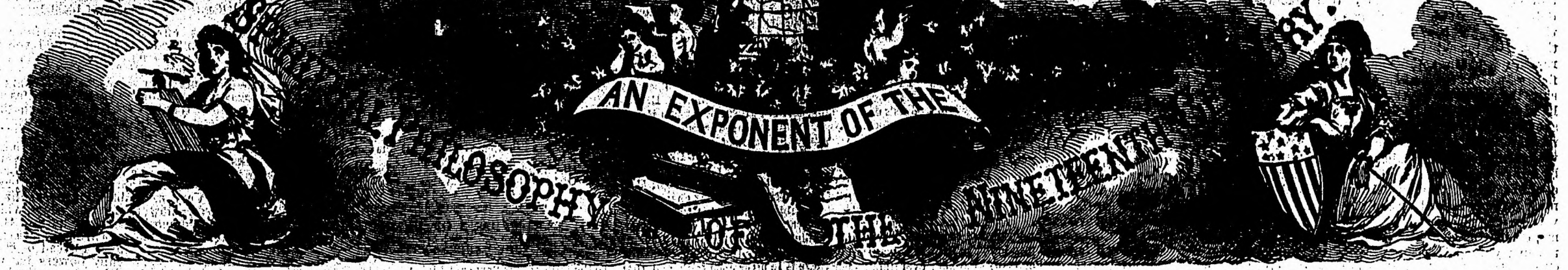


# BANNER OF LIGHT.



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## Free Thought.

### THE "DEBATE" REOPENED.

Herbert Spencer and Frederic Harrison on Religion and Worship—The Views of "D. L." Contested—Spirit-Friends not Proper Objects of Worship—The "Absolute Cause" is "The Eternal Goodness"—Religion to give place to Spirituality, or Spontaneous Worship of the All-Perfect—The Social Element Perpetual in Human Nature.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I was greatly interested in the article under the head of "A Pretty Debate," in the BANNER of Oct. 4th last, by my friend "D. L." of Washington, as I am in everything from his able and scholarly pen. In it he gives a critical and instructive analysis of the views of two leading thinkers, Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. Frederic Harrison, on the Final Religion, or the ultimate object of worship by advanced and cultured humanity, adding his own opinion of what this will be, as differing from both of these writers.

The one (Mr. Spencer) he finds believes that "religion began with the worship of ancestral spirits"; that its true object is the Absolute Cause, which is "unknowable" except as a mysterious Energy; "that it [religion] will cease to be a social observance, will disappear as an external fact, and will become simply a sentiment in the souls of cultivated persons." The other (Mr. Harrison, following Comte), believes that "religion began with the worship of natural objects, and will cease as the visible worship of the Absolute Cause, but will continue as an external fact and as a form of social communion in the worship of dead human beings, provided they be really extinct." D. L. agrees with both in "predicting the steady decline of the social worship of the Absolute Cause by rites and ceremonies," but differs from them in holding that "the intangible and invisible persons, the first and most natural objects of religion, still remain. They will constitute the objects of the true social worship of the last religion which men can enjoy in common." "They are our sufficing deities."

This means that, in his opinion, the spirits of our departed friends will be the only objects of united or external worship, though he considers that the Absolute Cause may continue to be "an object of increasing trust." "But," he says, "we shall find it ever harder and harder to organize for it an external worship in which we can unite. This worship must take up its seat in the individual soul. It needs and can tolerate no partners."

Now, in a controversial spirit, but with a simple desire to arrive at the highest truth, permit me to reopen this "Pretty Debate," and to suggest a somewhat different view.

The word worship (worth-ship), though formerly used in the sense of mere honor or respect to worthy human beings, in modern usage is applied only or chiefly to the highest homage held to be due to a supreme and All-Perfect Being, or to the highest conception of combined intelligence, excellence and power, which the mind can form. To thus supremely reverence and adore our disembodied personal friends, or even the most advanced and exalted of our race of whom we have any knowledge, seems to me not the highest or wisest thing cultured humanity can attain to. On the contrary, since these exalted friends, and even the worthiest human beings of all the past are still but imperfect and finite intelligences, it is degrading and stultifying to our higher conceptions and aspirations to regard them with supreme homage. Such homage carries with it, almost as a matter of course, a tendency to accept whatever such invisible gods and goddesses may teach or enjoin as infallible truth and unquestionable duty. And this is but a return to the gross superstitions of polytheism and demonology, and would plunge us hopelessly into that shadowy world of delusions and absurdities which is the chief danger of Modern Spiritualism. It is a too implicit reliance on spirits.

More than that, I can safely say, from my frequent and intimate intercourse with intelligent spirits, that they are not intelligent, wise and worthy of the worship which—do not desire any such worship on the part of

mortals, nor will they permit it. Like the angel of the Apocalypse, wise spirits who perceive any tendency to worship or undue reverence, will exclaim, "See thou do it not: worship God." It is only those who have carried into spirit-life the egoistic love of power, of domination, and have not yet attained to the higher graces of humility and self-renunciation which are characteristic of true wisdom—it is only such spirits who desire or will allow themselves to be worshiped, in the sense ordinarily implied by that term. And the giving of undue heed to spirits of this class usually results in such follies or disasters as in the long run furnish a wholesome corrective, often ending in the opposite extreme of a repudiation of all spirit-intercourse as unprofitable, delusive or dangerous.

But doubtless our friend D. L. did not intend the word in its full meaning, but rather in the sense of that respect and esteem with which we regard persons whom we love and confide in. I will quote his words:

"This is a worship that requires no ceremonies, no incantations, no magical rites, no performances of observances that are mysterious only because they are senseless. Our departed loved ones are coming back to us: though invisible, they emerge from their obscurity in garments of light; though intangible, they put on tangible forms; they beckon us upward from the soiling cares of earth; they ask no other adoration than intelligent love. Always seemingly absent, but ever present, they are our sufficing deities whom we trust next to the Absolute Cause. The day shall come when these gods and goddesses shall visit every family, shall converse with us in the stillness of midnight and the early dawn, and sit at our tables on sacred anniversaries. In that day every family shall have its own gateway to heaven, every group of loving friends its communion indissoluble by death. This worship of superabundant love shall be the last religion."

I think I have no lack of appreciation of the joy and beauty and priceless value of this loving communion with invisible friends, much of which I have enjoyed through many years; but I must say that this "intelligent love"—or even "superabundant love"—toward finite human or angelic friends falls far short of my understanding of what is signified by the words religion and worship. It may perhaps be urged that it is all these words ought to mean—all that there is any valid ground in the constitution of things for making them mean. Let us see.

As to religion, our friend furnishes this broad and original definition: "The endeavor to conform human conduct to the demands of a super-sensible personal agency, real or imagined." He is persuaded that every religion that has been, or that shall be, will fall within the scope of this definition. It is indeed very comprehensive, and comforts well with the derivative meaning of the word. *Re* and *ligo* signify to bind again, or to bind back—the main idea being that of binding, obligation or duty. Doubtless the ancient significance of religion was the voluntary acknowledgment and practice of the duties believed to be naturally owing to God or the gods. But this definition takes into view only one side of what is modernly meant by religion—the duty or requirement side. It does not include trust, or hope, or aspiration, or even love to that "super-sensible personal agency," which certainly are very important factors in the better types of religion.

Again, the definition given by D. L. implies that the personal agency referred to makes some "demands," either rightfully or otherwise, regarding human conduct. Is it true that our invisible loving friends, as a general rule, make such demands? I am not aware of it. They often suggest, advise and prompt to what they deem right and desirable, but do not "demand" our conformity, unless they belong to the dictatorial or domineering class, to whom it is not wise to conform. The term religion, therefore, as defined by D. L., seems to have no proper application to communion with our spirit-friends.

But behind and beyond all human spirits, our friend D. L., in common with Mr. Spencer, Mr. Harrison, and agnostics in general, recognizes the existence of a Supreme Cause, an Infinite Energy, or Force, from which all things proceed. Mr. Spencer thinks that the final term of religious development will be "to divest the Supreme Being of all attributes but Infinite energy, and leave him for the religious consciousness as simply the Unknowable." Yet D. L. thinks we may and do know something of this Unknowable: "If we cannot say what this Energy is, we can say what it does. It perpetually adds to the sum of existences, while as perpetually extinguishing less than all. It therefore guarantees unceasing continuance to some class of beings, notwithstanding their existence had a beginning." He therefore rightly concludes that the Supreme Cause or Energy may be "an object of increasing trust." We can trust in the bridge that has once carried us over the torrent below; so we may trust in that Absolute Cause that is self-consistent, through the fathomless abysses of space and the shoreless ocean of eternity."

But trust, which is only another word for faith or confidence in the Supreme Cause, is an important element of religion in the modern and better sense of the term. In a lesser degree, it may be exercised toward our human spirit-friends, as they prove themselves worthy of it; but in its highest, fullest sense, it can be reposed only in that Supreme Energy which is the source of all being.

But if we may trust in the Absolute Cause, we may also hope—hope and trust that the Infinite Energy, which is ever working in and through all things, is working for the best, the highest and worthiest ends—in other words, that it is a Power that is "working for righteousness," though we in our short-sightedness may not always be able to understand its workings. Hope

is another important element in religion, in its best definition, and can hardly be separated from trust or faith.

