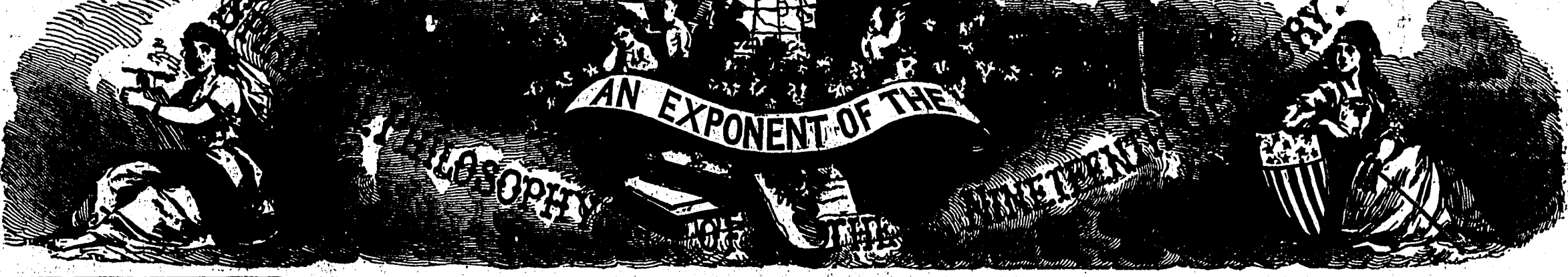


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## The Spiritual Postum.

Esoteric Buddhism—Its Teachings Concerning Spirit-Life Compared with those of Spiritualism.

A Lecture Delivered through the Mediumship of W. J. COLVILLE, In Berkeley Hall, Boston.

(Reported for the Banner of Light by Mrs. Codrington Finch.)

In our last discourse on Esoteric Buddhism we did not more than attempt to give a brief outline of the claims now being constantly made for occultism, or theosophy, by its leading literary representatives. To-day we shall turn our attention particularly to the Buddhist beliefs concerning life beyond the grave, which are now the leading topics of consideration in many cultured circles in this country and abroad. We request our hearers to bear in mind that the simple statement of historic facts does not by any means imply that they who call your attention to such facts in-formed them as truth. At the same time no well-informed person can refuse to admit the possibility of there being a vast deal more of truth in the formularies and text-books of the archaic religions, than either Christian, Jew or Infidel is disposed to admit; while many Spiritualists are so terribly afraid of everything ancient, that the very antiquity of certain beliefs, and even knowledge, bars the door through which such intelligence might otherwise enter and enrich their minds.

The petition, give us this day our daily bread, is a matchless supplication for the necessities of being. We cannot live on the food of yesterday; at the same time no one but an idiot would suppose that people went hungry until the time when they required sustenance. If spiritual food is imperatively demanded to supply the actual wants of humanity to-day, ancient races surely were provided with similar demands, and needed similar supplies to meet such demands. Human nature is pretty much the same the world over. History well-nigh repeats itself; with slight variations the music of life on earth is played over and over again in the same octaves; the same keys are pressed again and again on the keyboard of existence, though by countless millions of fingers in successive while every hand must play through the same scales and exercises until ready by diligent application to study and experience, crowned at length by success, to take up new and grander strains, and produce harmonies unknown to the men of old. Progress, as we have often told you, is accomplished by means of circular revolutions. The outward movements of the earth diurnally upon its axis, and annually around the sun, are typical and illustrative of the progress of life throughout the ages. Winter follows harvest, night follows day; one part of the earth is in summer while another is in winter. Whenever it is light in the northern zone it is dark in the southern, while only at the equator it is always equal; there the sun always rises at six and sets at six. Nowhere else can there be aught but change, and the further we get from the centre the more marked are the changes, the wider are the differences, the greater the extremes.

Upon the earth there are always some souls whose embodiments enable them to dwell much nearer the centre of gravity, spiritually speaking, than others. There are always certain fraternities of souls who are embodied here with a view to the fulfillment of certain missions. These are they through whom the light of the spirit shines most conspicuously. The earth is never without them; there are always some special witnesses for truth, even in the darkest night of ignorance, spiritual darkness and immorality. These witnesses have, many of them, been despoiled throughout their entire earthly career, and worshiped with divine honors after their passage hence. Others have met with some recognition even upon earth; some have fought for truth even to the ending of their days upon the scaffold, the rack or gibbet. Some have dwelt in solitude apart; others resorted to by kings and nobles, pronounced oracles or mouthpieces of heaven. That some have been faithful to their exalted mission is sadly true, while others have been so noble and self-forgetting that the worship paid to them in spirit, and the veneration shown their memories, have been but royal tributes offered by loving hearts to the elder brethren of the race.

At the head of these saintly ones in Oriental stands Gautama, the hero of Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia." With some of the leading incidents in the life of this admirable Indian prince you are doubtless all familiar. You know how he was born to wear the purple, and yet was so touched even when a child with the sufferings of the poor that he thronged the country and his father's palace, that he could neither eat nor sleep for long periods, his mind being so occupied with their distress. "Why should I be rich and happy," said this brave and feeling child, "while others die of leprosy and hunger? Let me share their griefs, let me abandon all the glories and luxuries of a court, to throw myself, heart and soul, into any enterprise which can possibly be devised for their relief," and so, when still a youth, though married to a charming princess, he leaves his father's palace and goes out into the night to eat in his lot with the poor and desolate, the sick and the infirm. The smaller circle of

family affection seems all too narrow for this brave, impulsive, most unselfish boy; and though his conduct in leaving his young wife and all bound to him by ties of blood and affection is open to criticism, no reader can question his motive for so doing. Rash he may have been, but sincere and tender-hearted he was also, and that to an extent impossible to overestimate. He had everything to lose and nothing to gain by taking the step he took. Hunger, cold, nakedness, all he risked; with diseases and horrors of every kind his new life must render him familiar, for did he not fly in the night of his "great renunciation" from every comfort, luxury, and joy, to face alone the world's distress, to share poverty with the poorest, and suffering with the saddest and most degraded, that through him sadness and disease, poverty and shame might be converted into their opposites?

His father sought for him, and found him not. Search was made diligently everywhere, but no traces could any discover of the prince who had so mysteriously left the palace in the dead of night. He has joined the mendicant friars, of whom there were multitudes all over India. Their most rigid asceticisms are welcome, most welcome to this youth who has been nurtured in luxury, wealth and ease. He thinks not of himself, but only of the poor, the sick, the despoiled, the wretched. He must crucify self that others may live; this noble thought impels him forward; he overcomes a thousand obstacles, runs into dangers without number, but from every trial comes forth unscathed. His healing power is wonderful; his spiritual sight is matchless. He earns for others what no gold can ever purchase, peace of mind and joy of heart, which are the only absolute medicines, the only perfect cure-alls in the pharmacopoeia of nature. But even in his new life he is not perfectly at ease, something yet is lacking, when at length new light breaks in upon his seeking soul as he meditates beneath the sacred tree, and an angel, who appears to him, points out a yet more excellent way. He withdraws from the fraternity of friars, and henceforth devotes himself assiduously and alone to meditation upon divine truths; never relinquishing his love for humanity, never letting an opportunity pass unimproved of benefiting his kind, till by complete purity of thought, word and deed he at length attains to Nirvana's perfect blessedness, which we have often told you does not by any means signify annihilation or anything approaching to it, but, on the contrary, involves a perfect individualization of every separate globe in the boundless ocean of universal life.

It will be our duty at this time to endeavor to explain in simple western language the highly mystical system of Asia, and to show you, if possible, how perfectly in accord with each other are all the gospels of the world on the subject of human immortality, the nature and processes of development beyond the grave, and the necessary sequences of sin and sorrow. Sin is not of necessity more than an infirmity. Infirmities are not immortal, and therefore means are provided for their ultimate extinction. These methods are often called punishments; in reality they are remedial penalties, and form a necessary part of the discipline of the human soul. In a previous lecture on the "Philosophy of Spirit," we have, to some extent, expounded the nature of the soul, and the dependence of mind and spirit upon the soul. The soul was called by Hindus *atma*, which term means what divine soul meant to the Grecian philosophers, the innermost principle of all, the breath of the eternal in man, the *living soul* mentioned in Genesis. The spirit is a primary offshoot from this innermost principle, the mind being more external, while the spiritual or astral body, and the vital cord connecting the spiritual with the material body, are necessarily far more nearly related to the material envelope. The astral body or shell, as it is sometimes called by Theosophists, is of course not immortal, any more than the physical body is immortal; as it is built up of force in the spirit-world as the earthly body is composed of material substances, and is subject to perpetual change. Nothing but mutability can be predicated upon a shifting basis, and as mind and body are alike subject to change, it is the soul only which is immortal.

