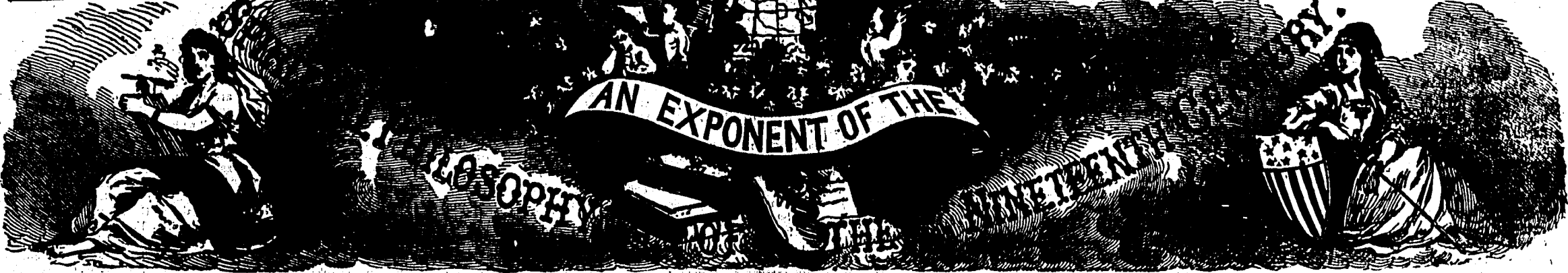


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Talmage on Longevity.
The fact is that men and women die too soon. It is high time that religion joined the hand of medical science in attempting to improve human longevity. Adam lived 930 years. Methu- salah lived 969 years. As late in the history of the world as Vesputian, there were at one time in his empire forty-five people 137 years old. So far down as the sixteenth century Peter Zartian died at 135 years of age. I do not say that reli- gion will ever take the race back to antediluvian longevity, but I do say the length of hu- man life will be greatly improved. It is said in Isaiah lvi: 20: "The child shall die a hundred years old." Now, if, according to the Scriptures, the child is to be a hundred years old, may not the men and women reach to 300 and 400 and 500? The fact is that we are mere dwarfs and midgets compared with some of the genera- tions that are to come.

Oh! how many people we have known who have not lived out half their days because of their intemperance.

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The Spiritual Reformatory.

In Memoriam Charles H. Foster.

An Inspirational Discourse Delivered by
W. J. COLVILLE,
Under Influence of his Guides, in Berkeley Hall,
Boston, Sunday Evening, Dec. 30th, 1885.
(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

It seems to us scarcely right to allow the oc- casion of the transition of Charles H. Foster, the celebrated medium, to the spirit-life, to pass unnoticed in the order of our regular ministra- tions. It was our privilege to speak at the fu- neral of his earthly remains only a few days ago, and as he was for many years a prominent public character, one who has passed through innumerable vicissitudes, been in many quar- ters highly appreciated and in others grossly misrepresented; as his was a complex charac- ter, an extraordinary life, and as there are many important lessons to be learned from an impartial view of his career and disposition, we shall endeavor in this discourse to lay be- fore you a few thoughts and suggestions which have pressed in upon us with increasing power and clearness since the moment when we were summoned to offer the last tokens of friendly recognition and sympathy in presence of his earthly remains, and in hearing of the large and representative concourse of friends and neighbors who gathered at his home in Salem on the occasion of the funeral service.

"The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones," may be true to some extent in a perverted state of so- ciety, but the reverse is rather true in a major- ity of instances, when even an ordinary mea- sure of right feeling and sympathy prevail. The milk of human kindness often flows more freely at a deathbed and at a funeral than at any other time, and it is right that it should be so, as death carries saint and sinner alike beyond the pale of mortal jurisdiction, and arraigns every spirit before a bar at which no earthly judge presides. Here and there a man of coarsest metal may be found who seemingly takes de- light in harrowing up the feelings of the mourn- er by indulging in execrations of the departed; but such monsters, who are a disgrace to the human name, happily are few and far between; and while an austere and rigid Calvinism may have afforded them some pretext for their ill- timed vent of spleen, the milder theology, which is now happily illumining the world and soft- ening the asperities of human nature, takes no delight in pronouncing a fearful doom for the departed.

There is also a deep-seated conviction in hu- man nature everywhere that sin is of the flesh, and that when the body is cast aside the eman- cipated spirit is purer than when it dwelt with- in a tabernacle of flesh. Old-school Universal- ism has carried this thought to a dangerous ex- treme, but the thought itself, on which Univer- salism is based, is a true one. The excess of this feeling has sometimes led to the pronuncia- tion of baseless eulogies and assisted in the spread of erroneous ideas concerning the future life; but when all false margins are removed, the idea itself stands out in glowing splendor, as in perfect accord with every one of man's deepest and noblest intuitions concerning the spirit and its hereafter.

Some few years ago a controversy was raging in New England over probation in or after death. Joseph Cook and others who claim to represent Orthodox congregationalism fought for probation in death but not after. Dr. Miner and many others, representing the Universal- istic party, contended for probation after death. Probation in and after death are doubt- less truths, as every trial the spirit has to en- counter is a means of purification and growth; and death, which is a sudden plunge into an- other state of being, usually accompanied by feelings of a very active and decided character, may justly be regarded as one of the greatest crises in the career of the human spirit. Time is nothing to the spirit; an instant may do more for an immortal soul at one time than many years have done at another. We cannot judge by length of days how long a man has lived. Spiritual maturity can never be determined by the length of time the spirit has dwelt in an earthly body. As some flowers take long to mature, blossoming in the shade, while others are quickly forced into maturity by the intense glow of a midsummer heat, or by exposure to the tropical glare of the sun in its meridian glory, or the forcing process of the conservatory, so some lives are brought out nearer to fru- ition in a single hour of earthly experience, if that experience be an intensely trying one, than others are in many years of calm and shaded seclusion from the active strife and sore temptations to which their brethren are exposed. Adelaide Proctor, in her story of a faithful soul, a charming adaptation from an old Persian lyric, tells the truth very graphically upon this subject when she pictures a spirit needing one thousand years more of ex- piatory discipline in purgatory, suffering for one moment such indescribable anguish that one thousand years of time, as counted by the angel who held the doors of Paradise, were all summed up in that single instant.

It is a common vice among all sects and so- cieties to set up entirely false standards of judg- ment everywhere, and try to make every life conform to some rigid rule by which none save those who are adapted to the rule can be justly judged. The human body, indeed human na- ture in its entirety, has often been compared to a musical instrument—a harp of a thousand strings. Some lives seem to answer to this simile; some remind us more of the Eolian harp than of any other instrument—that sim-

ple but most exquisitely sensitive piece of mechanism, which involuntarily responds to every breath of wind that approaches it, to the zephyr as well as to the hurricane. But if some are like the Eolian harp, others remind us of a church organ, which can only be induced to send forth music when vigorously wrought upon. We do not blame the harp because it is not the or- gan, nor constituted like it; neither do we blame the organ because it possesses none of the hyper- sensitiveness of the Eolian harp. We take them as they are and make the best of them. We feel the need of both; both contribute largely to our enjoyment, and we do not wish them to lose their respective differences and become as each other. While differences in de- gree of sensitiveness are always respected, and indeed deliberately produced by human art in objects subject to the creative spirit of man, very few are ready to accord just judg- ment to these sensitive plants in the human family, without whom the world would be en- tirely at a loss for a supply of much that con- tributes above all else to human wealth and happiness.

The words medium and sensitive are now fre- quently interchanged. Many philosophers and scientists use the latter term exclusively when speaking of those who in a peculiar sense are instruments of the spirit-world; the term, we must say, is a thoroughly apposite one, as it ex- actly defines the nature of that mysterious something the possession of which singles out a minority of the human family, and causes them to differ essentially from the majority in their receptivity to surrounding influences.

In recent lectures from this platform we have pointedly alluded to the recent and in- deed still prevailing controversies concerning mediums and their offences against society. We have endeavored to be fair to all parties implicated in the discussion, but must confess our sympathies naturally flow out in larger measure to the weaker and less protected side; and in the present stage of human development no one can say that for a person of unusual moral stamina to be an extreme sensitive is to enjoy an enviable distinction from his fellows. But why is this so? Why should not extreme sensitiveness render its possessor peculiarly open to celestial influx? Cannot the higher powers shelter their instruments from every seducing influence that may possibly fall across their pathway? Yes, indeed they can, and indeed they do in the cases of those who are in truth their especial instruments. But how many there are who are not yet so fully de- veloped to the work of angelic beings, and who are yet capable of doing an immense amount of good among a class of people who can only be reached by messages from the unseen world coming to them from members of their own fraternity, and through the instrumentality of those with whom they associate on equal terms. Mediumship itself is never a curse, but rather a blessing; it may insure much trouble, anxiety, distress, and even sin; but out of it all comes some ultimate good, some truth is revealed, some heart made known, some culprit warned, some heart consoled, some mind enlightened.

