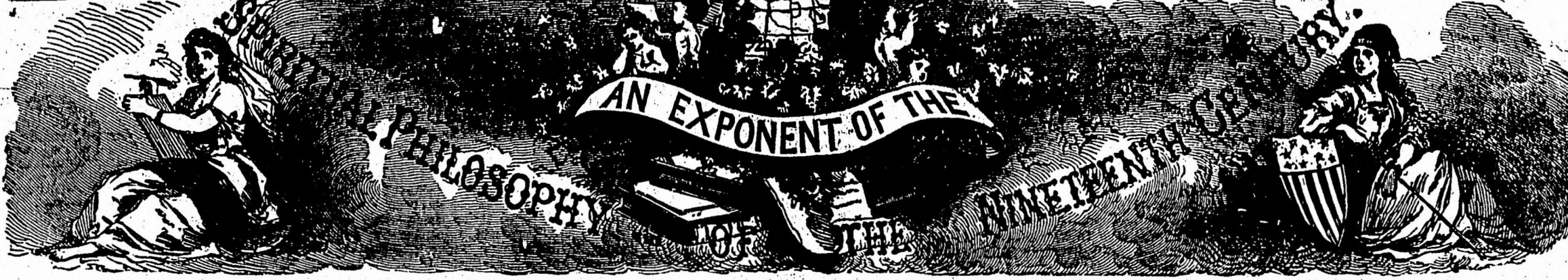


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The Spiritual Rostrum.

Looking Backward and Looking Forward.

An Inspirational Discourse by
W. J. COLVILLE,
Delivered in Berkeley Hall, Boston, Sunday
Evening, May 23d, 1886.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

This evening being the occasion of our last lecture in this season's course of Sunday work, before taking leave of our audience here, prior to the commencement of work in the far West, we shall ask you to devote a short time to the double duty of reviewing the past and forecasting the future. We are often reminded of such sentences as "Let the dead past bury its dead," and "Forgetting those things which are behind, reach forth unto those things which are before," and we can well sympathize with those who deem it advisable to put the past entirely out of their thoughts, meditating only upon the new days which are dawning and the new hopes which are blossoming in their hearts. "All before us lies the way," "the new transcends the old," are not only poetic expressions born of the vivid imagination of those who court the Muses, they are the sober utterances of common sense; they embody the truest prophecy and the soundest ethics. Looking back as Lot's wife looked back may have converted her into a pillar of salt, a symbol of warning and also of purification. But however much good she may have done as a pillar of witness, it was her husband, Lot, who, by pressing steadily forward, attained to Zoar, the city of safety.

Retrospect surely has its place; reminiscences and recollections, fond memories tenderly cherished in the heart's very core, are salutary when they help us to profit by the lessons past experiences have taught us, but we must never look back to repine because of vanished treasures; we must never permit ourselves to feel discouraged because the roseate tints of our morning sky of earthly existence have faded into the pale grey tints of a cloudy afternoon; for whatsoever be the condition of our life at this moment, it is a state that cannot be improved, though it may be rendered well nigh insupportable by contrasting it with the brighter glories of a buried morn. Let us learn the lessons the shadows as well as the sunlight can teach us, and if some passages in our past career have been fruitful only of sorrow, if the remembrance of certain episodes can cause us only pain, we must take the nightshade and the willow culled from the cemeteries where many an ardent hope lies entombed, and learn from these plaintive blossoms in life's garden the lesson of contrast, of the shadow of the sombre background of life's picture, were it not for which the splendid foreground would be scarcely discernible.

Nature, in her external moods, is a reflection and expression of the spirit within; those who turn from written records to the pages of Nature's ample volume are only turning from the smaller to the larger book of God. We cannot trace the history of the earth or any portion of it without perceiving, almost at a glance, how universal are the contrasts which liken the history of the planet to that of the life of mankind. Where is the mountainous district noted for the height and grandeur of its elevations where the valleys are not correspondingly deep? The very height of the mountain is the cause of the depth of the valley. In the tropics, where there are no excessively long nights, there are no very long days. At midsummer, as well as in midwinter, day begins at six A. M. and ends at six P. M.; but in the most northerly parts of the earth, where the sun does not appear for months at a time in winter, it never sets for months in summer; and there, where the long, dark wintry days are unlighted by even the feeblest solar ray, the magnificent *Aurora Borealis*, never witnessed in warm climates, more than compensates for the lengthened darkness.

By a little close inspection we find that things are not as unequally balanced in this world as many suppose. It is true that in the Northern States you have not the balmy zephyrs, spreading palm trees and luscious fruits of a more southerly clime; but then you have not the centipede, the tarantula, the rattlesnake, and other poisonous and offensive creatures, born of the heat and vapors, without which such luxuriance as that of the tropics is not produced. The spice islands or Ceylon may offer sweets that England can never boast, but the boa constrictor and the anaconda must be weighed in the balance with the fruits and flowers. Bishop Heber was incorrect when in speaking of the islands of the southern seas he exclaimed, "every prospect pleases." It does not; and many there are who would far rather endure the sterility and biting cold of Lapland or Alaska, and enjoy immunity from the terrors of the equatorial regions, than bask in every southern luxuriance, with the constant fear of a serpent's bite hanging like the sword of Damocles suspended as by a single hair above them.

There is vastly too much unreflecting complaint in the world; vastly too much enviousness and grumbling discontent, resulting from a failure to take in a sufficiently wide horizon; and as this lamentable fact spreads anarchy, confusion and wretchedness wherever a rapacious spirit is fostered, we may well conclude the special demon to be exorcised in the world today is to be cast out only by a vigorous crusade against the gall and bitterness of human discontent. But it may be asked, and that wisely,

Is there not a divine discontent? Is it not our duty to be dissatisfied with everything short of perfection? Are we to content ourselves with the platitudes of complacent resignation to our lot when stern duties demand of us our hands, and brains, and hearts? Are there not conditions to be bettered, wrongs to be righted, miseries to be overcome? And is not the feverish unrest of to-day, even in its most sanguinary and nihilistic forms, the very weapon employed by the Almighty to set matters straight? Is not society out of joint? Is it not afflicted with a deadly malady? And are not those who rebel against things as they are, the chosen leaders, destined to escort humanity into a promised land, flowing with milk and honey, where want and wretchedness are all unknown? In a certain sense, yes. We can no more doubt the purifying effects of a revolution than we can doubt the beneficial results following a tempest. The lightning kills the blight, the thunder clears the air; but it is not the strife or commotion in and of itself that is desirable, for were a storm to continue long enough everything would be destroyed. There is an end in view, an object to be gained, and anything which furthers that object is not only tolerated but accepted joyfully by all who feel the importance of the end to be attained. Take, for instance, those two tremendous conflicts in which this country has engaged—the struggle for freedom in the last century, and the war between North and South in the present. As July 4th or as May 30th comes round year after year, you celebrate the praises of the heroes who bled and died for freedom, and in defense of right. Yet many who celebrate the national jubilee and who decorate the soldiers' graves favor a non-resistant policy, and use all the influence they possess to dissuade their countrymen from studying the arts of war or trusting in material weapons of defense. Standing armies are a blot on civilization; the study of human butchery is a disgrace to manhood; yet bravery is so great a virtue, valor and courage are so highly esteemed, that from the old Roman days when there was but one and the same word in the speech of the people for bravery and virtue, to the present hour, a brave man and a good man have always been classed together. A coward is rarely upright or moral, while a truly brave soldier is usually an embodiment of integrity and loyalty. Honor and bravery go together; vice and cowardice are close associates. The valor, courage, bravery, loyalty of the hero is what we admire; these qualities have been closely allied with knight-hood and soldiery, and though the old orders of armed knights may be destined to soon pass away, and the troops of soldiers tramping through the country be only remembrances of an obsolete condition of affairs, those virtues for which we prize the heroes of every age and clime will never pass away; they are part of the eternal word which can never come to naught even though both heavens and earth are changed, and there are new heavens and new earths wherein dwelleth righteousness. The righteousness which is to dwell in these new homes is the phoenix which ever rises, deathless and immortal, from the ruins and ashes of departed dynasties and bygone states of feeling and practice.