The Oriental philosophy which we are now discussing appears in modern theosophy only as a faint and glimmering ray of the brightness which once shone with such resplendent fervor over the entire Orient. All interpretations of Sanskrit now attempted are apt to be faulty, from the simple fact that all the records of the East have so profound an interior meaning, that one may be a highly gifted linguist, and have a perfect knowledge even of those ancient and difficult tongues in which the Vedas and Puranas were originally written, still, as one might be able to translate the Hebrew prophecies or Christian gospels literally out of one language into another, with perfect accuracy, a far different line of knowledge would be necessary to give the translator a clue to any spiritual sense in which they may be profitably understood. Mr. Sinnett, in his "Occult World" and "Esoteric Buddhism," has been a faithful disciple of his Eastern teachers, and far more, perhaps, than he perceives has been employed by spirits as their amanuenses, they having used him to explain many dark passages which, without the light of inspiration, would have remained hopelessly obscure. It may truly be said that no one but the author can rightly interpret his own book, because no one but he knows absolutely what the words were intended to convey; but for many books it would be difficult to find the author. We know many authors who are almost entirely dependent on inspiration; let them write novels, so-called, and they are histories, biographies and parables. Like the poet Milton, they can write only when the "it" takes them. The fire kindled by the Muses will only burn when the Muses fan the flame. Many poets, essayists and novelists build wiser than they know; they are little more than passive instruments, whose hands are made to write, and whose brains become receptive to the influx of external thoughts. Thus genius is often nine-tenths mediocrity; only very rarely do we find a man of genius who can at any and every time and upon all occasions speak out his best thoughts or write his finest verses.

The loss of personality, looked upon by many as so great a catastrophe, according to the most enlightened Oriental conception, signified only the blending of the spheres of various souls in such perfect harmony that the orchestration of the celestial performers produced only a perfectly harmonious and completed volume of tone. No instrument and no performer loses his identity by playing in a perfectly trained band or singing in a chorus in which no voice is heard distinctly from others. The highest development of mediumship implies concerted action on the part of mortal and immortal. Where there is friction or arbitrary control the wheels are not well oiled, the machinery does not work smoothly; and where the highest adept differs from the lowest spirit-medium is only where harmony differs from discord and perfect blending from unpleasant contention.

Theosophical surmises concerning the future life and agnostic declarations made by occultists concerning phenomena are often purely and almost wor-

less; but because of this no one should stand ready to deny that there are, or at least may be, those who have studied, developed and practiced in the East, who are equally far removed from charlatanry and fanaticism. India possesses a religion of measureless antiquity, and gives ample evidence to the student that the supremest attainments of man were at one time perfected into outward form on the banks of the Ganges. India and Egypt are almost equally venerable, and for a long time their histories ran in parallel lines. In the remote past the African and the Asiatic races had developed simultaneously a peculiar people, whose culture in spiritual and scientific directions was equally remarkable. Such a period evidently antedated the biblical deluge, the deluge itself referring to a period when the seats of learning in the East were overthrown, while inspiration waned through an excess of sensuality. The true adept was always, and always must be, a pure and upright person. Magic and wickedness may coalesce, but communion with such spheres of intelligence as can inspire to the delivery to the world of such teachings as are to be found in the Vedas is only possible where aspirations are truly ennobling.

Those who have devoted whole lifetimes to the study of spiritual things have at length come so thoroughly into union with the dwellers in the spirit-world that they have, in many instances, spent the greater part of their time in converse with those who are no longer robed in flesh; while they have also so disciplined their own bodies as to leave and enter them at will, thereby acquiring facilities for perambulating space and gathering up information impossible to be acquired by those whose energies are centred upon material things. It certainly would not do for the majority of mankind to devote themselves thus entirely to the interior life, but if some can be spared from ordinary vocations to devote themselves exclusively to some science or philosophy, the world can well afford to let its teeming multitude to spare one here and there for the life of a spiritual recluse. As we listen to the words of specialists in every other subject and pay them deference, we can surely give some measure of attention to those self-denying and spiritualized Mahatmas who, amid Himalayan fastnesses and in the delightful valleys between those heights, have from age to age perpetuated spiritual orders in which are spiritual and Masonic truths that, unfortunately, the majority of modern Masons would only scoff at.

It has been repeatedly asserted by lecturers and others that the Hindus believed in fourteen spirit spheres, seven below the earth and six above it, the earth itself being one. The ether spheres are states of darkness when compared with the earth, while the earth-sphere is the abode of countless myriads of spirits who have left the material body with no heavenly aspirations; while the six ascending spheres are occupied by spirits who are gradually advancing toward the spheres of celestial light or universal heavens. The numeral seven has always been employed in occultistic documents as the symbol of perfection; hence the Oriental doctrine not only of seven spheres, but also of the seven-fold nature of man, is in no sense extraordinary, and should not create surprise or bewilderment. When Gerald Massey was lecturing in London in 1883, he spoke of this seven-fold nature as an Oriental and very ancient conception, and when in America he was ignorantly criticised in a New York paper, and was made to say that man has seven souls, only one of which is really worth preserving. False and misleading as so garbled a statement must necessarily be, there is more truth in it than at first sight appears to the cursory reader, for the seven-fold nature of man being capable of analysis, intelligible and easily comprehensible presentation. In Proverbs IX, the words "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars," refer no doubt to the human soul and its tabernacle, as the development of man is the highest expression of wisdom possible on earth.

What are the seven principles of which man is constructed? Mr. Sinnett, in "Esoteric Buddhism," informs us, and in so doing he only states a very ancient truth by no means unfamiliar to every sincere student of ancient mystic literature. Taking a view of the scale proceeding downward or outward from the centre to circumference, the principles appear as follows: 1st, The *atma*, or divine soul, which is the alpha and omega of conscious being, immortal and indestructible; that which is our essential *ego* or real, imperishable self.

2d, The human spirit considered as a primary emanation from the soul. This is called in Mr. Sinnett's work *Buddhi*, or spiritual soul. With this, the second highest principle, is developed, may be said to have attained to the sixth sphere in spiritual development. Exceptional men only display this divine life on earth, which is second only to the attainment of the seventh degree, where the *atma*, or divine soul, is expressed, which is only the case with those who have graduated to celestial life.

The remaining five principles are necessary to constitute a perfect man as distinguished from an animal, while the two highest-mentioned already are only discernible in exceptionally developed persons. These five principles are the Human Soul, *Manas*; Animal Soul, *Kama Rupa*; Astral Body, *Linga Sharira*; Vitality, *Prana*; and the Body, *Rupa*.

These seven principles are all emanations from the soul itself, and are simply differentiated modes of spiritual manifestation. According to the Buddhist theory water is only *Maya*, which means delusion; while *Brahma* (spirit) is alone accreted with life. Thus Mrs. Eddy, and other Christian Scientists now in Boston, will find, by carefully perusing the records of India, that their doctrines, in a slightly different form, have been promulgated for thousands of years in the far Orient, and though far from agreeing with them in all their claims and pretensions, were perfectly at one with them on the primary assumption that spirit is the basis of all things, and that life and spirit are synonymous terms. Take the life out of the tree, and all the leaves and branches remain, but instead of unfolding they decline, wither and die. Even the rocks, the elements of which were once instinct with life, are not able to resist the slow ravages of decay. Even the hills are not everlasting; even the most solid marble formed in carboniferous quarries from the decay of vegetable and animal life, is not immortal; and ever where life is not there can be no growth or progress, and where progress is not, stagnation is simply apparent.