If, then, we may trust and hope in this Infinite Energy which enlivens us, why may we not also exercise love toward it? Surely we may—we must—if we perceive in it or in its doings anything that is worthy of love. It may be said that we cannot love a thing, or a force; love can be exercised only toward a being, and one that is worthy of love. True, and Mr. Spencer, with the agnostic school in general, has labored hard to divest the conception of the Supreme Cause of every attribute but infinite energy or force. This bald conception, as D. L. points out, can be the object of no human emotions other than wonder and dread. But, as we have seen, he finds good reason for advancing one step beyond this. He finds that there is sufficient ground for trust, which is akin to hope, and not far removed from love. But is this all that the facts of the universe and of being warrant? I think not.

If this Infinite Energy is the Supreme Cause of all things, as is acknowledged, then it is the primary Source of all human beings or finite existences, which must derive their elements from that Source; and what is derived must first exist in its source. What is man? He is surely a being. How could he have become such, unless the Absolute Source which gave him origin is a Being? Carlyle has aptly said, "Man is a revealed force." That is, the real man is not the flesh-and-blood body which we see and handle, but a force behind this that reveals itself through the body. It would be more exact to say that man is a combination or bundle of forces, compounded in varying proportions in different individuals by the action of intermediate causes. But these forces are not self-originated. They must proceed in their origin from the one Absolute Energy or Force that underlies and energizes all things. They constitute man a being—a personality. Can they, then, in their primal source, constitute anything less than a Being—a Personality, in the largest and highest sense of that term? I see no logical escape from such a conclusion.

In man these forces reveal themselves in Will, Intelligence, Thought, Emotion, Attraction (love), Repulsion (hatred), etc. Through his Will, the central force, he has the power of controlling, modifying, increasing or diminishing, in some degree, the manifestation of all other forces in himself, so as to mold his own character more or less gradually toward an ideal of excellence or perfection which somehow exists within him—at least, in his more cultured and developed stages. Whence came that ideal, and whence the force that impels him to strive toward it—thus securing the progress of humanity here and hereafter? Must they not be derived from the one Absolute Source of all things, and thus indicate essential attributes of that Source—namely, that instead of being merely a blind force, destitute of all qualities or purpose, it is an Intelligent Energy, a beneficent Being, working toward improvement, perfection, the highest good, the most abounding joy throughout the universe? This conclusion also looks to me logically unavoidable.

If it is well-founded, then may we properly regard the Absolute Cause as indeed the "Eternal Goodness," and as worthy not alone of "trust," but also of the warmest love and highest adoration. In a true sense this Infinite Being must be the actual Parent of all finite beings, and as such entitled to the confidence, the veneration, the filial affection and fealty of all his children.

These emotions, with their legitimate expression in acts, constitute religion in its highest and best definition. They are spiritual worship. When arising spontaneously instead of from a "demand" or a constraining sense of duty, in the cultured soul, they mean something so far above the original or derivative significance of the word religion, that I feel inclined to lay it aside, and to substitute spirituality in its place. This, signifying the spontaneous upspringing of the highest love, confidence, reverence and fealty of the finite spirit toward its Infinite and All-Perfect Source—instead of the dreary negations, doubts and fears of agnosticism, or even the lesser joys of loving communion with finite spirit-friends—will, I opine, be the final attainment of cultured and spiritualized humanity.

But D. L. says that both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Harrison "are right in affirming that the human mind cannot ascribe to the Absolute Cause thought or emotion as we know these qualities."

I should say that both thought and emotion are modes of activity rather than qualities. But, passing that, it seems evident that, while the finite human mind may be able to form no adequate conception of what thought and emotion may be in an Infinite Mind, it cannot logically avoid the conclusion that something corresponding to thought and emotion, or something which produces these in finite minds, must exist in the Absolute Cause. How else could that Cause have imparted the capabilities of thought and emotion to human minds? *Ex nihilo nihil fit.*

Now, a few words as to social worship. Our friend thinks that any form of external or social worship of the Supreme Cause will gradually cease to exist. "Worship must take up its seat in the individual soul. It needs and can tolerate no partners," he declares. Is this so?

No doubt, as worship becomes more internal, sincere, or spiritual, it will be less and less showy, noisy, pompous and ceremonial. These characteristics are the natural expressions of emotion accompanied by a predominant externalism, and are, therefore, likely to continue so long as that prevails; but no longer. Symbol-

ism, too, when appropriately employed and rationally explained, is a natural and useful means of impressing and instructing the ignorant and unsprited; and therefore may properly continue to be made use of so long as there are ignorant and unsprited persons to be enlightened. In fact, the whole physical universe, and all the objects in it, are doubtless symbols of spiritual truths. Of course, all notions that particular rites or ceremonies "have value as a charm or delight to the object worshipped," and serve to placate an offended deity, will pass away as childish ideas; but the fact will remain that sincere worship of the Absolute Perfection tends to elevate and improve the worshiper.

But there is a social element in human nature that demands its appropriate gratification by at least occasional united participation with others in the expression of common emotions. I see no reason for thinking that this social element will die out of the race with increasing intelligence and spiritual culture. It may become more select in its partnerships, the refined choosing to withdraw from close association in reverential exercises with the coarse and uncultured—as appears to be the case in the higher realms of being, where they are represented as associating in graduated "spheres," in accordance with spiritual sympathies. But then, as humanity on earth advances, there will be larger numbers of the cultured and spiritualized to associate with.

There may be individuals in whom the social element is so far lacking that they are conscious of no want in this direction, and hence imagine that all humanity will eventually become isolated and unsocial like themselves. Profound and original thinkers are apt to be of this class. But this seclusive, cynical, egoistic tendency is evidently a defect, which will be outgrown as a more rounded culture and a true spirituality are reached. Man is inherently a social, as well as an individual being, and for aught that appears will remain such to all eternity, requiring for his fullest life alternate seasons of seclusion and of society. And while true spiritual worship of the Infinite Perfection "must take up its seat in the individual soul," it must also ever seek and delight in congenial partners of its joys, whose numbers will perpetually increase (in the after-life, if not in this), and whose intimacy will grow forever closer and closer as they near the Absolute Source. So it appears to me.

A. E. N.

## Spiritual Phenomena.

### A Séance with Mrs. Hatch.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

On Friday evening, Nov. 7th, I was present at a séance given by Mrs. Eva C. Hatch at her rooms, No. 281 Shawmut Avenue, and, on account of the marvels exhibited, I deem it but an act of justice to a deserving medium to lay some account of them before the readers of the BANNER.

I observed among the company assembled Mr. McArthur of New York, Mr. E. W. Smith, the well-known organ manufacturer, Mr. E. A. Brackett, the sculptor, Mr. Colby of Merrimac, Dr. H. G. Petersen of Boston, Elisha Morse, Esq., of Minneapolis, Minn., and several other gentlemen of note, together with a number of lady mediums—all of whom, I afterward learned, had been invited by Mrs. Hatch's spirit-control to be present at this séance, which the spirit-guides intended as complimentary to a veteran worker in the cause of Spiritualism; one who has always stood foremost as a champion of spirit-mediumship, shielding the weak and hesitating, beating back with brain and purse the arrows of disbelief, ignorance and hatred that have been aimed at the cause nearest his heart.

There were sixteen persons present, and on coming to order they were addressed by the gentleman who conducted the séance, in the following brief and well-chosen words: "My friends, we are assembled here this evening by the request of the spirit-guides of Mrs. Hatch, who expected to be able to welcome here a loved and esteemed friend of ourselves as well as of the spirit-world; one who has borne the brunt of the battle in the heat of the day; one who has truthfully and earnestly given the best years of his life to the soul-elevating cause of spiritual philosophy; one who is now ripening for the harvest. His spiritual sheaf of golden grain is already heavily laden with the richest soul-food, and in a few short years, at most, will be garnered into God's immortal kingdom, where, laying down the many crosses he has so faithfully borne, he will take up the crown of his reward, on which we believe will be inscribed in letters of ever-shining light, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' I regret to learn, however, at this late hour, that he is prevented by sickness from being present, giving, I doubt not, as much sorrow to his spirit-friends as it causes sorrow to us here."

These brief remarks were received with much favor, and the manager had no sooner taken a seat when the curtain opened and the controlling spirit of the medium, known as "Michael," stepped into the room and warmly welcomed the company. Upon retiring, a bright spirit-form appeared and was recognized by Mr. Smith as that of his wife, and a pleasing and affectionate interview took place; after which a number of other forms appeared, among them the lively spirit, "Gipsy," who is ever ready to greet her friend, Mr. Wm. Colby, he being equally ready to greet her. Some of the spirits, after conversing with friends, introduced them into the cabinet, where they were permitted to place their hands upon the entranced medium.