To condemn the action of persons in the old time is foolish; to waste time in condemning ourselves for past mistakes is folly; for the very time and strength we spend in idle tears and vain regrets had far better be employed in working in the present for the future. The Buddhist doctrine of Karma may be a profound and irrefutable spiritual truth when properly interpreted and understood; but granting that it is so, we have none of us any power over past existences and bygone acts. It is for us to sow such seed to-day that to-morrow's harvest may be of golden grain and not of tares. If the tares are troublesome and aggressive at this moment, they cannot be uprooted by regretting their presence. Sitting down and crying till your eyes are blind will only exhaust your strength; by so doing you will not remove the smallest obstacle from your path. But at the same time it must be conceded that a healthful use of the retrospective faculty does enable one, oftentimes, to see his errors and the cause of them, and in the light of such knowledge, to avoid the cause of similar sufferings in future. One who indulges in dissipation over night, wakes up with a headache in the morning. If he does not know what gave him the pain, he may again indulge in alcohol and suffer from a repetition of the ailment; but if he wisely connects the effect with the cause, and sees how one flows from the other, he has learned a salutary lesson. If foolish, thoughtless indiscretion has been the cause of any misery, then that very misery occasioned by it is the way out of it. Physicians constantly confess among themselves their inability to treat certain cases effectually, because they cannot find the cause of the disorder from which a patient is suffering. clairvoyants and mental healers sometimes fail in their treatment from a similar cause. If you only know what distressed you, you can find means for avoiding the occasion of offence in future, your prospects of recovery and future immunity from disease immediately brighten; whereas ignorance and lack of reflection are fruitful causes of much prolonged and aggravated misery.

Probably no one confesses to being quite well; no one can look back upon work attempted or accomplished, and feel perfectly satisfied with results, because you are all capable of doing better in future; and were you fully content with past and present efforts, you would make no progress. If there were no dissatisfaction anywhere things would soon come to a standstill. All are capable of doing better than they yet have done, therefore conscience probes them onward; and the moral sense is not a relentless judge—not an accusing angel, to be feared and dreaded as the servant of the law of Duty—but, on the contrary, the moral lever, lifting you to nobler heights beyond; the golden pulley elevating you to the mountain-top, whereon the mercy seat, and not the throne of judgment, is located. Mercy is above, judgment is within. Mercy is the divine blessing, the healing balm, the refreshing dew which falls from the regions of higher intelligence; while the stings of remorse, the bitterness of regret, and all that can be called either purgatory or hell, arise from within the human spirit. You have no sterner judge to confront than your own dissatisfied conscience—no harsher sentence will ever be passed upon you than that you pass upon yourselves. It is and ever will be the mission of the higher powers to enact the rôle of Good Samaritan, lifting you from your low estate, and making provision for your succor and healing in the place of refuge to which they guide you.

The world compels those who study it to look both ways, behind and before. The angelic state is symbolized in the living creatures of the Apocalypse, who are full of eyes without and within. Could we all see the end from the beginning we should regret nothing and feel pained by nothing; but in imperfect stages of mental growth and spiritual unfoldment, the pangs of discontent are calls to a higher and better life.

No doubt many in this audience have set out in life with high hopes and mighty projects; their ambitions have been great, their talents considerable, their prospects bright; but one by one all their treasures have slipped from them; they have been shorn of health, wealth, friends, and all they counted dear. Perhaps in the experience of not a few the blow seems to have fallen as a punishment for sin; at least it has been the result of their short-sightedness and mistake. This realization of course adds bitterness to loss and makes trouble harder to bear; but at times a shadow dark as this hangs over one's career, even when he cannot plead immunity from blame and cannot pose as martyr in his affliction. The past has already yielded up its dead sea fruit; if you are now unhappy the ashes are now in your mouth. But eternity is before you; stages upon stages in life's journey have yet to be traversed, and if any mishap has occasioned a temporary delay on your journey, the gates of the celestial city are never closed; and no matter how late the traveler knocks at the door, the door will be opened and admit the belated one, even though he arrive centuries after others who commenced life's journey with him. The parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish, is often misapplied. The lesson to be learned from it is truly the danger of procrastination; but an earthly wedding and a door shut at a certain hour has no reference to eternity, only to a stated period of earthly discipline. Five virgins, we are told, slept before they had earned repose. They had not procured oil for their lamps, neither had they filled the vessels they had carried with them as their wiser companions had done. Not having worked at noon, they had no sheaves at sunset. Their comrades could not give them oil out of their supply, as no one can do another's duty for him. What are termed works of supererogation in the Church of Rome with which saints are accredited are impossible, as no one can do more than he is able, and work to the extent of every one's ability is necessary to perfect spiritual attainment. We are none of us ready for the banquet, none can receive the prize unless his hands are full of sheaves and he has worked all day long in the harvest field. Whenever a period of day of labor draws to a close, and every worker receives his wages, those wages for that day's work will be the results in his own spirit of the industry of the day gone by. The night following the day passed by some in a banquet hall at a wedding feast, and by others in the cold outside the door, typifies the different conditions of mind and the different degrees of result in cases where one's best has been faithfully performed and where negligence has been the order of the day.

There are many persons who can never see an inch before them. They have no presence, no prophetic faculty; their practicality is based on a conservative, non-progressive worship of the already attained. If such people are moved to go forward at all, they can only be influenced by reference to history. Their ideals are all in the past; to them the world is moving backward; Eden is behind, Paradise is lost; the Golden Age is a legend of a fairer clime and happier age, but they have no future. No state of mind can be unhealthier than this, and it is to reach those who are so bound up in ancient records any movement is sent with a heaven-inspired message which urges them forward by showing the feasibility of a forward march, as nothing proposed or attempted has not taken place already. All has been recorded and is now a part of history. Buddha or Jesus may, as ideal, be even more than actual characters, but the marvelous stories told of them are both legends of past attainments and prophecies of the yet more glorious achievements of days yet unborn. No ideal can ever be too high, no prospect too enchanting, for the mind of man is so constituted as to be incapable of outliving the perspective attainments of the race. We must have the thought, the idea, the mental image, before the outward form. Every architect is in one sense a prophet, so is every poet, every inventor, every painter, sculptor, and artificer. All inventions are perfected in the spiritual realm of human consciousness before they can receive external form on earth.