Nature is never neutral; either she is building or destroying, and just so soon as the tidal wave of spirit which set out in its flow toward certain expressions, changes its course and recedes, matter, which is a vibration of ether or emanation from spirit, commences to disintegrate. Matter feels nothing; there are no sensations in matter; it is the spirit alone which feels, and this spirit is not independent or self-existent except in its primal and ultimate condition, *vis*, that is, the soul-unit; the unit of life is your inmost self. One there who has no conception of spiritual life and no desire to live hereafter. These display nothing of their immortal nature; the soul itself in such cases has never

broken through the external shell, and has therefore given you no sign of its presence. When such persons pass into the spirit-life they retain nothing of their earthly individuality; they are dead to all spiritual things, and can only display again their earthly characteristics by employing the physical magnetism of some one on the earth. These spirits, who are so intimately connected with the earth, can and do produce physical manifestations; but very little intelligence is displayed through any of their work. No one recognizes them, and they are often spoken of as elementaries, while the elementary spirits proper are not necessarily any other than animal spirits, and the transient, fleeting individualities of forms which survive in astral body longer than in material form.

With the physical body you are all acquainted, though there are many things to be known about it not yet revealed. However, we may safely and justly leave it to the student of the physical side of nature to explain to us the mechanism of the lowest point in man's being that comes within the range of the anatomist. The scalpel and dissecting knife have their place in dealing with its intricacies, while physiology and hygiene undertake to prescribe for its many wants; but ascending the scale from the body to the divine soul, at the very second step of our way we encounter another principle, which all scientists affirm must have an existence, but which they declare often-times proceeds from the body, is the result of molecular action, and is generated by heat, light and electricity. We, on the other hand, maintain that vitality created the body, instead of the body generating or producing vitality. Vitality, or the vital principle, is described in Allan Kardec's works as a fluidic cord connecting the mortal with the immortal parts of man. It is the cord mentioned in Ecclesiastes which, if broken ruptures life. This cord is the outermost emanation of the spiritual nature, and the direct agent in producing matter.

Electricity is said by many to be the basis of life, but electricity is beyond analysis, it is strictly invisible, and is simply universal force in a particular mode of motion. Motion is essential to life, but motion is inseparable from vitality, while vitality itself is the chain which binds the material to the astral or spiritual body. At death, vitality no longer flows from the inner or astral to the outer or material body; and thus at the time of dissolution clairvoyants have often seen the spiritual body rise out of the material. This astral body possesses no persistent individuality, it changes constantly, its a fleeting aggregation of particles gathered up from the kingdom of force as the physical body is built up from the kingdom of matter. It resembles the physical body very closely at time of death, and is composed of force, or, as Swedenborg's writings tell us, of spiritual substance, this substance being far finer, subtler, and more enduring than material substance. The idea of the substantiality or objectivity of this astral or spiritual body, though in itself largely true, has given rise to many erroneous suppositions; among them the one that children who have passed from earth in infancy will appear so forever in the spiritual state, while the exact reverse is the truth.

The astral body when seen as it really is appears beautiful or hideous in proportion as the life of the person who has developed it and wears it has been beautiful or the reverse. Many a handsome prince who was a tyrant; many a queen, decked in jewels, and beautiful as the most exaggerated representations of Cleopatra; many a man renowned for the strength of a Hercules and the beauty of an Apollo, has gone out into the spirit-world frightful to behold. The old mythologies and the ancient superstitions relative to transmigration are all founded on the visions of the seers. In Greece *metempsychosis* included a belief in the possibility of one who had already lived a human life on earth descending into an animal form in a future existence for purposes of purification and expiation. This doctrine we do not endorse, as no spirit can ever require experience in an animal form who has once inhabited a human body, and indeed, from our point of observation, we cannot conceive of a spirit having once in its entrance upon a material career produced a human form through which to express itself, losing the ability to produce the form of humanity should it again require to embody itself on earth.

The visions of the seers have doubtless revealed to the Orient what is now being clearly revealed to many in this land and elsewhere, who possess clairvoyance and the gift of discerning spirits, *vis*, that the vesture and environment of the spirit are always typical of the spirit's condition. Thus if attributes which are most naturally expressed in the form of a hyena, a bear, a serpent, a lamb, a bird, a tree, a flower or any other familiar object in the material world, are in the ascendant in the inner life of a spirit departed from earth, on entering the spirit-spheres such forms accompany the spirit, and often so completely surround and engulf the spirit-body proper, that only these integuments and appurtenances are visible to the seer. Of course it is not true that these forms are created through the death of the material body; they are within the natural structure during earthly life, whenever they preponderate in character. Thus a spirit need not be disembodied to have such appearances frequenting him. It is by reason of this that many seers are repelled from certain people who are outwardly beautiful, while they are irresistibly drawn to others whose outward appearance is at least uninteresting. When seerisms more thoroughly understood than at present, we may be treated to a solution of the problems of elementary and animal forms in spirit accompanying mortals, which will in no way invalidate clairvoyant testimony, while at the same time it will make clear many things which are now obscure.

Elementary spirits enter very largely into the philosophy of the Theosophist, and it is well known to all who have really investigated the occult sciences that depraved human spirits, and also sub-human intelligences, obey the will of strong-minded persons, who are simply black magicians and under the control of those who are their masters. These inferior spirits work out the designs of their superiors, just as weak-willed people and animals on earth obey perforce, and sometimes willingly, one whose will is more developed than their own, and diametrically opposite statements are made concerning the power, work and influence of elementary spirits by occultists. It is universally conceded, among Hindus who are acquainted with the esoteric side of Hindu marvels, that adepts, fakirs and others have inferior spirits under their control. These inferior spirits are both human and sub-human; but the adept is always the master, so they are not supposed to control his organism, but, by virtue of superior power, commands them to do his bidding. Again, it is stated that people are made to do foolish, mischievous and wicked things by elementaries. This is impossible unless the individual who eventually becomes the dupe of the powers of darkness has so encouraged his lower propensities and abused his power for shameful ends that he has become the creature of lower impulses, the easy prey of unbridled lust; but even when in such a condition elementaries have no power of their

own. They are, however, the emissaries of those under whose direction they work, there always being human intelligence among either embodied or disembodied, wherever a human being succumbs to an outside influence.

Caballistically considered, elementary spirits correspond to the four great divisions of human faculties: Gnomes, or spirits of earth, being earthly desires; Sylphs, or spirits of air, reasoning faculties; Undines, or spirits of water, imaginations, and Salamanders, or spirits of fire, spiritual aspirations. These four orders of faculties are essential to the completion of a human being. The fleshly desires must be dominated by reason; imagination as a mirror or reflector must stand between reason and the soul, and act as medium of communication between the spiritual nature and the intellect. Imagination, therefore, has a work and place assigned to it as mediator between the rational and intuitive elements of man's being. It is entirely out of place when it acts as a substitute for reason, as it is intended to be an advance guard going on before to catch glimpses of what is ahead. When it has discovered or thinks it has discovered a fresh reality, then reason must step in to probe, analyze and verify. The imaginations of the poets have frequently been foregleams of the achievements of reason and sense. The spirit is always in advance of the intellect, and when imagination is cultured and exercised discreetly, instead of being a will-o'-the-wisp, leading those who follow it into a manner of enures and absurdities, it will be a nearly gateway through which the golden city of celestial wisdom can be entered, till at length reason will be adequate to the task of explaining celestial life, and all parts of human nature acting in perfect concert will be truly one.

We must now in closing say a very few words upon the Esoteric Buddhist's ideas on spirit-communion. These are often very vague and shadowy; astral bodies and shells often receive credit for all that takes place at a spiritual séance, while the company there are convinced they are receiving tidings from their human spirit-friends. No one who has ever considered materialization philosophically imagines for a moment that the evanescent form rapidly built up in a circle-room, and as rapidly dissolved, is a spirit body; it is simply an appearance, a phantasm; but it cannot be produced unless there is human spiritual power to produce it. No elementary or animal spirit can possibly produce a human form, or any semblance or counterfeit of it. Human intelligence is always present when human forms appear, but these forms are often imperfect, owing to imperfect conditions for their development and imperfect knowledge on the part of the spirits who wish to appear to you through these semblances of what they once were.

