must be conceived under one universal principle. The logic of the new order will not permit us to assume that there is one kind of existence for man and another for all the lower expressions of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. And if any is conserved we are bound to assume that all are conserved. But how is it when it happens that there is no apparent consciousness of existence? I maintain that there can be no life apart from consciousness. The phenomenon may not express outwardly, or what we call self-consciousness, but in some aspect it is bound to be represented in Egoism. Suppose that it has a discrete subjective existence only

in what we may be pleased to call universal consciousness. What of it? The essential thing is that it be conceived as achieving consciousness under some form or aspect.

The Universe exists for Experience. It is this that rests at the base of all progress. It is all one vast out-working. Just as we see the objective world of phenomena a single, unbroken chain of continuous Becoming, so are we obliged, in the dawning light, to conceive the subjective world as one vast network of allied experiences, all straining for higher and nobler development. All that is accomplished by development—all that it can mean—is that it is called out. In other words, the Potential is made Active—the Subjective is Objectified—the Ideal is Realized. The artist who paints a picture never achieves on the canvas his subjective ideal. This illustration is typical of the entire process of out-working. We always fall short of doing what we feel ought to be done. The inner possibility is ever far in advance of the outer actuality. Whatever it is that constitutes energy, it must be the same when Potential as when Active. Yet when Potential we can conceive it only as an abstraction which the developed laws of perception or reason compel us to accept as having a positive existence, but any formal conception of which utterly eludes the representative faculties of the mind. All that the senses report is an effect, and that in no manner corresponds in kind to the energy that produced it. The thing itself is all a mystery.

Under the new Cosmology, Life is no longer conceivable as Entical, having a fixed beginning and associated only with such experiences as we know. If it had such fixed beginning, and is unrelated to any chain of antecedent experiences excluded from present consciousness, then it is *perforce a miracle*, and it is by a miracle only that it can be saved to a future existence—and, except through a procession of miracles, progress is out of the question. If life has no inner relation, then it is the reality we know it to be, and there is an end of it. We are then bound to no inevitable Logic, to no method of Out-working, because there is nothing to work out. Before we called the new-born into existence there was nothing, and when it passes from our view it ceases to be. Individually, then, is the one thing in the universe that is unrelated and unconserved? What a monstrous conception! It is the suicide of all philosophy by logical asphyxia! The vital center or point of view is extinguished, the formal circumference remains! In materialism the individual is swallowed up in the Race; his experience benefits somebody else. I build up a character and transmit it to my children! Very well. But what is it that I transmit? And how do I transmit it? In what manner is the passage effected? Is the moral power that controls us with its compelling persuasiveness merely a matter of ganglia or bone-structure? Is there no residuum that cannot be expressed in terms of matter? Is there no reality behind all this seeming? If so be, then my verdict is that Life is the one sham in the Universe, and he who calls it into being, be his motive what it may, is a criminal. And let me say that this aspect of the "come and go" of Life is to-day logically expressed by the Pessimism of Nihilism. None other is permissible. The Religion of Humanism is a specious and cowardly pretense. In plain English, it means that materialism is afraid of itself—and accordingly it has gone to work to build up a gigantic fetish, and it is to this we are expected to pay unquestioning homage. What is this Collective Man that I should adore him? Is not that which we call History a stream of blood? Is not the good always crucified? When we worship the Collective Man we worship a Collective Devil. It is self-worship in its most repulsive form.

What, then, is to be the outcome? I freely admit that as between the theological monstrosity and this "human" caricature there is little room for choice. One is the relative extreme of the other, and they must go to a common doom. If, therefore, the Materialist shall sooner or later be forced to give up his position; the same is to be expected of his antagonist, the old-fashioned Spiritualist.\* Both must be held to inevitable continuity, and both must face the problem from its inexorable Moral side. The believer in a spiritual life must prove the earth-life essential to the other, and explain why there are here the inequalities that we know. To answer that it has pleased God to make it so, no longer silences the inquirer. This is a Moral Universe. The outward phenomenon must inevitably be related to some inner necessity—not only in its Cosmical, but its Moral Logic. Now what is the Moral Necessity of this earth-existence? If I came from nowhere and go nowhere, what boots it that I am? To be or not to be, is it not all the same? The whole is a dream, and that, too, chiefly of the nightmare variety. This attitude of mind is well enough as a reaction from the mental servitude under the old theologies, but to the developed man of the future, moving toward higher and higher conceptions of this wonderful out-working of phenomenal existence, it will be wholly inadequate and unsatisfying.

The present time has been called a Moral Interregnum. It certainly marks the most important transition in human history. All the past is more or less allied to arbitrary conceptions of being and doing. The field of the future offers a free range to investigation, and at each step there is increase of wonder at nature's unfolding. The problem is by no means simplified. On the contrary, it is growing more and more complex, and it is through science that mankind is finally to enter the true temple of worship. Science is a torch-bearer. It illumines the portal that you may read the

legend "Know Thyself." Within the temple itself, however, science has no place. A scientific religion is as impossible as a round square. Science is made up of facts; religion is the crown and glory of our aspirations. When at its highest and best, religion is vivid with inspiration—when at its worst it becomes the cold and formal thing that now masquerades before the world.