The spirit-world exists, and it can do no one any good to remain in ignorance of the fact. Ignorance is never bliss except in seeming; it is never really a folly to be wise. In the days of Plato sophists encountered the learned Greek and tried to argue him out of his faith in the Socratic doctrine, which maintains that all knowledge is good and all ignorance evil; for, said these sophists, because of knowledge man suffers much; if they had not this knowledge which occasions them such pain, they would not suffer so. The wise man answers them by point- ing out how necessary is the pain of growth, and what poor creatures we should be if we could never enjoy any of the actual beauties and pleasures of the universe, but had to re- main eternally mere cyphers in existence. Seneca, the wise old Roman, says, concerning injuries, he who needs them not cannot be made to suffer from them, while those to whom they occasion suffering are by means of them raised to a sublimer attitude of being. It is a universal fact in human life that the power to enjoy and the power to suffer is the same power. You have none of you ever met a human being or an animal so delicately organized as to be capable of great sorrow and intense pain with- out finding one who could enjoy with the same exquisite intensity. Even in this world the law of compensation works far more perfectly than is usually supposed. Life's inequalities are more apparent than real; there is a hidden balance that very few can even catch a glimpse of, which adjusts the scales far more evenly than the world is apt to think. No one has a right to judge another by himself; judge not, that ye be not judged, is a maxim we must al- ways heed in order to be just; but the com- mand judge not refers only to our conduct to- ward our neighbors—we are to judge ourselves; our own consciences are born in us to enable us to do so. Self judgment is a necessary duty. The condemnation of others is a sin, while the use- less commiseration which ends in verbal pity of those who seem less happily circumstanced than ourselves, does nothing, practically, to re- dress the wrongs of society.

In the life of our departed brother, Charles H. Foster, we are brought face to face with an immense variety of almost incomprehensible contradictions. We find in him one who united the most singularly opposite elements in a single personality. He seems to have been per- petually swayed by the most widely divergent influences, some hurrying him on to ruin, others lifting him to loftiest heights of nobility and usefulness. He was indeed a singular man, far more unlike the ordinary than many con- sidering whom the most extended histories have been written. He was not an ordinary

spirit-medium; there are few if any like him; few so sensitive as he. Taken all in all he was indeed a *rara avis*, a most interesting specimen of peculiarity; at once very positive and very negative, extremely self-willed and exceed- ingly pliant; swayed as easily as the Eolian harp by subtle, unsuspected influences, and, at the same time, persistent even to obstinacy in hav- ing his own way. He could not be controlled by any ordinary means, and yet he was con- trolled by unseen powers with such remarkable facility that the tests given through his organ- ism numbered among them many of the most convincing proofs of spirit-ministry granted to the present century. Frankness, duty, loyalty to truth compel us, in our position as teach- ers of ethics and student of psychology, to lay before you, our fellow students of spiritual in- fluence, the character and life of this man as we honestly conceive them to have been. We shall set down naught in malice, neither shall we strive to gloss over palpable errors; but when we point out a flaw or call attention to a weakness, it will be with the sole desire to help you to deal with similar causes of distress and folly as they come up before you in the daily walks of your own experience individually, as well as in that of those with whom you have to deal and whose career you can measurably influence.

The secular as well as the spiritualistic press has spoken loudly in praise of Charles H. Fos- ter's mediumship, not only since his passing from the earthly body, but at frequent intervals during his earthly life. He was a great traveler both by land and sea, especially by land. He visited almost every section of his native land; his fame spread, and his name became a house- hold word from Maine to California, and in every part of Europe there were those who knew of him and had the privilege of attending his sances. In England the impression he made upon the nobility was very great, and it was the same in the other countries which he visited. He was received everywhere; rank was forgotten, social barriers dissolved like ice before the mysterious power which accompa- nied him. The number of hearts he cheered and lives he blessed with revelations from the spirit-spheres is known only to those who can read the records of eternity. The good he did, the light he spread, was so great, so phenom- enally bright, that when we dwell upon it its dazzling beams at once annihilate the shadows, and he stands before us only as a man of such rare genius that in the contemplation of his re- splendent gifts we can see and remember nothing which could possibly cast a shade upon them. But great gifts are often the posses- sions of most excitable and erratic persons; indeed physiologists are almost united in affirm- ing that an abnormally excited condition of the nervous system is almost inseparable from very extraordinary genius. The lives of great men not alone remind us that "we can make our own sublime, and departing leave behind us footprints on the sands of time," they also tell us that many of these footprints will be danger- ous signals as well as guide boards, warning us of perilous rocks and fearful precipices which stand between us and the dizzy heights of greatness. They tell us of the thorns which the fairest flowers conceal; of the deadly crea- tures that lie in wait to destroy in the fairest forests of the earth. In human experience, dealing with character and temptation, it is pretty much as it is with the physical earth. Where the skies are brightest, the verdure richest, the foliage thickest, the air balmy, the flowers and fruits most gorgeous, luscious and abundant, there hide the deadliest reptiles, there the Upas casts its fatal shade, there the monsters of the forest prowl, there the air breathes poison as well as sweetness. There are no snakes in Lapland, no poisonous plants border the Arctic Sea, no dread miasma breathes in the biting wind of Greenland. If we have the sweets of Java, we must encoun- ter the perils also; if we must endure the rigors of the frigid zone, we are at least safe from the vapors of the tropics. The same sun which brings into being the loveliest things in nature, awakens the deadliest. So it is with human ex- perience. In the moral realm, great gifts bring great temptations; great power for usefulness exposes its possessor to a thousand ills the commonplace, every-day member of society knows nothing of.

But while these illustrations and analogies tend to throw light upon the weaknesses as well as upon the strength of persons of unusual endowments, we must never allow these con- solatory and explanatory thoughts to lessen our zeal in pointing all to the one only safe- guard against all temptation, viz., the blazing star of moral sense, the polar star of conscience. However sensitive an individual may be, the moral law is no respecter of persons. The eter- nal energy of being whose motions produce the laws of life never stays in its course, never deviates from its immutable career to favor or excuse even the most pliant of earth's chil- dren. And why? Surely not because there is no mercy in the Eternal; surely not because the rigors of Providence are such that there is no room for tenderness and pity in the heart of the Universal Spirit; by no means. Rather because of God's infinite goodness the law is never set aside; that great law of cause and effect, which appears to the materialist only as an inflexible, unconscious force, cold as ice and hard as marble, is to the true Spiritualist all aglow with divine love and wisdom. It is the eternal influence of perfect goodness, and never works except to bless all on whom it oper- ates. It may seem severe, but in reality it is always kind; and though from the standpoint of earthly time and mortal sense it may appear relentless and cruel, in the light of a happier clime, where all earth's mysteries are resolved

and its darkness turned to glory, this resist- less decree which ordains that all who err shall suffer, and that bitterly, even though they suffer in ignorance and weakness, shines forth as the gracious and blessed moral lever which lifts the spirit from its earthly weakness to celestial strength.

One of the hardest lessons the spirit has to learn is that we must all suffer for our own good, even when we err through weakness, and not of malice prepense. There seems to be a pretty well established conviction in the minds of humanity, that when persons sin through willful choice of evil, through malice, and all uncharitableness, they deserve to suffer; but if one is endowed with a more sensitive or- ganization than another, and if that organiza- tion and surrounding influences over which he has little if any control cause him to stumble, then it seems hard and unjust that he should have to undergo the self-same penalty as they who err in spite of knowledge, far less provoca- tion, and far greater ability to withstand tempta- tion. The law cannot be changed; kick against it as we will, we cannot alter it. Replac- ing at the inevitable never made things better and never can, so instead of complaining at what we cannot help, it is surely wiser to face the question boldly, and seek for light to com- prehend the law in its interior and beneficent action, that we may not be compelled to affect stolid resignation if we cease repining, but rather aid in the accomplishment of that gigan- tic task which Milton describes as justifying the ways of God to men.

False views of life here and hereafter, sup- ported by a cruel and despotic theology now happily fast giving place to more enlightened views of God and immortality, have done vastly much to increase the murmurs of mankind against the decrees of Providence or fate. The world is now but just beginning to view suffer- ing in the light of education or unfoldment. Just as soon as trials and sorrows lose their primitive aspect, and come to be regarded as educational and elevating agencies, will the laws of being pass from under their eclipse, and show themselves what they truly are, wise and merciful dispensations of infinite indwelling as well as overruling Providence. The world seeks happiness, and will never be content without it; but happiness can be attained in only one way, and that through perfect purity of thought and deed; and this purity can only be reached by complete mastery over the lower nature. When the lower nature in one's self is com- pletely under the control of reason and the moral sense, no temptations from without, whether coming from minds embodied or dis- embodied, have the slightest power to harm. Not weakness, not simple innocence even, will suffice; there must be strength of character, and fortitude attained by persistent spiritual effort. When this is gained tempters innum- erable may approach and ply their every wile, but the spirit is beyond seduction, as all they could work on has been outgrown.

It is quite unnecessary to employ a labored argument to prove that genius and gifts are not necessarily the products or associates of high moral character. In the spiritual econ- omy of human nature the intellect and spirit are utterly distinct, though they both flow from the same primal source and are eventually united in a more perfect state of being. One can be, and often is, unfolded apart from the other, both during earthly life and also in those realms of spirit which cannot be said to be the abodes of "just men made perfect." Wootton says in a highly suggestive poem, that the ear- nest seeker after the highest wisdom daily prays for grace rather than gifts. Grace means vir- tue, beauty of character, unfoldment of soul. A graceful person, in a moral sense, is one of lovely character, while a graceless individual always means one who is devoid of moral sym- metry. The slang phrase, "he is a scape- grace," really means he has escaped grace, is without moral integrity. Grace is, therefore, the leading feature of a truly moral person; but such an one need not be gifted; he may be dull, prosaic, not at all intellectual, and yet valued highly for his probity and many sterling char- acteristics. Conscientiousness is the leading organ in the brain of an exceedingly just and moral person; impulse, however, is the leading trait in the disposition of a genius. Impulse of course is not an evil in itself; it is indispensa- ble to extreme sensitiveness and ready action. Highly mediumistic persons are always exceed- ingly impulsive; if they were not so they could never yield as they do to every touch of inspira- tion that falls upon them from surrounding states.