It is this truth of spiritual causation and involvement, palpable to all observers, which alone explains the true relation of mind to matter, and demonstrates beyond the possible fear of successful contradiction the absolute certainty of spirit being the originating cause of all things. If there cannot even be a new fashion for a bonnet, a cloak, a dress, or any other garment without some brain conceiving a new design, and some fingers sketching out on paper before fabrics are brought together, and an outward result obtained; if the houses in which you dwell, the instruments on which you play, are all perfected in mind before they assume external proportions, how can there be any doubt but that the soul, or innermost of man, conceives and designs while the fingers, deftly or clumsily, as the case may be, follow the spiritual architect, and perform their parts, often slowly and imperfectly, in rearing the outward pile. The common expression, such and such things are not practical, is opposed to common-sense, for nothing can ever become common practical till it has passed the theoretical and entered the practical stage. As well expect the fetus to become instantaneously the perfected organism, as well declare germination, gestation, incubation useless and Utopian, and rave over the practical chicken, the practical vegetable, and the practical child, as ignore and deride the theory which gives birth to practice, and antedates practical demonstration. Practice is applied theory; were there no theory to apply, there could be no practice. Is not the steam engine a practical invention? Are not the uses to which electricity is now put eminently practical? Is not the Atlantic cable practical? Is not the Brooklyn bridge practical? You will answer yes, assuredly, because these actualized triumphs of genius, that is, of mind, are now working in the interests of manifold commercial transactions. But was there never a time when Stephenson, Watt, Edison, and many another pioneer of mechanical progress, was laughed to scorn by the hyper-practicalists who scorned to give credence to mere theory? If to-day trains of cars are propelled by steam where fifty years ago the old stage-coach was the only means of transportation; if steam now causes swift vessels to sail in six days from New York to Queenstown, when in days not so far distant sails were the only wings, and those most uncertain ones, where-with to cross the ocean, why should not electricity ere long be applied to trains and vessels to the abolition of steam transit, as gas is fast yielding to electricity as the next motor power in the lighting of houses and cities? And as the uses of electricity are discovered more and more fully, why not accept it as the next motor power, and behold in Bulwer Lytton more of a prophet than a romancer? The French Academy some years ago presented Jules Verne with a medal because of the strictly scientific nature of the principles stated and elucidated in "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," and other books so delightful to children, imaginative ones especially, though pronounced trash by many of their seniors who are not wiser, but only colder and partaking less of the glowing ambition and ardor of youth. Before you know it some of your boys will be proving in some degree the practicability of many of Verne's suggestions. Then you will step in your boats as readily as you now employ the steam cars or the ferries.

The next development following upon the inventions of this cycle will be journeys to the moon, and at length to other planets; for with the gradual equalization of the atmosphere surrounding this globe, coupled with a knowledge of how to navigate it, there will be two oceans traversed by swift-sailing vessels instead of one. We do not say this will come to be a fact in this century, but a fact it will be sooner or later; and if there be those on earth now who have conceived a plan, but cannot make it work here and now, what is to hinder such from impressing the brain of some sensitive child after they have quitted the mortal frame, so that the inspirations of the geniuses of the twentieth century may be the fulfillments of the hopes and realizations of the wildest schemes of those whom the nineteenth century has pronounced Quixotic and Utopian? Utopia is ahead; the new Eden is before us; individually and collectively our hopes will be fulfilled. Press on with good courage, never daunted; first be sure you are right, then go ahead. If such a motto influence your lives, then come storm or calm, cloud or sunlight, the victory is yours, and coming generations, if not the present, will rise up and call you blessed.

Apply this subject as you will, our farewell texts left ringing in your ears are, "With God all things are possible," and "All things are possible to him that believeth." But if according to your faith it shall be unto you, never forget that that is but delusion misnamed faith which is built on selfishness and error. All selfish schemes will come to naught; all personal ambitions which seek not the universal good of humanity must eventually fail. Those who build upon the rock of persevering industry anything out of harmony with the pure gold of truth must see their work destroyed and they themselves must suffer loss, though every soul is saved at length; but they who in patience work zealously, unflinchingly for human weal will receive a great reward; the double blessing of their own souls and the reflected radiance of the happiness of others occasioned by their work. To each one of you we apply the motto before quoted, "Be sure you are right, then go ahead." In the confidence of truth no storm can wreck your vessel; no edifice built upon the rock of truth and devotion to it can ever be overthrown, and if the truth be told to-day, though brighter than that seen yesterday, is still less bright than that to be discerned to-morrow, the only possible means of improving spiritual vision is to employ faithfully all the light and all the sight now at your disposal.

THE TRANSLATED.

Dear dead! they have become
Like guardian angels to us;
And distant heaven like home
Through them begins to woo us;
Love that was earthly, wings
Its flight to holier places;
The dead are sacred things
That multiply our graces.
Those whom we loved on earth
Attract us now to heaven;
Who shared our grief and mirth
Back to us now are given;
They move with noiseless foot
Gravely and sweetly round us,
And their soft touch bath cut
Full many a chain that bound us.
—F. W. Faber.

Free Thought.

"RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALISM."

to the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The letter of Mr. Warren Chase on "Religious Spiritualism" (his own title) in your issue of the 5th inst., clearly implies that no persons have any right to apply to themselves as a class the name *Spiritualists* except as indicative of their acceptance of the "facts of spirit-life and intercourse." He asserts that "there is a greater variety of religious views and beliefs among Spiritualists than among Christians"; and that he "knows of some who are good (sic) mediums, and as firm in the belief in spirit-intercourse as I am (he is), that adhere to even the Catholic Church." Therefore he says: "How any rational persons could expect to effect a religious organization of Spiritualists in this country is a mystery to me" (him).

If he means, as he seems to, that it would be irrational for any person to expect to include all Spiritualists (as he defines the term) in one religious organization—or in a general organization of any kind—he is, doubtless, correct; and I think he will find it very difficult to name any person who entertains such an expectation. Hence the "mystery" may be dismissed from his mind. But to expect to effect a religious organization consisting of Spiritualists (according to his definition) cannot be deemed irrational or mysterious, because such organizations exist, and have, I think, always existed. In fact, there are but few Spiritualist societies to-day, in this country or in any other country, which are not, *avowedly*, based in part upon some religious principle, and have, in some degree, the religious element in their exercises or articles of belief.

Mr. Chase has recently defined religion (or his religion) as "devotion to truth." Does he mean to say that there are no Spiritualists who have enough of this devotion to form a respectable and influential organization? That would be a strange commentary on forty years' experience in spiritual things. Probably by the phrase "devotion to truth," he does not mean a bigoted devotion to one's own personal opinions, leading to such acrimonious controversies as have disgraced so many of the Spiritualist conferences, but a sincere devotion to *all* truth, and a willingness to consider respectfully other persons' views with no attempt to ridicule or misrepresent them. Such a spirit is indeed an essential element of religion, since it is the "spirit of truth," that leadeth surely, in the end, to all truth.