We speak of progress, of growth, of development, of unfolding, as a process from zero to summation, from the simple to the complex, from the sinner to the saint, from man to God. At every turn something is derived from nothing. This is the so-called or false science point of view. From this the philosophy of Involution radically dissents. It accepts the genetic method as an explanation of the objective out-working, but posits a subjective reality as a basis for the objective phenomenon. This philosophy proclaims the Possible Ideal as the Absolute Real. Within it the Microcosm unfolds into the Macrocosm. The coward of Time is vanquished by the hero of Eternity. Human life is taken out of the category of accidents and given a place in the endless chain of primal and inextinguishable causation. In this light we see clearly, for the first time, what is meant by Moral Law. It is the out-working of responsibility. It is a crime against the eternal principles of justice to invoke the law where there is ignorance of its demands. It is an insult to Deity to assume that the divine spark in man, the real ME, has been subjected to alien conditions without its sovereign concurrence. As there is no sin without knowledge, so there can be no responsibility without consent. In the material aspect we observe only the manifestation of Might. The Right that has sole sway in the diviner realms of the soul is sedulously veiled from us. It is in the sphere of Absolute Freedom that these fetters of Necessity are riveted, and it is in the light of this freedom only that final judgment can be rendered. Responsibility must be inherent. If it is imported or foisted upon me it is not only my right, but my solemn duty, to reject it. Might may impose its laws upon the physical man, but it has no voice in the domain of morals. Blind necessity imposes no obligations. Right alone gives the measure of duty, and duty can mean nothing less than *inherent responsibility expressed by a freedom of choice*. When the written or imposed moral law shall have spent its force, as soon it will, and if at the same time man is shut out from associating himself with inherent responsibilities, then chaos is surely come again. But such is not the divine order. It always moves toward the light. My trust in the future is implicit. As we depart from written law, and approach nearer and nearer to a standard of self-judgment, the logic of our relation to some higher necessity becomes a pervading conviction—and between this necessity and ourselves there must be a conscious chain, or the stress would immediately cease.

Morality is still in the empirical stage. True, it is placed at the centre of the universe, and it is more and more clearly seen that it is the one guide and source of strength to depend upon; but we are not told how it is derived, by what process it is built up, and what is the nature of its relation to another existence. Two questions are of paramount importance: Does what we call birth into this world confer existence *per se*, or is earth-existence only a school of experience to that which already exists? If existence *per se* has its beginning here, then there is an end to all moralizing as well as philosophizing. What matters it? Life began as a miracle, and it must end as one. A philosophy of miracles is a contradiction in terms. Miracles are without morals, because without sequence and outside the pale of logic. If, however, it be conceded that existence now and here is the result of a legitimate antecedence—an antecedence that must be expressed in terms of existence apart from matter and empty process—then our sojourn here is placed on a substantial basis, and becomes at once a moral problem of the most far-reaching significance. As we are able to bear light in this world, such is the economy of its unfolding, it is added, and with it new responsibilities. The primitive man is governed altogether by and through fear. The next step is responsibility imposed by law, hedged about by a variety of artificial sanctities. The last and crowning step in this moral evolution is *responsibility to one's self*. This is the supreme position. However, when man is made sovereign it must be over something—it can be nothing less than his whole destiny. With absolute accountability must come the sense of absolute freedom. If I am the product of inevitable and unfeeling law, then all talk of accountability is unmeaning, and the whole moral order is a veneering and monstrous sham. If, however, I am the outcome of a necessary moral out-working in a conscious background, which I enrich by such experiences as are entailed upon me, and which, on passing into the inner life, becomes my heritage, then a great moral meaning is given to life, then there is presented a logical connection between cause and effect as we apprehend these terms when applied to the order of the objective world, and it is in such light only that I can accept my burden, whatever it be, with intelligent resignation.

It is moral necessity that lies at the base of the Philosophy of Involution or Embodiment. As man is conceived as a link in the chain of the Race, so he is neither more nor less a link in a grand subjective Egoistic chain. Man on earth represents a definite amount of expression. But, at the same time, he has unmistakable intuitions of vast inexpressibilities. They just impinge upon him, but do not enter into him. It is the unexpressed that he lacks to make him a complete man. We are all mere

\*Including all who believe in a spiritual existence.







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OF LIGHT goes to press every Tuesday.

# Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1884.

**PUBLICATION OFFICE AND BOOKSTORE.**  
100 North Main Street (formerly Montgomery Place),  
corner Province Street (Lower Floor).