The relation of mediumship to morality, and morals to mediumship, is always a very diffi- cult one to comprehend, and only those can deal with the question at all who are either highly mediumistic themselves or have made mediumship a life study. Sensitives and poets are very near relations; indeed they are often the same genus. Many poets have had expe- riences which have clearly proved to them that they were mediums. Under cover of "poetic license" they have told many a truth in verse concerning their actual spiritual experiences. Virgil, leading Dante through the spirit-world, is more of actual history than romance. Homer, discoursing with as well as of the dwellers in the unseen world, is more fact than fiction; but as we come to analyze the writers and sing- ers of our sweetest songs, are we not often pained, and even at times momentarily shocked and disgusted, as we read of their shortcom- ings? These have unquestionably been exag- gerated from two causes: one is that genius, being superior, always excites the envy of me- diocrity, and thus arouses mediocre minds to vilify its possessor; the other is the puritanic tendency of many minds to look upon music,

poetry, and everything not rigidly utilitarian, as a snare of the evil one, and therefore any fault to be found with poets and others of similar type are brought forward in support of this most erroneous conclusion. But notwithstanding the allowance we must make for misrepresentation in the case of Robert Burns and Edgar A. Poe, for instance, it would be folly to shut our eyes to the fact that the stories of their weaknesses have at least some foundation in fact. They were nervous, highly strung, hypersensitive, and altogether unfitted to cope with the ordinary business of the commercial world, without being drawn hither and thither by the sway of passions whose psychological influence over them was for woe and not for weal. Even Shakespeare, the immortal bard of Avon, who has taught us such tremendous moral lessons, was not altogether exempt from frailty. A psychological study of such cases never leads us to censure those who have been drawn into the maelstrom anything like so severely as we censure the maelstrom into which they have been drawn.

Society exerts an enormous influence over all its members. Thoughts are palpable entities to the sight of spirit. It is well impossible for an extremely susceptible person to be in an atmosphere of purity without feeling the higher nature awakening, or to roam through the haunts of iniquity without feeling an almost irresistible impulse luring him into the midst of vice. The prohibitionists who would forcibly close the saloons and forbid the manufacture and sale of liquor have got hold of one side of the truth on the temperance question pretty firmly, as have also those who are endeavoring to repress the social evil by legislation, for there is a subtle invitation to sin in the very atmosphere of a saloon or any haunt of riot. The difficulty many experience in passing a saloon is a real one, as there are those inside whose thoughts go out to draw others in, and the extreme sensitive cannot help being both a mind-reader and a mesmerist subject to a considerable extent.

The perils of mediumship like Mr. Foster's are very great, as he and others situated somewhat like him are not sheltered by a powerful band of intellectual influences who employ their instruments to teach morality. The public inspirational teacher or writer, one who never has in the course of his duties to submit to the control of the individual spirit-friends of those who are benefited by the instruction which is given through him, being on the plane of general topics engaged in the promulgation of ideas, lifted above the plane of the personal into the universal, is of course in a much safer position than he or she who must admit after sitting into the privacy of home or office, and there yield to the influence of whatever spirit may present himself, or else fall in the discharge of the very labor he is specially developed to perform. How many there are who admire the intellectual iceberg glittering on the public rostrum, lighted up with the sunshine of exalted inspiration and flashing forth ray after ray of glorious spiritual ideas, who point with scorn and speak harshly of those equally necessary mediums who sit in their private rooms day after day, holding interviews with hundreds of private persons who come to them for personal tests and guidance. The platform orator may be dignified, impervious and entirely beyond the reach of the temptations hourly surrounding the sensitive who devotes his energies to another kind of work. The one holds an audience by means of the psychological influence of a band of guides who can and do rebut all opposing forces, and keep at a distance all personal influences, who, if they assumed control or gained any ascendancy, would prevent the work that the rostrum is founded to accomplish. The private person test-medium must yield to the various influences that cluster thickly round him; he must bend to every spirit who would influence him, or he could not do his special work. He sins and suffers, and then gets up again, a stronger and a wiser spirit; but the follies of his career are due far more to the psychology of his surroundings than any willful resistance of right on his own part.

It is not an open question to us whether mediumship of this perilous type has done good or not; we know it has done immense good; millions have been comforted and blessed by the actual demonstration of spirit presence and identity which it has revealed; millions whom the platform and the press at first could not have reached. But a state of affairs which brings about suffering is not an ultimate state; a perilous condition is not always to continue, and now, after nearly thirty-eight years of spirit-communion in this century and in this country, it is high time that the community arise and set to work to improve the moral tone of mediumship; not by attacking and persecuting the unfortunate sensitive, who is, in nine cases out of ten, the almost irresponsible victim of social perdition, but by so purifying their own thoughts, deeds and words that when they consult a medium, instead of bringing with them a sphere of lust and liquor, they enter the presence of a modern medium as the ancients entered their temples and went before the oracles prior to that period of decadence which followed a prostitution of gifts divine. We do not ask you to be superstitious, or attribute supernatural powers to mediums; they are only frail and fallible human beings, but their very sensitiveness which is their bane is also their blessing, and yours in a marked degree; for were it not that some could see where you are blind, that some could hear where you are deaf, the gates of the immortal world could never stand ajar for those whose straining eyes and ears would fain catch glimpses of the life within the veil, and catch the echo of the songs their spirit friends now sing.

But it is not all *coulour d'ore*, that life beyond the grave, between which and yourself the medium stands as a gate ajar. Those who have sinned on earth are suffering there; all follies must be repented of and at length outgrown, and he who can only paint sometimes the darker aspects of the picture is one who can reveal a needed truth, and warn man against the by-paths, if it be not as yet his happy lot to open the door into the lighted banquet-hall of celestial gladness. The life of Charles H. Foster brought to light many a hidden spring of action, and threw immense light upon many a secret principle of being. He yielded sometimes far too readily to flattery and the seducer's wiles; often, exhausted by constant strain on his vitality, he resorted to unwise means of recuperating strength. Such indiscretions, brought about far more by his surroundings than his own deliberate intent, shattered his physique and befuddled his mind; so that for a time it was feared his reason had left him. But the cloud passed away, his sufferings left him with a clearer mind and a keener insight of spiritual truth than he had ever

known while in the heyday of prosperity; while fêted and caressed alike by millionaire and peasant, he was the lionized wonder of the age. Worldly dissipation had some attractions for him, and the mists of earth veiled the splendor of the sun of spirit. After years of suffering, he recovered all he had lost of spiritual perception, and gained a sweetness and mellowness of character he had never possessed before. He was always good-hearted, generous, prodigal in giving; he was no miser hoarding up treasures to clog his spirit when the hour came for its release; he was a spendthrift, some would say, but a spendthrift in an angel in comparison with a miser. He earned money, a great deal of it, and he deserved all he got; he however did much gratuitous work, and was never hard on those whose material means forbade them paying him his fee. His was the life of a successful professional medium, one in which the sweets and bitters, flowers and thorns of life quickly alternate and freely abound. He lives in the memories and hearts of thousands; they cannot but remember that it is to him they owe their first glimpse of spiritual existence.

His passing away was delightful to behold. Calm, tranquil, serene as the gentle twilight of a hot, tempestuous summer's day, were the closing moments of his earthly pilgrimage. The day had been very trying, the heat had been very great, the lightning vivid, the thunder loud, the rain had poured down in torrents, the rivers had swollen and overflowed their banks; it had been a feverish, fitful day; a day of great excitement and of great achievement; of vivid contrast, of lurid light and awful shade. Darkness had come before sundown; objects had been veiled by a darkening cloud; the sun had been eclipsed—but before it set and the calm night followed, all the noises had been hushed and the sun had peeped forth from behind its curtain; the clouds rolled away; the moon rose; the evening star appeared; one by one the twinkling stars came forth, and the day had ended in a sweet calm; the air was purer and the sky clearer because of the tempest.

Peace at the last. In the full realization of the presence of angel-friends, Charles H. Foster entered the realm of spirit, greeted by innumerable spirits, who crowded round him, thanking him for being the instrument through whom they reached their friends on earth. Many who had been the recipients on earth of blessings through his mediumship gathered round him, welcoming and strengthening him. Now the worn-out body is resting in the bosom of its mother-earth. The spirit, whose origin and home is not in matter, has gone on to join the mighty army of invisibles, who in this cycle are commissioned to enlighten mankind by bearing special tidings from their state beyond the river. You will hear from him again. His body being dead, he yet will speak. He is not dead, but only risen—only entered upon that wondrous life, glimpses of which it was his high privilege to be the means of showing to so many while he dwelt on earth.

Religious Evolution.

BRIEF ABSTRACT OF A LECTURE DELIVERED BY
HON. WARREN CHASE, AT SPRINGFIELD,
MASS., JAN. 10TH, 1886.