The spirit-body, as seen in spirit-life, registers the present condition of its occupants; while the forms shown at a séance often would be unknown to you who are dependent on sensuous evidence if they did not assume an appearance with which you were once familiar on earth. If the same spirit desired to show himself to four different people, each one of whom had known him at some stage in his earthly life when the others were not acquainted with him, he would endeavor to make four distinct appearances, that each of his acquaintances might know that it was he because of the form reminding them of him as he was when they knew him. If one had not seen him since he was a little boy he would try and show himself as a child; if another had known him as a young man he might endeavor to reproduce his appearance in early manhood; if another had not met him till he was between forty and fifty, when he came to that friend he would try to appear as he did in middle life, and if the fourth had seen him an old man, ready to pass into the other life from sheer old age, he would try to appear to that friend as he looked in the last act of his earthly career. The little boy, the young man, the middle aged and the old man are all one, they are four aspects of the same being; and when physical proof of spirit presence is demanded you all know how very far from conclusive that proof is considered, by many investigators unless it appeals completely to the senses.

Materialization, and every other form of physical phenomena, is only a stepping-stone to the time when spiritualized humanity will rejoice more in the development of spiritual discernment than in any external tests. There are many to-day in whom this inward power to recognize spirits by spiritual means is developing, and very often when manifestations are uncertain and unsatisfactory to external observers, some one or more in the company will express such deep joy, and such unbounded satisfaction with what has occurred, that those who cannot experience spiritual communion when spirits appeal to the spiritual senses and touch the emotions of the heart, laugh at him, and call him crazy or deluded, while he is just as sure that he has held communion with a beloved one in spirit-life as he is of his own existence. Let no one rob you of your simple, earnest, soul-satisfying faith in what has demonstrated itself to you as a spiritual reality. If we are to be free to accept truth as it appeals to our own minds and hearts, we must forever discountenance the carping, convolving methods so often resorted to by the opponents of mediums and mediumship. If you choose to leave the physical aspects of a subject to physical scientists; if you think it wise to employ learned ignorance in the shape of psychical research societies to do your investigating for you, instead of using your own powers of observation, the new papacy and the new priesthood may possibly, in the course of ages, determine something with regard to the nature of the force which operates in the production of spirit phenomena; but if in an hour of trial or bereavement you receive enlightenment, consolation, hope, courage, relief from a spirit communication, it matters little to you whether "authorities" have pronounced a favorable or unfavorable verdict upon the medium through whom you receive what you are most in need of. While doctors dispute over a disease and its treatment, patients die; but if one who is an "irregular" steps in, and by faith, prayer, metaphysics, or any other agency, accomplishes a patient's restoration to health, the boon is not less valuable to the one rescued from suffering, because the means employed are not sanctioned by colleges and the physicians furnished with diplomas.

We read of a blind man who was thoroughly at sea as to what opinion ought to be formed of the healer who had opened his eyes. He professed to understand nothing of the character or work of Jesus; but one thing he knew, and that was he had been cured through the instrumentality of some agency powerful enough to give him sight. The blessing of sight was none the less because mystery or ignorance veiled from him and those about him the source whence the healing virtue came. So to-day, if in sorrow or darkness light is shed, you may not know by what means the light has reached you, but if the light is there and you are restored and uplifted by it, that is enough. We would give more for one practically useful result than for millions of statements and arguments; there-fore must bear our dispassionate testimony to the good accomplished by spirit-communion; and if on the tree of Esoteric Buddhism, or any other branch of











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## SPECIAL NOTICES.

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

## Banner of Light.

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Before the coming light of Truth, Creeds tumble, ignorance dies, Error decays, and Humanity rises to its proper sphere of Knowledge.—Spirit John Pierpont.

## A New Spiritual Story.

We shall, in our forthcoming issue, commence the publication of an interesting Original Story, entitled, "HERE AND BEYOND," by Miss M. T. Shelhamer, author of "Outside the Gates," which appeared some time since in the BANNER. The latter Story attracted great attention, and created deep interest in many quarters, and we have no doubt "HERE AND BEYOND" will be equally interesting and instructive to the general reader.

"Outside the Gates," we are informed by Miss Shelhamer's guides, was a true spiritual story, and is the forthcoming one. The sickness of our medium last year contributed to the development of her mental powers in the literary line, and the first-named story was given to her while in her physically weakened condition. It was wrought out of her very life, we are told; and no one except her guides and herself have any claim upon the authorship. In the future, we are also informed, valuable contributions to the press may be given in a similar manner.

## The Dead Medical Bill—Sour Grapes.

All persons who are still disinclined to surrender every vestige of personal liberty, even that of caring for their own health and safety, to a self-constituted autocracy of medical men, will continue to rejoice together over the decisive and even signal defeat of the odious medical bill in the recent Massachusetts Legislature. The monopoly never worked harder to carry its point; it never showed a more aggressive and vindictive temper; it never betrayed its real spirit and purpose so distinctly to the public view; and it never demonstrated so powerfully the necessity for the defeat which it invited. The entire community is to be congratulated on the summary overthrow of a power that assumed to usurp unquestioned control over the bodily health and mental integrity of every one of its members. Had this medical bill passed we should have witnessed strange mutations indeed in the social condition. There would have been set up a power in our midst for which it would be vain to look for a parallel in our whole history.

So great has been the effect produced by this latest medical campaign and victory that the friends of freedom in remedial practice are already agitating the idea that measures should be inaugurated whereby from merely occupying the defensive each year, when attacked by the Regulars, they may be in position to assume the offensive. Our correspondent, "A. E. G."—(in whose initials will be recognized a talented lawyer and a close thinker, whose contributions to our columns in the past have been of varied character and sterling interest)—suggests in his *Quo Warranto* article, on our second page, one of the methods which might with justice be employed toward this end.

Years ago the ministry were forced to relax their hold on the pockets of the people for legal support. Now the doctors are reluctantly compelled to surrender their claims to a similar support, while offering to punish those who dare to compete with them in practice. The cases are very similar. If these doctors are so sure of their methods being not merely the best but the only safe ones, why are they not willing to leave the matter with the discretion of a discerning public? But since they are not thus willing it follows that they have no respect whatever for the increasing intelligence of that public, believing it to be wholly incapacitated to care for its own physical well-being. They might as well try to make a law preventing individuals from framing a dietary suitable for themselves, on the ground that prudent living will be sure to cheat the doctors out of their business living. Happily, however, the community is not in the hands of the medical oligarchy yet; and every such battle as the last one fought with an intelligent and liberty-loving community is sure to keep it out of their hands indefinitely.

The ignominious and repeated failures of the Massachusetts Medical Society busy-bodies in their persistent attempts to obtain medical legislation for their own benefit has led them to think it best to "withdraw in good order." Hence the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* proposes that in future efforts "the medical profession, in order to avoid any possible

aspiration of their motives, stand wholly aloof," which means that they shall keep out of sight next time, and employ the best cat's-paw they can find to pull the chestnuts out of the fire.

The Journal also says:

"As far as any personal feeling in the matter was concerned, it is evident that the sentiment of the great majority of the society was one of entire indifference. But a small portion thought it worth while to put themselves on record at all. As a matter of fact, the medical profession has much less at stake in the passage of such a law than the public at large, for neither themselves nor their families are in any danger from unqualified practitioners. It is the non-medical public who are especially concerned in protecting themselves from ignorance and incapacity."

Such talk as this is a very thin covering for the chagrin of defeat, and the overwhelming criticism to which they were subjected by Prof. Buchanan. The *Cincinnati Eclectic Medical Journal* says of this address of Prof. B.:

"It has the ring of good metal. The older Eclectics will remember Buchanan, his stirring lectures in the Institute, and his lectures and addresses published in the *Eclectic Medical Journal* from 1849 to '55. Those who have old files of the *Journal* will do well to turn back and read some of these papers."

The men who fought the battle for freedom in medicine, and who have made Eclecticism what it is, spoke with no uncertain voice. They were able to point out the errors of the old practice. They were able to denounce the bigoted intolerance of the dominant school, and they were able to fight the battle that all laws interfering with freedom in medical practice were effaced from the statute-books of all the States of this Union.

Your poor-spirited, half-hearted, 'milk-and-water' Eclectics was at a discount those days. The man who would come whining for 'laws to regulate the medical profession,' would have been contemptuously kicked out. Let him be kicked now, until he reaches the regular camp where he wants nothing to be, as we said, until he is as happy as a pig in a trough.