**WHOLESALE AND RETAIL AGENTS:**  
THE NEW ENGLAND NEWS COMPANY,  
14 Franklin Street, Boston.

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,  
33 and 41 Chambers Street, New York.

**COLBY & RICH,**  
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

ISAAC H. RICH, BUSINESS MANAGER.  
LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.  
JOHN W. DAY, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

Business Letters should be addressed to ISAAC H.  
RICH, Banner of Light Building, 100 North Main Street, Boston.  
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**SPIRITUALISM is the Science and Philosophy  
of the Universe as viewed from the Spiritual Stand-  
point; and it is identical with Spirituality.**—SPURGEON  
R. BRITTON.

## A Happy New Year!

The *Banner of Light* presents to every one of  
its readers and friends the cordial greetings of  
the New Year—1884. Most people think they  
must try and collect all their best thoughts to  
spread out on such an occasion, but we can con-  
scientiously plead that we are trying to do  
that every week in the year, and therefore can  
express no more than we are in the habit of  
saying to our readers at every stated interview.  
The recurrence of this particular time, how-  
ever, does suggest to us to say some few things  
that might not be so appropriately said at an-  
other time. The closing up of an old year, and  
the opening of a new one, naturally excites re-  
flections that are pertinent to no other season.  
A new year, too, forces one to look forward  
and try to discern the figures into which the  
future is to weave its material. Perhaps the  
occupation is a profitable one, or it may be  
wholly the contrary. "Sufficient unto the  
day," etc., is generally accepted, however, as  
an excellent working motto. It is well enough  
to attempt to project ourselves into the future,  
but we are invariably brought up by the con-  
viction that, though we know every minutest  
detail of it in advance, it would be out of our  
power to change it one whit so far as it belongs  
to what is commonly styled our destiny.

As the years accumulate on our hands, and  
the passing of every new milestone tells us  
how long the course has already become, it be-  
comes a pleasant satisfaction for us to sit down  
personally, as it were, with the readers of the  
*Banner* and take counsel together, calling up  
the eventful past and casting glances of inquiry  
into the future. We cannot help thinking that  
the future of the spiritual cause contains the  
potentialities of an experience with which  
that of the past thirty-five years can bear but a  
trifling comparison, in respect both to its depth  
and power. We likewise feel the reflection  
forced upon us at this time, that if it is not per-  
mitted us personally to bear our part in this  
new and vastly wider experience through  
which our beloved cause is to pass in its work  
of winning over the hearts of mankind, we are  
confident that from some other sphere we  
shall be allowed to return and strengthen the  
hands that will devotedly take up our earth-  
work, and assist in carrying forward the great  
and good designs which are constantly evolving  
from the heavens that contain all the mys-  
teries of the future. That this great work, now  
fairly opened and begun, will go on to the end  
of time we have such assurances, both from  
without and within, as amply convince us. If  
anything in the universe of God is true, it is  
true that the vast spiritual forces which rule  
cannot be successfully resisted by puny, per-  
ishable mortals.

It cannot be necessary for the *Banner of Light*  
(at the present ripe stage of its existence and  
this seasonable time of its service) to enter upon  
any promises of what it is to do, or attempt to  
do, in the coming year. It is wholly safe to as-  
sume that it will not only hold steadily and  
faithfully to its old course, exerting all of its  
wounded enterprise and energy, searching con-  
tinually to know where and how it can do most  
effective service, and stimulating and inspiring  
others with its full, fresh and free presentation  
of the truth as it is all the time imparted—but  
that it will also study to seize hold of new and  
more effective methods, that it will go forth  
eagerly to meet and greet all new spiritual sug-  
gestions, that it will keep fully abreast with the  
great liberal movements of this age of unrest  
and transition, and aim to become more and  
more the active and wisely serving agent of the  
spiritual powers which are continually working  
for the regeneration of the human family. It  
was for no less a purpose that it was avowedly  
chosen to be the welcome bearer of glad tidings  
to the people everywhere. No less a purpose  
has continued to serve for its inspiration from  
the beginning. It is the friend of the lowly  
and the poor; of those who feel destitute of  
friends; of the waiting multitude that hunger  
for a message from out the spirit-world; of all  
who confess that life is a series of questionings.  
The special theme to fill the thoughts of all  
reflecting and conscientious Spiritualists at  
this time, is the steady progress of the cause,  
or rather of the truth, the world over. That is  
something to bring encouragement and confi-  
dence to every heart. When a new and noble  
truth like that which we advocate is seen to be  
making its way silently but surely wherever  
human thoughts are current, and men's minds  
are being kindled and burning with the new

and larger inspiration, and old forms are gradu-  
ally yielding and giving way to admit the  
coming light, the narrow and dogmatic suddenly  
surrendering to the broader and better, there is  
certainly occasion for those who joyfully ac-  
cept and adopt the latter to allow the free play  
of congratulatory feeling and indulge in re-  
joicings that flow from a love of the truth rather  
than from any mere desire for victory. This is  
the condition over which Spiritualists are  
allowed to exchange their congratulations and  
mingle their rejoicings to-day. They reach the  
height of a New Year from which they are able  
to view a prospect that is cheering in the true-  
st and highest sense. The landscape that  
stretches before their eyes is one that is crowd-  
ed with the beauties of a large and living prom-  
ise. If there is a class of believers on earth  
that have reason to take courage from what  
they see around them and before them, that  
class is the one which is recognized by the mod-  
ern world as Spiritualists. In spite of those in-  
evitable drawbacks and obstructions which seem  
to be almost elemental forces so far as frail hu-  
man nature is concerned, they see and know  
that the work they are engaged in is the favorite  
child of time.