After reading a poem written by Jeremiah Hacker, on Creation, and some excellent music, the speaker remarked that he had seen the hundreds of people on the streets returning from the many temples where they had been to worship their several unknown gods, some eight or ten of which gods, each different from the others, had temples and worshippers in the city. To the latter the priests told all about the gods, and directed the worship, themselves knowing no more about the gods than the youngest child among the worshippers. This view and the thoughts arising from it, he said, suggested his subject. To him it seemed strange that in this enlightened age people did not look up the history of religion and the origin of the many gods of the world, as he was sure, if they did, they would find them all man-made idols, kept before the minds of the people for the benefit and support of a priesthood, while the honest but ignorant devotees were paying their money and devotion mostly through fear. Christianity, he said, was a very modern, a very late and young sect or system of religion, not yet two thousand years old; and its gods, which in character were widely different, however much a common name was used, were increasing in number and changing in character to suit the progressive age; at least such was the case as described from the pulpits in the temples. Christianity, he said, began in the second or third century of our era of *anno domini*, as it could hardly be said to have existed before the Council of Nice made its trinitarian god by setting the divine origin of Jesus and the Holy Ghost. Mohammedanism was some four hundred years younger, and had about the same number of worshippers, evidently as honest and sincere, though probably more ignorant, but not the less conscientious or firm in belief. Both of these late systems of religion had been forced upon the people by the sword and by cruel persecutions, by which earlier forms of worship and other idols were put aside. For a time the Mohammedans gained rapidly on the Christians, till the discoveries in science and increased intellect in Europe turned back the tide to Asia.

The Jews, from whom Christianity borrowed many of its myths and some of its gods, had a religion probably four or five thousand years older, but still this was young and recent, as it was now well established that the world was many millions of years old, and the human race more than one hundred thousand years old, and probably two hundred thousand. It was equally sure that religion was nearly as old as the race, and that many temples were built and many gods worshiped long ages before the Jewish God was heard of, and their temples were far more costly and magnificent than any the Jews ever had. Fear was the ruling element in the religion of the Jews and of all preceding and succeeding religions. In all that preceded the Christian and Mohammedan, the rewards and punishments were temporal, and all pertained to this life, as the great body of the worshippers had no idea of an after life into which they should go from this through death. In the first ages of religious devotion which preceded the Chaldean astronomy and the charts of the heavens, the idols were all monsters, or monstrousities, brought down to the vision and the senses of the devotees, and made to excite the greatest fear and terror. As the race, through natural growth of brain, and consequently of intellect, saw that these man-made images did not rule over the elements, and did not bring the blessings nor the evils that fell upon mankind, the priests saw the necessity of substituting other gods, and the sun, moon and stars in the constellations were substituted, and for ages these gods received the devotion of the millions that lived and died as honest in belief as any Christian people are or ever were. It is certain, he said, that a large part of Judaism and Christianity is taken from the religion of the sun-worshippers, and the astronomical religion. The Lord's prayer is an old sun-prayer; and the Lamb of the Christians is from the Zodiac, and the cross has a still earlier symbolic devotion. The star in the east was the morning star heralding the coming of the sun-god, when the shepherds had no timekeepers. It was always in the east, and in the west, over Jerusalem. The wise men of Persia came from the east, where the sun was god. Even Job lived in the land of Uz, not Judea, as he was not a Jew.

One more grand transition originating from the same cause as that which lifted the gods to the sky, removed them to an imaginary region, changed them to personalities, and multiplied them to hundreds, if not thousands, of which Jehovah is one, and according to history the most cruel one of all. The improved

of the Christians, with a trinity in the head like Vishnu, is another, and the Christ and Holy Ghost, and even the Virgin Mary, are others, with the same evidence of real existence as there is of Jupiter, and Apollo, and Minerva. It makes very little difference what the name given to the man-made God if the character is set up as a model, and the worshippers are elevated and refined, and made more moral and upright by the devotion. The historic record of all religions is filled with cruelty and persecution, wars and bloodshed, and Christianity is not less so than the others. Its pretended preaching of peace on earth and good will among men has been a sham, and never carried into practice where it had power in its hands to persecute.

Mr. Chase dwelt at length on the present transition, in which all personal gods are being swept into oblivion, and the infinite, omnipresent power in every form of life is the next recognized God of this and all worlds, and he dwelt on our acquaintance with the next state of human existence, where as little is known of the Gods of the Christians as in this. The lecture was listened to with the closest attention, and gave good satisfaction.

Spiritualism at Greenwich, Mass.

I wish to call the attention of the public to a grand and noble work that has been undertaken by one man in the little town of Greenwich. Unaided and alone, Mr. Henry W. Smith—a philanthropist in every sense of the term—has succeeded in establishing a spiritual meeting-house and in maintaining free Sunday lectures in this place. Like many other country towns in this and other States, Greenwich had become thoroughly impregnated with the Orthodox element. Theological superstition and bigotry have maintained their sway until it seemed as though the little spot set among the hills had grown to be one of the very strongholds of religious intolerance. Not until H. W. Smith settled in the place, some six years ago, did Spiritualism dare to lift its head in this benighted atmosphere; but through the indefatigable efforts and staunch firmness of that gentleman in seeking to disseminate the truth of our glorious philosophy in the neighborhood, and in opening a place of meeting where the spiritually hungry could assemble and find the food they craved, Spiritualism is to-day becoming known as a power and a light that cannot be quenched.

From the very incipency of his work to open a free road of spiritual inquiry to his neighbors, Mr. S. has been met with opposition and persecution of the most bitter kind from the members of the Orthodox Church. They have stopped at no effort to belittle his standing as a citizen or to impeach his integrity as a man. In public and private his character has been assailed by those who, imbued with the spirit of the sixteenth century, would burn an apostle of truth at the stake or torture a heretic with the most fiendish cruelty. Yet I am glad to say that in spite of the animadversions that have been cast against him, Mr. Smith stands to-day a man honored in his own community, and retaining the respect and friendship of all—save the few bigoted ones who have sought to injure him.

A description of the beautiful little chapel built and furnished entirely at the expense of this gentleman, and dedicated at Greenwich last May, has been given in the columns of the BANNER OF LIGHT, and I may add in this connection that the edifice is, in design and finish, everything that is calculated to delight the eye and appeal to the sense of the beautiful. The interior body of the house is most exquisite; not only in its appearance to the sight, but in the atmosphere of purity and peace which it enfolds. None but the most unsuspicious nature can pass an hour within its walls without feeling uplifted by the influence and benefited by the experience. Many of our best spiritual speakers have spoken words of wisdom and cheer, either within these walls or beneath the hospitable roof of Mr. Smith's residence, and the work is going bravely on. Sunday after Sunday, that ceaseless worker fills his team with neighbors gathered along the road, and drives two miles to conduct his morning service, tarrying till afternoon to hold his Lyceum session in the lower part of his little temple.

Having watched the growth of this grand work during the past few years, and realizing the fearful odds against which the man has had to struggle in his efforts to uphold truth, I have felt my sympathies drawn upon in his direction to a large degree. Therefore I determined not only to lend him the encouragement of my voice and presence for a day at Greenwich, but also to bear to him the magnetic support and influence of that band of spirit-workers with whom I am associated. Accordingly on the 30th of January I accompanied the BANNER OF LIGHT medium to Greenwich, and on the following morning took my place beside her on the rostrum of the little chapel, my object being to deliver a discourse through her agency on the question, "What have we as Spiritualists done to commend ourselves to the world?" aiming to draw near to the hearts of my listeners in an understanding of their needs and duties, and in sympathy with their struggles and efforts, while pleading to them to make the best possible use of their spiritual knowledge in their thoughts and words.

The good-sized audience listened in a receptive and attentive spirit, and as I noted the anxious desire, on the part of the most of its members—plain country people, many of whom had driven miles to be present—to learn more of themselves and more of the spirits, I felt more than ever convinced that here is being sown good seed that will by-and-by reap an abundant harvest. Our medium attended the Greenwich Lyceum in the afternoon, speaking a few words to the children during the exercises. In point of interest on the part of its leaders, of its exercises and of its appointments, this is a model Lyceum, and one that is worthy to rank with the largest and best-regulated Lyceums in the country. Its Conductor, Guardian and Leaders deserve great credit for their labor in its behalf and in behalf of the children. All Spiritualists, all mediums and speakers who desire to help a good work along, had better direct something of their influence and their ministrations toward the Greenwich Spiritual Meeting-House.

Before closing this article I must refer to the fact that Mr. Smith has—as a member of his family—in his home the presence of that fine trance medium, formerly well known to Boston Spiritualists, Miss Helen B. Lochlan. Through the agency of this lady the spirit-powers interested in the work of planting a light-house of truth in the place have been able to sustain Mr. S. in his arduous and benevolent undertakings. The battles of this man are not all fought yet; he is still fighting, single-handed, the bigotry and prejudice of an intolerant Orthodoxy, but under the guidance of attending angels he is sustained and strengthened to press bravely on.

As an instance of Miss Lochlan's beautiful mediumship I desire to relate the following incident: Seated one Saturday evening, nearly

four years ago, in the parlor of his house, Mr. Smith discovered that Miss L., who was present, seemed to be under a spiritual influence. Calling for paper and pencil, the medium dashed off line after line, the hot tears chasing themselves down her cheeks all the while in rapid succession. The communication was signed "Robert Emmet." While admiring the production thus so strangely wrought, neither Mr. S. nor the medium could conjecture what should bring the spirit of the Irish patriot to their home, until, on taking up the morning paper from Boston, the following Monday, the gentleman read an account in its columns of the anniversary of the birth of Emmet, which had just been celebrated with appropriate exercises by the friends of the distinguished man. Struck by this fact and by the beauty of the poem, Mr. Smith called on John Boyle O'Reilly, of the Boston Pilot, submitting the lines to that gentleman, and relating the circumstance of their production. Mr. O'Reilly pronounced it a wonderful manifestation, and requested the poem for publication, which Mr. Smith presented to him, believing that, as it was addressed to his country and intended for the Irish people by its spirit-author, the poem would perhaps work its mission if printed in the Pilot. Recognizing the beauty of the lines as well as their spiritual authorship, I have personally requested a copy of them from Mr. Smith for the BANNER OF LIGHT, and present them to the readers of our journal, as clipped from the columns of the Boston Pilot of April 1st, 1882.

