

# BANNER OF LIGHT.



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## OUTSIDE THE GATES: THE STORY OF A SPIRIT'S WOE.

GIVEN THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF  
MISS M. T. SHELHAMER.

### CHAPTER III.

OUTSIDE THE GATES! How the conviction settled like a weight of gloom upon my spirit. Below was the material, with its tolls, its struggles and its conflicts; here was a dead, blank desert, with nothing to enliven or to quicken one's being. There was light and peace and happiness and heavenly rest. There, beyond that wall of beauty, lived my idol, the dear one whom in all my dark hours I had never forgotten. There, too, was my pure-hearted little Daisy, and other dear ones whom I had mourned when they slipped from their earthly hold.

And I could not get to them; I was debarred a sight of their sweet faces, and of the heavenly land; and although my heart, famished for the sight, would find no entrance-way into the glorious Aether-World. In my grief I madly questioned why I could not find my darlings and be at peace; and one of the voices of my soul answered: "Never, until you regain your self-respect, can you find the heavenly way, or gaze upon the faces of the immortals who live in purity and peace."

I bowed my head in submission, and paced to and fro, as near to the belt of light as I could get. I gave no thought, no notice, to any of my fellow-travelers. If curious glances fell upon me I knew it not. With bent head and lowered gaze, my black garments trailing behind me, and busy with my own remorseful thoughts, I passed on, and recognized neither the surrounding faces nor the lapses of time.

I know now that a human soul can endure an eternity of experience in an hour's anguish. Not that I was but a brief hour in my woe, but that I have seen spirits suffer so, that it would seem as though ages had passed over them in an instant of time. Oh! what should I do? What would give me back the fresh innocence of heart that was mine before I entered upon my path of sin?

These were the questions I demanded of myself; how could I get beyond those Sunrise Gates? I could never return to earth and reveal my suffering and my wrong-doing to the dear ones there. What! torture their hearts with a knowledge of how I had deceived them? Never! though ten thousand torments awaited me.

In the midst of my terrible cogitations I heard a sound, and a voice above me said: "You will find relief in work. Work for your fellow-beings. There are those all around you who need your counsel and your sympathy. Speak to them encouragingly; it will strengthen you. Go back to earth and tell your story; it will deter others from doing wrong. Oh! forget self in ministering to others, and you will regain all that you deem is lost."

Like the sound of an angel harp the words fell in silvery accents on my soul, and, looking upward, I caught a glimpse of a radiant face beaming upon me through the wall of light; but, as it vanished, the clouds again gathered over me, and I wrapped the sombre folds of my robe around my head and passed onward, more unhappy than before.

I now know that I was in this unhappy condition for months, though to me then it seemed as though eternal ages were rolling over me. I continued on my way, wrapped up in my woe, until at length I began to notice the import of a sound that had for some time fallen unheeded on my ear, and discovered it to be the low, moaning, sobbing cry of a woman's voice. As I began to comprehend the sorrow of the tone, a feeling of pity came over me. Was it possible that any one could be so unhappy as I?

I threw aside the veil from my face and looked around, and there, peering to and fro like myself, I beheld a young and beautiful woman, who was sobbing as if her soul would rend in two. In her arms she held a chubby, dimpled child, over which she bowed in her agony of grief. Good heavens! I thought, a child, an innocent babe from heaven, in this forlorn and gloomy place! What can it mean? I approached the woman, and she could not have been more than a few paces from me, but I would not let her see that I had seen her. "I am a sister," I said, "and I will not harm you; perhaps I

"Oh! who are you?" she sobbed, turning her tear-stained face toward mine. "You speak kindly, but you cannot help me; no one can do that. I have my punishment to bear alone. Please leave me. I want no one."

"I am one like you who has suffered deeply," was my answer. "I may be powerless to aid you in any outward manner, but I can give you my sympathy. Come, tell me your trouble; it will relieve you to confide in some one who is friendly, and I can at least be that."

She hesitated a moment, and then, as if the prospect of sharing her sorrows with another was pleasing to her, she pressed her child more closely to her bosom and began to relate, in a hurried and tearful voice, her tale of woe. The little one in her arms cooed softly, and nestled to his mother's heart in innocent love and confidence that was beautiful to behold.

By dint of gentle persuasion, and sympathetic assurances of my interest in her and her infant, I succeeded in winning the whole story of her life from the unhappy girl. Every now and then she would break down in pitiful sobs that for a time choked her utterance; but she would soon grow calm again, and continue her narrative.

Thus I learned that she had been the idolized child of a poor but refined widow, whose husband had died about three years after their marriage, leaving her this daughter, a child of two years. By careful application to her profession as a music and vocal teacher, the lady had succeeded in providing for the wants of herself and child, and in rearing the latter in refinement and culture.

"I never wanted for anything mamma could get me," said the weeping girl. "She gave me the best advantages of a liberal education the place afforded. She denied herself the luxuries of life, that I might go into society as well informed and as handsomely dressed as the daughters of our more wealthy neighbors. She loved me devotedly, and I repaid her devotion with unflinching gratitude."

"My mother was the organist of our Unitarian society," she continued, after a fresh paroxysm of tears, "and under her tuition I became sufficiently proficient in vocal music to be considered a fit candidate for the position of first mezzo-soprano in the choir. Our tenor was a handsome man, about thirty years old, when I first met him about two years ago. His black hair and beard, his dark eyes and rosy cheeks, his straight form and superb bearing had won the admiration of all the members of our congregation, while his divine singing made him almost worshiped by my mother and myself."

The girl went on to relate that it soon became the custom of this handsome Adonis to visit her home several times a week, for the purpose of practicing singing with herself and her mother, the latter possessing a rich contralto voice, that gave depth and harmony of tone to the mellow sweetness of the others. And it soon became quite the thing for these two ladies to await the coming of the dashing tenor with impatience and eagerness.

But why dwell upon the story? Little by little the intimacy of the young people advanced, until the dreadful truth dawned upon the girl that she was soon to assume the cares and responsibilities of maternity. With blanched cheeks and paling brow she sought an interview with her lover, imparting to him her secret, and imploring him to make restitution for her honor. He soothed her anxiety with gentle caresses and promises of an immediate union; but the next day it transpired that he had left the city for parts unknown.