For this one sufficient reason they are assured  
that it will advance and prosper, and that nothing  
merely human and temporary can avail to  
hinder it. It is alike from without and within  
that offences come, and perfect freedom from  
them is not to be expected. But the hasty view  
would almost report to us the most serious ob-  
struction to the progress of our cause from the  
disappearance of so many noble souls, snatched,  
as it were, from our ranks, since the dead year  
began its new course and sprinkled about its  
coming the flowers of so many promises. We  
have indeed been most seriously bereft of our  
chosen ones during the past year. To the  
worldly sight it would seem only a loss, to be  
grieved over as an irretrievable disappoint-  
ment; to Spiritualists there is a far larger sig-  
nificance in such events. Our faith, which is  
so much of actual knowledge, teaches us that  
in a mere change of place these departed ones  
are only enabled to perform a higher and more  
effective service for humanity; that from their  
new positions they have it in their power to  
see better what is needed and to comprehend  
more clearly how to provide it; that their  
presence among us is become a matter of  
thought merely, from which all the slow ob-  
structions of physical movement have been  
eliminated. And more than this, they now  
see how great and holy a work it is in which  
they are engaged, and realize their reward  
along with their service. We would not call  
them back again in the flesh, knowing that  
they are already so much nearer to us in the  
spirit. They and we together are doing the  
same work, and it is for the emancipation and  
regeneration of the human spirit.

## The Constitutional Rights of Spirit- ualists.

Considerable discussion has appeared recently  
in the papers of Battle Creek, Mich., concern-  
ing certain materializing séances held in that  
place, and the unceremonious attack upon one  
of them by a self-constituted committee. The  
opinions entertained by both parties to the dis-  
cussion have been fully and forcibly expressed,  
but, according to one writer, a very important  
factor in a fair consideration of the subject  
has been overlooked, and that is, the legal  
right of any individual to enter a private, or in-  
deed any building, and disturb or interfere  
with the proceedings of a séance, such act be-  
ing an infringement upon the rights of the peo-  
ple guaranteed them by the Constitution of the  
United States, it being claimed that a spiritual  
séance is a religious meeting, and that as such,  
those engaged in it are entitled to the protection  
of the Government. On this point a writer  
in the *Battle Creek Daily Journal* of Dec.  
22d says that the first of the amendments  
adopted by the framers of the Constitution be-  
fore that instrument was made acceptable to a  
majority of our forefathers, who doubtless had  
seen something of the effects of bigotry, reads  
as follows:

"Congress shall make no law respecting the estab-  
lishment of religion or prohibit the free exercise  
thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of  
the press, or of the rights of the people peaceably to as-  
semble and to petition the Government for a redress  
of grievances."

The first question that arises is, "Is Spirit-  
ualism a religion?" Of the several definitions  
given by Webster, one is: "Any system of faith  
or worship"; and he proceeds to say that "in  
this sense religion comprehends the belief and  
worship of Pagans and Mahometans, as well  
as of Christians"; it consists, he continues, of  
"the belief of a superior power or powers gov-  
erning the world, and in the worship of such  
power or powers." This appears to fully an-  
swer the question affirmatively, for no one will  
deny that Spiritualists believe in "a superior  
power or powers governing the world." One of  
the chief objections urged by the evangelical  
clergy is that their belief goes too far in that  
direction; hence we must necessarily conclude  
that Spiritualism is not only a religion, but a  
far greater one than Christianity. And why  
should it not be, since it was the foundation-  
stone upon which Christianity was built? and  
the principal cause of the present decadence of  
the church plainly is that it has rejected this  
stone, actually torn up its foundation and cast  
it away; while at the same time the rapid growth  
of Spiritualism is attributable to the fact that it  
has taken that stone, and, relieving it of the  
mould and dust that had been allowed to col-  
lect upon it, discovered its beauties and its in-  
estimable worth, and shown them to the world.  
Seeing that Spiritualism may be considered a  
religion, our opponents will seek to deny it  
the protection of our Government by declaring  
that it is not the true religion; (of course they  
have that, and no one else can;) but this is sim-  
ply a question of majorities. Were Mahom-  
etanism to prevail, Christianity might be sub-  
jected to the same charge, and hence out-  
lawed. Fortunately, however, the Constitu-  
tion makes no distinction based on individual  
opinions of the truth or the falsity of a reli-  
gion; the fact that Spiritualism is a religion is  
sufficient to establish its claim for protection  
equally with any and all others; and that it is  
a religion, is proved even by the assertion of its  
opponents that it is a false one.