FEB. 1st, 1886. SPIRIT JOHN PIERPONT.

AN APPEAL FOR IRELAND.

Dedicated to the Memory of Robert Emmet.

BY MISS HELEN B. LOCHLAN.

My country! oh, my country!
Is the burden of my prayer;
I breathe it in your own free soil,
And in my land so fair.

There's not in all the world so wide
A country like my own;
I'll not expect proud Britain's tale,
With her jewels and her throne.

For wealth of love and purity
Give me my "sunny vale";
Her valleys and her little hills,
Her lakes that seem to smile.

Oh! brightest spot of living green!
Well hast the poet sung,
While gazing where the waters meet,
A veil around him hung.

Oh! ne'er in all the world I've found
A sweeter spot than this;
Where rivers to each other run
To meet with lovers' kiss.

And yet, my native land, I sigh
When I behold thy downy
To toll for others all thy day,
And bow beneath a power

That knows no justice, feels no pang,
When tramping o'er thy home;
See not the misery they cause,
When Ireland's sons must roam.

And leave the dearest spot on earth
To tyrants with broad lands,
Who tighten chains around our necks,
Till red become our hands!

Oh! lay it not at Ireland's door,
The blood which has been shed!
Be it on the tyrant's back—
The feast by him was spread!

Oh! cruel laws, oh, despotic power,
That drive the poor and weak
To sacrifice their "little all,"
And other homes to seek!

Where stranger hearts are pitiful,
And tears are seen to flow
Adown the many cheek of those
Who hear their tale of woe.

God bless and keep America,
The nation of the free;
Long may her noble banner wave,
Her bells ring loud with glee!

But let her not forget her sons
Who nobly fought and bled,
That slavery, that foulest curse,
Might be numbered with the dead!

Oh! brothers of the mighty North,
Your hearts and hands are strong,
Ye have the right to applaud too!
Ye trample down the wrong!

See ye the chains that bind our land?
Her patriots "prisoned, bound!"
Her children scattered everywhere;
Yea, hunted by the hound!

Have ye no voice to speak for her?
Ireland, the Emerald Queen!
I die for her a thousand deaths,
To keep her memory green!

Oh! herald not my name afar,
Nor stain with your breath,
Unless you love my native soil,
And haste the tyrant's death!

The "Harp of Erin" lies unused,
Each chord is bathed in tears,
It hangs upon the willow tree,
And there must stay for years—

"Till some kind pitying hand shall wipe
Its tears of grief away,
And strike it to the lofty tune
Of Liberty for aye!"

Greenwich, Mass.

To Mediums.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:
Thanks have reached me from several mediums and others, for the words spoken through the BANNER in my latest articles. I am exceedingly gratified to find that I have, while stating my own convictions, also voiced theirs, thus proving myself to be upon the right track. And in return I wish to ask them if they will not express themselves in print upon the subject of their experiences, which are so intimately connected with their own welfare and happiness. None can speak for them as they for themselves—they only will.

Tell us what you know of the different phases of physical phenomena, including materialization and transfiguration, and how much you have been able to understand concerning your mediumship; whether you are conscious or unconscious during the evolution of phenomena, and if unconscious usually, does consciousness ever occur? And if it occurs, have you ever found yourself in the midst of what those who cannot judge of circumstances as you can, would have termed fraud?

Do not fear, as one good medium writes, that you "cannot express" yourselves graphically and correctly. The plain, homely facts are what we need from which to draw conclusions, and these will show themselves all beautiful in the light of the divine plan which permits them—if you will only explain them as they come to you, who are honored by being, by birth and circumstance, chosen as the instruments by which to bring truth to man. How you have suffered in this ordeal, and in many instances even died from ignorant persecution, only the angels can know. If you were talking with a friend you trusted, you would make yourselves intensely interesting in your rehearsal of strange occurrences that had come to you, often beyond your own comprehension. Forget that you are talking to many, and just talk to your friend and print it, and then we shall be wiser and richer for your addition to the fund of experiences that is gathering, and from which some wise good friends may, perhaps, draw helpful inferences. A knowledge of some of the puzzling and perplexing conditions in which you often find yourselves, would open the eyes of many who now condemn through ignorance, and would tend to broaden the charity of all toward you in your vocation.

There are many things occurring to mediums that cannot be publicly spoken; there are others that might better be spoken, but those who suffer them are fearful of not being understood. Dear friends, do not fear; "the truth will bear its weight," assert it boldly, and stand by it. Nothing can overthrow you with the truth by your side. "God and one" are in the majority always. There are more interested for you and for these questions than you think, who will do their best to help clear the atmosphere to a perfect understanding, among whom, to the extent of her ability, you may always reckon as
Your friend,
LARA BARNEY BARNES,
Xenia, Ohio.

February Magazines.

THE CENTURY.—The striking feature of this month's issue is an expression of opinions respecting international copyright, given in the "Open Letter" department, in which forty-five American writers give their views, considering that it is "time to put the legal brand of theft upon the appropriation of the intellectual property of foreigners by Americans, and upon that of Americans by foreigners," without equitable remuneration. A portrait of Gen. McClellan serves as a frontispiece, and "Anecdotes of McClellan's Bravery" are given. In his characteristic witty and sparkling vein Frank R. Stockton contributes the first part of "A Borrowed Month," and Mat. Crim tells of "An Onfortuitous Creator." The war papers are numerous, comprising "Our March Against Pope," by Gen. James Longstreet; "With Jackson's 'Foot Cavalry' at the Second Manassas," by A. C. Redwood; "Comments on Gen. Grant's 'Chattanooga,'" by Gen. W. F. Smith; "Gen. Leggett's Brigade Before Vicksburg," by Col. F. D. Grant, and "The Bear Guard after Malvern Hill," by Gen. E. D. Keyes. Equal in interest with any of the contents is "The Dance in Place Congo," by G. W. Cable, with several pages of arrangements of Creole Music. The Century Company, New York. Cupples, Upham & Co., 233 Washington street, Boston.

WIDE AWAKE.—Frontispiece with a finely engraved page in illustration of some very musical verses about "The Nest in the Wind," the contents of this month's number comprise an excellent variety of short stories, attractive pictures, poems, etc. Foremost of these "The Elitist's Punishment" is prominent, with its Southern negro dialect, portraying a feature of old-time domestic life in Kentucky. "How Daniel Abbot Outwitted the Indians" describes an event of long ago in New Hampshire. A thrilling story of the Newfoundland coast is "Saved by a Kite." The special attention of all who open the pages of this issue will be drawn to the peculiarly striking engravings, and the verses of more than ordinary merit that accompany them, of "Youth in Twelve Centuries," Tale, of Thebes: 1500 B. C., and Thelma, of Karnak: 1500 B. C., by M. E. B. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.

MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY.—The opening article is a retrospective of two hundred years of the city of Albany's progress, with twenty-four engravings in illustration. The subject of the interesting series of papers, "Prominent Men of the Revolutionary Period," in this number is Anthony Wayne, of whom are given a biography and portrait. A stirring chapter of the late civil war is entitled "The New Mexican Campaign of 1862." Major W. H. Mills treats of the "Army of the Potomac under Hooker," A. W. Clason, "The Charleston Convention of 1788," and Prosper Bender of the disintegrating influences at work in Canada. The frontispiece this month is a portrait of James the Second, and the historical documents here first printed consist of letters written by Washington, Martha Washington, Pickering, Fairfax and Patrick Henry. Published at 30 Lafayette Place, New York.

Another Veteran Gone Home.

Passed on from Watkins, N. Y., Dec. 20th, 1885, Edwin W. Lewis, M. D., aged 77.

It does not seem fitting that the transition of this pioneer of Spiritualism should pass unnoticed. As early as 1855 he published at Auburn, N. Y., the *Spiritual Reasoner*, one of the first volumes published in this country devoted especially to modern spiritual phenomena. It is a book full of thoughtful suggestion. Dr. Lewis possessed a nature so sincere, so devoted to truth, so fearless in its exposition, that no one who knew him could fail to give him the highest respect. He united with his courage so great a degree of charity that he could never see evil or shortcomings in others, and thus his faith was always shining like a light set on a hill, without the shadow of fear.

As a physician, he won for himself a good practice and a high position, but he was so consistent in his faith that, as soon as he became thoroughly convinced of the nearness of the spirit-world, he consulted the intelligences that answered to his call in all difficult cases, and with unfailing faith prescribed the remedies indicated by the tips of a table, chair, or other convenient medium, and with remarkable success.

Although called upon to suffer some severe criticism for this novel method of diagnosing and prescribing homeopathically for disease, he continued to hold the respect and love of the community in which he resided, and was consulted often by timid conservatives, like Nicodemus of old, in secret.

He inherited a fear of the physical change called death, which his faith could not overcome; but in his last illness all fear left him, and he looked with joyous anticipations for the final change, and was happy in the knowledge that he should not leave his family comfortless, but should come again to them. Of such child-like, sincere loving natures is the kingdom of heaven. L. M. W.