After a few minutes' delay a voice in the cabinet was heard to say: "We desire that every one here should come and view what the spirits have produced as a testimony of their love and esteem for the BANNER OF LIGHT and its managers." As this was said the curtain was drawn fully open by a spirit, who took her station outside of the cabinet, disclosing to our astonished eyes a model of a building that appeared to be standing in the midst of green fields with sparkling water beside it. Over it was a bright blue sky, with what resembled white summer clouds moving slowly athwart it. The building was a marvel of beauty; it glistened like a jewel in the sunlight. The materials of which it appeared to be created were as semi-lucid as alabaster. It had beautiful columns, with glistening capitals, upholding a beautiful dome. Over all was the legend—"Spirit Home of Fannie A. Conant, the Banner of Light Medium." The letters appeared to me to be about four inches high, composed of glistening gems, showing the colors of an ever-changing prism. Two white-robed figures stood on the right and left of the building, bowing their heads and swaying their arms. On the left was seen the entranced form of the medium, sitting in a chair, resembling a marble statue, apparently without life or motion. The beautiful scene was in sight full ten minutes, long enough to afford each an opportunity of viewing it. All this time a bright spirit was holding the curtain open, and two other forms, apparently a male and female, stood bowing and moving their arms. One of these forms claimed to be Mrs. Conant, but I did not catch the name of the other. These figures were illuminated, and their garments shone with a brightness strange to behold. The whole scene slowly faded from view and the curtain was as slowly dropped, shutting from our sight what I have no hesitation in calling one of the finest illustrations of spirit-power ever given to mortals. Before it fully faded away Mr. McArthur and several others, myself included, were taken into the cabinet, where the three full-sized spirit-forms shook hands with us, and we plainly saw the entranced medium sitting in the corner. I took particular pains to carefully scrutinize one of the forms, and can say that there could be no mistake in the thin, thoughtful face before me, giving the name of Fannie A. Conant; she expressed regret that her dear friend was absent.

After these spirit-forms left I was called to the cabinet, when the curtain opened, and there stood the two forms I fully believe are my spirit-daughters, called in spirit-world "Sweet Brier" and "Daisy Bell," who have of late frequently appeared to myself and wife. They stood with arms lovingly entwined about each other's neck, and turning their bright faces toward me, exclaimed, "Dear, dear papa, we love you with our whole being!" I patted their cheeks, and they kissed me repeatedly. My wife also came to the cabinet, and was warmly and lovingly received. While my wife and myself were talking with these, our spirit-children, I asked them if their grandfather was near, when both smiled, and withdrawing their arms from each other, the form of my honored father stepped between them; they each placed an arm about him. My father's face was as perfect as when he was in this life. He placed his hands on the children's heads, and said in a joyful tone, "My boy, these are my jewels!" Several of the company were witnesses of this beautiful materialization, which displayed the three figures at the same time.

Shortly after these had retired, the well-remembered Dr. J. R. Newton appeared, and greeted the company with his usual cordiality. He shook hands with nearly all present, and said to me, "I regret"—the remainder of his remarks were cut short by lack of strength, and he faded away. As soon as the Doctor had left, a peculiar laugh was heard behind the curtain, and I at once recognized the face and form of the once famous scenic artist, Paul Barnes, at the aperture, and he laughingly said, "Good evening, all!" This Paul Barnes will be remembered by our old-time friends as the artist who sketched the scenes and painted the celebrated "Seven Mile Mirror," famous thirty years ago as a truthful representation of beautiful scenes on the St. Lawrence River. A warm friendship existed between Paul Barnes and myself. His features were perfectly natural.

When Paul retired, the company was requested to sing, and in a few moments a call was made to reduce the lights. This having been done, there emerged from the cabinet a female figure, beautifully robed in shining garments. It was a spirit known as the "Star of Hope." On her brow was a shining star, and another upon her breast. By her side was a cross brilliantly illuminated. The spirit took the cross in her hand and walked around the room, holding it over the heads of the company, and then, kneeling upon the floor, with the cross elevated above her bowed head, a clear, musical voice was heard within the cabinet, chanting a hymn, which continued until the form rose to its feet. All present were hushed with a spirit of reverence and awe. The apparition chanting the hymn could then be seen standing between the raised curtains. As the spirit rose to her feet, a lady commenced in a low, sweet voice to sing the beautiful hymn, "Sweet Hour of Prayer." The Star of Hope glided back to the cabinet and slowly dematerialized, the glittering emblem of the Christian faith being the last to disappear. While this was taking place the same enchanting voice was heard within the cabinet, joining with the company in singing the hymn. This whole scene was beautiful and reverential, far beyond my power to describe. It touched the hearts of all.

After a short delay, and after the room was



still further darkened, three illuminated forms appeared, a female and what I took to be two male forms, all shining with great brilliancy. The female form boldly entered the room and walked around so that each could see the beautiful effect of the illumination. While she was doing this, the two male figures stood waving their hands and bowing to the company. When the female form had made the circuit of the room, she again approached the two other figures, who at this moment were standing outside the doorway of the cabinet, when one handed her what appeared to be a stick, and she then again commenced walking around the room, waving a flag of the stars and stripes, which had been materialized for the occasion by her two companions. The stars and stripes could be distinctly seen shining in the darkness. When she had passed around the room, waving the flag over our heads, she approached me, evidently to permit the flag to be taken between my fingers. The material resembled a silk fabric. The spirits then entered the cabinet door, and the flag dematerialized, leaving a stick, which was placed in the hands of one of the company. It proved to be one of a friend of mine had procured to take to his home and had left in the hall. The flag was about a yard long and of proportionate width.

While the "Star of Hope" was present, she spoke of the occasion as having been selected by the spirits to welcome the "absent friend." She also stated that the day was the anniversary of her entrance into spirit-life more than half a century ago.

After these illuminated forms—who I have been informed were Hindus—had retired, the room having been partially lighted up, a tall and elegantly-clad form appeared, claiming to be the "Empress Josephine." Around her shoulders hung a dark mantle, which sparkled with golden bees, emblems of the Emperor. A long train of brilliant material trailed upon the carpet as she majestically passed around the room. On her brow was a glittering crown, which she seemed desirous of having all notice. Her arms were bare, and around her neck was a sparkling necklace, which, falling low upon her breast, sustained a cross composed of what appeared to be jewels. Some one addressed her as "the Empress," when she quickly turned to him and extended her hand. As she passed near me she also extended her hand. Thus ended a most wonderful scene.

HIRSH E. FELCH.

16 Brattle Square, Boston, Nov. 12th, 1884.

#### Spirit-Identity.

Mrs. Hamilton of Lewiston, Me., called at this office on Wednesday, Dec. 25, and related the following experience met with by her at a séance with Mrs. Whitney, held the afternoon of the day previous, at the residence of Dr. Wellington, 23 Concord street, Boston. The sitting was conducted in the light; the medium was seated before the company with a curtain disposed about her that her form and face were in plain view of all during the séance, her hands, filled with flour, being kept under the curtain and out of sight.

While so circumstanced numerous spirit-hands, our informant states, were made visible and tangible, also, to the sitters; these hands were illuminated, and varied in size from that of the full-grown male or female to the thinnest among baby-fingers, and were regarded by the company present as conclusive evidence of the capability of spirits to work through the organism of Mrs. Whitney—these hands appearing, in every instance, either at an altitude impossible of her reaching up to without rising (which she could not have done without being instantly seen) or coming from directions the very opposite of what might be expected from her own hands, it used. The space behind the medium, and partially darkened by the curtain, seemed the laboratory in which the unseen forces wrought—as not only the hands seen had their source therein, but bells and instruments, placed behind the medium, were intelligently and vigorously manipulated, to the satisfaction of those present. The handkerchiefs of the company were taken from their several owners, tied in knots (in some instances in a unique fashion), and returned, by direction of the sitters, to their proper owners without a single mistake.

The above-mentioned phenomena constituted but a portion of what occurred during this séance—all that were witnessed being endorsed as genuine by the people in attendance. The crowning feature, however, was, as far as Mrs. Hamilton was concerned, was a test she received of the continued individuality of her late husband, D. Howland Hamilton, who was well known to the Spiritualists of New England and elsewhere as a bold speaker, also as author of "Rough-Shod Rhymes," in which productions he sought to convey spiritual truths to the people in poetic fashion. Mrs. Hamilton stated that her husband had traveled some thirty years lecturing on phrenology and other themes, illustrating his remarks with the use of the magic lantern—gaining thereby for himself the title of "Showman." Wherever in his journeyings an opportunity presented itself to introduce the subject of Spiritualism among the people he always embraced it. After the various manifestations spoken of above had occurred, the medium was suddenly afflicted with a severe cough, which, however, turned out to be a signal displayed for recognition by a spirit controlling her, for on Mrs. Whitney's arising and approaching Mrs. Hamilton, something in her manner recalled the fact to Mrs. H. that her mother died of consumption; as soon as she recognized the spirit the coughing ceased; Mrs. Whitney then returned to her seat, and redeveloped herself in the curtain, as before described. At this juncture, a hand appeared high up above, and behind the medium, holding a folded paper, which it shook rapidly in the direction of Mrs. Hamilton, and finally cast as far as possible toward her. When the paper was read it proved to contain the following:

"Dear Wife—I am still at work, and this is my first effort. I still live, and you may say in the show business. You know I always took to it, and am now illustrating the philosophy of life." D. H. HAMILTON.

Mrs. Hamilton informed us that she was of a skeptical turn of mind regarding the phenomena—indeed felt sometimes as if she were too skeptical—but that she was convinced in this instance of the honesty of the medium, and much gratified with the proof of her husband's presence and interest in the work to the prosecution of which his life on earth had been so assiduously devoted.

Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker, who was present at the séance just described, and who accompanied Mrs. Hamilton to our office, freely endorses the statements of Mrs. H., and considers the phenomena there witnessed, and the communication just cited, as remarkable demonstrations of the power of the invisibles, both on the physical and mental plane of action.