From the above no other conclusion can be  
arrived at than that Spiritualists have rights  
which their opponents are bound to respect;  
and it is their duty to maintain them against all  
attacks, under whatever pretence they may be  
made, and by whomsoever, whether by a single  
individual, a committee, or a legislative body,  
and to sedulously guard against all infringe-  
ment upon those rights, among which is the  
right to heal the sick.

The Spiritualist meetings in Troy, N. Y.,  
ended for the season on Sunday, Dec. 30th.

## In Re the Spirit-Message of Daniel McDonald.

The *Toronto News* is altogether too sensitive.  
The spirit-message of Daniel McDonald it printed  
in good faith in its issue of Dec. 18th, copied  
from this paper, is a legitimate production, not-  
withstanding the twaddle about it sent to that  
paper the next day by a cowardly anonymous  
writer, and published over the signature of  
"One Who Knew Mr. McDonald." The "trick,"  
as the anonymous correspondent alluded to  
terms the effort of the spirit to convince his  
friends that death with him was not the end of  
life, was "managed," to use his own words ad-  
dressed to the editor of *The News*, as follows:

"The article was written in Toronto by some  
cowardly preacher of Spiritualism and sent to  
Boston for publication, and then taken to your  
office and insidiously worked into your col-  
umn."

Remark upon this imaginative discovery,  
and the pretentious regrets expressed at the  
appearance of the message, the editor of *The  
News* says:

"The item was brought to *The News* exchange  
editor by a well-known citizen, and he, without  
thinking that it would wound the feelings of any  
one, inserted it with the comment that this paper  
takes no stock in Spiritualism. The trick seems  
to have been managed just as the correspondent  
suggests."

Which remark is grossly unjust: (1) unjust to  
the publishers of this paper; (2) unjust to the re-  
spectable *Toronto* gentleman who submitted it to  
the "exchange editor"; (3) unjust to the spirit  
who returns to his people through the aid of a  
trance-medium in a distant city to identify him-  
self to them—thus demonstrating the fact of  
direct spirit communion.

The facts in the case are, first: The spirit of  
Mr. McDonald visited our Circle-Room, among  
other spirits, Oct. 5th, and requested of the  
guide of the medium, Father Pierpont, the privi-  
lege of sending a message to his earthly rela-  
tives and friends. As our platform is free to  
all classes of spirits who desire to communi-  
cate, of course no objection was made, and the  
spirit accordingly gave a brief message.

In the second place, neither ourselves, nor our  
medium, nor any one else connected with this  
establishment, had the slightest knowledge  
previous to the message being given (which was  
taken down by a shorthand reporter at the  
time as the words issued from the lips of the  
medium), that such an individual as Daniel Mc-  
Donald ever existed; and, moreover, no believer  
in Spiritualism in Toronto, (as Mr. Anonymous  
asserts), or anywhere else, ever wrote us a sin-  
gle line, or in any other way informed us, in  
regard to the life and death of the above-named  
spirit.

And, thirdly, the trade in *The Toronto News*  
is so utterly unjust to the spirit who communi-  
cated, that we advise his immediate friends to  
investigate the phenomenon of trance-medium-  
ship, with the serious object in view of ascer-  
taining through some other medial instrument  
whether or not, in their estimation, the spirit of  
Mr. McDonald did communicate at our Pub-  
lic Circle as aforesaid.

It is our earnest desire, in justice to ourselves  
and the medium of our Public Free Circle, that  
the facts in this case should be clearly under-  
stood by the people of Canada, and the *Banner*  
vindicated; consequently we hope that the  
editor of *The News* will have the justice to copy  
this article into his columns.

## The Institute of Heredity

Held three meetings in Boston on Tuesday,  
Dec. 18th. Among the speakers were Dr. E. V.  
Wright, Mrs. Clara Blaise, Dr. Wright, Mrs.  
Lydia Warner, J. S. Cobb, Mrs. Dr. Smith, Dr.  
George Dutton, and Prof. Joseph Rhodes Bu-  
chanan. The important theme for whose eluci-  
dation the Institute was formed was well  
treated in all its bearings, and the occasion  
proved a credit to the Society.

Letters, kindly in tone toward the movement  
were received from several prominent gentle-  
men, from which missives the following out-  
spoken extracts are made:

[The Science of Heredity] lies at the root of all  
real education, and, once opened and understood,  
affects all judgments of crime, measures responsibility  
by a new standard, and throws a new light on all  
theories of disease. A subject with wide relations  
and such profound influence certainly claims the most  
thorough and exhaustive discussion. —WENDELL  
PHILLIPS.