Wrought up to frenzy by the knowledge of her shame and her lover's baseness, she gathered up her jewels and the little money she had in her possession, and fled from her home. After traveling in an unknown direction as fast as steam would bear her for three days, she was set down at a country station, and left alone and desolate in the world.

I cannot tell you what experiences the poor girl passed through during the next six months; it requires the thrilling pathos of her voice to adequately convey a realization of their suffering and their depth. The knowledge she possessed of music had enabled her to earn a comfortable living until her child was born, a precocious little boy, with curling black hair and dusky eyes. Then her strength failed her; the small savings of a few months were soon exhausted; then she sold her jewelry, and at length, faint and weary, she found herself penniless and deserted.

"My punishment was just," she moaned; "I deceived my mother; I may have killed her by my actions; she never could have held up her head again after my disgrace. Poor mamma! she was so proud of her Lettie."

Driven to despair, the poor girl at length procured writing materials and penned a long letter to her mother, confessing all her fault and praying for forgiveness. This she gave to a woman in the town who had shown her some kindness after her misfortune had become known, with the request that she should mail it to the address on the envelope.

"That night, I started for the night with my baby in my arms," she said. "I clasped him close, and with a prayer for pardon I plunged in. After a few moments of agony I lost consciousness, and when I opened my eyes I found myself here!" and with a gesture of despair she swept her hand around in the gloom of the place.

"And why should you be here?" I demanded. "You have been more sinned against than sinning. It is not just God to permit such things! Why is not the villain who caused your misery here, or in some more unhappy place, instead of you, my poor child?"

him; he is my darling; I love him still, and to save him such suffering as I have known, I would walk with bare feet over red hot stones to warn him to flee from danger. If I had repented of my sin, so as to be strong to live until God called me, it might have been different; but I allowed despair to govern me, and I took my life, and robbed my innocent child of his—I can never forget it; and sometimes when it seems as though I could get away from here to a more congenial place, the thought of what I have done arises and confronts me, and I sink down helpless and condemned. I am not fit to live in a holier place than this. But it is so fearful! Those who are here seem so dark and unhappy, or else so coarse and careless, they frighten me. But worse than all is the thought that my child must be in such scenes, instead of in heaven where he belongs."

The child, as though understanding his mother's sad plight, lifted his tiny hand and caressed her cheek, and with a satisfied smile nestled still closer in her bosom. Ah! poor woman! Little did she realize then that the prattling infant found its heaven in the loving arms that enfolded it.

"If I could only get to my mother!" Lettie wailed. "I am sure I could win her forgiveness. Through all the woe of my life I feel she is calling me. She spends her days in anguish, her nights in tears; she can find no rest, I am sure. Her head is bowed to the dust, and I have caused her all this pain. Oh! if I could reach her!"

Then I knew my work had come; it was to teach this child the possibility of spirit-return and control over matter, and with gentle words I drew her to my arms and related the wonderful story of how hapless or happy spirits could find their way back to earthly scenes, and, under certain laws, demonstrate their presence to their mourning friends.

She listened in wild-eyed excitement and eager breathlessness. "Come," said I, "we will go; I know the way; we will leave this place. Think of your mother and her home, and we will soon be there." Fixing our thoughts upon the place we desired to reach, we felt ourselves rising and floating out into the atmosphere. In a few moments I saw we were in an apartment that belonged to an earthly dwelling. It was furnished neatly and with evident refinement.

In its centre, by the side of a table covered with books, sat a lady with bowed head and clasped hands, the picture of grief and of desolation. She was evidently not more than forty years of age, and bore traces of great beauty, which, however, had been dimmed by the lines of suffering that shadowed it. I could see at a glance that here was Lettie's mother, for the resemblance between them was too great to be mistaken.

With a great cry my companion started from my side and flung herself at the feet of the drooping figure. I caught the child from her arms, and, with him clasped to my breast, stood a sympathetic spectator of the scene. As the spirit clasped the feet of the mortal a shudder swept through the frame of the latter and a cry of pain escaped her; she raised her head and glanced wildly around the apartment.

A soft, sweet influence filled the room. I felt it thrilling every fibre of my being. As the lady continued to gaze and the kneeling spirit to cling to her skirts, I saw a beautiful, soft, mellow light gradually steal through the dusk of the winter twilight and fill the room with an indescribable glory. In the centre of the apartment a human form became outlined, and in a moment I perceived the form and features of a handsome, stately male spirit, whose hands were raised in blessing above the heads of the two women.

[To be continued.]

## John A. Poor—A Reminiscence.

(From the Portland Argus.)

John A. Poor and the writer of this were Oxford County boys, and socially were early friends, and as such we continued our relations until his death; and the writer knew something of his interior qualities and his moods of thought upon subjects outside of his material enterprises and activities.

He was a deep thinker, and possessed a far-reaching and comprehensive intellect—perhaps inspirational—as may be illustrated by the following:

When the first section of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad was being constructed, we met at Norway Village and took the mail stage to Portland. I asked him what suggested to his mind an enterprise of such vast magnitude as uniting Montreal and Portland by a railroad. He answered that it was a matter he felt disinclined to make public; but as I was a Swedeborgian, he could tell me without prejudice, as perhaps I might understand the philosophy of it. He said:

"It was a vision in which I saw the whole line pass before me like a great panorama, and in continuation a vast system of railroads permeating the whole country from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Bay of Chaleur to the Gulf of Mexico, with new cities with a dense population, with every facility for oceanic travel from every country, and the coast of Maine lined with cities rivaling the cities on the coast of the Baltic."

Swedenborg is a title not unknown to the readers of the Commonwealth as the nom de plume of one of its contributors, Mr. John Wetherbee. This book is not the reproduction of published articles over that signature, but new ones, written in the interest of Modern Spiritualism. Its features are simplicity of statement; wide experience and manifest truthfulness; it has the writer's popularity in a marked degree, and is therefore, pleasant reading, whether one is a believer or a disbeliever. It strikes us, after a perusal, as one of the most interesting books that has come out of the movement known as Modern Spiritualism. As the author is well known among the Spiritualists, it is likely to be widely read among them; and also with profit by those who are indifferent; it contains 388 pages and a portrait of the author. Boston: Colby & Rich. The Commonwealth, Boston, Jan. 17, 1884.