Letter from Lyman C. Howe.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:
A warm wave has struck Elmira. The churches are nursing *Shoel*; the Spiritualists are warming by the fires of heaven. The cause has been gathering strength for a year past and bids fair to continue. Bro. F. M. Chase, President, is the right man in the right place. Modest, earnest, and uniformly pleasant to all alike, he is universally popular. No better man could have been found for the place he fills. Bro. S. L. Barber has done much for the Society and the cause. He is an inspiring speaker, a good preacher, a good writer, cultured, and unselfishly devoted to the cause. He has the confidence and good-will of all who know him, and I am told his speaking is of a superior order. He manifests a cordial feeling toward other speakers, with no taint of jealousy. So far his usefulness or good has been well known. Mrs. H. T. Stearns has given several discourses here that were well received so far as I hear. She was followed on the 10th and 17th of January by Mr. J. B. Little, whose inspiration woke many of the dead to sleep, and put new life into the resurrection. Rooms in Park Church (T. K. Beecher's) were secured for her afternoon lectures, and she drew good audiences and made a profound impression. Mr. Beecher listened to her first lecture, and I hear he spoke well of it. He is doing a large good work here, and many of his people are Spiritualists, as I think also is their pastor. Mrs. Little's last lecture was her crowning work, and pronounced by her friends the best they had ever heard. Her voice rang with intense passion, while her burning words moved many to tears, and she held the large audience in rapt silence to the close. A glow of enthusiasm was pictured on every face. She had made many friends, and was much anxiously for her return. Mr. Little had much to the enjoyment by his music and choice selections. He sings religion into the heart, while she burns it in with her thrilling eloquence and spiritual analysis. Yours for the cause,
LYMAN C. HOWE.

A Card from C. E. Winans.

After eight weeks in Elkhader Jail, I am once more home in the bosom of my family. As to what transpired at my escape of Nov. 27th at Strawberry Point I know nothing, and will say nothing further than that it was honest as far as I was concerned, and that I never said to any one that I ever practiced fraud, for I never did. If the spirits controlling have used me as they should not, then it is a pity for both them and me. Knowing that I can now say more than the above will mend the matter. Some hundreds of names to the last two and a half years must speak for themselves; if any through them have obtained proofs of immortality, with them I rejoice; if any through them detected fraud and humbug, with them I am sorry. I am not a free man; if I were, I would stay here with my family forever. But I am not my own—I am claimed by a band of spirits who lead me as they choose. For fifteen years I have not been in my own condition one day in the time I am in. Like Paul, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, I do." Oh! wretched man, I am I who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Oh! that every one understood the law of spirit control; then would mediums have sympathy and help when they need it.

After a few weeks at home I shall be forced to go into the field again as a clairvoyant, test, business, independent of any other medium. I am sure that my controls will never force me to sit again for materializations, except for select circles, where the law of the best of harmony. Respectfully, C. E. WINANS,
Edinburgh, Ind., Jan. 1st, 1886.

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and Liver Oil, with Hygienic Guarantees.
Is Especially Indicated for Children's Diseases, as it acts both as food and medicine. It is not only given with strength and vigor, but it is also a tonic, and creates an appetite for food, and thus builds up the system.

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

In quoting from the BANNER OF LIGHT care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications (condemned or otherwise) of correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of impersonal free thought, but we cannot undertake to endorse the varied shades of opinion to which correspondence give utterance.

We do not read anonymous letters and communications. The names and addresses of the writers 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 pencil or ink line around the article he desires specially to recommend for perusal.

Notices of Spiritual Meetings, in order to insure prompt insertion, must reach this office on Monday of each week, as the BANNER goes to press every Tuesday.

Banner of Light.

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

Human Imperfection.

Whether a sense of imperfection comes altogether from the personal recognition of the standard of perfection which man never can hope to reach, may well continue to be a question; but that it is deepened within him by a knowledge of his constant inability to achieve even the standard which he knows to be possible in his daily life, must be a familiar matter to every one who is from time to time haunted by its presence.

A highly thoughtful discourse on this subject was recently delivered from the Unity Pulpit in this city by Rev. Charles G. Ames, who laid down the statement at the beginning that the sense of imperfection is common to all who think at all, though it never lies on us like a burden of pain and shame save when we are false or unfaithful. Man, he said, was the only one among all creatures that can know that he is mean or suspect that he is a fool; and even this he would count among our mercies, our feeling of folly and guilt, like our sorrow, being "the inverted image of our nobleness." And this consciousness of imperfection, instead of being meant to fall like a stunning blow on head and heart, was intended to act as a spur to our improvement.

Man's past experience tells him that his advance in wisdom and virtue changes all things for him, and modifies or destroys his cherished ideas. Instead of being regarded as a misfortune, this is to be considered as a step toward God. It is only when we persistently shut our eyes to the light that our innocent errors become wicked lies. A man's life is no longer a life when he is become honest enough to confess that he is liable to err, and sensible enough to be grateful for every ray of light that exposes him; when, in fine, he is ready to take sides with the spirit of truth against himself. No man can be called a liar simply because he is mistaken; any more than he can be called blind when he has never had the use of his eyes.

The speaker felt compelled to say that multitudes of the race apparently are not led by intelligence; why they are this or that they are unable to give a reason; they wear the labels that are stuck on them, and move in the grooves they find themselves in. While this is not bad in itself, it is nevertheless a low form of life; it is above that of the animals, but far below that of the sons of God whose life is individual and their own. Those whom we pity for being the creatures of superstition we do not blame, because of the condition into which they happened to be born. They had no choice about the latter. None of us are allowed to choose our ancestry, our birthplace, or the customs in which we are brought up. Nor does any one of us choose a republic or a monarchy for the government of his native country, or whether he will have stern and gloomy Calvinism branded on his plastic being or be instructed in the large and liberal conceptions of a truly spiritual faith. All through the centuries, generation after generation of men is permitted to exist in this moral twilight by a benevolent Creator. And it is because these things are not matters of choice, and cannot be, that they are not matters of vital morality. They cause neither condemnation nor self-reproach, and do not rob childhood of its innocence.

And the same kindly allowance must be made for a very large part of the people in lands called civilized and Christian. In all the earth there is not yet a nation that is wholly enlightened. Even in our smallest towns and villages is to be found every grade of intelligence and ignorance. Nor indeed are any of us so very far ahead of the rest. The most and the best we can do is to follow the light on the way to our ultimate emancipation from error and evil, from ignorance and narrowness. We are all the time forced to be mindful of our limitations and needs. Hence we should neither feel embittered nor discouraged, and should cherish a patient and forgiving spirit toward others. Our first view of anything are never clear or correct. We do not receive instruction as it is meant to be conveyed. We think in myths and misunderstandings. This harmless ignorance, certain to be outlived and outgrown, does us no perceptible harm. We were purposely born into it that we might work ourselves out of it. We are in this regard morally where babies are physically, with the eyes of our common parent on us to watch and guard our growth and progress.

It is the nature of the living mind to grow,

as it is the nature of the living body. But there must be no obstruction. The mind is to be treated reasonably; is to be allowed increasing light and liberty; is to be properly fed with knowledge, and duly exercised in reflection on it. The law of life is orderly toward perfection. If the mind is dwarfed or distorted, it is never its own fault; that is to say, never the fault of the vital principle. It comes of unwise treatment, or unfavorable conditions. The perverting cause may be post-natal or antenatal, or both. We inherit from ourselves as well as our ancestors. As we grow older, we need to outgrow and throw off the faults and follies we have acquired, including what comes of unwise instruction and bad example. We want our minds to be occupied with truth instead of error, and our conduct to be regulated by reason instead of blind and lawless impulse. The better to achieve this, we are to think of ourselves as a part of the human race, and to study mankind in the large and clear light of a common experience.

We shall thus soon discover that all men are liable to mistake and liable to temptation. Our truest thoughts are likely to be crossed and clouded with absurdities. Superstition mixes itself with true faith, and folly companionship with wisdom. For this reason it is best for us to be teachable and humble. Any taint of willfulness converts folly into sin. The gradual displacement of our childish ignorance by knowledge ought to afford us the agreeable excitement of exploration and discovery. We should be taught from our youth up to always hold our minds open to light; changes of belief would then come gradually and painlessly. Much of the history of mankind is explained by the reflection that men have been in the habit of forming full sized conceptions of matters on which they have but a partial knowledge. It has worked in the matter of religion as it has in everything else. The religious history of the race is a history of forging chains only to break them.

What we all need is life—life, more and better life. We want it both for body and spirit. There is no truth whatever for us in doctrines and traditions, except as we have honestly and rationally come into possession of it. We must rethink it, verify it, and make it our own. It is but dead truth in one case, and in the other living truth. True religion, under whatever name it may go, ought to awaken and keep in perpetual activity this instinctive passion for progress toward perfection. It would put an entire population in motion toward improvement, and call on that spirit to preside over it which leads through all truth into all good. Accepting this discipline of improvement in the spirit of faith, hope and love, life will become joyous and restful amid all activities; our minds will feel the support of a divine inward strength; and we shall carry our daily burdens with a calmness which must belong to the immortal and invisible ones. We were made to find our sure way out of this partial darkness into the light. And an all-helping goodness and love forever waits on our struggling.

The Poor Workingwomen.