Let our civilization be ever quickened by the warm  
inspiration of the motto of this Institute of Heredity—  
*Science, Love and Goodness*—and it will open to the  
coming generations a new heaven and a new earth,  
and usher in that golden age of which poets have sung  
and sages have taught, and which believers call mil-  
lennium.

The opportunity for observation, which nearly half  
a century of active professional life has given me, re-  
sults in the strongest conviction that there are no  
causes on which the weak or the woe of a people may  
depend, of more momentous importance than those  
contemplated in the purposes of the organization of  
this Institute of Heredity.

And may it live! May it live till there shall be no  
need of jails and asylums for the insane! May it live,  
and its benign influence be felt till the prison and the  
ghetto shall be remembered as things of the past. —  
DAVID THAYER.

I regret exceedingly that I have time to do no more  
than express, in the briefest way, my hearty sympathy  
with the work proposed by the Institute of Heredity.  
I cannot now enter into the subject further than to  
say that science is teaching us that not only, but all  
men, must be "born, not made." Education can  
only bring out what faculty and power one is endowed  
with; it cannot furnish brains. And this is also largely  
true with the essentials of character.

If, then, the race can ever be brought to that point  
where people are properly born, they will not need to be  
"born again."

This would perhaps take away the business of many  
of the preachers; but I, for one, should be glad to  
know that men were wise enough and good enough to  
render my vocation no longer necessary. —M. J. RAY-  
AGE.

The *Spiritual Offering*, published at Ot-  
tawa, Iowa, comes to our sanctum the present  
week looking grandly in its new dress, and is  
printed on beautiful paper, which is a sure  
sign of prosperity. Besides, it has added several  
names to its editorial corps, among which we  
may mention Prof. Kiddle of New York. Its  
editorials are exceptionally good. For ex-  
ample, it says: "Whatever uplifts hearts that  
are weary, whatever strengthens those who are  
weak, whatever gives knowledge of the triumph  
over death and the triumph over enslaving  
powers on earth, whatever brings greater  
charity and love and patience—these form a  
New Year of promise and labor in every life.  
These are the offspring of spiritual communion  
and growth." Yes, indeed! We cordially ex-  
tend to our Western contemporary the compli-  
ments of the season, and hope the present year  
will not end without its publishers finding thou-  
sands of names on its subscription list.

Dr. H. B. Storey's great medical remedies  
have not only relieved but cured many in-  
valids; as he has ample evidence to prove.

## Seances with Mrs. Fay and Miss H. C. Berry.

A prominent gentleman of Syracuse, N. Y.,  
who is at present on a visit to this city, per-  
sonally relates to us what we briefly describe in  
the following paragraphs, as being some of his  
experiences at the sittings of the Berry sisters,  
at No. 1 Arnold street, also with the distin-  
guished materializing medium Mrs. H. B. Fay,  
of No. 126 West Concord street, Boston.

On Wednesday evening, Dec. 26th, this gen-  
tleman attended a sitting with Miss Helen C.  
Berry, and was privileged to receive several  
tests of spirit-identity which were satisfactory  
to him in the extreme, and his own pleasant  
experience was evidently duplicated in the  
cases of the others in attendance. The first in-  
telligence to manifest was his spirit-uncle, who  
called out the full name of our informant—a  
name he is sure was unknown to any one in at-  
tendance in the mortal form, as he was a total  
stranger to all present—and then gave his own  
name in full. The gentleman had been named  
for the uncle in question. Then came the  
spirit of a dear aunt, who, after his mother  
passed to the higher life, had been indeed a sec-  
ond mother to our informant; this spirit gave  
him the best of evidence of her personality—as  
did all the others mentioned in this account;  
while he is confident that not one in attendance  
had ever even heard of such persons. His  
mother and his little daughter Violet also man-  
ifested, giving him pleasant messages of con-  
tinued love and interest.

On Thursday afternoon, Dec. 27th, this gen-  
tleman attended a materializing séance at the  
home of Mrs. Fay. Thirty persons were pres-  
ent—twenty-three gentlemen and seven ladies  
—and during the sitting some fifty forms ap-  
peared. Those attending were well satisfied  
with what they witnessed. Our informant saw  
and recognized four spirits: his mother, his  
daughter, a sister-in-law and a young lady with  
whom he used to be acquainted in school-days,  
and who passed away years ago. These spirits  
conversed with him naturally, and he recog-  
nized them perfectly.

Several forms came out of the cabinet and  
moved among the people with grace and ease,  
and some with great rapidity and force. Among  
the most striking of the phenomena occurring  
at this sitting was the taking of a little child  
who was present into the cabinet by its spirit-  
mother; the spirit was powerful enough to lift  
the child without apparent difficulty. The lit-  
tle one knew and recognized its mother, as did  
others.