If this is what Mr. Chase means by "Religious Spiritualism," should we not all "put our shoulders to the wheel" and impel the car of progress onward toward so grand a consummation?

There are especially two things that appear to trouble the mind of this sincere and earnest worker—the Bible and Christianity. The very names seem to give him a shock of alarm, when used in connection with Spiritualism, except in terms of unqualified reproach, contempt and condemnation. This is not the case with the religion and "sacred" books of India, Persia, China, or Egypt, and even Mohammedanism and the Koran may probably be named, and even commended, without disturbing his equanimity. When, however, a professing Spiritualist expresses an acceptance or approval of anything in Christianity or the Bible, it seems to arouse in his mind a kind of *odium theologicum*, almost as strong and warm as that which is characteristic of the ecclesiastical mind in its dealings with heretical offenders.

Spiritualism ought to have a liberalizing effect upon the mind, and should enable one to perceive the good and true in all religions and all religious literature; and there is no just reason why the Christian religion and the Scriptures held sacred by the most enlightened nations of the globe should be excepted. I do not think there is a Spiritualist living who believes in the infallibility of the Bible or in its plenary or literal inspiration. A dispassionate and unprejudiced perusal of it may have convinced him that certain portions of it were the result of an inspiration or spirit-influence, similar to what we see in these days; and that its truth is not to be accepted on authority or on its assumed sacredness, but to be judged by our own reason and best intuitions, as well as by the application of sound spiritual principles.

The Bible must contain much that is true and good, or it never would have had the earnest, devoted support of so many acute, cultured and spiritualized minds. All the so-called sacred books in the world contain much that is true and good, mixed with a great deal that is useless or erroneous. A knowledge of Spiritualism enables the calm, unbiased mind to discriminate between them. One who is prejudiced and bigoted condemns by wholesale, and usually without a full or fair examination. The iconoclastic Liberalist gives his attention only to such parts and passages of the Bible as are the most vulnerable to his attacks, or present the best subjects for his derision. This is the method usually adopted by the pulpit and non-Spiritualist press in assailing Modern Spiritualism and its literature; and we are often called upon to complain of it. Spiritualists should rise above so mean and illogical way of dealing with any subject or any book—should soar far above the murky and pestilential atmosphere of prejudice into the serene empyrean of a candid love of truth and justice.

The Bible is not necessary to Spiritualism; the facts and truths of Spiritualism are wholly independent of the Bible, for they depend on the observations and testimony of people of our own times. Still the ancient Scriptures as a record, in great part, of similar facts and truths tend to confirm and illustrate the results of our own observations and deductions; as, also, the phenomena of these days illustrate and confirm the statements of the Bible. I have had a vast deal more regard for the Bible since becoming a Spiritualist than I ever had before; but I am not, and never was, a Bibliolater. I sincerely pity those who can find nothing good, true, or valuable in it. It seems to me that nothing can be more incorrect or unfair than to assert,

as Mr. Chase does, that any Spiritualists "anxious to get up a religious organization want it based on the Bible and its spiritual phenomena, with Christ as the chief cornerstone." I know of no such Spiritualists here, or in England, where some movement of this kind has recently been urged. "Religious Spiritualism" must be based on the facts and philosophy of the New Revelation, and the enlightened intuitions of its believers; but, of course, it must have much in common with primitive Christianity, without regard to the "creeds of Christendom."

Mr. Chase remarks: "Spiritualism seems to me to be a subject of diffusive knowledge, and its facts educational." Spiritualism is, indeed, in one of its aspects a science, or branch of knowledge; in another a philosophy of the spirit-side of nature; and in a third a pure, rational and enlightened religion, leading to spiritual progress and soul-culture, and tending to bring all mankind to the same plane of practical ethics and harmonious, virtuous living. The jarring sectarianism of Christians proves that they have not reached that exalted plane, and the wrangling individualism of Spiritualists painfully demonstrates how far they are below it, in spite of forty years' spiritual intercourse. What is really required is more, not less, "religious Spiritualism"; that is, Spiritualism should be really *spiritual*; and, in order that it may be understood, I will cite—not as authority—a passage in the well-known book, the Bible: "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The possession of these qualities is the true test of spirituality, and to cultivate them the work of religious Spiritualism. Which of us, then, can afford to do without it, and why should not those who feel the need of it organize "to effect" it, always letting those who are otherwise minded go on in their own way? The bottom will not fall out of Spiritualism if such a "Spiritual Alliance" should become both numerous and influential. HENRY KIDDLE.
New York, June 5th, 1886.

New Publications.

A STUDY OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY. By Lewis G. Jones. 12mo, cloth, pp. 319. Boston: Index Association.

To the list of meritorious works related to the liberal and progressive spirit of our age which the Index Association has placed before the public, notice of which has been made in these columns, the valuable one above named has recently been added. Its pages represent the results of a laborious and exhaustive research in every quarter where information was likely to be found upon the subject of which it treats, and is creditable alike to its industrious author, and to the advanced thought that made its publication desirable.

While engaged as teacher of an adult class in the Sunday-school in Brooklyn, N. Y., connected with the liberal school of which John W. Chadwick is pastor, Mr. Jones devoted much time in the study and preparation of papers relating to the origins of Christianity, the character and validity of the New Testament literature, and the different phases of custom and belief which existed in the earliest of Christian communities. These, delivered as a course of lectures before the Brooklyn Association for Moral and Spiritual Education, attracted marked attention and were so highly appreciated that an earnest desire was expressed for their publication, the outcome of which is the book before us.

The plan of the work as stated by the author is, first to examine the local environment of the earliest phase of Christianity, involved in the political, social and religious condition of Palestine in the Roman period, then to consider the state of society and religion in the Roman empire outside of Palestine, followed by a close and critical investigation of the sources of the information thus far obtained concerning the life and teachings of Jesus, and the different stages of the evolution of the new religion, up to the time of its secular triumph. In pursuing this well-ordered plan the greatest care was taken by Mr. Jones to insure accuracy in regard to all statements of fact, by placing reliance only on authorities of generally admitted weight and impartiality.

Interesting sketches are given of such notable characters in church history as Hilite, born about ninety years before Jesus, and passing from earth when the latter was about ten years old. To him (Hilite) is attributed the origin of the Golden Rule, in this wise: He was a liberal Pharisee, and was opposed by Shammat, a distinguished leader of the conservatives. A proselyte came to Shammat one day desiring to be initiated into Judaism, provided he could be instructed in its precepts within the time during which he could stand on one foot. He was harshly repulsed as a trifle unworthy of a serious response. He then applied to Hilite, who replied to him as follows: "My son, listen. The essence of Judaism is, whatever is displeasing unto thee do not do unto others. This is the foundation and root of Judaism; all else is commentary. Go, and learn." The book abounds with incidents of this kind, and a vast amount of information garnered from almost interminable fields of historic wealth is placed within reach of the people, whose prevailing ignorance upon many points these statements explain has kept them in mental bondage from which they, fortunately, are now rapidly freeing themselves, and toward which consummation this book will be a great incentive and aid.