If one wants to see the beauty of medical legislation, let him go to Canada. There the regular is on top, and he makes himself felt. The beauty of it is that regularly consists in having a medical degree from a Canadian or British college—no American diploma is recognized. Dr. Bartholow, Flint or Draper, and even our own Dr. Rauch, of Illinois, would be obliged to attend Canadian lectures, and pass their examinations before they could prescribe for the sick.

They have things well in hand, and employ detectives to spy out the shortcomings of their neighbors. This is what we will come to if things go on as they propose, and it has even come to this now in some States.

As an example I will give the case of Dr. McCormack of Pelee Island, near the U. S. line. This doctor was in New York, had a good education, and attended his studies at the Buffalo Medical College. The island is sparsely populated and cannot support a physician, so that the only medical assistance the people can get is from Dr. McCormack. The past winter a person who had been provoked to wrath concluded to even up. He suggested to certain doctors on the mainland that Dr. McCormack was violating the law. Good, they would like to catch him, and punish him. A detective was sent over, the evidence obtained, and the doctor was forced to pay \$115 into the Dominion treasury.

Very gentle are these medical lumps when protected by law. They do not care whether the people have medical assistance; indeed they may die if they choose, unless they take a legal doctor.

Do you think that this method is confined to Canada? If you do, you are mistaken. I could also point out New York, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Louisiana and Illinois of the same character. It is the intent and purpose to have such laws and such punishments in every State of this Union."

## Spiritual Discernment and Sensuous Evidence.

The latter portion of the discourse printed in this week's issue of the BANNER OF LIGHT, wherein the guides of W. J. Colville treat of Esoteric Buddhism, and its Relation to the Spiritualistic Phenomena, contains several sentences which are literally golden (in their wealth of spiritual information) to the inquirer concerning the phenomenon of materialization, explaining as they do the difficulties attending the spirit seeking to manifest in this manner in reaching even the present imperfect standard of approximation to what it desires in the way of resemblance to its former habitation of clay, and the demonstrating as far as may be of its mental peculiarities through its temporary envelope; and thus teaching the lesson of the necessity on the part of those who would reach the truth in this direction, for patient, definite, self-centred investigation, rather than sporadic and aimless visits to mediums made at random, and without consecutive and connected purpose. Truly do these guides remark: "These forms are often imperfect, owing to imperfect conditions for their development, and imperfect knowledge on the part of the spirits who wish to appear to you through these semblances of what they once were."

The illustration presented by Mr. Colville's guides regarding the representations of the various stages of growth to which a spirit would be subjected who wished to identify himself to the merely sensuous perception of four different people who had known him respectively on earth as a boy, a youth, a middle-aged and an aged man, is a pertinent introduction to the point they make, and the prophecy they utter, when they show the necessarily difficult nature of a recognition of a materialized form when that identification is based alone on sensuous perception or the unsupported exoteric testimony of the human senses, and then proceed to declare that there is another order of perception, an esoteric, which rightfully enters into the identification of these forms by the observer—and which is found, in time, to clear away the mists often attendant on the path of those seekers after truth who now demand proof of spirit-presence which shall appeal only, and completely, to the ordinary physical senses—and that is the recognitory evidence offered by the interior, the inward-looking spirit within the man himself, which at once and instinctively comprehends the contiguity of its loved ones. Materialization, and all other forms of physical phenomena, are, they declare, (taken in the aggregate) but a stepping-stone to the time when spiritualized humanity will rejoice more in the development of spiritual discernment than in any external tests: "There are many today in whom this inward power to recognize spirits by spiritual means is developing, and very often when manifestations are uncertain and unsatisfactory to external observers, some one or more in the company will express such deep joy, and such unbounded satisfaction with what has occurred, that those who cannot experience spiritual communion when spirits appeal to the spiritual senses and touch the emotions of the heart, laugh at him, while he is just as sure that he has held communion with a beloved one in spirit-life as he is of his own existence."

In this connection, too, the guides of Mr. Colville do not forget to speak a word for many, self-reliance on the part of investigators, rather than a leaning on constituted authorities or a listening to the voice of doubt and censure which comes from other sources, and may or may not be founded in honest conviction, as

viewed from the personal standpoint of the parties uttering it. The point emphasized is that each must investigate for himself, and endeavor to develop an individual confidence in his own powers of investigation, the testimony of his own senses and the instructive and intuitive declarations of his own interior being. How laden with truth is the following sentence, wherein this idea is crystallized, and set as a memento for the treasure-house of human reference on occasion:

"If we are to be free to accept truth as it appeals to our own minds and hearts, we must forever discountenance the carping, conviving methods so often resorted to by the opponents of mediums and mediumship. If you choose to leave the physical aspects of a subject to physical scientists; if you think it wise to employ learned ignorance in the shape of psychological research societies to do your investigating for you, instead of using your own powers of observation, the new paper and the new priesthood may possibly, in the course of ages, determine something with regard to the nature of the force which operates in the production of spirit phenomena; but if in an hour of trial or bereavement you receive enlightenment, consolation, hope, courage, relief from a spirit communication, it matters little to you whether 'authorities' have pronounced a favorable or unfavorable verdict upon the medium through whom you receive what you are most in need of."

Modern Spiritualism, say these wise guides, means good news to ALL people; we fully agree with them in the positions above taken, believing that the "good news" will be more fully than ever spread among the people when the two yoke-fellows, spiritual discernment and sensuous perception, concerning which they so cogently reason, are brought to work in harmonious unity by those visiting materializing circles.

## A Dreadful State of Affairs.

A little eight-page tract on "The Sunday Newspaper," issued from the American Church Press, No. 76 East 9th street, New York, which must have been done in obedience to some "regular" doctor's prescription to his patient to work off his bile. The writer—if it were indeed written instead of spoken—wants to lift up the standard of a higher public sentiment against the abuse of the "Lord's Day" by the publication of Sunday newspapers. He is nothing more than an iron-clad, triple-plated, copper-bottomed, double-riveted bigot, with about as much of the real religious spirit and sentiment in him as there is of saccharine in a persimmon. It is all "holy day" with him; "divine institution"; "the sanctity of the Lord's Day"; "divine authority" and "hallowed associations"; and "sacred institution." If one were to strike these worn phrases from his vocabulary, it is plain that he would suffer such pangs from the poverty of expression as would fix him as a mental dyspeptic as long as he tried to think about thinking. His chief reason for his plous disquietude is that the Sunday newspaper is "secular and only secular."

If it were a Sunday school annex, no doubt it would be all right for him; but as it is only a newspaper, it is of course a horrible concern.

This peanut-peddling pietist asked, evidently without a suspicion of exciting laughter: "What Christian man would think of taking his ledger home on Saturday evening, that he might devote the quiet hours of God's day to posting his accounts?" Let him ask any Christian farmer if he would call up his hands and get in a field of hay in case he saw a heavy thunder-shower coming up in the west? Posting the ledger on Sunday he thinks no worse than reading the market quotations in the Sunday papers. We think we see any man who is "going long of the market," for instance, Christian man or pagan, refusing to look at the Sunday quotations and putting them away from his sight till Monday!

But what would this pious critic have one do on Sunday in place of reading his newspaper? We can judge by the character of the complaint he raises against the paper, which is, that "it takes the time, all too little at best, which had else been given to the study of God's word, and to the acquiring of that knowledge which makes the Christian man an intelligent and interested sharer in the great work of the church, for which small opportunity is found during the week-days." What venerable twaddle! The man has clearly lost his way, and wandered down to us out of the darkness of the Middle Ages. But it is funny to see him handle what are called the "religious newspapers." He says they are open to the same objection, "if they are to be read as a whole on the Lord's Day." Now let the "religious" publishers have their waack at him. They will be sure, first of all, to call him an ass, which we do not, for the reason that his own ears advertise him. Alas! and alas! he says, "the sacred can never so sanctify the secular." In these papers as to make them either proper or profitable reading for "the day of rest."