## The Spiritual Postscript.

### Frauds and Exposures in Mediumship.

Delivered in the Church of the New Spiritual Dispensation Conference, Brooklyn, N. Y., Jan. 4th, 1885, by  
HENRY KIDDLE.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

Fraud, and the exposure of fraud—these are not pleasant things to contemplate in connection with a subject so sacred—for such it should be—as spirit communion. But it is never allowable to ignore facts for the indulgence of sentiment, however disagreeable it may be to confront them; and it is usually an important preliminary to the attainment of truth to throw down the idols we may have enshrined in our minds and hearts, and to enthroned the actual—the matter-of-fact—in their place. The millennium has not yet arrived; humanity is still characterized by the weakness and wickedness that stand out so conspicuously in the records of the past. There may have been progress and amelioration, but the elements of human nature are very far from being purity, unselfishness and truthfulness. The opposites of these are far more potential and conspicuous in human society, notwithstanding the establishment of Christianity for more than fifteen hundred years, strengthened and sustained, as it has been, during that long period, by all the power of the civil government and the institutions of social life. It is not necessary for me to ask, how far that social system which calls itself Christian reflects the ethical and spiritual principles of the Great Teacher, or to what extent the lives of those who are nominally his followers are based on the divine beatitudes that fell from his lips. When the angels of this New Dispensation—for such we seem to have at this time, at least in its dawn—talk to us, they whisper the same essential truths and blessings, and for a time, at least, startle us from our sleep of materiality; but, alas! there are other voices, beguiling and ensnaring, that drown the sacred accents of the divine messengers, and lead us back to our more accustomed sphere. We do not sufficiently heed the tender injunction of the loving and beloved disciple: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Thus we see that, in the early days of Christian Spiritualism, when the voices of spirits were listened to, when "spiritual gifts" abounded, as they do now, there were then, as now, mediums (prophets) of deceptive manifestations, as well as of the good and the true. The doors from the spirit-world were open then, as they are at the present time, and the two classes of spirits came through—in the language of John, those who were "of God," and those who were not—spirits of light and spirits of darkness—the white-winged messengers of truth, and the "seductive spirits" from that sphere where every one "loveth and maketh a lie."

The material sphere in which we now dwell has one special characteristic—that of choice. Everywhere we are, as the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, are made to partake of the "fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"; and the experience by which we are taught to discriminate between them is often a very sad one. But the lesson must be learned, because in this way alone can our individuality as responsible, self-conscious beings be perfected.

Spirit communion presents no exception to that law; it contains the elements of good and evil, and we are to be strengthened and elevated by choosing the one, and refusing the other. We cannot evade the responsibility of making that choice. We dare not dash the cup of blessing from our lips, because the poisoned bowl is by its side, and we are too indolent, too apathetic, too cowardly, to distinguish one from the other. It is the condition of life itself, for we should die of hunger or of disease, did we refuse to study the properties of the substances offered for food, and the salutary influences that surround us and thus learn to reject the unwholesome and the morbid.

So it is with the true and the false in Spiritualism. I ignore neither; I never have, for I conceive that both come to us with the same mission, to instruct—the one with the voice of education, the other with that of admonition. But it is incumbent upon us to make a wise discrimination, with neither ignorance nor rashness. The tares and the wheat must usually be left to grow together, lest while we gather up the one, we root up the other. The harvest comes, when the separation can be safely and effectually accomplished.

The enemies of the great spiritual movement of this time find no more so prolific as the "frauds" which they allege are perpetrated by those who are called mediums for spirit manifestation. In their public invectives against it, they usually resolve all the phenomena on which we base our knowledge of the spirit-world into fraud, delusion, or misinterpretation; and fraud is said to explain the greater part. We must, of course, expect this from the enemies of our cause, the progress of which threatens their earthly interests, and the claims of which are offensive to their strongest prejudices; but, certainly, while we ought always to be faithful to the truth, as Spiritualists we should not be eager to fasten this odious charge upon mediumship, and thus to supply ammunition to its bigoted assailants, and aid them most effectually in their efforts to poison the public mind against it. When we attempt its defense, we often have to meet the statement hurled disdainfully at us: "Your best friends have to admit that the movement is permeated with fraud, and that the word 'medium' has become almost a synonym with trickster or impostor." There may be, they sometimes admit, a small residuum of fact after excluding the result of willful imposture; but this, they assert, is wholly due to certain unknown psychological forces, or to the psychic powers of the embodied spirit, the hypothesis of disembodied spirits being wholly unnecessary and therefore illogical. Thus Spiritualism is made to "give up the ghost" literally; and its force exert over its lifeless remains, from which all the vivifying warmth of immortality has passed away, to give place to the deathlike coldness of scientific psychism.

You all know the frantic efforts that were made to prove the Fox mediums to be tricksters—how committees were appointed at the public meetings held to witness the phenomena; how disappointing the successive reports of those committees were to the people who were charging the mediums with fraud, and how those committees being obliged to exculpate the accused, after a careful examination, and how those pious and respectable citizens bore their disappointment, being restrained from violently assaulting, and probably murdering those innocent girls, only by the heroism of a small band of resolute men, who bravely confronted and held back the insane mob, furiously with scientific and religious bigotry, and maddened by their righteous zeal against fraud. This was the first ordeal passed by the New Dispensation,

which then came nearer being strangled in its cradle than did the babe of Bethlehem to falling a victim to Herod's "slaughter of the innocents."

Since that early period, the spirit manifestations have gone on with a vast increase in the number and variety of their phases, and with overwhelming demonstrations of spirit power; but there has been no intermission in the outcry of fraud against the public mediums. Indeed, there is scarcely one, however genuine or powerful, who has not thus been stigmatized.

In former years this outcry of fraud came only from the opponents of Spiritualism; but, in recent years, it is kept up quite as vigorously by many professing Spiritualists, especially in relation to manifestations which they are inclined to disbelieve and discredit. While, without doubt, this is done with good and pure motives, and the sincere desire to keep the spiritual movement free from all that tends to dishonor it in the minds of the public, I have been led to believe, from careful experience and study of the phenomena, that many serious mistakes have been made in carrying out this policy; as, I think, will be obvious from the facts I intend to present.