Attention is directed to the Prospectus of the BANNER OF LIGHT, which may be found printed in another column of this paper. The BANNER is the oldest paper in the world devoted to the Spiritual Philosophy. The freshness of religious thought and ideas with which its columns are filled, together with its chaste scientific and literary departments, are features that have long marked its columns, and rendered it a favorite with all believers in progress and freedom in religion. Surely no intelligent Spiritualist can well afford to do without the BANNER OF LIGHT.—*Nov. 10th (O.) Experiment.*

#### Ontario Cases.

A clergyman, after suffering a number of years from that loathsome disease, Cancer, after trying every known remedy, and having succeeded at last in finding a cure, writes: "I am now cured and saved from that terrible disease. Any sufferer from this dreadful disease should send an address stamped envelope to Dr. J. A. Lawrence, 130 Nassau street, Brooklyn, New York, will receive a free copy of his book."

## Banner Correspondence.

### New Hampshire.

KEENE.—"Cheshire" writes: "The meetings were continued Sunday, Dec. 14th, in Liberty Hall, with Mr. J. Frank Baxter as the speaker. A large audience convened in the afternoon to listen to a discourse upon the theme 'Spiritualism's Great Message to the World,' a discourse pronounced by many capable of sound judgment as one of more than ordinary merit and moment. At 6:30 in the evening every seat in the room was taken, and when the exercises began, and during the same to the end, many stood. The lecture of the evening was upon a subject taken, unexpectedly, from the lips of one present the Sunday previous, viz., 'What I Want to Know is, Supposing Modern Spiritualism is True, What It Amounts to Anyway?' A most trenchant lecture was the result, and one decidedly well calculated to meet the wants of public listeners, be they investigators or opponents. Mr. Baxter's tests were numerous, and very acceptable. It is considered well to write up and publish the latter, so interesting and convincing many of them were, and at some near day such an article may be prepared by the President of the Spiritualist Society.

Mr. Baxter's readings and vocalizations have been an attractive feature, and to gratify the public with recitations and song not appropriate in connection with his lectures and descriptions, as well as to assist the Society, on Tuesday evening, Dec. 9th, he gratuitously tendered an informal entertainment. Considering the several attractions elsewhere, and the price of admission, a good audience, in every respect, was the result.

A glorious good impetus has been given our cause by Mr. Baxter's bearing, reasoning and mediumistic demonstrations in this city. It is to be hoped that such a man and power shall be constantly employed, at any needful cost, for his course is such as to usually more than pay the way. Make meetings free, supported by subscriptions and collections, and above all, offer the best talent and thought, and the most gifted, intellectually or mediumistically—and, better, both—and any place is assured of success. Try it, any desiring to venture.

'The Ladies' Spiritualist Social Union' met Friday at Mrs. Elbridge Clarke's. By this Union, on Wednesday evening, Dec. 17th, was inaugurated a series of Socials, at which dancing, under important restrictions, affords the chief exercise.

At the opening of the new year will come the annual meeting of the Keene Spiritualists' Association, and already are minds busy in preparation for action which may continue the Association with as efficient a Board of Officers as now serve.

The State Convention has been invited to meet some time hence in this city, and we believe the invitation has been accepted, and the date fixed. At opportune time full announcement will be made.

It strikes us that the times are ripe for rich results everywhere just now in Spiritualism, and that all that is needed is untiring effort on the part of Spiritualists, and a determination to once again put the hands unflinchingly upon the plow. The soil is now in good condition, the furrows would be deep, and the general overturning would assure a rich reward from the seeds willing hands would abundantly sow."

### New York.

SARATOGA SPRINGS.—Under date of the 16th, "Arlon" writes: "The audience in the Court of Appeals Room on the evening of the 13th manifested the most intense interest in the names and descriptions given by Dr. Mills, as follows:

Charles Dee and brother, standing near Charles Gridley, and recognized by him, Sarah Baldwin and her brother, Abraham Morrison, Jr., Montague of Troy, who had papers in his box, J. B. Wilson of Albany, and Dr. H. Van Valkenburgh. Morris Gilbert and wife, son Obadiah and daughter Mary. Five Indians. Five ladies were described standing in a row, all named Mary—Mary Bonner, Mary Graham, Cohoes, Mary Berthia, Mary Marshall and Mary Dawson. Charles Burlingame. Libbie Allen, who said, my nearest friends are not here, this evening. Lucy Andrews, Martha, sister of Mrs. E. E. Miller. Benjamin Ayer, Al. Wood. Daniel Smith was described standing near Gen. Bullard with a bundle of hardware. The General knew a hardware dealer by that name, but did not know whether he was living or not. Dr. Mills remarked that spirits generally appear to him as moving or quivering, except such as may have died from suffocation, when they appear as members of the audience. Two of this latter class were correctly named and minutely described. One was Henry Lawrence, of the Excelsior Spring, who was drowned at Lake George, and the other was A. E. Stowe, a guest at the Irving House, who was suffocated by gas."

TROY.—Dr. W. H. Vosburgh writes: "About three years ago I was called to Pawlet, Vt., to treat the sick. While there I formed the acquaintance of a family by the name of Dillingham, consisting of the father, three sons, and a young lady housekeeper. The oldest son, Paul, twenty-three or twenty-five years of age, was an outspoken Spiritualist. Through his personal energies he succeeded in opening public meetings on several occasions, and employing some of the best speakers on the subject. About fourteen months since he was taken ill, and passed to higher scenes. Last winter E. W. Emerson filled an engagement here before our Society. One evening, when giving tests and delineations before a large audience, he said, 'Now a very active, smart-appearing young man enters here, dressed in black, and he appears to be searching through this assemblage, to see if he recognizes any one. He now approaches you, Mr. Vosburgh, puts his hand on your shoulder, and says, "I am glad to meet you, Mr. Vosburgh; my name is Paul Dillingham, of Pawlet, Vt." "Yes, sir," I said, "I know you." Through Mr. Emerson he then stated that his father was very unrequited and unhappy over his departure: "I want you," he said, "Mr. Vosburgh, to write my father, and tell him of my coming to you, and say to him that I am with him still, and will aid him to go right on with his business, for everything will come out right. Tell him he must be reconciled, and go on, then I shall feel better." I performed the duty, and wrote the father as requested. Mr. Emerson never was in Pawlet, did not know the circumstances, or the parties herein named."

COMMUNITY.—Upon a renewal of subscription a correspondent writes: "The BANNER is a great treasure to me, for the reason that it has so many spirit communications to teach mortals about the great hereafter. My soul is full of thankfulness for the privilege of reading them. I wish I could attend one of your Public Free Circles. It seems as if the very atmosphere must be so pure that it will help those sitting in it to take a new start in the spiritual life."

### Massachusetts.

SPRINGFIELD.—Joseph Leggett describes several séances held by him with Dr. C. T. Bufum of Boston, the two being entire strangers to each other. "I was barely seated," he says, "when Dr. Bufum was controlled by my mother, who called me by name, described her sickness and death, and repeated her last desires and words, then gave me the names of my two brothers and another spirit-friend who was very dear to me. A few days later I received other proofs of my mother's presence. The medium was controlled by his Indian guide, Red Jacket, gave the names of spirits, personated death-scenes, all of which were recognized by myself and friends. Others received as satisfactory tests as myself. Then came my mother, two brothers, a spirit-friend, Maria, an old maid who was employed by my father when I was a boy, who afterwards lost his sight by accident and was taken care of by my parents in Belgium, giving his name, Frank Stroobant; a little boy gave his name, Johnnie Holland, whom I quickly recognized from a description given of his deformity; also his brother Jamie; then came my Indian guide, giving a good test by showing the medium a peculiar mark on his face.

A friend of mine had a private sitting with the Doctor, the first she had ever had with any medium, and received tests from a sister who passed away in Europe. She described the place where she died, gave the names of the persons who took her last words, with promise to communicate them to her family, which was never done; described a ring given to a friend, and a picture, the only one in the family.

I advised all who are in search of truth and positive evidence that the dead live to give Dr. C. T. Bufum a call. BOSTON.—Anne Lord Chamberlain writes: "While at Laconia, N. H., in September, I had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of Mrs. S. B. Craddock of Concord. She is a splendid test and business medium, one of the most accurate I ever met. While under the influence of 'White Feathers,' she saw and described people and events of which she had no knowledge whatever. She has been remarkably successful in finding lost articles, and bodies of persons drowned. In two instances at Laconia she saw and described the bodies of boys that were drowned, after all hope had been given up of finding them, giving their exact locality and position. Her directions were followed and the bodies recovered. She is a worthy woman, and fully deserving of patronage. Her works speak for her. I wish Mrs. Craddock and all good mediums success."

PRINCETON.—E. H. Heywood writes: "Recently I had the pleasure of attending one of Mrs. M. E. Williams's materializing séances at 232 West 40th street, New York. Several forms appeared, spoke and were recognized. One gave the name of Laura Kendrick. Two or three came out of the cabinet, walked about the circle, and addressed friends or relatives present. Mrs. Williams seems to be an honest woman; Mrs. Olivia F. Shepard, her assistant, who has charge of all matters outside of the cabinet, is well known among reformers, as an intelligent, sincere and devoted worker, who would have nothing to do with what she thought to be untrue. Mrs. Shepard says that, unquestionably, everything done there is in utter good faith, and that the fraud-theory of accounting for the manifestations is preposterous. Mr. J. V. Jeanneret, a gentleman of intelligence and character, who has known Mrs. Williams for years, and been personally conversant with her growth in materializing power, bears witness to her integrity."