The Sunday paper, continues this bigot, requires the "habitual violation of the Holy Day in its issue and distribution." Bad enough! The work done on Sunday for the Monday morning paper he dodges altogether, or rules it as a question out of the debate by saying that "the cases are not parallel." For his purpose they of course are not; but for the vindication of plain common sense they are in every practical sense. How does he know that so many persons in the large cities are deprived of a greater blessing by enjoying the actual blessing of a Sunday paper? And what right has he to say that the Sunday press would necessarily take sides against the religious observance of Sunday because it makes its issues on that seventh day? He does assume to say so, however.

If it is right, he reasons, to advertise the theatre on Sunday, it is just as right to open it. This is the size of the man who tries to scare people with their "hell-reasoning" and rhetoric. "If it be right on Sunday to advertise wares for sale," says this unclucked goose, "can it be wrong to open the store and sell these wares on that day?" He even asserts that if it is right to issue the Sunday newspaper and to read its contents, then it is right to open places of business and amusement! And then, he says, "we shall have the French Sunday upon us, with its high-handed defiance of divine law." Dreadful! The issue, sale and reading of Sunday papers he knows will bring about the same Sunday state of things here that it has in France! The first and main thing to be done, he advises, is to cancel the subscription to the Sunday paper at once! Especially does he so advise those who, "through thoughtlessness, or want of serious investigation, have drifted into the habit of reading the Sunday newspaper"—poor innocents! Never mind the mortification involved "before your family and friends," which at least shows how widely the dreadful evil has taken root. He says the public sentiment which tolerates the Sunday newspaper "needs toning up." So does he, and then he would not amount to enough to warrant the reckoning up of his moral and intellectual assets.

## Spiritualism in America.

Under the above heading Mr. J. G. Meigs writes from this city to London Light as follows:

Possibly a few words as to the cause of Spiritualism as it appears to a visitor in this part of the world may prove of interest to some of your readers. I arrived in New York on May 10th, after a fairly favorable but rather rough passage in the *Germania*, and came on to this city the following day, when I had the pleasure of again taking by the hand my old friend, J. William Fletcher, by whom I was most cordially welcomed. I also very speedily received an equally cordial reception from his spirit-control, "Winona," who was as much as a *courant* of my affairs as I was myself, only much more so, and from her I received many messages of affectionate greeting and of kindly interest from many of those dear to me on the spirit-side of life.

On my second evening in Boston I went as a stranger to the séance of the Misses Berry, where I was cordially received by their courteous manager, Mr. Albion. It would be impossible, in the limits of this letter, to describe all that took place at that séance. Fully thirty spirits materialized, and these were of every kind and condition as regards age, height, dress, appearance, etc. On one occasion two female spirits, one that of an Indian chief, the other that of a lady, brought the entranced medium out of the cabinet, and, one supporting her on each side, made the tour of the circle with her between them. Two spirits appeared at the curtain together and addressed me by name, but I failed to recognize them, although they gave me names that I was familiar with, of relatives who had passed away. A day or two after this I accompanied Mr. Fletcher to a séance in Brooklyn, where he lectured ably and eloquently to a crowded and appreciative audience; and I accompanied him after that to Washington, where we were very cordially received, and found everywhere a desire to hear and understand more of Spiritualism. We stayed there for a few days, and very much enjoyed some most friendly receptions that were gotten up for our benefit, and where I was called upon to give some of my own experiences as a Spiritualist, returning again to Boston by way of New York.

Certainly I must say that, so far as I have been able to judge during my stay in America, Spiritualism does not occupy the same position that it is accorded to in England. As a rule, people don't shrug their shoulders, turn up their eyes and look the other way when Spiritualism comes on the tapis, nor are they so ready to refer the thing to the working of the devil, as many people do in England. I have generally remarked that there is a very intelligent spirit of inquiry as to the truth of the question, and, at such spiritual reunions as I have attended, I have found the company composed of intelligent ladies and gentlemen, very different indeed from the cranks and eccentricities that some smart writers would have the world believe are the only supporters of or believers in Spiritualism. I cannot do better than end this letter with a couple of most marvelous séances I had at Mr. Fletcher's on the evening of May 1st and 2nd, which I sent to the BANNER OF LIGHT for publication.

Following the above is the article printed in our columns June 6th, "A Test Beyond Peradventure."

## Old Wine in a New Bottle.

Some people appear to think that a new and wholly original religious force has come to light in the person of a notorious revivalist, named Rev. Sam Jones, who is making things lively among the sensation-loving people of certain districts in Tennessee, of which Nashville is the centre. We have met many miscellaneous excerpts from his popular harangues, which are quoted as containing fresh and original thought—whereas all that can be said of them, in reality, is that they are the slap-dash, reckless and singularly expressive utterances of a rude and uneducated mind that is able, always and only to a limited extent, to see men and things in odd relations. His pith and point consist far more in his daring incongruities of idea and speech than in any special and striking presentation of truth in its application to life and conduct. It is perhaps a brand-new bottle, though frightfully rough on the outside, but it is the same old creedal wine within, and made all the more unpalatable by the way it is poured out.

Not wishing to give our readers an unpleasant draught of muddy theological lees frothed up by the vigorous hand of an irreverent Punch-inello, we do not propose to cite anything from his quoted utterances save the following, which gives the real depth of the man, and the amount of attention he is worthy of at the hands of the thoughtful and reflecting everywhere:

"I like Shakespeare; I like to read Shakespeare; he can lead the reader down to hell with his masterly word-paintings; but there is one thing he cannot do—he cannot take the reader by the hand and lead him back. When he gets you there, he just leaves you there."

The amount of people led down to and left in hell (Shel now-a-days destroys all the bite of the old-time wine) by Shakespeare is left by us for computation by those churchmen who, railing all the while at Spiritualism, because of the by them alleged ignorance of its promulgators and followers, yet show themselves enthusiastically ready to seize upon and parade before the people as a new hope of Zion the discourses of a man like the revivalist (?) Rev. Samuel Jones, while they efface with ribald wit, coarse metaphor, and genuine affronts to the finest feelings of human nature, are held to be religion par excellence, and the beverage best calculated to increase the number and sustain the souls of "the heirs of the kingdom."

## The People's Sunday.

"The Unity Pulpit," the name under which the discourses of Rev. M. J. Savage are published weekly, recently reached No. 39, Vol. 6, the subject of which was "The People's Sunday." In it he outlines its secular and religious history, and reaching a consideration of its use in our own times, states that in the first place, he would have all the dram-shops hermetically sealed; "and this," he remarks, "at however heavy a cost; for, leaving out of account the questions of public morals and happy homes, it would be a financial saving through the lessened expense of courts and prisons and reform schools and through the much greater amount of good work that would be done. We cannot pursue people to their homes and see what they drink there; but for one day in seven we can shut up the devil's shops, and give God and nature a chance."

On Sunday morning he would have every individual, no matter what their occupations during the week, engage in church or elsewhere in earnest religious service—"a service that lifts the imagination, and brings us into wider, sympathetic relations with the larger life of the world, that touches and quickens the sense of duty, that thrills with elevated thoughts of worship, that awes and chastens as in the presence of the Divine." Such a worship he thinks ought to rest body and brain, and fill the whole being with a stronger life.

Of Sunday afternoon, he says: "I would have sheepy trains into the country on every road, leading out of the city; I would have cheap steamers down the harbor. I would have art galleries and reading rooms wide open and free."

I would have as many active oppositions to evil as possible. I would do all I could to break up the weary monotony of drudgery and commonplace. I would make trees and flowers and grasses and ocean and light and air so attractive and easy of access that people should leave the attics and cellars, the attics and the narrow streets, to seek them with a simple and hearty relish."

Sunday evenings he would devote to home, wife, children and friends. "Let it be," he says, "a time of all joy and freedom and simple festivity, a time in which all the week-day burdens of life roll off and are forgotten. Enough of the worry, the care, the perplexity connected with what to eat and what to wear; enough of social jealousies and rivalries; enough of political turmoil; enough of fret about the means and ways of living, can be crowded into the six days of labor. Throw off the shackles, and for a few glad hours be like the angels, just living and loving and rejoicing."