The Fox mediums, fortunately, after they had been scoffed at by the prejudiced, superficial witnesses in the public meetings at Rochester, were examined carefully by committees appointed for the purpose; and thus, in part (but only in part), escaped public condemnation.

In 1874, long after the "toe and knee joint theory" had been exploded, we find the English scientist, Alfred R. Wallace, bearing the following testimony in favor of one of those mediums (Mrs. Kate Fox Jencken):

"We have here a career of twenty-six years of mediumship of the most varied and remarkable character; mediumship which has been scrutinized and tested from the first hour of its manifestation down to this day, and with no invariable result—that no imposture or attempt at imposture has ever been discovered, and no cause ever been suggested that will account for the phenomena except that advanced by Spiritualists."

The phase of manifestation which has especially encountered the charge of fraud is that which is known as "full-form materialization"; in connection with which the "exposures" of mediums, apparently guilty of imposture in personating spirit-forms, have not only brought public odium upon mediumship and Spiritualism, but have been made the means of discrediting many of the most earnest adherents of the cause, who are, even now, I am sorry to say, charged with "condoning fraud," because they present facts, as well as theories supported by facts, that go far toward the partial or entire exculpation of the accused mediums, and the vindication of mediumship in general.

It certainly cannot be right or expedient to make sweeping denunciations against the intellectual and moral integrity of a large class of intelligent and earnest Spiritualists. Surely this is not requisite to strengthen the defense of truth against falsehood, purity against immorality, or genuine mediumship against that which is spurious and fraudulent.

There is a very serious question concerned in this matter—a question the proper solution of which is rapidly being reached by the intelligent, fair-minded students of spiritual phenomena and laws; and if any one thinks he can affect the decision by attacking the motives or aspersing the character of those who have taken either side of it, he will find himself greatly mistaken. It would be no triumph, but a great misfortune, to divide the present spiritual army into two hostile camps. Differ we must in our interpretations of many of the phenomena, but difference of opinion is not inconsistent with fraternal feeling and mutual respect and good will, unless it incite to personal insult or detraction, to which no true disciple of spirit communion will ever descend. If I commend a medium whom another has condemned as unreliable, it does not prove that I have "condoned a fraud." The inference is, indeed, quite the reverse; since my experience must have been totally different, and that experience should be respected.

In what I intend to say on this subject I shall present only well-attested facts, and the conclusions of investigators of mature experience and superior intelligence; and these should be attentively considered, without prejudice or partisanship. I make no plea for "charity" toward wrong-doers justly condemned. Let the guilty suffer; but let no penalty be inflicted before a fair trial, lest in the end it reflect lasting disgrace upon both judge and executioner. I do not know but that, with some persons, it may be "easier to be charitable than to be just"; but I do know that it is always vastly easier to be uncharitable than to be just. It is not, however, charity, but truth, as well as justice, that is concerned in a careful discussion of the principles by which mediumship should be tested, and the cause of deceptive manifestations demonstrated and exposed. The personal element is, in fact, a subordinate one; for the progress of spiritual science depends, in no small degree, upon a knowledge of those principles. I trust, therefore, I shall not be misunderstood; I offer no apology or excuse for those who have profaned the sacred gifts of Heaven by fraud, or counterfeited the evidences of immortality; let them suffer the just consequences of their guilt; but let no innocent suffer in consequence of our rashness and ignorance.

The great question is, On what principles and by what methods are we to determine the guilt or innocence of mediums charged with the perpetration of fraud while in the exercise of their mediumistic gifts? This is the primary question; and next to it, of the greatest importance to us as responsible representatives of this spiritual movement, is: What is the proper course to pursue toward those who have been found guilty of fraudulent acts in connection with their mediumship?

It will be observed that, in both these questions, I refer only to those who are really mediums—whose mediumistic gifts have been clearly proved to exist; and, also, that I refer only to acts committed in the exercise of their peculiar vocation. The simulation of mediumship by artful pretenders, that is, the perpetration of what have been aptly called "Truesdell's tricks," presents a different, and scarcely cognate, subject for consideration, as, indeed, does also the moral character or conduct of mediums, apart from the exercise of their special vocation, or as ordinary members of the community. The common laws and usages of society provide for such cases, irrespective of any spiritualistic policy. I admit that offenses committed in the name of mediumship, or by those endowed with that divine gift, should be followed by a heavier rather than a lighter penalty; but experience has certainly taught us the truth of what I read recently in the English Spiritualist paper, Light: "The moral character of a medium has about as much to do with the reality or excellence of his mediumship as the moral character of a singer or actor has to do with the quality of his art." While I should object to the use of the word excellence in that connection, there is no denying the fact that the natural endowments of mediumship may, and often do, coexist with great defects of character. Since we are now demonstrating to the world truths that can be made known only through







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 B. BRITTON.

### The New Philosophy.

A leading lawyer of Maine, Hon. Albert W. Paine of Bangor, has recently published a book with the above title, in which he aims to show that the new philosophy is one that unlocks all the great problems of human life. Briefly expressed, it is that all known life is from the spiritual world, flowing thence into the natural world, and therefore that this spiritual world is close by and not far off. In other words, that the two worlds, in juxtaposition as they are, are dissimilar, in that one is a living world and the other a lifeless one; that the spiritual world, though invisible because it is immaterial, is the substantial and real world, while the material world is but the result, as an effect follows a cause. The spiritual and material are thus linked together, the latter being dead except when life is imparted to it from the former. Well and truly does our author say that hitherto the spiritual world has been viewed from a theological standpoint, not from a scientific or philosophic one; and hence that it has been regarded as a vague and viewless world rather than as a really substantial one.

The logic of it is perfectly simple: the spiritual world being a living world, from which all life issues, then man, who is a living being, can be no other than a spiritual man with material investiture. The author pertinently appends to this reasoning the inquiry, whether it is inconsistent to believe that the man, when he casts off this material covering, is not the same man precisely that he was, retaining the same form as before, and not vanishing in vapor, or floating away in the limitless ocean of ether to some distant star.