### Washington Territory.

ORONDO.—John Brown Smith writes: "Though silent the past summer, I have not forgotten Spiritualism. I daily feel or see the presence of the angels about me; and the lessons of nature on every hand, broken development from the standpoint of individuality without unjust restraint. On the 12th of July I made claim to one hundred and sixty acres, and now propose to donate twenty acres (when I have secured a title for it from the Government) to a Camp-Meeting Association in perpetuity as a camp-ground where Spiritualism, Liberalism and the laws of nature may be expounded to the people at all times. The proposed Camp-Meeting-Ground is situated on the East bank of the Columbia River, about twelve miles above the Wenatchee, and two miles below the mouth of the Entiat River, and is partly covered with a growth of wood. There is a great bend in the river at this point, on account of room being required for five islands and as many channels. The banks of the river furnish several fine places for an auditorium. The location is enchanting. Looking down we see the foaming waters of the Columbia and hear their incessant roar as they rush over the rapids at this point; casting the eye up we behold the rising bluffs of the Columbia, which terminate in Badger Mountain on the East and the snow-capped Cascades on the West, while the scene is made perfect by the intervening sky of blue which ties the Gordian knot of love, binding the heavens and earth in one bond of spirituality.

Orondo possesses two steamboat landings—one below and the other above the rapids, and is near the great cañon that leads directly to Badger and Okanogan from the river. It is named by myself (the first settler in the township), after the ancient spirit 'Orondo,' and is destined to be one of the future commercial emporiums of the Big Bend country. It possesses two good water powers, plenty of building stone, and a fine valley for fruits, and hill lands for grazing for cattle, horses and sheep. There is not as beautiful a location within fifty miles. It is a fit and central site for the future State of Washington to have for a spiritual camp ground. Let us have the first camp-meeting here the coming summer. Though it may be small, it will enable Spiritualists and mediums to get acquainted, and take measures for establishing a camp-meeting each summer in the Territory. Let me hear from all who are interested in the proposed Orondo Camp-Meeting, and I will reply to all who enclose stamps (they are scarce this way). Address me at Orondo, via Badger, Douglas County, Washington Territory."

### Minnesota.

BENSON.—A homeopathic physician, Dr. C. G., writes: "A friend of mine handed me a copy of the BANNER OF LIGHT containing remarks upon the effects of vaccination, and I am in wonder that there should exist a law compelling people to be vaccinated. A letter from Dussel the other day says a case of supposed smallpox was three miles from that place in the country. Though many thought it was a case of measles, everybody had to be vaccinated, to the great delight of the Allopath M. Ds., who had but little practice just then.

Some two years ago I vaccinated a family, by their earnest request. One of them, a young lady of splendid health, suffered greatly. Her arm was indeed sore to the perfect satisfaction of the family. The virus was sent me by Allopath M.Ds. who are establishing a vaccine farm for procuring pure vaccine. The sore on the young lady's arm was as large as a silver dollar. As it began to heal an abscess formed on the lungs, and grew more serious as the arm healed. There were no signs of consumption in the young lady before she was vaccinated. To-day she lies in her grave. Who among the best of doctors can detect diseases in cattle? For this reason, I have no doubt that hundreds of deaths are caused by what is thought pure but which really is poisonous virus.

Many of my patients are among the Catholics, and in the worst cases the priest is called first, and often when death seems almost ready to part the thread of life, I must wait and let him anoint the patient. After the priest has gone through with his ceremonies, I find the patient improved and seemingly getting better. I once asked a priest how it was he could do them so much good. He said: 'It gives the soul rest from worry, and they are naturally made better by a tranquil mind.' Now vaccination proves effective just so far as it rests the mind and drives away the fear. But how much good would the vaccine do if the patient knew that disease was creeping through the blood-vessels from diseased virus? Let all be vaccinated who want to, but why compel others to be and endanger their lives? Better vaccinate the mind, and let the arm go."

### Ohio.

CINCINNATI.—In answer to the question, "What good is there in Spiritualism?" a correspondent sends us an account of a séance at which a person addicted to intemperate habits was present, and to whom his father came from spirit-life, and besought him to reform, and by so doing assist him (the father) to arise from the darkness and misery to which similar habits had consigned him in that existence. He mentioned various incidents in the young man's life, showing that he was cognizant of his every act, and that those acts served to augment his sufferings. "The distressed father asked all in the circle to say a prayer for him; then he told his son to take hold of some one's hand, and there promise him not to drink any more, and be good to his family, which the young man promised to do most earnestly. The spirit-father then asked all in the circle not to forsake his son on account of his drinking, for the angel-world will bless those who do good to his son; to take him into their company, and give him good advice; a member of the circle having remarked that he did not like to sit in a circle where there was a drinking influence, or one who spent his time in the saloons. The above, and much more that cannot now be recalled, occupied fully half an hour. The young man broke down completely, and nearly every member of the circle was in tears at the father's merciful entreaties."

### Verification of a Spirit-Message.

ALDEN J. SPOONER. ALDEN J. SPOONER, from whom a communication in the Spirit-Message Department of the BANNER OF LIGHT of Nov. 15th is given, was, as he there states, well known in this city and in New York. He was at the time of his decease Deputy Clerk of the City Court of Brooklyn, and one of the oldest and best known lawyers of this city. He was, as the message states, one of the originators of the Long Island Historical Society. He had the pleasure of an acquaintance with him for upward of twenty years; and I recognize the communication referred to in the BANNER as expressed in his characteristic manner. Yours truly, JOSEPH M. FRAY, Brooklyn, N. Y., Dec. 26th, 1884.

### THE YEAR IS OLD—SO OLD!

The year is old—so old!  
The nights are long and dark and dreary;  
The fretting winds are never weary;  
They fret against the window pane  
The burden of their sad refrain.  
The year is old—so old!  
The year is old—so old!  
The mountains tell it to the river,  
Their sides deep rent by seam and shiver;  
The rivers, sobbing as they flow,  
Repeat it in the valleys below.  
This wild sea-wave takes up the strain,  
And ocean bears it back again.  
The year is old—so old!  
Oh! voices of the dreary night!  
Oh! sleepless watches for the light!  
Oh! hills that lit your hoary heads  
Above the boundless river-beds!  
Oh! winds that wall round nameless graves!  
Oh! sobbing, sighing, wild sea-waves!  
The year is old—so old!

### THE EARLY DAYS OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY WARREN CHASE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Few persons who enter the ranks at this time, either as mediums or defenders of the spirit-intercourse, have any idea of what its earliest workers had to suffer from the persecuting sentiment which then, as now, found its source and spring in two prominent classes in society—the sectarian Christian bigots and the vulgar rabble, which is ever ready to be "set on" and bark, or bite if it can, when urged on by pretended pious and respectable leaders. Having been actively engaged in this cause from the very start, and having held a discussion in defense of Davis's great book, "Nature's Divine Revelations," with a clergyman, before the rappings were commenced at Hydesville, I know, probably, as much of its early history and persecutions as any one. Probably I have endured as much of its vile slanders and persecutions as any one, except the more sensitive mediums, many of whom I have known who were crushed and some sent prematurely to spirit-life, where they found better treatment, while many were driven back and forced to abandon the work they might and would gladly have done had they been treated decently.

I sometimes turn back to my diaries or Life Line or scrap-books of early correspondence, and recall events long since forgotten by most who still live and knew of them, and contrast the persecutions of that time with those of this day, which we even now call severe, but which, compared to those of the first ten years, are like the rumbling and echoes of distant thunder compared to the fiery rattling overhead. Only those possessed of strong nerves, large firmness and indomitable perseverance could withstand the opposition which confronted so many of the early mediums. Many times when I had public notices ahead for lectures, anonymous letters would be sent there, directed to the post-master, or any Spiritualist, or some idiot, warning them against me as the most dangerous and wicked social and religious renegade that lived, and accusing me of crimes and wickedness none of my friends nor any who ever knew me had ever heard of; hundreds of times accusing me of having deserted my family and neglecting all family obligations, when there was not a more harmonious or devoted family in the country, and never has been. I never was attacked with missiles in any of my meetings, and never had one broken up, but in every false and underhanded way they tried to keep people from hearing me, and yet I kept on my course and at length lived it all down.

For several years it has been smooth sailing, and the breezes from the spirit-arch are moving me smoothly into the harbor of the Summer-Land, where I shall meet scores of the early workers who knew me on earth when friendship in this cause was precious, and when the work we did tried the hearts and souls of men and women. I have lectured on Spiritualism, including spirit-life and intercourse, in more places than any person now living in this country; and, I think, in the greatest variety of places. I have given one course of lectures on it in an Episcopal Church, on experience, I think, no other speaker has had; and I have spoken in all denominations' churches except Catholic, but not in all on this subject. I have lectured in a blacksmith's shop, standing on the forge; in a cooper's shop among the rubbish; in a sheep-pen (not such as held Christ's lambs); in barns and sheds, and of course groves, etc.; and the new gospel (good news) has spread till I have seen the glorious result, and now a great Temple is erected in Boston for its spread, and many small ones over the country, and many of the abandoned churches are open to us where the society has outgrown the creed and the preacher. We have millions now where we had only scores when I first took my gripeack and started, often on foot, from place to place, to proclaim the new and glad tidings.

Forrester, Mass.

### Freethought University.

We have received from H. L. Green of Salamanca, N. Y., a copy of a call directed "To the Freethinkers of the United States and Canada," from which we gather that the question of establishing a school free from superstition, to which Freethinkers may without fear of creedal influence send their children for education, has been under consideration for a number of years, though as yet no real movement in that direction has been inaugurated. At the late Convention of Freethinkers at Salamanca, he introduced the subject, and was much pleased to find his views fully endorsed by all in attendance. He therefore proceeds to unfold a plan for the inauguration of such a school at Salamanca, his reasons being his conviction that "there are more of this class of people residing in Western New York than any other portion of the country of the same extent," and that there is no small town so accessible by railroad and other conveyances as Salamanca.