A young lady present was, by her brother  
George in spirit-life, lifted and carried rapidly  
across the circle—the form demonstrating  
much power, and a certain joyousness of dispo-  
sition in every movement, which the lady re-  
cognized as characteristic of her brother when  
in earth-life. When it dematerialized, our in-  
formant states, the figure disappeared "like a  
flash." A form also materialized slowly, among  
the company, and outside of the cabinet—growing  
upward from a little white ball upon the  
carpet, the features being the last to develop;  
with which latter manifestation our informant  
and the company were specially pleased.

## The Banner Message Department.

The present week is replete with information  
from supermundane sources of the utmost im-  
portance, in our estimation, not only to the  
parties to whom the various spirit-messages  
are addressed, but to the community at large.  
Especially would we call attention to the  
Questions and Answers column, wherein spirits  
give their views upon a variety of subjects pro-  
pounded at our Public Circle.

That in regard to earth-bound spirits opens  
up a mighty field of thought in regard to the  
future state, and is therefore highly important.  
That in relation to the future development of  
mediumship will more especially interest Spir-  
itualists, investigators and mediums, rather  
than the skeptical public.

As the old workers in the cause are laying  
down their earthly armor for continuous labor  
in a higher sphere of action, many new com-  
ers are appearing upon the mundane stage to  
carry on the grand work already far advanced.  
The spirit well says this fact is cause for re-  
joicing.

The invocations are beautiful beyond mea-  
sure. No theologian of whatever sect can gain-  
say the fact that they are emanations from the  
world of spirits, for their purity of thought and  
expression is infinitely superior to that of the  
mundane efforts of the most learned.

The question propounded in regard to the al-  
leged shortcomings of mediums is answered by  
the spirit-aid and well, with that charity which  
becometh one who is free from the conflicting  
elements of the earthly life.

Dr. Cornell Smith—who avers that he was  
well known in Albany, N. Y.—gives a some-  
what lengthy message replete with practical  
thought upon topics of deep significance. He  
says he was somewhat interested in the Spir-  
itual Philosophy ere he passed away; that he  
was a healer, i. e., one who utilized his magnetic  
powers for the best advantage of physical  
suffering, and that he is still interested in that  
system of practice, which proves that mankind  
may be cured of disease without the aid of po-  
isonous drugs, etc. Messages from other spirits  
are equally interesting.

## Interesting Lectures.

The public are invited freely to attend the  
opening lectures of the College of Therapeutics  
on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 7th,  
8th and 9th, between the hours of 10 A. M. and  
2 P. M., at the Wells Memorial Hall, 587 Washing-  
ton street.

Prof. Buchanan will show in his opening lec-  
tures the necessity of placing physiology, pa-  
thology and therapeutics on a new basis corre-  
sponding to the correct view of man's spiritual  
and physical constitution. The lectures are  
designed not for the medical profession alone,  
but for all progressive and benevolent minds.

In a letter from Miss Lottie Fowler,  
dated London, Dec. 10th, she says: "By the  
time this reaches you I shall most likely be on  
the way to your shores, and shall be glad to see  
and hear from old friends. I am leaving the  
old country only for a short time on private  
business, intending to return to London in the  
spring of '84."

Miller's *Psychometric Circular* (and Sup-  
plement) for November and December—rather  
late—came to us last week, freighted with a  
great variety of interesting reading. It is for  
sale at our Bookstore.

Thanks to Mattie E. Davis of Orange,  
Mass., for a box of Illies for our Free Circle-  
Room table.

Attention is hereby called to the card of  
James R. Cooke, in another column.

## To Advertisers.

Our merchants in times past did not adver-  
tise in the Spiritualist newspaper, thinking it  
would not add them in their business. But of  
late years they have changed their minds, hav-  
ing become convinced that Spiritualists are  
among the most thoughtful and well-principled  
of the various classes to which they (the mer-  
chants) belong.

More than this the merchants have learned:  
That their advertisements in the Spiritualist  
papers are scattered over a much larger terri-  
tory than the daily press can possibly reach,  
and are therefore read by a far greater number  
of persons. As an instance of this, a gentle-  
man who dealt in sewing machines asked a  
friend of ours what weekly paper in Boston he  
would prefer to advertise in. "*The Banner of  
Light*," was the response, "because it circulates  
in every State of the Union, and in foreign  
countries as well." "If that is the case, I think  
I will send to the publishers my advertisement." And  
he did. A few months afterwards the said  
dealer chanced to meet the friend who had re-  
commended the *Banner* as an advertising me-  
dium, and asked him what sort of a paper it  
was. "Why?" queried our friend. "Be-  
cause," was his reply, "I have received orders  
from Washington Territory, Oregon, and other  
distant points, where I never expected to reach  
customers." And we have evidence from other  
sources of a like tenor. So, business men, if you  
wish quick returns for your goods, all you'll  
have to do is to advertise in this paper to ac-  
complish the end in view.