But, although the spiritual and the material worlds are in such close juxtaposition, our author maintains that the former is wholly distinct from the latter, and either within it or above it; and thus that spirit is not refined matter, but a something that under favoring circumstances can flow into it and become manifest—although it has existence wholly independent of matter, and existed before it thus manifested itself in matter, and will continue to exist after so manifesting itself—notwithstanding the spiritual world originally gave birth to the natural world, of which it is but the present visible basis and outer clothing. In fine, he maintains that the spiritual world is but the outflowing life of the Creator, and therefore nearer to the First Cause than the material universe is.

In respect to the laws which govern the spiritual world, the author would be understood as holding that they correspond to the laws which govern the material world, in that the latter are and can be only the extension downward or outward of the former. For example, he maintains that in the spiritual world time and space cannot be measured as they are in the material world, and in the same sense, because, this being a dead world, actual spaces can be measured; whereas, the spiritual world being wholly a living world, the laws of time and space are superseded and swallowed up by the laws of life; and these laws relate to the spiritual states of those there, showing the kind and degree of life they receive from the Creator, and not whether they are in similar affections or not; and it is this similarity or dissimilarity which establishes the law of distance there. The distinction between a material and a spiritual law can thus be readily apprehended. Therefore, reasons our author, if we concede that the spiritual world is as real a world as this one which we inhabit, and if it be in close juxtaposition with this, so that its life at all times flows into this so far as it finds a receptive ready, that world must of necessity have a very great influence on this one. And furthermore, that if when a man dies he continues to hold as close relations to those he left here as he held before, it is perfectly fair to suppose that he exerts a real and direct personal influence over those who are still living, and not a merely indirect influence through the remembrance of what he may have spoken, written or done.

To use his own language—"That the inspired thoughts of our poets, the grand developments of science and demonstrations of art, the wonderful exhibitions of the scholars, the thinkers, the scientists and artists of the world, are all the result of unaided intellect, is a problem too mighty to be credited; too impossible to be denied. The light flowing from those of

a higher order of life come to the seeking mind, and find a ready expression through the language and acts of the seeker, who unknowingly courts their aid and presence. At other times they come unsought in hours of sleep and in moments of listlessness, and simply ask of the inspired author the use of his hand and pen on paper or otherwise to execute the rich thought thus imparted for the good of humanity or the world's enjoyment."

A better statement in brief could hardly be made of the constant serviceableness of Inspiration. This theory, or rather this apprehension of the governing spiritual law, is made to serve as the satisfactory explanation of the several problems involved in dreams, premonitions, mind-reading, inspiration, insanity, visions, trances, and so forth. Only in this way is it possible to comprehend, even if we do not fully understand, the soul-philosophy, and view with rational minds the mysteries which have so long been employed as superstitions to our injury and degradation. Only in this way can the veil which separates the visible and invisible worlds be penetrated, and our relations to the spiritual and real world be understood. It is time that we looked at this life of ours with more intelligence, refusing to allow it to be clouded and confused by the bugbears of ignorance, multiplied many times by the power of tradition.

It ought not to be necessary to say, but it is, nevertheless, that man continues to be the same individual or unit, in the next world, or the spiritual, as in this; as the author of this book asserts, "possessed of the same mind, the same constitution, with the same prevailing loves and tendencies, and the same general characteristics." Of course he becomes more or less modified in his progress. "As he passes from one state to the other," says our author, "he carries with him his preceding but perhaps modified character, and enters the new field of activity and employment with his former acquirements and entanglements still clinging to his life. His change at death—so called—is simply one step further on in his progress. In the same line, too, that he had inaugurated or practiced before—a change as natural and as inevitable as those which had attended him in the various periods from infancy to old age. The soul, or spirit, which tenanted his body in this world is identically the same with that which survives beyond; and how can there be any material change effected by the mere passage across the line of separation?"

While it is freely allowed that the spiritual world is close to the material world, it cannot be said to be a matter of equal certainty that it manifests itself chiefly or only through it. There may be variant views and beliefs on the subject of the mode of the spiritual operation. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the intimate relation of spirit to matter is becoming more widely understood than it ever was before in the world's history. The phenomena of Spiritualism have done and are doing wonders in opening men's eyes to what is true on this subject. It is made plain that we all are spirits, whether in the body or out; that life is given to material only by the spirit; that what we call death changes the spirit-tenant of the body in no wise, and hence that it is capable of exercising even a wider and more powerful influence when disembodied than when in the flesh. All this is, as knowledge, like the opening of the eyes of the spirit to see what has hitherto been concealed. If it be not religion, it is the basis and inspiration of it in a larger and truer sense than was ever before made known to the human race.

### American Society for Psychical Research.

"My son, do not go near the water until you know how to swim," said a very cautious but not over-wise mother to her boy. Ridiculous as is this advice, the American Society for Psychical Research, organized in this city last week, seems to have adopted it, inasmuch as while its object is to investigate manifestations of spirit, it proclaims its intention to wholly ignore all spirit-manifestations, publicly announcing the following as the foundation upon which its operations are to rest:

"In view of the dangers to which the new Society is exposed in the systematic investigation of the little-known psychical phenomena, great care has been taken to exclude from active control all elements which might turn the energy of the Society into a helpmate of any of the vague, unsettled and sometimes fraudulent enterprises of Spiritualists."

The announcement of the purposes for which this new organization was instituted led us to suppose its aim to be the obtaining of information upon which to base a definite conclusion in regard to these same "vague, unsettled enterprises." Now, for it to toss to the winds the subjects they wish to examine, seems to be the postponement of their day of judgment to a future about as remote as that to which the Christian world is looking forward. This Society takes its initiate from "The Society for Psychical Research," formed in London, Feb. 20th, 1882, but differs materially in its most essential points. The English Society, so far from disowning Modern Spiritualism and abusing Spiritualists, has among its Vice Presidents such able advocates of the cause the American Society taboos as W. Stainton Moses and Prof. W. F. Barrett, who are also members of its Council, together with Morell Theobald, C. C. Massey and others.