Since the proposition was laid before the Convention above named, one of the leading business men in this town has come forward and promised to donate a very fine lot of land for the school, and also to take a number of shares of stock. The working plan suggested by Mr. Green is as follows:

1st. That not one cent of money be called for until twenty-five thousand dollars is pledged, a sum sufficient to pay up as good a building as would be desired at the first; and that the twenty-five thousand dollars be pledged in this way: That it be subscribed for in twenty-five dollar shares, and that every dollar of this twenty-five thousand be put into a school building, so that when the building is erected the company will own the grounds and the building free from debt.

2d. That as the one thousand shares are taken, the persons who have taken them meet and perfect an organization and appoint the proper officers, but that no other share of the sum of this twenty-five thousand dollars with which to pay his salary.

3d. That when the organization is thus perfected, it immediately set up the school building, and that while it is being erected the Association call upon the Freethinkers of this country and Canada to subscribe a sufficient sum to set the school going, on a small scale at first, of course.

Mr. Green desires that all persons feeling favorable to such an undertaking, who may read the plan set forth, will address him at Salamanca, with information as to how many shares they are willing to take in the educational institution thus projected.

### The Spread of Spiritualism.

In our last we called attention to the esoteric manifestation of spiritual phenomena in London; the forcing of a fact upon public attention. But although this has its uses... the true strength of Spiritualism lies in its esoteric and private manifestations, which are occurring in thousands of families and in all civilized countries. Indeed it is an exception where the subject crops up in any small assemblage not to find some one or more present who have at least an incident of spiritual phenomena in their experience to relate. It is only this so-called "credulous" (9) Spiritualists who accept them as probable facts, for the reason that he has, as a rule, experience of analogous phenomena; while the "presumably" "knowing" ones, who have decided a priori that such things are impossible, make as the weak ones of the "believers" the honest doubters, and do not have the courage to make a fair trial of the truth and spread of the subject.

### Questions Answered.

Through the Trance-Mediumship of Mr. W. J. Colville.

SERIES NUMBER TWO.

[Reported for the Banner of Light.]

Ques.—What effect does the perfume of flowers have on the brain? and would you recommend the practice of having flowers constantly in close proximity?

Ans.—The perfume of certain flowers is good for certain persons. Your necessities are not all alike: What is your death is another person's life; what will bring you the best of health will bring another person disease. You may have already too much of what your neighbor lacks. The perfume of a certain flower may supply your deficiencies, while it would overburden another with that of which he has a sufficiency. Very excitable persons ought to be surrounded by flowers of strong odors, which are somewhat composing in their nature; thus a great many odors of flowers are used as anæsthetics, and are administered instead of composing draughts. Very many flowers have a strong perfume, and when placed near the bedside of a sleeper induce sleep; whereas, as these same flowers placed in the room of another, when he had slept late in the morning, would cause him to sleep the best part of the day, and on waking to feel oppressed and suffer pain. The result of placing flowers in close proximity to any person would depend on the nature of the flowers, of the person, the time, and the place. The same flowers are not good for everybody. Certain flowers have an exhilarating perfume, as the lemon plant. There are many others which have a directly opposite effect. Of course you can discover what flowers are best for you, by the effect they produce upon you. If they make you feel unwell, you know you have tried the wrong kind of flowers. If they improve your health, then it will be well to have them around you. Usually, flowers which have not a very strong perfume are good for the majority of persons, because mixed flowers will generally be of advantage in purifying the atmosphere and cultivating the love of the beautiful, thus tending to general harmony.

Q.—Much of our unhappiness here is caused by our dread of something that may happen to ourselves or our friends. Have you, in spirit-life, any dread of the future?

Ans.—There are some spirits who have; but those who are in higher worlds have no dread at all. The very highest condition here on earth is that of perfect resignation—not mere stoicism, but something far beyond it—a firm belief in the Infinite Love, a perfect confidence in the Infinite Right, an earnest conviction that all things are working together for the highest good. We consider that the most perfect condition of mind is to be so absorbed in the duties of the present that you have no time to think about the future. That passage in the Bible concerning the fowls of the air; the lilies and Solomon, is very often misquoted and misunderstood, as though Jesus taught that it was well for people to be idle; to do nothing, but wait for God to feed them. The true idea is, that you should fulfill all the duties of to-day, and should be so absorbed in them that all your energies will be employed in doing your duty, and you will have none to spend in sentimental fears, and forebodings for a morrow that may never come. If you are doing your duty in the present, have no fear for the future; for the angel-world has work for you to do, the angel-world will provide for your necessities. In higher worlds we are quite aware that all things are as they should be, so far as circumstances are such that we have no control over them. But if we, by misuse of any power, bring a catastrophe upon ourselves, we know that the catastrophe will teach us a useful lesson; and that it is right we should have to bear the consequences. We understand that whatever comes to us is right; that it gives us experience we need. Whenever you are confident you are in the path of duty, and are moved by higher powers, you may dismiss all fear. The higher you rise the more consolations you are; the more completely you obey the moral voice the less fear you will be troubled with.

Q.—Where was the human soul before the birth of the infant?

Ans.—The human soul is a preexistent individuality, as almost all philosophers have taught. You are aware that the words cherub and seraph are oftentimes mentioned, yet many people fail to understand what the cherubim and seraphim really are. A cherub is a masculine spirit; a seraph is a feminine spirit; and these names are applied to spirits before they are incarnated in physical forms. These spirits are individual, but they necessarily lack wisdom and experience; they are in embryonic life; they are germinal; they possess the possibilities of future greatness, but that future greatness is no more unfolded than the possibilities of the flower are unfolded in the seed. Before the spirit comes in contact with matter, it is really an individual creature. After its incarnation in matter, and arrival at angelic blessedness, it is no longer the seed, but the flower; it is no longer the germ, but the full-fledged bird.

Q.—[From the audience.] Is the spirit, then, eternal?

Ans.—We consider that the spirit is eternal. Concerning the individuality of the soul, we are taught by those higher than ourselves that the soul always existed as an individual spark of life, just as the drops of water in the ocean are individualized, just as all the grains of sand on the seashore may be individualized. The shrine of the soul is not individualized; the spiritual body is not individualized; the mind is not individualized; nothing that is expressed is individualized; but the soul itself, which is the fountain of individual intelligence, is individualized.

Q.—Does it make our spirit-friends unhappy to have us mourn and grieve for them?

Ans.—Certainly. They are sorry when you mourn and grieve for them; because they are attracted to you by feelings of sympathy. They minister to you, in order that they may stay your tears, and turn your thoughts to higher things. The custom of wearing black at funerals of the departed is always to be deprecated. We advise persons to avoid mourning altogether. It is a vestige of ancient barbarism; it has nothing to do with spirituality. The greatest spiritual teachings that have ever been given to the world have alluded to death as in reality a birth. So far as our appreciation of it is concerned, we realize that in death the spirit has only completed one stage in its experience, and begun another; a higher one. If a spirit loves you very dearly, your mourning of course will reach that spirit, who will sympathize with you and become saddened; grieve by your grief. The spirit who reaches after and sees the ultimate of all things cannot be made sad; whereas, those nearest to you, your immediate relatives or friends, those who are not much above your plane of spiritual development, are likely to be affected by your grief. We would urge all mourners, instead of mourning over the vacant socket, to think of the deceased spirit, to seek after communion with the risen mortal, rather than indulge in sentimental regrets over the perishing shrine, the form that was once dead.

Q.—Are there beings who know all our thoughts and actions, and who approve or condemn us for them? We reply in the affirmative. Of course we can do so only through the medium of intuition. We have not the same evidence of the Infinite Mind that we have evidence of your presence, because your presence is something we can thoroughly comprehend; your spirits are spirits with whom we can meet as equals; whereas the Infinite Mind is not necessarily so. Beyond the Infinite Mind there is a lower plane, and that lower plane is the plane of the human mind, which is the plane of the human body, and that human body is the plane of the human soul, and that human soul is the plane of the human spirit, and that human spirit is the plane of the human intelligence, and that human intelligence is the plane of the human wisdom, and that human wisdom is the plane of the human love, and that human love is the plane of the human truth, and that human truth is the plane of the human justice, and that human justice is the plane of the human mercy, and that human mercy is the plane of the human peace, and that human peace is the plane of the human happiness, and that human happiness is the plane of the human glory, and that human glory is the plane of the human power, and that human power is the plane of the human knowledge, and that human knowledge is the plane of the human wisdom, and that human wisdom is the plane of the human love, and that human love is the plane of the human truth, and that human truth is the plane of the human justice, and that human justice is the plane of the human mercy, and that human mercy is the plane of the human peace, and that human peace is the plane of the human happiness, and that human happiness is the plane of the human glory, and that human glory is the plane of the human power, and that human power is the plane of the human knowledge, and that human knowledge is the plane of the human wisdom, and that human wisdom is the plane of the human love, and that human love is the plane of the human truth, and that human truth is the plane of the human justice, and that human justice is the plane of the human mercy, and that human mercy is the plane of the human peace, and that human peace is the plane of the human happiness, and that human happiness is the plane of the human glory, and that human glory is the plane of the human power, and that human power is the plane of the human knowledge, and that human knowledge is the plane of the human wisdom, and that human wisdom is the plane of the human love, and that human love is the plane of the human truth, and that human truth is the plane of the human justice, and that human justice is the plane of the human mercy, and that human mercy is the plane of the human peace, and that human peace is the plane of the human happiness, and that human happiness is the plane of the human glory, and that human glory is the plane of the human power, and that human power is the plane of the human knowledge, and that human knowledge is the plane of the human wisdom, and that human wisdom is the plane of the human love, and that human love is the plane of the human truth, and that human truth is the plane of the human justice, and that human justice is the plane of the



Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1884.