According to the recent annual report of the labor commissioner of the State of New York, the condition of the workingwomen of New York City, especially those engaged in trades, would seem to deserve the sympathy of all. It appears from the commissioner's estimate that there are over two hundred thousand females at work in the various trades, their labor being hard and their pay poor indeed. They receive, as a rule, much lower wages than men, without regard to the quality of the work they perform. In but a few trades and callings do women receive equal pay for equal work with men, but in nearly all such cases the women are sustained by the power of self-organization; such occupations are those of printers, cigar-makers and hatters. By far the largest number of women who work at trades are employed in the making of clothing, in which occupation the very meanness of wages are given. They compete in this with male sewers, who are invariably better paid. The great oppressor of sewing-girls is the middle-man, or "sweater," as he is called, who makes it a rule to grind them down to starvation wages. He is their chief and most direct oppressor.

He saves his own rent by making them take their work home to their cramped lodgings, and pays them not more than one dollar and fifty cents a dozen for making trousers, and fifteen cents for a waistcoat. A fourth of what the poor woman can earn is paid for rent. She keeps at work day and night at her sewing-machine, which she also has to pay for. And her tyrannical employer holds her responsible for every garment he entrusts to her while she works upon it, and as often as he can cut off her pay in considerable slices on a frivolous charge of inferior work. In a room on an attic floor, on a certain street named, the commissioner found six women working in the stifling atmosphere, the whole apartment being not more than ten feet square. It was filled with cloaks ready to be made up, with the noise of four sewing-machines going all the time. And all that these poor women could earn for a day's work of sixteen hours was fifty cents each. The cloaks were such as were sold at the establishments at from thirty-five dollars to seventy-five dollars each. Two of the women could not put together more than one cloak a day, for which they earned a dollar between them! The same thing could be seen, the commissioner says, in hundreds of tenement-houses in the city. He may well add that the want, misery and degradation of these women are almost beyond conception.

The Report lately sent out by Miss Jennie Collins as to the work done at "Biffin's Bowler," No. 1031 Washington street, contains much food for reflection on the part of those who have at heart the welfare of the workingwomen of Boston. Of the twenty thousand shop-girls, for instance, a majority work for less than five dollars a week. They cannot live on this respectably without severe privations; and their position appeals peculiarly to the sympathy of the more fortunate part of the community. The work that Miss Collins does among them—which is not merely a charity, but a delicately proffered help—should be heartily supported; but she complains of the lack of a special charter, as an obstacle in the way of more successful labor. Miss C. is doing a noble service and should be fully sustained. The Fair in aid of free dinners for girls out of employment will open Feb. 17th.

We have received several letters already, complimenting the three lectures given to our readers last week. We have other discourses, also, much interesting matter in the way of essays, reviews, accounts of phenomena, etc., which we shall print as time proceeds.

Mrs. Huston in Manchester.

The Manchester (N. H.) Union of the 26th ult. contains a good account of the occurrences at a séance held in that city by the lady above named, from which narration we make the following extracts:

"The most wonderful spiritual manifestations that have ever taken place in this city were witnessed last evening at the residence of Samuel P. Bailey, 421 Manchester street. The company numbered twenty persons, about one-half of whom were believers in the phenomena, and the remainder had never seen anything in the line of materialization. The medium was Mrs. Beale Huston, of Boston, the same who some months since, at the residence of Col. B. P. Burpee, was the means of producing wonderful results. Last evening's séance took place in the parlor of Mr. Bailey's residence, and the cabinet, so called, occupied by the medium, was merely a drapery of cambric built out from one of the walls of the room. The freest investigation was allowed as to the examination of the interior of the cabinet and the material of which it was constructed. Light was furnished by a candle, the illuminating power of which was modified by drapery, but the forms of the occupants of the room were at all times distinguishable.

Before subjecting herself to control, Mrs. Huston explained the rules which would govern the circle, and stated in conclusion that she was utterly oblivious of what was progressing from the time she entered the cabinet until she came out of the trance. She shortly afterward entered the trance state, her control being 'Patricie Flower.' Hattie Deering, of Scarborough, Me., a schoolmate of the medium, was the first to show herself. The next form was that of a young lady, who advanced from the cabinet to the circle of spectators, and motioned to a lady to approach the cabinet. She gave her name as Lily, but did not give her last name.

Others came in a similar manner until half a dozen had materialized, when a young girl made her appearance, whose parents and brother were in the room. She walked over to her mother first, then to her father, afterward calling to her brother to join the family group. She then walked about the room between her parents, kissed them, and finally seated herself in an unoccupied chair. The next important test was the coming of a wife to her husband, she having been dead for some years. She kissed him, and a young lady was introduced to the company as his wife. A young lady came to a young gentleman in the company, and taking his arm walked about, at the same time talking with him freely. An old lady wearing a cap next made her appearance, and in a few minutes a spirit form stepped out, the light was made more distinct, and holding the drapery one side, the medium was at the same time seated in a chair. This performance was given several times, two forms and the medium being seen at once. One or two gentlemen next came, and were followed by a spirit who created a decided sensation. He gave his name as Nathaniel Huston, brother of the medium's husband. He said that he lost his life by falling thirty feet from a building in Boston on which he was painting. 'It didn't kill you?' was an inquiry. 'No, but it broke my neck,' was his response. He said that he was in the army; was at New Orleans and Fort Hudson, and remembered the New Hampshire boys.

Other forms followed, nearly all of which were recognized, and among the number was an Indian girl who went through the motions of a dance. The séance lasted until nearly eleven o'clock, and was most satisfactory to all present. The company, as before the opening of the manifestations, were permitted to again inspect the cabinet."

The Latest Wrangle.

Of the Allopathic serpent, as recorded by the daily press, is displayed in the fact that Mr. Fay, of Brookline, offered the following order in the Massachusetts House on Feb. 1st, which was adopted, and referred to the Judiciary Committee, and reads thus: "As to compelling mayors of cities and selectmen of towns in contracting for medical treatment of paupers or inmates of penal institutions to employ only physicians who have been duly licensed by proper diplomas."

Without question this order has but one object, and that is to establish a precedent in the direction of "regulating" the medical practice of the State by law, and thus obtain a foothold for an enactment further on that can from year to year be amended to greater and greater strictness of provisions until all the people of the State will be included in the list of those who will be compelled to employ diplomatically practitioners or go without medical treatment. The "order" aforesaid is really the same old law in another form that has been annually sought for by the meddles of Massachusetts during the past ten years—fortunately without success. It is a significant fact in this connection that this new venture of the Allopaths and their allies has been recommended to the Judiciary Committee, a new field of operations! Instead of the Committee on Public Health, before which matters of a medical nature have been heretofore referred. We trust the members of the Judiciary Committee will prove equally as wise and far-seeing as those of the Health Committee have shown themselves to be in the past, and will nip this new proscription enterprise in the bud.

It behooves all lovers of medical freedom to see to it that they are not caught napping through allowing a "medical" law to be enacted—however innocent in appearance—where there is no necessity for such enactment. Is there a pauper house or a penal institution in Massachusetts that now employs an irregular practitioner? If so, where is it to be found? What reason, then, exists for either the meddles or their friends to ask for such a measure as the one noted above? A diploma does not guarantee skill or success in giving relief and making cures; therefore a diploma amounts to nothing in many cases, and competence and moral integrity should be sought in such institutions more than diplomas without such requisites. Equally before the law for all modes of treatment in the remedial art is the true spirit of the Constitution, and this should be sustained at all hazards!

A New Species of Grain.

I send you, Mr. Editor, the St. John Sun, with a marked account of a species of grain taken from the crop of a wild-goose in this province some years ago, and which, it seems, was planted at Machias, Maine. In the harvesting the grain has proved not to be anything like any known American species. I send you this as a straw of proof regarding the North Pole inhabitant theory, as recently advanced by the spirit. It will be quite easy to ascertain the truthfulness of the statements concerning the grain, if parties interested would write to Samuel Wakefield of Machias, Me. The goose must have dropped the grain in that said-to-be uninhabited region beyond the ice-fields and fogs.

Yours truly,
St. John, N. B., 27th Jan., 1886.
EDWIN C. FOSTER.

We have forwarded the account alluded to above to the Agricultural Department, Washington, D. C., hoping to receive additional light in regard to this peculiar grain, which is represented as wholly unlike any American cereal in existence.

"Disembodied Spirits."

Spiritualist writers and lecturers frequently fall into serious error when they speak of the returning spirit as a "disembodied spirit." The Materialists often bring up this point as an impossibility, and with truth, as there cannot be bodiless spirits. A spirit who communicated some time since at our Public Circle spoke upon this very point, protesting against the use of the term, saying that he possessed a body similar to the earthly one he had cast off, and he did not wish his friends here to think of him as a "disembodied" individual. Now let us see what Victor Hugo has recorded in the *Annales Politiques et Littéraires* bearing upon the subject in question. He says: "The butterfly is the caterpillar transformed; but it is still so much the caterpillar that every part of the creeping creature is, on examination, found in the winged creature; yet so complete is the transformation that, to appearance, it is a new creature. So, in our life beyond the grave, we shall not be bodiless spirits: such a term conveys no form to be reasoned upon. What could a life be without organs of life? What is a personality without form defining and fixing it? We shall probably have another body, radiant, divine, and, so to speak, a spiritual transformation of our earthly body." This fact is what our spirit friends also teach. That man is a dual being, as St. Paul has said, there is not the remotest doubt; that he has a physical and a spiritual body we know, as we have seen the spiritual counterpart of the corporeal, as have many other persons whose evidence would not be disputed in a court of justice.

The M. Ds. at Work in Ohio.