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM. Historical Revelations of the Relations Existing Between Them Since the Disintegration of the Roman Empire. By the Roman Emperor Julian (called the Apostate). 12mo, cloth, pp. 86. Boston: Colby & Rich, corner Bosworth and Province streets.

The medium for the transmission of the contents of this volume from the spirit-world, Mr. T. C. Buddington, remarks in a preliminary "statement" that "earthly history has always seemed to be deficient from its inability to record only the external acts; whereas the subtle forces which produce external acts seemed to be overlooked by the earthly historian, or, if understood, are passed by in silence." It certainly will be of great assistance to the student of history if from their present sphere of existence those who were participants in the events it records can communicate to us what they know of them. This volume purports to be such a communication. Of its verity each individual who reads it must judge for himself. It is clearly and concisely written, and possesses a tone and dignity of style and expression that gives it character, and impresses one favorably. The writer portrays the origin, growth, and subsequent decline of various political and priestly powers existing during his earthly reign; denies the truth of charges made against him by the church; declares Christianity to be an overgrown combination of truth and error, and as unnatural as Paganism ever was; refers to spiritual phenomena as having existed in all ages, and gives his views of the result of the present efforts of advanced spirits to instruct the people of earth. The predominant thought and purpose of the book is in harmony with the character and aims accredited by all liberal writers of modern times to Julian, who was a nephew of Constantine, born A. D. 334, and at the age of 32 acquired the undisturbed possession of the Roman Empire.

Weep not, my dear friend, when we lose those we truly loved; they are not where they were, but they are everywhere where we are.—Emile Perrin.

Scott's Emulsion of Pure Cod Liver Oil, with Hypophosphites, in Children's Diseases.

Dr. EDWIN BARTLETT, Milwaukee, says: "I have found Scott's Emulsion to be one of the best preparations in use, especially in children's diseases, on account of the elegance of the preparation and its agreeable taste. It is very desirable in wasting diseases."

Banner Correspondence.

Massachusetts.

EAST BRIDGEWATER.—E. C. Bennett, Secretary of Spiritualist Association of this place, writes: "The second series of meetings in this town has been inaugurated—we holding them on alternate Sundays. The opening one occurred on May 16th. Dr. H. B. Storor being the speaker, who provided an appreciative audience with a rich mental feast; we consider Dr. S. as one of the very best speakers on the spiritualist platform, afternoon and evening. Her afternoon address, under control, was an emphatic illustration of the leading reform questions of the hour, showing them to be practical and progressive ideas, and that it was only a question of time, and short at that, when popular sentiment will demand their recognition. The evening session was also full of interest—the deep thought and concise arguments of the speaker holding her hearers with strict attention."

MISS B. having arrived by train on the evening previous to her lectures, she held a séance at the house of Mr. G. E. Pratt, fifteen attending, and some remarkable tests were there given, and fully recognized, although she was a total stranger to the sitters, and never before in this place.

I take pleasure in recommending Miss Barneale to those unacquainted with her, as a lecturer and test medium, and a lady whose inspirations are of a high order of merit. The spirit of progression demands that she be kept busily employed. Address her at 175 Tremont street, Boston."

SIATUCKVILLE.—E. E. J. Davenport writes: "Spiritualism is beginning to awaken quite an interest in the minds of the people in this vicinity. A number of meetings have lately been held in Maxam's Hall, which have been well attended. Mr. J. P. Thorndike of Manchester, N. H., a trance-speaker, spoke Sunday, May 23d, to a large and attentive audience. He spoke under the influence of Gen. Anthony Wayne of Revolutionary fame. His talk was quite practical; with occasional humorous and pathetic remarks he held the strict attention of the audience for nearly an hour and a half."

A number of meetings of this nature have been held from time to time in this place, but there is an abundant amount of work that might be done for the cause of Spiritualism in this vicinity. Should any good speakers upon the subject be passing near this place we should be much pleased to have them stop here a few days and hold a meeting. They would be hospitably entertained. The hall in which most of such meetings have been held is owned by S. N. Maxam, Esq., and is about two miles north of Shelburne Falls on the Fitchburg Railroad, also the New Haven and Northampton Railroad, lines direct from Boston or New York."

Vermont.

NORTH SPRINGFIELD.—Mrs. S. A. Jesmer-Downs writes: "Last camp season I met at a séance at Onset Bay for the first time Mr. H. F. Merrill. Mr. Merrill, partially controlled, said he saw my two boys; one, my husband, was young, about twenty. I asked Mr. Merrill if he got the name; he said, 'no.' I then asked if he could describe the manner of his death. He said, 'I see a body being lifted out of water.' This proved it to be my son, who was drowned."

At Onset I was one of the occupants of Hall's Block. I attended every séance held by Mary Edy Hinton. Two years ago at Lake Pleasant Nellie J. Kenyon came through the organism of Arthur Hodges and sent a loving message to her companion and sister, requesting them to make conditions for her to try and come to them in a materialized form; she also told me she should come to me sometime. One night at Mrs. Hinton's I stood back, arranging the light, when a form came out and moved forward and gestured to me, saying, 'I am Nellie!' It was in appearance that of our sister Nellie J. Kenyon. Others who had been well acquainted with her were satisfied it was her spirit presence. I mentally requested that my son would call me to the cabinet and take my hand. The next night, according to request, I was called for; a hand took mine, drew me forward over Mrs. H.'s head, patted my hand took one ring and pulled it down on the finger joint, and then took another ring, on the same finger, that my son wore while on earth, turned it around and held it up from my finger. Inside was the inscription, 'From Mother to Victor.' At another séance of the same medium, a child came for me and said, 'Minnie.' My sister had a child pass away of that name. This little child's spirit showed much affection, as did many others.

During the past year I have had many strange manifestations, and had I not been a sufferer from ill health, I doubt not that much greater power would have been used by the spirit-world through my organism for the benefit of humanity."

Kentucky.

COVINGTON.—Mrs. A. G. W. Carter, widow of one of the BANNER's old-time Cincinnati and New York correspondents, writes us from Covington in evidence of the rapid advance in a knowledge of spirit-communication which is being gained in Kentucky through the use of the celebrated "talking board," a form of planchette, spoken of by us in our issue for May 1st. (By the way, another appliance of a like nature will be found described in the BANNER OF LIGHT for June 12th.) As a practical instance she cites the case of E. D. Crigler, of Gunpowder, Boone County, a letter from whom to his son she forwards in evidence. The gentleman mentioned is, she informs us, seventy-two years of age; is well, and full of practical sense. He has been an active member of the Lutheran Church nearly sixty years, and is prominent throughout the State of Kentucky in all church deliberations. Up to the present time, she writes, he has listened to his son on spiritual matters, but could not feel for himself the truth of the spiritual philosophy. "When our old wheel-horse, Warren Chase, was last here, the daughter of Mr. Crigler engaged him (C.) to go to Gunpowder and deliver lectures in the Lutheran church—presuming the church which had so long been in her home would gladly learn of the world to come by accepting the evidence she felt could be produced. But no—not even the schoolhouse could be obtained for a lecture or two." The letter mentioned by Mrs. Carter bears date of Gunpowder, June 6th, and Mr. Crigler therein informs his son that "we all have become believers in communication with the departed spirits." He endorses the "talking board"—by practical experience with which the conclusive evidence was obtained—as "one of the most wonderful things we have ever seen."