## "Beyond the Valley."

After a prolonged interval a new book is born from the brain and being of the seer and harmonious philosopher known to the world of our present time, Andrew Jackson Davis, to which he has given the above title, and which he asserts to be the sequel to his well-known "Magic Staff." It constitutes, within certain limitations, the autobiography of its author, and therefore contains matter of absorbingly intense interest. It is hardly necessary to add that it will be widely and eagerly read. The several sketches of the author's interior experience, making nearly two-thirds of the book, are in substance not unfamiliar to all readers, and they will excite public curiosity and enlist popular sympathy in various degrees. They will all be read, of course, as a part of the life-experience of their reader, in which is felt an interest that may be described as almost universal. While this portion of the book offers nothing strikingly new, it nevertheless forms a living part of the author's career and character.

The latter part of the book is, to our mind, the brightest and freshest. It is studded with very beautiful thoughts, and continually spreads out large views to the human spirit. Not that it challenges a critical perusal, but it will be felt to be encouraging and inspiring. We think this part of the book will be adjudged that which is of permanent interest and value.

As a whole, this latest volume from the pen of its prolific author will be greeted with a warm welcome by his numerous friends; and what seems only personal to himself will prove to be but a confiding invitation to others to lend their attention to his teachings with the more sincerity because of their new acquaintance with the experiences of his personal life. "Beyond the Valley" will go forth as the companion volume to the "Magic Staff" wherever the latter has been received and read.

Here is what the Boston Commonwealth says of the book:

In *Beyond the Valley*, a sequel to "The Magic Staff," an autobiography of Andrew Jackson Davis, we have a record of psychological events which attract and interest a large class of readers. The volume is full of interesting spiritual experiences, and doubtless contains much that may be read with highest intellectual and moral advantage by parents and children, and by philosophers and scientists. Mr. Davis asserts that this is his "last will and testament." Boston: Colby & Rich.

## Spirit Phenomena Among Materialists.

In our columns of June 13th a correspondent gave some account of spiritual phenomena which had occurred among the residents of Liberal, Mo., a town whose population was chiefly of the materialistic class. We are pleased to learn that the manifestation of spirit-presence continues, and in the very intelligent and convincing form known as independent slate-writing. So unmistakably genuine are the phenomena that the *Truth-Seeker* (New York) of June 27th publishes a detailed account, by C. W. Stewart, of slate-writing without visible human agency at two places, the residences of Dr. Bontton and Dr. Clark, appended to which are the following affidavits subscribed to by a notary public:

LIBERAL, MO., June 5th, 1885.  
We, the undersigned, of Liberal, State of Mo., have a personal acquaintance with Dr. B. Bontton, and know him to be a man of truth and a worthy citizen.

We have been given the privilege of examining the conditions under which certain slate-writing takes place in the said Dr. Bontton's house, alleged to be through the instrumentality of spirits. We have availed ourselves of said privilege, and have made a thorough examination of the said premises, and we hereby pronounce it utterly impossible that slate-writing can occur through visible or tangible human agency.

C. W. STEWART,  
D. E. GIBBLY,  
J. H. BENDER, JR.,  
JOHN G. MEYER,  
G. H. WALKER.

LIBERAL, BARTON CO., MO., June 5th, 1885.  
This is to certify that I am a citizen of Barton County, Mo., and a practicing physician of Liberal, Mo. This on the evening of May 24th there was a person present, but myself and wife. That on said evening my wife placed a clean slate with a fragment of pencil on a bed in a bedroom, and fastened the door. Shortly minutes afterward, on opening the door, the following message was found on the slate:

"It is me—Mattie."

The above is the fact in the case as witnessed by me.

J. W. CLARK.

In the BANNER OF LIGHT last week we referred to the account of the late Rev. Dr. Wheden's theory of "angeloids," as it appeared in an evening paper in this city. The following, printed in the Boston Evening Record of the 8th ult., shows the outside world that this reverend gentleman was—as to the points really set forth—a Spiritualist himself in belief, hence the ideas which those not acquainted with the Spiritual Philosophy were led to ascribe to him as original in conception and elaboration:

To the Editor of the Evening Record:  
In your issue of this date, in commenting on the late Dr. Wheden's "discovery," you say: "The Spiritualists, who are apt to change the rationale of their belief with every new vagary, have already taken up the theory to some extent, materializing angeloids in their séances." Now, this is not correct. Spiritualists have always held the same views that Dr. Wheden advanced, according to your statement, namely, "that the brain and nervous system constitute within us a sort of spiritual duplicate of ourselves; that they are the 'mind,' and that when the flesh and bones and other things are dead, this nerve duplicate survives as a soul." This is one of the fundamental theories of Spiritualism, "discovered" and demonstrated long before Dr. Wheden wrote a word on the subject. Evidently the doctor was a Spiritualist, but preferred to present his views in a manner calculated to hide that fact. This doctrine is in perfect harmony with that of St. Paul, who says "there is a spiritual body and there is a natural body."

Boston, June 5th.

J. W. Fletcher can be consulted about one week longer.

20 years is a long time, but for that term DE GRAY'S HEART-REGULATOR has been before the public as a sure cure for Heart Disease in all its forms. Free pamphlet of F. E. De Gray, Cambridge, Mass. \$1.00 per bottle at drug stores.











## New York Advertisements

**PROFESSOR ST. LEON**



Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JULY 11, 1885.

Opening at Onset.

Sunday, July 12th, is the regular opening of the camp-meeting season at this popular resort. Dr. Fred L. H. Willis in the morning, and Miss Jennie B. Haggen and Joseph D. Stiles in the afternoon, are the speakers and media announced for the day. We have already published the regular list of speakers, etc., for the entire season, and feel confident that all who attend for spiritual food will in no wise go away empty.

We have frequently spoken of the delightful character of the grove, the bay, the quaint and beautiful cottages, etc., and now commend them to the attention of the visiting public. The following, written up by the talented abolitionist, Mrs. Helen Stuart Richings—who is now at Onset for the first time—will give our readers some idea of how forcibly the charms of this romantic spot seize upon the attention and sympathies of a receptive and cultivated mind:

"There are some things which it were vain to attempt to describe; some things which may be felt, but not expressed; some things which fill our whole being with a light, a joy, a peace, a sense of the presence of a true God, and to anyone outside of their influence, the painter stands before his finished landscape with a sense of impotence; for, though his eye may be beautifully blue, he cannot transfer to canvas the very grace of a distant smile, the beauty of a perfect in color, form and grouping, but where is the murmurous rustle of their leaves—the rhythmic swaying of their sun-kissed tops? He may paint with the brush of a master, but he cannot paint a breeze, the rustle of a bird, or the scent from a field of new-mown hay.

So, too, the word-painter must feel his weakness when he attempts to clothe with language the beauty and charm of a landscape and the glory of a scene, may tell of breezy seaport islands, waters that sparkle in the sun, or softly ripple across the moon's mysterious track, lovely coves, white stretches of pebbly beach, wooded slopes, banks of wild roses, birds that chirp and twitter, and the fragrance of flowers, inland ponds, where fragrant water-lilies bloom, hazy bill-tops, glorious sunrises, and wondrously beautiful sunsets, and encircling all the blue horizon—the image of the all-containing, all-creating, all-sustaining Infinite. And yet, to one who has not himself seen, words will be but shadows, and fall to thrill the soul as can this grand symphony of nature."

ONSET BAY.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Two weeks have elapsed since my last letter, and during that time the population of Onset has steadily and surely increased. Meetings are being held at the auditorium every Sunday, and the mediums now on the ground have already commenced their work.

Today there have been two meetings of an interesting character. This morning Helen Stuart Richings favored us with readings which were exceedingly well rendered, and won the hearty applause of all who had the pleasure of hearing her. In the afternoon a Fact Meeting was held, presided over by Mr. L. L. Whitlock, at which Mrs. Townsend-Wood, Mr. Rothwell, Mrs. Dr. H. H. Hare, Mrs. Maud E. Lord, Dr. Stoddard and others related interesting facts of their own personal experience. Mr. Crane, Mrs. Whitlock and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Rothwell and Mrs. Werner (of the Werner Dramatic Company) favored us with some very fine music.

To-night a sacred concert by the Werners will be given at the Temple, and several séances held by well-known mediums at their homes.