When Louis XIV. revoked the Edict of  
Nantes, by express command of the Pope, he  
expelled from France all his subjects, except  
Atheists, who would not conform to the Catho-  
lic religion. Twelve thousand tried soldiers,  
nine thousand sailors and six hundred officers  
left France and entered the service of England,  
Holland and Prussia. Those who went to Hol-  
land entered the service of William, Prince of  
Orange, and contributed largely to the suc-  
cesses at Boyne, Athlone and Aughrim, which  
ended in driving the French out of Ireland and  
firmly establishing the English rule over that  
island. The sailors also did good service at the  
sea-fight of La Hogue, where the English and  
Dutch fleets destroyed the expedition prepared  
by Louis XIV. for his descent upon England. The  
expatriated French soldiers also fought at  
Ramilles, Blenheim and Malplaquet, and one  
of their engineers directed the operations at  
the siege of Namur, and another that of Lisle,  
both of which cities were captured. Of those who  
entered the service of Prussia, some were raised  
to the highest offices in the service of Freder-  
ick William, Elector of Brandenburg.

Their descendants visited France on more  
than one occasion during the wars of Napoleon  
I., and at Sedan, in 1870, they crushed the  
descendants of their forefathers' persecutors. Not  
long since, Jules Simon, while Premier of  
France, reminded his countrymen of what they  
had lost by the tyrannical edict of Louis XIV.,  
and stated that not less than eighty distin-  
guished officers of the German staff were rep-  
resentatives of Protestant families who were  
thus expelled from France. And yet, at this late  
day and in the face of history, the *Catholic Re-  
view* says: "The Bishops of the Catholic Church  
are live men, learned and pious men, and they  
know the age and feel its pulse at least as well  
as their enemies," and endorses the saying of  
Mgr. Capel, that "The Catholic Church is not  
the opponent of intellectual liberty and free-  
dom of thought." Comment is unnecessary.

*La Luz del Cristianismo* (a spiritual  
journal published at Jaen, Spain), has fallen  
under the ban of the Church, and the bishop  
has published a long pastoral letter which the  
November number of the *Revista Espiritista* of  
Buenos Ayres gives in full. Having, as is cus-  
tomary in these cases, assumed that Spiritual-  
ism is of the devil, the bishop forbids the  
"faithful" having any relations with the pa-  
per itself, its editors, employees, or anybody  
who in any manner contributes either to its  
publication or support. *La Luz* is a wide-  
awake sheet, and no doubt will continue on in  
its mission for the elevation of humanity, not-  
withstanding this violent protest from Dr. D.  
Manuel M. Gonzalez, "by the grace of God and  
the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop of Jaen."

Lottie Fowler on her way to embark for  
this country made a brief stay in Glasgow, her  
visit to that city calling forth the following  
mention by a correspondent of the *Herald of  
Progress*:

"She has had quite a warm reception in Glasgow.  
Nothing more satisfactory in the form of mediumship  
have I hitherto observed. Clear as a running stream  
at times are the revelations she gives to sitters, creat-  
ing surprise and content; no mere cases of mind-  
reading, or the rendering of subjective impressions as  
objective realities."

Miss Fowler was next to visit Edinburgh  
and Newcastle. Her intention to give séances  
in Leeds and other places would not be carried  
out for want of time.

The fact has been made public that the  
directors of the Connecticut River Railroad  
have recently decided to run no trains on Sun-  
day; consequently no more excursion trains to  
the Lake Pleasant Spiritualist Camp-Meeting  
Grounds during the summer season will be al-  
lowed. The President, N. A. Leonard, is re-  
ported as saying that the road will lose consid-  
erable money in consequence. Perhaps the  
stockholders will have a word to offer upon this  
decision hereafter. Thus it will be seen that  
Bigotry is still on the war-path in the State of  
Massachusetts.

We are pleased to learn, as we do from  
The Rostrum, that the Vineland Children's  
Spiritualist Lyceum is gaining in numbers and  
strength. Its sessions are held at 12:30 every  
Sunday. How about Children's Lyceums in  
other places? They should be established in  
every city, town and village in the United  
States.

We shall print next week the report of a  
lecture delivered through the mediumship of J.  
William Fletcher, in the Columbia Conserva-  
tory of Music, Brooklyn, N. Y., and reported  
specially for our columns. It has for its theme  
the important query: "Has God Ever Written  
a Bible?"

Mrs. and Mr. H. J. Horn, of Saratoga  
Springs, N. Y., made a pleasant call recently at  
our sanctum. Our readers are of course fa-  
miliar with the names of Mrs. Horn, the authoress  
of "Strange Visitors," a book that everybody  
should peruse.

Caroline Corner is to give an entertain-  
ment, including a Christmas Tree, to two hun-  
dred poor children of London, in Memorial  
Hall, Bethnal Green, E., Jan. 10th. She is a  
genuine philanthropist.