New York.

WEST EXETER.—Joseph Simms, M. D., writes us as follows regarding the decease of his father (see obituary notices the present week), "who has taken the BANNER OF LIGHT more than twenty years consecutively. He stood six feet one inch tall, possessed a most remarkable memory, and was the greatest reader I ever knew. He was a man of strict honesty in words and deeds, and lost no opportunity to advocate Spiritualism. To him I owe my first aspirations for knowledge. The night after he died (while I was unaware of his death, so-called) I saw his spirit-form in my bed-room at 2 o'clock A. M., at 58 Lexington Avenue, New York City—not as I last saw him in mortal life a year ago, but as his cold face looked to me when I beheld it the day after I saw his spirit in New York City. This was not a dream, because, as Prof. Huxley says, dreams only reproduce what we have seen, or the impressions of thoughts which have passed in our minds before. I only recognized my father's spirit when I looked on his lifeless body the day following this vision, because he had changed so much since I saw him a year ago."

Iowa.

DES MOINES.—V. O. Taylor writes that since 1848 he has been a Spiritualist, and has stood as such openly before the world, and he has no patience with a class of writers who, after making certain admissions in the secular press regarding the phenomena witnessed by them, hasten to utter disclaimers regarding their belief in spirits, etc. He is of opinion that such writers are a positive injury to the cause, as far as human agency can go. "If a person who admits," he says, for instance, "that he converses with spirits—referring all the occult phenomena he witnesses at a séance to only spirits—is not a Spiritualist, it would be interesting to know what sort of a nondescript he is, or where to place him; for by what other means or methods are Spiritualists made? Shakespeare says: 'Well know they of what they speak, who speak so wisely,' and doubtless Shakespeare knew that the race of Nicodemuses did not all become extinct when the nocturnal visitor of Christ shuffled off the mortal coil. Of all the pliable objects truth-loving humanity is obliged to contemplate, the skulker of the Nicodemus school bears the palm. We believe Spiritualists generally will endorse the assertion that the time has come for those who attempt the 'good Lord and good devil' feat to desist, and bide their time till the security that is waiting and longing to give them sanctuary from the perils of being classified either as 'fish, flesh or fowl.' The cause to-day needs no such recruits. With the honest skeptic, who disclaims any knowledge of spirit-communication, let us still have patience, and exercise toward him the largest charity; but let every one display his colors."

Ohio.
CINCINNATI.—S. Hainebach writes that the Spiritualist Society and the Lyceum in this city are in a flourishing condition. He also expresses his pleasure at the work being done by the BANNER Message Department, through the mediumship of Miss M. T. Shelhamer, feeling sure of the verity of such communion with spirit intelligences by reason of the light which has come to him through his own medial powers.

Spiritual Phenomena.

Under the above heading the BANNER OF LIGHT publishes from time to time communications contributed by reliable people describing the spirit-form manifestations they have witnessed; but we desire it to be fully understood that we cannot be held responsible for any accounts of such manifestations appearing in our columns, except those we have witnessed and personally endorsed. Writers in describing the phenomena they have seen, must alone bear the responsibility of their statements.—Publishers B. & L.

Materializations in San Francisco.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I have just returned from a visit to California, where I spent some time in San Francisco attending two materializing séances at Mrs. A. B. Souther's, corner of Howard and Ninth streets. Any person seeing such manifestations of spirit power as I saw at those séances could not but believe in the same, fully realizing that the seen and unseen worlds are blended together, and that the barrier called death is entirely broken down. Spirits came and threw their arms around their friends' necks, kissed them and conversed with them familiarly and lovingly on topics only known to them, and they, in turn, would take pencil and paper and write on general topics, exhorting us to lead pure lives, and to have charity toward all mankind.

The séance was conducted under conditions satisfactory to all present. A small room was used as a cabinet by being divided from the larger room with a curtain stretched across a folding door-way. We examined the cabinet room carefully and found only one place of exit, and that through a door leading into the kitchen; the door was locked, and to make it more sure we left our room door open so that we could have seen any one go in. Soon after Mrs. Souther had seated herself spirit-forms made their appearance, many of whom were recognized by friends. Subsequently "Montie," Mrs. Souther's control, told us to turn down the light, as she was going to send out some illuminated spirits. This being done, a man and woman came out in raiment so bright it illuminated their forms and faces. Their complexion was of a bright copper color; their features were of a golden hue, and the brightness of their garments, were different from the Indian and African type. The man did not talk to us, but the lady was very affable. I asked her to shake hands with me, which she did. I also asked her to permit me to examine her dress. The material appeared to be an illuminated gauzy fabric, ornamented with circular spots two or three inches in diameter, of a velvety texture, which spots or stars were illuminated much brighter than the rest of the dress, giving considerable light, and very different from anything that could be prepared by human agency with phosphorus or anything of that kind.

After the lights were turned up, and several spirits had made their appearance, "Montie" announced that a spirit would try to materialize in the room with us. Suddenly I saw a small white cloud on the carpet, about the size of my hand; the cloud kept expanding until it became the size of a full grown person, when the form of a woman transformed into a beautiful young lady, clothed in a flowing white robe. This form passed rapidly to an elderly man in the circle, and lovingly threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him. After conversing with him she returned to the same part of the room, near the curtain, again assumed the appearance of a white cloud, that gradually diminished until it was about the size of my hand, then wholly vanished. This was done in a good light, so that we could distinctly see what was going on. It was afterward told by the old gentleman that "the spirit was the recently deceased daughter, who died several years ago. I had previously seen another spirit come and kiss him, which he said was his oldest daughter. "Dr. Morris," Mrs. Souther's principal control, also materialized, and explained the laws of materialization to us.

Trusting you will publish this in the interest of truth. Yours truly, J. R. GRIFFITHS.
Wichita, Kan., May 17th, 1886.

Séances with Dr. Rothermel.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Having had the privilege of sitting with Dr. A. W. B. Rothermel, some three or four years ago, your correspondent was pleased, on meeting him recently, to find his mediumship much improved—full form materializations having been added to his previous gifts. Dr. Rothermel always sits under test-conditions, the controlling influences refusing to allow it otherwise, even when the circle is composed of personal friends and believers. The medium sits in front of an undivided curtain stretched across the corner of a room to about the height of his head, and with a space behind him three or four feet in depth.

He is seated in front of this curtain some gentleman in the circle takes a cotton band around each limb above the knee. These are then sewed fast by which a hand is held firmly to each knee; the ends of the tape are then sewed together, the knots also being sewed through, making it impossible to untie them without disturbing the stitches. A front curtain, which is secured at the same points as the one before mentioned, is then dropped over the medium, reaching to the floor, leaving his head only visible, which protrudes through a slit in the middle of the curtain.