Cremation.

The corner stone of the Mount Olivet Crematory Temple on Long Island, N. Y., was laid on the afternoon of Nov. 19th. Dr. J. D. Bangless, President of the U. S. Cremation Co., made the opening remarks, in which he said that the structure would be of brick and marble, 40x72 feet in size, and a modified Grecian temple in design; that it would be erected on a site including about seven-eighths of an acre, and nearly 200 feet square, which had been purchased for \$2800; that the furnace would be constructed of fire-brick, and adapted to burn coke, and that the incinerating chambers would consist of retorts, which would exclude all fuel and flame from contact with the bodies. He further explained that incineration would take place at a temperature of about 2500° Fahrenheit, and that it would only require forty minutes to reduce a body weighing one hundred pounds to a nearly ash weighing about four pounds.

The next speaker was Prof. Felix Adler, who maintained that burial was repugnant to common sense and would certainly be superseded by cremation. The public welfare, he said, demanded that putrefying bodies should no longer saturate the soil and poison water. Poetic imagery had deluded people in this matter too long. Poets might rhapsodize about cemeteries, but sanitarians were forced to disagree with them. A human body was the garment of intelligence, and should not be suffered to become the prey of worms, but should be resolved into its elements by fire. By thus respecting the body one revered human intelligence.

"The great dragons in our path," said the Rev. Howard Henderson, D. D., "are custom and prejudice. Nothing is so tyrannous as sentiment associated with tradition. And yet poetry and propriety are on our side. The poets speak of the ashes of the dead, and surely dust and ashes are interchangeable terms. The human body lives by combustion. Putrefaction is only a slow burning. What a hyacinth is to a bulb a celestial is to a terrestrial body, and one's identity can be preserved infinitely better in an urn than in a grave."

After the ceremony the president said that 20 bodies were waiting to be burned, and that he expected a much larger number as soon as the crematory was in working order, especially as several officers connected with leading cemeteries had approved of cremation. The building, which is under the supervision of Dr. Charles J. James, will be completed in February. The cost of erection will be about \$19,000. The expense of cremating a body will range from \$10 to \$30. The building will contain a "refrigerarium," where bodies can be kept for an indefinite period; a "calderium," or room with a high temperature, for cases of possible suspended animation; an "odulation," or urn room, and an "atelier," or autopsy room. The body of the building will be fitted up as a chapel, or auditorium. In the central aisle of the chapel there will be a catafalque, on which the bodies will be placed, and whence they will immediately descend by means of an elevator to the incinerating room below. Thus the incineration and the service can proceed simultaneously. The offices and reception rooms will be on the main floor. Above them will be the apartments of the superintendent and his family.

The following paragraph from the press despatches of Nov. 25th describes the dedication of another of these useful and practical temples, this time in Pennsylvania:

"The Lancaster crematorium, built by the Lancaster Cremation and Funeral Reform Society, was dedicated this afternoon with appropriate religious services. The crematorium is the second establishment of the kind in the United States, and the only one now open to the general public. The building occupies an elevated situation in the southern part of the city, and will be furnished with two retorts, although only one is in position now. The first incineration took place to-day subsequent to the dedicatory services, the body being that of Mrs. Frederica Beesler of Jersey City, some time deceased. The remains were reduced to ashes in a little over an hour's time. A number of applications for cremation have already been received from different parts of the country."

The young and promising actress, Laura G. Clancy, whose mother and sister were in spirit-life, passed on to join them from the home of her friend, Mrs. H. L. Lumbach, in Baltimore, Md., Nov. 10th. She was a Spiritualist, and shortly before her departure she said: "I know my mother will be with me to-night. Have my body cremated and the ashes divided, so that one-half can lie with sister Venie in Baltimore, and half with mother in Burlington, Vt." The promise was made that her wish should be complied with. Mr. and Mrs. Lumbach, and Mr. J. N. Gardner, left Baltimore with the body in time to reach Lancaster, Pa., Dec. 2d, on which day the body, which had been embalmed, was taken from the casket, wrapped in a cloth saturated with alum water, placed in an iron orb and rolled before the retort. The retort was opened at 8:20 P. M. and the body placed in the chamber, which was heated to 2200°. It did not burn, and retained its form for nearly an hour, but then sank. In less than two hours it was reduced to ashes, which were taken out and placed in two sealed tin boxes and disposed of as requested by Miss Clancy.

The New England Cremation Society, organized last winter, but too late for securing an act of incorporation, has petitioned the Legislature of Massachusetts for such an act, and will, we understand, soon adopt measures for the building of a crematory similar to those above described, in this city or vicinity.

sition is shown to be a reality; when this question of "May not such and such things be?" is met not only with an affirmative answer, but with palpable proof that they not only may be but are, these pulpsters are ready to denounce us, and because we announce our belief charge us with being unbelievers. The inconsistency of one who is called a "true believer" surpasses all our powers of comprehension.

"How to Live a Century, and Grow Old Gracefully."

The above is the title of Dr. Peabody's late book upon hygiene and health, previously noticed in our columns. We see by our exchanges that it is being reviewed not only favorably, but very generously, by the secular and literary press. The New York Home Journal says:

"The author maintains that all good constitutions should endure in a full possession of the senses for a hundred years, and that every child ought to be born with such a constitution. He holds, moreover, that such a state of improved vigor and longevity is attainable if people will only use common sense and reason in regulating their habits of living, labor and recreation. He lays down certain principles to be followed with this view, and they are certainly quite simple and sensible. They comprise the now orthodox regimen of temperate eating and drinking, pure air and water, regular hours, good society, cheerful thoughts, and an open and cheerful mind. The book is both interesting and profitable. There is, of course, a good deal of incidental doctrine in the brochure, which is not absolutely essential; it is entertaining for those who have got well started in the way of reading health literature."

For sale at the Banner of Light Bookstore, 9 Bowditch street, Boston.

THE ST. LOUIS MEDICAL JOURNAL (published at 608 North 13th street, St. Louis, Mo.) opens its pages to writers whose progressive views are strongly in contrast with those who seem to think the limit of medical knowledge reached. In an article in its December issue upon "Medical Secularism," it is said that in every division of society a creed-bound dogma prevails, continually crying, "Lo! I am the way," and ability in any direction is measured by the capability of the individual to inflict abuse upon those who have honest grounds for a difference of opinion. This is bad enough anywhere; but when it exists in a profession, to which the people entrust their lives and health, it is to be more than lamented, and that it does exist there this writer admits.

Staats Zeitung, printed in the German language and published in Charleston, S. C., refers in the following terms to the New Spiritual Temple in the Back Bay district, and its prospective uses:

"The Spiritualists in Boston have erected a temple costing \$250,000. It contains rooms for the use of Progressive Lyceums, a large hall on the first floor with seats for fifteen hundred persons, and in the upper story five small halls for lectures. Sunday mornings and evenings lectures will be delivered in the large hall, and on week evenings in the smaller halls. Healing mediums are also to be provided with rooms in which to cure the sick, by the laying on of hands, 'without money and without price.'"

"Shadows."

In John Wetherbee's new book, now in press, one of the twenty-eight chapters is called "The Boston Outlook." The following extracts from it we copy from the advanced sheets:

"The Spiritualists who live in, especially if they are natives of Boston, have good reasons for being proud of their locality. I do not mean that it is of the 'burning bush' order, a place to put off one's shoes, because of its being holy ground, for a good deal of its terra firma is artificial; but I do not count that fact as in any sense unholy, for that has been a decided improvement upon the original first outline of it as nature made it, or God, if one likes that expression better. Part of this artificial addition, a very small part, to be sure, has been selected by a liberal Spiritualist and dedicated to the spirit-world, and a spiritual temple erected thereon; and yet with that creditable event in my mind, I am not proud of Boston for any special holiness, and so what I am going to say I do with my 'shoes' on, uninfluenced by the Horeb injunction. I was saying, we Spiritualists who live in Boston have many reasons to be proud of it. It is a bright and respectable place for a new country, or new to Caucasian life, as America is.

I am aware also that all over this broad land are the sons and daughters of this 'Hub,' as it is sometimes called, who have as much inherent right to be proud of it as I have; so while I express my pride in being thus generally connected with the locality, I do not put on any airs, or prevent any distant ones from having their pride in this or any other place, on the world's map.

By Boston I do not mean the little peninsula on the coast of the Bay State, of two or three square miles of land, which the Indians called Shawmut, nor it with the accretions of territory of which I have spoken, by the 'removal of mountains' in the neighborhood and casting them into the sea, thus doubling and trebling its area; nor it with the supplements of contiguous cities and towns by annexation, so that now, geographically speaking, it has a territory over ten times what it had when it first became a figure in history. I include its vicinity, or the general indefinite locality which goes to make up the intellectual atmosphere of this small, but may I not say rather brilliant spot in the world of letters and of thought?