The fact is, it is too late to attempt to institute a Society of intelligent, progressive men for such a purpose as this proposes to engage in—and none others would be attracted to it—without including among its most efficient members one or more believers in Spiritualism, for they abound everywhere. The officers of this American Society are as follows:

President, Prof. Simon Newcomb of Washington; Vice Presidents, Prof. G. Stanley Hall of Baltimore, Prof. G. S. Fullerton of Philadelphia, Prof. E. C. Pickering, Dr. H. P. Bowditch, and Dr. C. S. Minot, all of Harvard University; Secretary, Mr. K. D. C. Hodges of Cambridge, Mass.; Treasurer, Prof. William Watson.

These together with the following form the Council:  
 Dr. William James, Prof. George F. Barker, Mr. S. H. Scudder, Dr. C. C. Everett, Mr. Moorhead Storey, Prof. J. M. Crook, Dr. J. A. Hyatt, Prof. J. M. Pierce, Mr. Coleman Sellers, Major Woodhull, Messrs. C. C. Jackson, T. W. Higginson and W. B. Pickering.

We do not know how it may be with others. Doubtless several are more or less believers. But of one we have this to say: Mr. T. W. Higginson delivered a lecture before Theodore Parker's congregation at Mr. Parker's request at Music Hall in this city on the morning of Sunday, June 25th, 1883, a report of which was published in the BANNER OF LIGHT of July 10th following. In that lecture Mr. Higginson said: "Spiritualism comes before us from the investigations of wise observers than I am, and brings with it the same kind of evidence which is primarily founded. If they have seen bodies floating in the air without human touch

If they have seen pencils rising up in broad daylight, and without human contact, writing words which were from another sphere—because they gave knowledge of which man had not before been possessed—then we must believe it. Improbable? Improbable? What has Science to do with improbabilities? For one fact that we see God keeps, in his providence, multitudes of grand instances, that are yet to come to our lower sphere and startle us with their mystery, and crush down the pride of human science, by the impossibility of arguing them away. . . . I stand here to testify to my belief in one single truth, the possibility of communication, and conscious communication, between the spirit-world and this."

The remark of one of our daily papers that "three or four Harvard professors" are prominent in this new movement, reminds us of the fact that, in 1887, a like number of Harvard professors met in this city ostensibly for the same purpose for which this Society has been formed, and entertaining similar views regarding Spiritualism. We hope the latter will attain better results than did the former, though we can only surmise what those results were, for the reason that the Report promised nearly thirty years ago to be given immediately after the Gardner-Felton investigation, has not yet made its appearance.

But it seems to us, upon calm reflection, that in catering to what it considers to be popular opinion by ostracizing Spiritualists from its deliberations, the newly inaugurated Society for Psychical Research mistakes the path that leads to success. At the same time its manifest fear of "cranks" appears to indicate a mental weakness. Have not its members a judgment of their own by which to determine what is a fact and what is not?

The learned men and the chiefs of the synagogues eighteen centuries and more ago, saw among the people two individuals who, in modern parlance, they looked upon as "cranks," for the reason that one of them "had not where to lay his head," and the other was clothed in camel's hair bound around him with a leathern girdle. The former they hung upon a cross; the latter they beheaded; but the truths they taught outlived themselves upon earth! And so the truths of MODERN SPIRITUALISM will outlive its enemies, triumph over all opposition, and ultimately be fully endorsed by all mankind.

### "Life and Labor in the Spirit-World."

The sale of this interesting book, written by members of the spirit-band of Miss M. T. Shelhamer, is steadily progressing. As its table of contents shows, the work is intended as an exposition of the life, conditions and surroundings of those who have passed from earth to experience the discipline of the spirit-world. Its matter is instructive and entertaining, its manner of elucidation clear and simple, and its purpose is to teach mortals of the realities of a future existence.

Those who desire to know how spirits live, of their joys and sorrows, their duties and labors, as well as of their methods of assisting earthly friends, will be interested in Part First, containing the writings of Spirit Violet. Those who are eagerly demanding knowledge of their household darlings who have been taken from them, and ask, with eager longing, Where are our children? are they well provided for? have they happy homes and pleasant surroundings? do they love us yet, and shall we meet them again? will find these and many more questions answered in Spirit May's account of the Children of the Summer-Land, as portrayed in Part Second.

Those who desire to gain a connected life-history of an intelligent spirit, to understand the personal experience of a denizen of the spheres, will do well to carefully peruse Part Third of this interesting volume, which contains the story of the spiritual experiences of Spirit John Critchley Prince, as given by himself. To many this is by far the most absorbing and instructive portion of the book; it graphically portrays the struggles, efforts, failures and achievements of a progressing spirit. As many are aware, John Critchley Prince was on earth a poet of Lancashire, Eng.—one whose poetical abilities were and are recognized far and wide, and the recital of the experiences of such a spirit deserve the attention of the reading public.

The style of this work is pleasing, and aims to entertain while it teaches, and its purpose is accomplished in a charming manner.

### Simon De Main in America.

We are informed by Henry A. Lobby, Esq., that this eloquent and well-known trance-speaker, to whose projected tour from England to America we made reference some time since, delivered his first lecture on this side the Atlantic in Freehold, Luzerne Co., Pa., on the evening of Jan. 14th. His address, which had for its theme a general review of Spiritualism's past and present, was highly appreciated by his auditors. Mr. De Main's guides have done grand work through his organization at his home in Durham and other points in England, and we have already given to our readers reports of several of his discourses. He is now in this country, and we feel justified by what has gone before in recommending him to the managers of all Spiritualist meetings wherever the services of a trance-speaker are desired. He can be addressed for the present at Freehold, as above.

### The Threatened Agitation

Of the "Doctors' Plot law" question before the present Legislature in Massachusetts is already arousing the friends of "freedom of practice and patients' rights" to a sense of the requirements of the case, as a petition-head on our eighth page and the call of a correspondent in another column will serve to show. It is urgently requested that our readers in Massachusetts will copy or cut out the petition-head above referred to, paste it upon a sheet of paper and circulate it for signatures, when such lists of names can be forwarded to this office to be placed in the hands of the Committee of Defense, for use in case the Allopathic-Dental alliance approaches the Legislature with the usual demand for a summary statute with which the domineering "Regulars" have vainly bored the Legislature of this State for years past.