Immediately the little hand-bells are rung; hands appear over the curtain back of the medium; the music-box is invisibly wound and set going (let me explain, in parentheses, that the music-box rests on a stand just outside the curtain and in view of the audience); the either is played behind the curtain, sometimes held up in full view over the Doctor's head; independent voices are heard within the recess and messages are written on paper, and passed out to the members of the circle. Of course pencil and paper are provided before the séance begins.

Quite an interesting feature is writing on pocket-handkerchiefs with an indelible pencil. Each member of the circle gives a handkerchief to the attendant, who slightly dampens and tosses them over the curtain. They are then given back singly—raps indicating to whom they belong, but frequently they are spirits then directing the attendant to whom they should be given.

It is very rare that any mistake is made, and each handkerchief is found to contain a few words or a sentence legibly written upon it. This part of the séance occurs in a moderately lighted room. Afterward Dr. Rothermel retires behind the solid curtain into the corner,

his hand still secured as before; the lights are all put out save one, and that shaded by a Japanese fan, and in a short time a form appears before the curtain. One evening recently the materializations were very fine, I think nearly dozen forms appearing, most of which were recognized, and in several instances the friend or relative for whom the spirit appeared was permitted to approach, converse with, touch and receive kisses from the materialized form. One form, apparently that of a man some inches taller than the medium, seemed to come with considerable strength and vigor, stepping well out in front of the curtain, standing fully erect, repeatedly spreading his arms at full length from his body, and exhibiting the utmost freedom of limb and motion.
Rochester, N. Y. J. G. MURRAY.

Allopathy Arraigned.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

John M. Souder, M. D., editor of the *Eclectic Medical Journal*, Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the leading eclectic practitioners of the United States, makes use of the following strong words in the June issue of his publication:

"The serious obstacle to legislative regulations is the want of sympathy of the public with the efforts of the regular practitioners. While the regular people do not sympathize with their efforts? If it is to benefit the public, they should sympathize. If regularly is a great boon, the people should be able to see it. Let us go back fifty years, and look at the regular practice. It consisted of purgatives, bloodletting, and the use of calomel, and blisters. It could not have been harsher. All the tortures of hades seemed drawn upon to make the treatment of the sick as unpleasant as human flesh could bear. It greatly increased suffering; it produced more death than it cured; and even when patients recovered, they would many times carry the marks as long as they lived."

Surely the people could not be expected to sympathize with such regularity. Slowly the regular doctor has been driven from the older methods, and forced to become more moderate in his drugging. But he has contested every inch of ground. He gave up blood-letting with reluctance, and nothing but the determination of the people was to take it. It caused him to abandon calomel. The tenacity with which he has held to the old methods and the old drugs is wonderful. Even now he is on record confessing the uncertainty of medicine, and the public cannot be expected to sympathize with this. They compare the so-called regular with those he designates as irregular, and it is clear that the irregulars have the advantage."

In the use of harsh drugs, which make the sick sicker, there are pleasant remedies which relieve suffering. Instead of a disease running weeks and months, and leaving the sufferer a wreck, the time is counted by days, and recovery is complete."

It is also the true fact that the thousands so-called "irregular physicians of the United States are the peers of those called regular. Whether it is education, medical training, social position, wealth, or anything that may be included in professional success, we will make no comparison. The people are entitled to the best, because we have been the friends of the people, and have done a work for which they are thankful."

As medicine is not a perfect science, and as men cannot all see alike, there are good reasons why there should be differences of opinion and schools of medicine. Especially is this the case so long as men are intolerant of differences of opinion, and would use force to compel uniformity. The harsh medication of the olden time became so burdensome that men could no longer bear it. They did not wish to have the blood removed with the lancet, their bowels rendered useless for digestion with physic, their rest and comfort destroyed by harsh and irritating drugs. They objected to being poisoned by calomel, by blisters, and by acids, and they did not wish to be lulled to an everlasting sleep with opiates. The revolt in this country was commenced by the followers of Samuel Thomson, and was carried on by the school of medicine and Eclectics."

Dr. Souder's remarks are sensible as far as he goes—showing him to be well conversant with the history of the regular "system," its uncertainty and its fear of learning anything new. But if he would investigate the work being done for medical freedom he would discover that the Spiritualists of this country are foremost in demanding equality before the law for all remedial agents and systems of eradicating disease; also that the Eclectics generally do not recognize or include in Eclecticism the exercise of clairvoyance and magnetism as aids in medical practice, as the situation demands and the people require. Feeling, as I do, that each system of practice should be allowed to stand upon its own merits before the public, and at an equal advantage before the law, it is a sorry spectacle to witness the advocates of Eclecticism (as occurred in Massachusetts, for instance) joining with these same Regulars whom Dr. S. so scathingly rebukes in an effort to foist a one-sided and unconstitutional medical monopoly upon the people.

The friends of medical freedom in New York and all States where Doctors' Plot laws have been enacted in past years will do well, the present summer, to reflect upon the feasibility of united political action, in their respective commonwealths, against these self-seeking measures and the friends of such unjust legislation, at the polls in the autumn.

How would it do, also, to make a strong appeal to Congress for an enforcement in these States by the general government of obedience to the United States Constitution in its guarantee to citizens of "the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"? What right has the notoriously unsuccessful system of Allopathy to arrogate to itself a legal guardianship over the life of any one? or to make the demand that all citizens of the United States whom it cannot cure must be doomed by law to die? A. S. HATWARD.
Boston, Mass.

MICHIGAN.

Sturgis June Meetings.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The Annual Meeting at Sturgis came off a week earlier than usual this year. The President of the Harmonical Society and Committee of Arrangements, expecting an early harvest, appointed the 4th, 5th and 6th as the dates upon which the anniversary of the building and dedication of the "Free Church" should be held; this change to an earlier date than usual was a happy one, as the large number of Spiritualists, Free Religionists and Free Thinkers in attendance testified. The meetings were held in the evening, and were well attended. In these Sturgis meetings had lessened somewhat the last year or two; this supposition was not unreasonable perhaps, as, at the meeting of last year—particularly as ever, perhaps it is not too much to say that we all enjoyed ourselves quite as much as we had in any previous year since these meetings commenced, twenty-seven years ago. There is something about genuine Spiritualism which prevents people from getting cold and careless; it is so always so full and inspiring; and if the separation of friends are prolonged, the enjoyment is all the more when they meet again, and the bonds of fraternity are often strengthened by causes which, to a superficial observer, would seem likely to produce a contrary effect.