T. S. G. writes us from Cleveland that a "State Board of Health Bill" has been introduced in the Ohio Legislature, containing the usual section, to regulate (?) the practice of medicine by establishing a "State Board of Censors," consisting of nine members, six regular, two homeopaths, and one eclectic. It is also stated that forty-eight members have been pledged for the cause before the election last fall. We hope the friends of medical freedom in the Buckeye State will rally in full force to meet the emergency.

The SPIRIT MESSAGE DEPARTMENT finds introduction the present week by an Invocation asking for strength and encouragement to welcome all returning souls, "that they and we may be uplifted and blessed through the association and the communion of spirit." Questions are answered by the Controlling Intelligence regarding suicide and whether it is ever justifiable, the length of time before the spirit receives consciousness after the death of the body, the origin of life, "creation" so-called, "effect" and the measure of its comprehension of "cause," the universal presence of spirit; Spirit Rosa T. Amedee, one of the earliest media workers for the Spiritualist cause, gives "thanks to all who are friendly, to all who desire to defend mediumship and its results" (this powerful and opportune message should be carefully perused by every reader of the BANNER); William Harlow brings his own greetings and those of his wife, Amelia, to friends in Windsor, Vt.; Thomas Garrett of New York desires his friends to give him an opportunity for private conversation; Emma Smith speaks in a cheerful vein to Mrs. French of Toledo, O.; Henry Crafts wishes his friends to feel that although "death comes to those they love, sometimes suddenly, sometimes slowly, but always effectively, it does not suppress the powers of human nature, it does not deprive any one of its faculties, it only stimulates them to grander growth and unfoldment"; Lizzie Ross wishes to give an expression of love to her mother in Baltimore, Md.; and the Indian maiden, Lotela, presents brief messages from Charles J. Lamont; Mrs. Andrew Fox; Charles Lang; W. B. Lord (a prominent member of the Masonic fraternity when in earth-life); Orville Handy; Sarah Dewey; Rebecca Bowker (a benevolent lady and ardent Spiritualist, well-known to the Boston friends); Phineas E. Gay (who when on earth was an indefatigable worker with time and means for the benefit of local meetings at Music Hall, etc.); Carrie Bennett; Black Hawk and Ninnette.

An Englishman, Mr. J. W. Mahony, has just pleasantly given some of his spiritualistic experiences here in the London Medium and Daybreak. Bro. Burns, it seems, doesn't like the methods of American Spiritualists as pictured by his correspondent in regard to the financial basis upon which our outdoor public meetings are carried on. He thinks we worship the "almighty dollar." Too much, we say, "If Mr. Mahony comes amongst us [returns] as an apostle of that cult, we would remind him that the most serious ill that have befallen the Movement have arisen from following American methods and notions." Indeed! This is quite a new idea to us. Doesn't the good book say that the laborer is worthy of his hire? But "the dollars are not so abounding" as our contemporary across the water would have his readers believe, as many poor mediums and lecturers are fully aware. The Medium also makes light of our summer camp-meetings, by saying "no doubt they are jolly affairs, or rather fairs, to those who have money to spend or anything to sell," omitting altogether the fact that thousands of people attend these meetings on Sunday to listen to trance and normal speakers precisely the same as if they were given indoors. Out upon such cant! But Bro. Burns became piqued, perhaps, because Mr. Mahony, in the course of his communication, said "the average American Spiritualist is an advanced thinker, and an able citizen, and, as a rule, a competent defender of the facts which underlie his philosophy." Has envy warped our contemporary's judgment, or what?

The February number of the *Facts Magazine*, just issued, contains a picture of Miss Helen C. Berry, the materializing medium, who is well known to the readers of the BANNER as one of the Berry Sisters. Her séances are attended by many seekers for spiritual evidence. It also contains a new song by Herbert Leslie, "Cast thy bread upon the waters." These new features of *Facts* for the year 1886 are only additions. The same number of pages as before are devoted to the statements of phenomena. See contents, as published in advertising columns. *Facts* is for sale by Colby & Rich.

CONVENTION AT LUDLOW, VT.—A report of the proceedings at the above mentioned convention on the 22d, 23d and 24th ult. has been received, and will appear in our columns next week.

A materializing medium is much desired at Billings, Mo. Particulars can be obtained by addressing Dr. J. A. Kitchin of that place.

Mrs. John H. Pickering.

We learn with regret, from a reliable source, that this lady, who has been known for a long time as an excellent materializing medium, accounts of which we have published from time to time, has been an invalid for two years past at her home in Laconia, N. H. She is at the present time in very destitute circumstances, and we are requested by our informant to notify the benevolent reader of this fact, to the end that immediate relief may be rendered her. Our correspondent says that Mrs. Pickering feels hopeful of soon being restored to mediumistic work; but in the meantime pecuniary aid is needed. Her spirit guides request us to call attention to this case, and intimate that prosperous mediums get up benefits in her behalf. Should any of the friends feel disposed to render assistance to this invalid lady they may remit to our care, and we will faithfully see that she receives what funds are sent to us for her. Colby & Rich have forwarded \$10.

Rev. Dr. Eddy, of Melrose, Mass., one of the most gifted of the Universalist denomination, devoted himself last Sunday to the task (not a very hard one it proved) of replying to the strictures of Rev. Mr. Babbitt (who is mentioned elsewhere in this paper as a recent convert to some kind of Orthodoxy) concerning the tenets of Universalism. In the course of his remarks Dr. Eddy truthfully asserted that the human mind instinctively shrank from the ultra-Orthodox idea of death and the after life, and then proceeded to make the remarkable prophecy that "within fifteen years, perhaps ten, there will not be a Protestant pulpit in the land where the doctrine of eternal misery will be preached, but that of annihilation will be substituted. This," added Dr. Eddy, "is the sign of the time and of the new school of Orthodoxy toward which, it is stated, Mr. Babbitt is strongly tending." We have no doubt Dr. Eddy is correct, in the main, on this point, (viz: that the idea of annihilation will be in future strongly emphasized by the churchmen instead of "hell," as being the most preferable according to their light,) but it seems to us that he (as well as the New Orthodoxy and its newly-converted Babbitt) loses sight of another great factor in the problem, viz: the work which Modern Spiritualism is daily doing toward proving to the human mind of the present day the utter falsity of the hell-fire dogmas, and the annihilation "make-shift," and the certainty of the continuity of soul-life after physical death, with every remedial possibility, in a natural world, filled with natural conditions and governed by natural law.

There died in this city the other day a man who at twenty-five was a college graduate of splendid education, and of great intellectual ability and promise, but whose latter days were those of drunkenness, wretchedness, and absolute pauperism. In early life he had learned the printer's trade, and was a finished workman. But drink had dragged him down to the lowest pit of shame, and the walls of many a bar-room have echoed to the liquid odor of his breath, and the long, flowing sentences of Cicero, delivered for the amusement of a gang of roughs who would pour for his sake the sake of hearing him "spout Greek," in the Boston Evening Record.

If we mistake not this man was a compositor on the Boston Post many years ago, who wrote several very clever articles for that paper—one in particular, we remember well, on Shakespeare's works, which the *Atlas* attributed to Hon. George Bancroft, which was a great compliment to the "poor, poor printer," who has at last succumbed to King Alcohol. He was sent to the Home for Inebriates several times; but he could not withstand the temptation for drink, and was soon as bad as ever. It was evidently a disease with him. He was accustomed in his last days to seek out his printer acquaintances, and solicit small sums, invariably saying that he should drink no more. One time, we remember of seeing him coming up the stairs at our office, and before he had observed us we said, "You are going to ask for twenty-five cents in order to get your trunk from Cambridge." "Yes," he quickly replied, "that is just what I was going to say. But how in the world did you know in advance?" He got the quarter just the same.

The Saratoga Eagle, which is smart enough and independent enough to keep its readers posted in regard to spiritualistic matters in its locality, says that the First Society of Saratoga Spiritualists has elected W. B. Mills, President, and proposes to resume Sunday meetings. The editor reports Mrs. Brigham, in a recent lecture there, as saying that "a farmer by patiently picking up stones, drawing them away and laying wall, would not only clear his meadows and make them productive and beautiful, but would at the same time surround them with substantial stone walls, and thereby greatly improve his farm. Some Spiritualists, however, seemed to pick up stones only to throw at each other." If the Saratoga Spiritualists make the proper application of this moral, their Society will probably be strong and prosperous, adds the Eagle. Very true; and this truism is just as applicable in Boston, New York and Philadelphia as in Saratoga. Is it not about time for Spiritualists to become "strong and prosperous" by building "substantial stone walls," and thus "greatly improve" the spiritual "farm," instead of continuing "to pick up stones only to throw at each other?"

We are in receipt of an imperial photograph of Dr. Benjamin Rush—the likeness being one in a series of portraits of eminent spiritual workers, on both sides of life, which the artist Albert Morton, of 210 Stockton street, San Francisco, Cal., is now preparing. He has already completed portraits of Prof. Denton, Dr. Gardner, and P. B. Randolph, and proposes to work next upon a picture of the late Charles E. Foster. These portraits when completed will be photographed (as was that of Dr. Rush) and placed on the market, of which due notice will be given hereafter.

THE COLLEGE OF THERAPEUTICS (as shown by the notice in our advertising column) opens another course of instruction on Feb. 22d, 3 P. M., at No. 6 James street, which will interest all who seek the most scientific methods of healing, and the most important modern discoveries in the healing art and the philosophy of soul and body.

As will be seen by reference to his advertisement on our seventh page, the address of Dr. J. R. BODEN BUCHANAN is now at 6 James street, Boston, Mass.

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