Of course the Fourth was a great day here. The attractions announced drew a large attendance, and it is estimated that fully four thousand persons were on the grounds, and were well provided for and entertained. Mrs. Townsend-Wood was the orator, and gave a fine discourse, elevating and inspiring, and peculiarly adapted to the requirements of young men and women to whom it was more particularly addressed. There were also during the day among the attractive exercises, music by the Middleboro' Band, a rowing match and a tub race, two entertainments at the Temple, three sessions at the rink, and fireworks in the evening, making a fitting ending to the celebration. Despite the great crowd from outside, excellent order was maintained, and no disturbance occurred to mar the enjoyment of the pleasure-seeker.

The O. B. R. L. has not yet recommenced its trips, those having the matter in charge being determined that when they do so everything shall be as perfect as they can make it. The track is being thoroughly inspected and overhauled, and a different wheel put on the cars.

Dr. Henry Blais is at the "Robbins' Nest," and has so far recovered his health as to be able to resume his wonderful sittings for independent state-writing. Mr. Joseph Caffray and wife arrived on Friday last, and have taken rooms in W. F. Nye's cottage.

Mr. A. W. S. Rothwell is located here and giving séances.

Prof. R. H. Hare and wife of Philadelphia are at the Glen Cove House.

The hotels are doing a thriving business, and everything bids fair for a very prosperous season at Onset this year. THORNDEN.

Sunday, July 12th, 1885.

The New Bedford Standard recently had an article from its correspondent "Hal" regarding Onset, to which reference was made last week, and from which we condense the following:

The first cottage in Onset Bay Grove was occupied May 15th, 1877, and about a dozen others were finished that spring. Now there are three hundred and fifteen. About a hundred have been built since last August; the forty-fifth since January was begun on Saturday. The most magnificent building, and the grandest in the Temple just completed, will be used for the camp-meetings whenever the weather is such as to be uncomfortable for listeners in front of the pavilion. It is 70x120 feet, open nearly fifty feet high to the central ridge of the nave, and cost about \$10,000. There is a break in each side of the roof, with windows the whole length. The stage is the entire width of the building, about 25 feet deep, and provided with simple scenery. The stage is smooth, and there are seats for 800 people, including a gallery over the vestibule. Nearly as many more seats could be put in if desired. In the large window opposite the stage there is a cross of blue and orange glass. At one corner, a tower and spiral rise to the height of about 30 feet. The exterior is painted light blue, with the shingled gable and tower dark red. The view from the tower is fine, commanding the entire grove and its surroundings, the hills of Bourne and North Falmouth, the Vine Neck and Bird Islands, light houses, Temp's Knob, the great Marion, Bourne's Hill, the stretch of high land north of Tremont, and the great Manomet hill at South Plymouth, the highest land south of Milton and Quincy, overlooking all the rest of the Cape. The view, and the Association could bring something into its treasury by putting in a few telescopes, and charging a few cents for admission.

Onset is getting to be a permanent village. Fifty-three families were here all winter, and the town of Wareham has been obliged to build a school-house. Twenty scholars went last winter to the East Wareham school, a mile and a half distant, and the first term in the new house is now in progress with thirty-five scholars.

Onset Bay station on the Old Colony railroad is this year to become a full-fledged station. Heretofore it has been a stopping place only, with a man to take care of the delivery and reception of communications from the grove at all seasons, but the new station, which the accounts were kept at East Wareham, Mr. Augustine W. Blais has now been appointed railroad agent at Onset Bay station, and commenced business May 1st. In May his freight collections were over \$1000, and probably a third much freight for the grove was left at East Wareham station. A new passenger station was commenced June 12th by men in charge of Charles Lewis of Hyannis. It is 72x120 feet, with an 12 by 14 for a baggage room. Then it will be a regular station, with ticket office, and telegraph or telephone.

The fact that passenger trains have stopped at Onset Bay station only a few months in the year, and there being a growing demand for communication from the grove at all seasons, has led the town to lay out a new and direct road to East Wareham station.

The new list of (officers) is as follows: Col. William C. Crockett, Boston, President; George Hooper, Boston, Vice President; Dr. E. Y. Johnson, Warren, R. I., Treasurer; G. Henry Brown, Charlestown, Clerk; Simon Butterfield, Chelsea, Alfred Nash, William Pickett and Mrs. J. P. Ricker, Boston, and Cyrus Peabody, Dr. E. L., with the other officers named above, Directors.

Speaking of "Opening Day," the account contains the following among other points:

"In the morning (Sunday, June 21st), Miss Shepherd, known as the BANNER OF LIGHT medium, addressed the audience. She made a plain setting forth of the leading doctrines of Spiritualism, and said the good spirits aid those who act in harmony and for the general welfare, and the evil spirits who are in association with power support the work in an association to advance their personal ends."

Regarding Resident Agent Bourne, the Standard scribe remarks (the BANNER scribe endorsing): "Mr. B. H. Bourne has been the agent of the Association from the first. It was well that his valuable services are retained. He is a very agreeable gentleman, and is thoroughly conversant with all the details of the business."

Neshaminy Falls Camp-Meeting. To the Editor of the Banner of Light: The first Sunday in July opens with a clear sky, a bright omen to those who contemplate opening their camp-meetings during this and the following months, as they greatly depend on pleasant Sundays for their success. On the 18th the First Association of Spiritualists will pitch their tents again at Neshaminy—and the 10th will be the Grand Opening Day, on which occasion we have a Clegg Wright in the evening, and afternoon Mrs. E. L. Watson, late of California, 21st. Emerson will give tests from the platform at the close of each lecture. The programme of speakers for each succeeding day is as follows, Edgar W. Emerson to close each lecture with spirit delineations from July 18th to 26th inclusive.

Tuesday, July 21, Mrs. E. L. Watson; Wednesday, July 22, J. Clegg Wright; Thursday, July 23, Mrs. E. L. Watson; Friday, July 24, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, July 25, J. Clegg Wright; Sunday, July 26, J. Clegg Wright. Tuesday, July 27, A. B. French, A. M., and Mrs. E. L. Watson, P. M.; Wednesday, July 28, A. B. French, Wednesday, July 29, J. Clegg Wright; Thursday, July 30, A. B. French; Friday, July 31, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, Aug. 1, A. B. French; Sunday, Aug. 2, George Chalmers, A. M., and A. B. French, P. M.; Tuesday, Aug. 3, George Chalmers, A. M., and J. Clegg Wright, P. M.; Wednesday, Aug. 4, George Chalmers, P. M.; Thursday, Aug. 5, J. Clegg Wright; Friday, Aug. 6, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, Aug. 7, J. Clegg Wright; Sunday, Aug. 8, J. Clegg Wright. Tuesday, Aug. 11, Rev. Samuel Watson; Wednesday, Aug. 12, Mrs. A. M. Gladding; Thursday, Aug. 13, Rev. Samuel Watson; Friday, Aug. 14, A. M. Gladding; Saturday, Aug. 15, Rev. Samuel Watson; Sunday, Aug. 16, Mrs. Gladding, A. M., and Rev. Samuel Watson, P. M.; Tuesday, Aug. 17, A. M. Gladding; Wednesday, Aug. 18, C. F. Fannie Allen; Thursday, Aug. 19, C. F. Fannie Allen; Friday, Aug. 20, C. F. Fannie Allen; Saturday, Aug. 21, C. F. Fannie Allen; Sunday, Aug. 22, C. F. Fannie Allen; Monday, Aug. 23, C. F. Fannie Allen; Tuesday, Aug. 24, J. Clegg Wright; Wednesday, Aug. 25, J. Clegg Wright; Thursday, Aug. 26, J. Clegg Wright; Friday, Aug. 27, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, Aug. 28, J. Clegg Wright; Sunday, Aug. 29, J. Clegg Wright; Monday, Aug. 30, J. Clegg Wright; Tuesday, Aug. 31, J. Clegg Wright; Wednesday, Sept. 1, J. Clegg Wright; Thursday, Sept. 2, J. Clegg Wright; Friday, Sept. 3, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, Sept. 4, J. Clegg Wright; Sunday, Sept. 5, J. Clegg Wright; Monday, Sept. 6, J. Clegg Wright; Tuesday, Sept. 7, J. Clegg Wright; Wednesday, Sept. 8, J. Clegg Wright; Thursday, Sept. 9, J. Clegg Wright; Friday, Sept. 10, J. Clegg Wright; Saturday, Sept. 11, J. Clegg Wright; Sunday, Sept. 12, J. 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