### "The Secret of Happiness."

We shall print next week the report, prepared especially for our columns by George H. Hawes, of an eloquent discourse on the above topic, delivered in Metropolitan Temple, San Francisco, Cal., by Mrs. E. L. Watson.

A Hartford (Ct.) correspondent in commendation of the article by Mrs. Stiles, recently published in the BANNER OF LIGHT, she says: "That statement of Mrs. Stiles in your last paper is the most satisfactory account of spirit-return and intelligence, taken in every respect, that I have yet read."

### Mrs. E. H. Britten in Boston.

On Sunday, Jan. 18th, Mrs. Emma Harding Britten addressed two large gatherings of Boston Spiritualists in Berkeley Hall, her themes being, in the morning, at 10:30, "Delethazar's Feast, or the Handwriting on the Wall," and in the evening, at 7:30, "Spiritualism, the Reform, Science and Religion of the Age." Her lectures were delivered with earnestness and fire, and were replete with instruction for her hearers. On account of the deep interest manifested in her morning discourse, the same topic was continued for treatment in the evening, together with the regularly announced subject, and the two were treated in harmonious connection, to the edification of all present. We shall print a full report of both these addresses at an early date.

On Monday evening, Jan. 19th, Mrs. Britten was the recipient of a congratulatory meeting of friends in the parlors 30 Worcester Street, this city. The place of assembly was thronged by her well-wishers, who were greeted by singing by Mrs. Wilson, after which Mrs. Britten, in response to the general desire, announced herself, or her spirit inspirers, as ready to answer such questions bearing on the spiritual philosophy and phenomena, and cognate themes, as might suggest themselves to the present audience.

During this part of the service she, among other things, proclaimed the existence, in practical justice, of twelve commandments, instead of ten, the additional ones being: Never do anything to any living creature, and never lose an opportunity of doing good to any living creature. These were dual in character, and affirmative and negative in their operation, one being a command to do, and the other to bear.

Conservatism she proclaimed to be the chief danger of Spiritualists—that kind of conservatism through the cherishing of which many of them were in danger of falling into the error of considering that the light they themselves individually received as to the philosophy, and the experience in the phenomena which fell to their lot, comprised the whole of their duty and discharged all their responsibilities in the premises—when it was rather their duty to endeavor to expand in knowledge and usefulness day by day, and to exert themselves to spread the light which they had received among those "which sit in darkness" and have not the glorious knowledge which Spiritualism brings. There was great danger that Spiritualists would imitate certain Christians of the early days, who built up a system of Christianity with Christ left out.

High lands and dry air she defined as most adverse conditions to the development of clairvoyant and inspirational faculties, while low lands and moist atmosphere were best for the inciting and production of the physical phenomena or manifestations.

The ultimate of true marriage in spirit-life she defined as the union of two previously separated halves into one angelic whole, by the blending of spiritual counterparts.

After considering other queries on reëmbodiment, etc., for some time further, she bade an affectionate farewell to all present, assuring them of the certainty that the present and other pleasant occasions experienced by herself and husband among the friends in Boston would remain firmly fixed in the memory of each; the passage of time on earth brought seasons of parting, but our hearts, our duties, our destinies were one, and the days that went by also brought nearer the more glorious meeting which awaits us all in the land of souls!

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," was then sang by the congregation; after which Miss M. T. Shelhamer appropriately expressed the feelings of the company, by assuring Mrs. Britten of the warm appreciation existing among them, and also in the minds of the BANNER OF LIGHT publishers and staff—mortals and spirits—of her labors as a spiritual pioneer, one of those who had labored so successfully in the past to render possible the present improved views and conditions among men in regard to this life and its outcome beyond the change called death. She wished, in conclusion, added success to Mrs. Britten in years to come wherever her steps might be directed by the spiritual powers she had so nobly served so well.

A choice bouquet from Messrs. Colby & Rich, publishers of the BANNER OF LIGHT, was next presented to Mrs. Britten, who responded with feeling to the good wishes of Miss Shelhamer and all concerned, and for the gift. A few additional remarks were then made by J. W. Day, and the meeting resolved itself into a conversational mood, closing at a late hour with the expressions of many individual wishes for the future happiness and prosperity of the lady in whose honor the meeting was convened.

### A. B. French Going South.

Intelligence reaches us that this distinguished apostle of Spiritualism and general information—who has just returned from a pleasant and profitable trip to Wisconsin—has engagements in Florida from Feb. 10th to 20th. This will undoubtedly be the best opportunity which the Spiritualists of the South will have to secure his valuable services; and friends of the cause in that part of the country who may wish to introduce to their townspeople as an advocate of their belief an orator of pronounced eloquence a teacher who utters no uncertain sound, and a genial gentleman in all the affairs of life, will do well to address Bro. French at Clyde, O., with a view to making engagements for courses of lectures following the above dates.

THE SPIRIT MESSAGE DEPARTMENT on our sixth page is introduced with the petition that the hour of service "shall be one of good association, where in blessing may fall upon the hearts of men"; the QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS DEPARTMENT treats of inquiries concerning the verity of the Newtonian Theory, the work of the mesmerist, and its effects upon himself and his subjects; the relation borne by animal food to mediumistic qualities, and the utility of sleeping with the head to the north as an excitant of activity on the part of the inner vision; AUNT MARY A. HALSTEAD expresses the best wishes for her friends in Brooklyn and New York City; WM. F. BERRY, of Brooklyn, Mass., particularly desires to come into communication with those who were connected with him by ties of social life, that he may give them renewed expressions of his love and sympathy; ADA SARBON, of Milwaukee, Wis., speaks for herself and her father John, to her mother and sister, asking them to make the attempt to realize their spiritual presence, since it is very hard for the spirit to be "knocking at a door that is shut, and one cannot open"; MILO IVES, of Wallingford, Ct., brings greeting to his friends, and bears witness that the activities which were lost to earth have been utilized in the spirit-world; KATIE T. MAGEE, of East Boston, informs her relatives that though called so early from earth she is perfectly satisfied and reconciled, and hopes a similar feeling may be theirs also; GEORGE DILLINGHAM, of Lynn, Mass., has a kindly word for his widowed companion, for his old comrades in arms, and his acquaintances generally; and EXTRA CORRECTION sends a consolatory message to her aunt in Newburyport, and friends in Boston.