One of the things that helps make me proud of this locality, that so enhances its value to me, is the reception it gives to Modern Spiritualism. How many pleasant or intelligent faces will fall a shade or two, on such an intimation as this—without any basis of truth; such will of course say or think and are happy in knowing that it is not true, and that if it was true it would be retrogression, and a stain rather than a source of pride to any one. They might perhaps be charitable to the writer, and suppose him to be living in his little world and meeting Spiritualists only, and if meeting others, not counting them; strabismus in his eye and he thinks the world squints.

The fact that the first Spiritual Temple of which we have spoken is blossoming out here in its fine architectural proportions, is but one of the pointers that in this summing up of my pride in the locality, prove that I am not drawing on my imagination for my facts; that I have solid reasons.

As in the human organization there are ganglionic centres or sensitive places which are not universal in the human system; so there may be, so to speak, ganglionic centres on the earth's surface. . . . Palestine, for instance, only about as large and unattractive as Wales, has left its mark deeply on the human race. Why did it happen so, on that circumscribed and unattractive spot, when there were so many superior ones in every respect? Frederick II. was sent to Syria against his will; the Church persecuted him, and one of the charges was for saying, 'that if God had ever seen Naples, he never would have selected Palestine for his chosen people.' I quote this circumstance to show it is not the attractive features of a locality that make it one of these ganglionic or sensitive places. Neither dare I say that Boston is any more ganglionic, or thin, or sensitive, or imaginative, than many other places in the American domain; but I have uttered a thought, indigenous, one may say, to a 'Hub,' and I must try to make it reasonable.

December Magazines.

THE HERALD OF HEALTH gives instructive articles upon "The Influence of School Life on Eye-Sight," "The Mind Cure," and "Massage for Indigestion." In "Answers to Questions," "Topics of the Month," and "Studies in Hygiene for Women," valuable suggestions on a variety of topics are given. M. L. Holbrook, M. D., publisher, New York.

VICK'S ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY has an elegant group of dahlias for its frontispiece. Seasonable instructions are given in every branch of floriculture, and a review of the gains and losses during the past year experienced by farmers and florists. Rochester, N. Y.: James Vick.

THE SIDERAL MESSENGER.—The usual variety interesting to students of astronomy, and those who would learn of the current phenomena of the heavens, is given. An extract from a private letter states that when the eruption from the volcano of Krakatoa occurred in August of last year, the bark Wm. H. Beale, of Boston, was within twelve to fifteen miles, and it soon became too dark to run from the shower of ashes. They therefore anchored for forty-eight hours. During most of the time the darkness was so great that at noon the hand could not be seen within a few inches of the eye. The ashes fell in such enormous quantities that all hands were constantly engaged in shoveling them overboard, as well as they could in the darkness. As soon as they could see at all they weighed anchor, and found the ashes on the surface of the ocean six hundred miles away. Northfield, Minn.: W. W. Payne.

RECEIVED: BABYHOOD. Devoted exclusively to the care of Infants and Young Children, and the General Interests of the Nursery. New York: 18 Spruce street.

—THE COUNCIL FIRE. Devoted to the Civilization and Rights of the American Indian, and the Promotion of the Principles of Arbitration. Washington, D. C.: T. A. Bland.

—NOTES AND QUERIES IN ALL Departments of Literature. Manchester, N. H.: S. C. & L. M. Gould.

—THE MANIFESTO, Shaker Village, N. H.—THE SOCIOLOGIST, Adair Creek, Tenn.

Shawmut Lyceum.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

As an occasional visitor to this Lyceum, when in Boston, it was my privilege to recently attend one of its sessions, whereat the marked improvement in all of the exercises participated in was apparent—especially the recitations: Miss Rosa Wilbur, though young in years, showed remarkable talent, and it is possible if she continues in her studies she may eclipse, at no distant day, many of the "professionals" to be before the Lyceum.

The introduction of the "Shawmut Educator," prepared by Mr. Danforth, the Secretary, adds another interesting feature, thereby giving the children instruction upon spiritual matters and kindred subjects. These little ones' minds are plastic, and now is the proper time to mold them, avoiding, of course, running into sectarianism of any kind, and only working with a deep desire to give them truth, outlining it wherever it may be found.

We noticed among the workers Miss M. T. Shelhamer of the "Message Department," who is to be highly commended for her efforts in forwarding the cause in this direction, when her time must be so much occupied during the week. We hope the Spiritualists of Boston will not be unmindful of the grand work that is being done here, and will encourage the enterprise by their presence and in other ways.

Too much praise cannot be awarded Mr. Hatch, the Conductor, and his assistants, for their years of hard labor to make the Lyceum movement a success. May these pioneers remain long enough in the form to realize that their efforts have not been in vain. R. I. H.

The Hebrews are often spoken of as "a race without paupers." Though not strictly accurate, this statement gains color from the proverbial thrift of the race and from their excellent system of charities in the large cities. For the past ten years the Hebrew community in New York has steadily had in operation a scheme for relieving the needs of the poor, and this has been done by the aid of philanthropists. The city is divided into twenty-four districts, and in each district a visiting committee investigates all applications for relief. Distribution of clothing and money is carried out by the executive committee, and there also is a well organized medical corps, with a competent physician in each district. One of the best elements of the work is a pension system by which rent is paid for poor widows and infirm families. There are nearly five hundred of these pensioned families in the city, families which, but for this aid, would inevitably be in the poorhouses or other public institutions. The true beneficence of the whole system of the United Hebrew Charities is shown by the fact that all of the work is done by volunteers. All the officers serve without pay, and the cost of distribution is never more than ten cents for each dollar of benefit. In many charitable societies the cost of distribution is nearly half of the amount distributed.

Lydia E. Plinkham's Vegetable Compound was first prepared in liquid form only; but now it can be sent in dry form, by mail, to points where no druggist can readily be reached, and to-day the Compound in lozenges and pills finds its way even to the foreign climes of Europe and Asia.

The friends of the late Edward S. Wheeler—and they are numerous all over the country—should circulate freely the Sketch of his Life, that has been carefully prepared by Mr. George A. Bacon, which has been put in convenient pamphlet form by Colby & Rich, Booksellers, No. 9 Bowditch street, Boston. Price 10 cents.

Passed to Spirit-Life:

From New York City, Dec. 11th, Mrs. Eliza Foster Stillman, in the 53d year of her age.

Mrs. Stillman will be remembered by multitudes from the Atlantic to Colorado, for her fine mental gifts in the highest degree, and her healing power of her hands. She was a woman of pure force and energy of character, with a warm heart and active sympathies, whose life-record was a full of pleasant memories to her friends. For some years she has been a great sufferer from rheumatism, and with a firm faith in the reality of spirit-life, she was fully prepared and eager for the welcome change. Mrs. J. A. Crockett, who had been a friend and neighbor, and the beautiful funeral services, which were held at her late home, the residence of Dr. Denington, 124 West 44th street, on Friday, Dec. 12th, the remains were taken to Scholastic College, near early home, for interment.

From Watfield, Vt., Nov. 18th, Joel Pattee, aged 67 years.

He was for many years a firm Spiritualist, and ever ready to express his belief in words and acts. Day and night he labored for the spiritual welfare of his family, and for the benefit of the human race. He was a man of pure heart and high character, and his death was a great loss to his family and to the community. His remains were taken to Scholastic College, near early home, for interment.

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AGASSIZ AND SPIRITUALISM: Involving the investigation of Harvard College Professors in 1882. By Allen Putnam. This stirring work contains the most characteristic of memoir, essay and review. The matter considered is of vital interest to the cause of Spiritualism, and readers cannot fail to be pleased with the treatment which the author accords to it.

TALES OF THE SUN-RAYS. What Hans Christian Andersen tells a dear child about the Sun-Rays. Dedicated to the Dear Child Santa, by the Spirit Hans Christian Andersen. Written through the mediumship of Adeline von Vay, of Geneva, in Switzerland, Austria, and translated by Dr. G. Bloede, of Brooklyn, N. Y. Paper.

THE LIFE. The main object of this little volume is to give to suggestive teaching a recognition and a force (in the domain of religion and morals) greater than dictation has.

"MINISTRY OF ANGELS" REALIZED. A Letter to the Edwards Congregational Church, Boston. By A. E. Newton.

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For sale by COLBY & RICH.

THE DAY AFTER DEATH. A Discourse by Spirit ESSE SARGENT, through the mediumship of Mrs. CORAL V. RICHMOND, delivered in Fairbank Hall, Chicago, Ill., Sunday evening, Jan. 10th, 1884. This discourse vividly portrays the experiences of its author immediately prior to, during, and after his transition from the material to the spiritual state of human existence. It is the only work of the kind which has been read in the columns of the Banner of Light, presented in a pamphlet form, convenient for circulation and preservation, and in order to insure a general distribution, the pamphlet is sold at the retail price of five cents per copy, and should, at this low figure, reach an extended circulation.

SPIRIT WORKS: Real but not Miraculous. A Lecture, read at the City Hall in Boston, Mass., on the evening of Sept. 21st, 1883, by ALLEN PUTNAM. This lecture, delivered in Roxbury, Sept. 21st, 1883, and was the subject of a paper read by Mr. Allen Putnam, through the mediumship of several addresses by Leroy Sunderland, A. E. Newton, J. M. Spear, and others, in smaller rooms, and a most interesting and instructive lecture on the subject of Spiritualism, which was the first of a series of lectures given through the press and by posters, and the first to be printed and based in pamphlet form. Though the author says that he has no special interest in the subject, yet the pamphlet is of great interest and value because of its connection with the introduction of Spiritualism into the public mind.

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