THERAPEUTIC SABOOGONY has been a very successful publication. Only a few copies remain on hand at present. In every notice from the press it has been spoken of in the highest terms as a profound and important work, and it is already being translated and republished in the Spanish language.

THE A. T. WARD is rising in the West, which may mean a new chapter in the history of the

### Ingersoll in Boston.

"Which Way?" was the pertinent problem propounded by Col. Robert G. Ingersoll to the three thousand persons who gathered in Boston Theatre Sunday evening, Jan. 17th. He was heartily applauded on his appearance, and, bowing his acknowledgments, said:

Ladies and Gentlemen—There are two kinds, or rather two theories of government, one religious, the other secular. One is founded upon ignorance and fear, the other upon courage and intelligence. There is a conflict between these theories. I shall take the secular. (Laughter.) Most people imagine that if you do not believe in their particular religion it is because you wish to steal something (laughter); that you would like to eat your own child (laughter), or commit some fearful crime. Yet it seems to me that religious belief never had much effect toward making people good. (Applause.) Some of the worst people who ever cursed this world have been believers. The gentlemen who made Socrates drink the hemlock were believers; the Jews who crucified God or Christ believed in and worshiped God; and, if any one can believe in the Scriptures, the devil believes in God. (Laughter.) It doesn't seem to have affected his moral character much. (Laughter.) The only effect, according to the Bible, that it made him tremble. (Laughter.) But he kept just as bad all the while. (Laughter.) Charles Sumner was not a believer (applause), but he believed in a trinity better than the Christian worship. He believed in reason, justice, and, above all, in human liberty. (Applause.)

What is the origin of religion? Fear! (Laughter and applause.) Take death out of the world, and how many men would go to church? (Laughter.) Fear is the foundation. Prosperity gives a man courage. Calamity is the sunshine of superstition. The cathedrals were built by hands that trembled. This fear was born of ignorance, and of the idea that there were thousands of gods paying particular attention to the affairs of this world. The savage thought everything was done on his particular account. Behind every good thing that was done there was a god; behind every bad thing a devil. Both of them had agents—recurring sergeants. The god wished to buy on credit (laughter), and pay in another world (applause); the devil, who appears always to have the best idea of business, proposed to pay cash down. (Applause and laughter.)

The best possible test of character is the use of power. How does a man treat his wife and little children, or how does he treat his creditors?—(laughter)—or even the loving dog that follows his footsteps? Tell me that, and I will tell you his character. That is the only test of a god: How does he use his power. If a gentleman attempted to civilize his fellow-men, would he appeal to their lower qualities, or would he not appeal to the qualities of reason, love, liberty and the highest of all—humanity? Let me tell you that when the sword of justice is changed into a staff to support the weak, that staff bursts into blossom, and the perfume of that flower is the only incense, the only offering, the only sacrifice that mercy will accept. (Applause.)

The speaker then humorously discussed the creation of Adam and Eve, and their residence in and expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The ten commandments were analyzed, and six of them were said to be old, and then the speaker proposed the following substitutes for the other four: "Thou shalt not enslave thy fellow-men; every man is entitled to the product of his own labor. (Applause.) Thought and speech shall be forever free (applause); thou shalt not persecute for opinion's sake. (Applause.) Thou shalt not wage a war of conquest or extermination. (Applause.) The man shall have but one wife (applause and laughter); the wife but one husband; the husband shall love his wife and the wife her husband with all their hearts, and their children as themselves." "I will substitute those four," said the speaker, "and I think mine are far better than the ones we have."

### Notice.

We would respectfully request those of our readers who have forwarded questions to our office to be answered by the controlling intelligences at the BANNER OF LIGHT FREE CIRCLE, to have patience. We have a large number of queries on hand, which are being presented in their turn just as rapidly as it is possible. In the meantime it is gratifying to see the eager desire manifested by inquiring minds to avail themselves of the opportunity offered, as it shows the healthy growth of a prompting for research into spiritual knowledge by all earnest souls.

For the past six weeks strange noises have been heard, it is said, in the cigar factory of Holt Brothers on Middle street, Portland, Me. They begin at about 5:30 o'clock and continue until the place is closed. One night last week the noise was so startling that two cigar-makers beat a hasty retreat down stairs, one of them in his haste forgetting his crutch. For a number of years there worked in the factory a man commonly known as "Bones." He was a butt for all his brother workmen, and in his lifetime he declared if there was such a thing as coming back after death he would haunt that building. Last fall "Bones" died, and Conroy and Bice stoutly maintain that the ghost of the departed cigar-maker has come back to fulfill his promises.

Tricksters abound. They put forth their yellow handbills filled with absolute lies. They take the names, in part, of legitimate mediums in order to deceive the public. We have cautioned our readers against this class of individuals many times. The last of this ilk, it seems, advertised to give a "religious illustrated lecture—subject, Spiritualism, by Miss Kate Davenport, of the famous Davenport family," etc., at Chickering Hall, New York City, which turned out to be a poor travesty which, it is a gratification to know, was very slimly attended. But these impostors will probably turn up somewhere else, hence we caution the public against them.

A Boston correspondent, in the course of a letter regarding his subscription, writes: "I take three spiritual papers, and I like the BANNER OF LIGHT best, for the following reasons: It is really a pattern sheet in its mechanical make-up and neat typographical appearance; it is constantly devoted to the spiritual elevation and uplifting of humanity, and labors almost unceasingly to bring the two worlds nearer together; it is always free from abuse, slander and vindictiveness, and its charitable distributions manifest the right principle of a practical Spiritualism—Charity."

While in Germany a "Regular" is being punished for not keeping abreast of the times as regards a knowledge of improved appliances, etc., the rampant "Regulars" of America are saving for the passage of laws to exclude any save their own ilk from the fields of medical and remedial practice. "Look on this picture—then on that!"

By reference to the tabular statement rendered by James A. Ellis, on our third page, it will be seen that "the gentleman assumes us—the new project he has in hand is not a money-making affair for himself."

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