But my intention at present is not to moralize, but to tell the readers of the BANNER what a good and profitable time we had at the Sturgis meeting. The singing was unusually fine at the meeting this year; we had some new songs, and the choir, consisting of 12 men and 12 women, composed of many of them were strangers to me. The song, "There is Rest for the Weary"—so beautiful in sentiment and capable of producing such a heavenly emotion, was exquisitely rendered by Mrs. E. W. Kenyon, Mrs. Woodruff, and Dr. Spinyer. The meetings were presided over, as usual, by Hon. J. G. Wait, the President of the Sturgis incorporated society; and the Sturgis Spiritualists manifested as warm a hospitality as ever; perhaps it is not too much to say that we all enjoyed ourselves quite as much as we had in any previous year since these meetings commenced, twenty-seven years ago. There is something about genuine Spiritualism which prevents people from getting cold and careless; it is so always so full and inspiring; and if the separation of friends are prolonged, the enjoyment is all the more when they meet again, and the bonds of fraternity are often strengthened by causes which, to a superficial observer, would seem likely to produce a contrary effect.

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Sturgis, Mich., June 8th, 1886. THOMAS HARDING.
Hale's Honey, the great cough cure, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Sulphur Bath, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Kidney Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Liver Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Stomach Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Blood Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Brain Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Heart Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Lungs Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Nerves Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Skin Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Throat Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Urinary Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Vascular Pills, 25¢; Dr. E. W. Kenyon's Whole Body Pills, 25¢.

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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 (condensed or otherwise) of correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of personal or local thought, but we cannot undertake to endorse the varied shades of opinion to which correspondents give utterance.
We do not read anonymous letters and communications. The name and address of the writer are in all cases indispensable—editors for local facts. We cannot undertake to return or reserve manuscripts that are not used. When newspapers are forwarded which contain matter for our inspection, the sender will kindly be so kind as to draw a pencil or ink line around the article he desires specially to recommend for perusal.
Notices of Spiritualist 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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A Norwegian Medium.

We shall publish next week an admirable translation, made expressly for our columns by Dr. H. G. Petersen, 6 Worcester Square, Boston, with interesting explanatory remarks by the Doctor as a preface.

The narrative—a biography of the Norwegian Medium VIS-KNUT (which account has never before been translated into English)—embodies a pathetic and striking page from the spiritualistic history of a distant land, and at an early period, and is from the pen of the distinguished author, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson.

A Perfect Religion.

President Warren of the Boston University delivered a discourse to the members of the graduating class of that institution, on the last Sunday in May, which none who enjoyed the privilege of listening to it will probably cease to consider a remarkable performance for years to come, and perhaps to the end of their earthly lives. When he had finished his substance, which was a dream-narrative, he assured his young hearers that inasmuch as they had come for words of wisdom and of counsel; they had received only a dream, though it was not all a dream. It was one, however, whose interpretation by them would not be difficult.

He narrated his imaginary experience in the Japanese capital of Tokio. While walking up one of its main streets, in company with the American Minister, the latter pointed out to him a large hall which was originally built in a spirit of hostility to Christian missions, and designed for a headquarters for all those who wished to rehabilitate the old religions, or in any way oppose the spread of the Christian faith. As they approached nearer, they discovered that a convention of all the nations of the earth had been called to assemble within its walls, to discuss and decide upon a series of questions respecting religion and religious worship. The object was to find out the best and most perfect. The delegations pressed forward for entrance into the temple, each carrying its banner or other distinctive symbol.

There were five questions on the programme, relating to a perfect religion, to a perfect object of worship, to its demand of and promise to the sincere worshiper, to the relation subsisting between the divine object and the human subject, and to the way in which this perfect religion, if ever found, should be known.

The discussion of each of these five questions was reported in summary form by the preacher. It could readily be seen that one led up to the other. The whole culminated in an imaginary tale that was pathetic and interesting. Of course it brought all doubts and differences around to the starting-point set up in the preacher's mind, which was the Bible, from whose pages it supplied apt quotations. All other religions were made to disappear in the solvent of the Christian, though the Jewish seems to be presently left alone—the one on which the Christian religion rests.

The purpose of this discourse, thus based on the preacher's dream, was to personify, and so more powerfully illustrate, the various religious opinions and views of mankind, and to show which religion now in existence answered the requirements of them all. And he enforced it by telling his hearers of both sexes that they would find the great world of civilization around them a vast hall than the dream-land one in distant Tokio, in which are assembled the elect spirits of every nation, and about whose doors hang millions of our humanity, conscious of their own lack of light and truth, waiting to know what has been discovered by their representatives. The discussion within relates to human perfection and to the means for its attainment. The debaters may dwell now upon one phase of force, and now upon another, but the theme is ever the same—the perfection of human beings and the way to this perfection. All are in quest, though by different routes, of a perfect religion; some by a perfect industrial adjustment; some by a perfect education; some by a perfect government; and some by a perfect social order.

They were told that some of them would be called to speak, while all would be called to vote, in the presence of a hundred nations, for or against the Perfect Religion: "The world convention," said Dr. Warren, "will insist on

knowing what you can tell it respecting its supreme problem. And you will have to meet the demand in a publicity as wide as the world. The days of personal and national isolation are forever gone." Thus far does he go, and there stops. He contents himself with asking his youthful hearers if they will speak for or against the Christian religion, for or against the Bible. But it is evident that upon his words presses heavily the thought, not to be brushed aside in this age any longer, that, as there is so much more to discover and to know, so there is vastly more to tell. The shadow of the larger lies heavily across the preacher's "perfect." The old definitions will no longer answer. Those who accept them may continually repeat their declarations of belief in them, but they must go on searching and inquiring for what those definitions still fail to supply them with.

But how is a perfect religion ever to be had on earth so long as a single item is left out that relates to human welfare? If the great problem is life, and all are eager to solve the mystery which broods over its continuation, how is a solution to be had that refuses to recognize revelations from any quarter? How are men to be called seekers after truth who are resolved not to know what may modify or change the little measure of truth they already possess? There is but one meaning to such a discourse as we are commenting on. It is, that the world of to-day is not the world of yesterday, and therefore that it demands different methods, and larger knowledge, and newer views. The church has parted with its old-time power, and is never to regain it. The world has passed through a millennial period of gloom and darkness, and is now emerging from the shadows behind it into a period of light. And they who come forth to teach it must accept the light that shines from all sides, and not point the way back into the former darkness.

The Modern Way of Doing Penance.

For the average minister, who has said or done something to abate the confidence of his ecclesiastical associates somewhat, and who seeks for a pretext for regaining it at the expense of anybody but himself, Spiritualism has long offered the opportunity so much coveted, while affording a chance for sharpening his weapons in the presence of those whom he would impress anew with a sense of his dangerous qualities if brought to bay.

The Rev. Waldo Messaros will have to acknowledge himself a fair subject for the portrait sketched in the above paragraph. Very recently he preached a harangue in one of the pulpits of Philadelphia on "The Fallacies of Spiritualism," which was from beginning to end a gross attack without presuming to offer anything like intelligent criticism. Unless we labor under a very positive and plain misapprehension, this Mr. Messaros, who is a minister of very liberal and rational views otherwise, had the courage of his convictions sufficiently to condemn the Old School Presbyterian Church because of the iron-clad nature of its dogmas, and the unbending rigidity of its ecclesiastical rules. He openly acknowledged that he could no longer fellowship with it. Naturally, therefore, he has been made to feel the rough side of Presbyterian (Old School) friendship, and naturally, too, he is desirous of not being utterly cast out of fellowship as an evangelical preacher. Hence this voluntary assault by him on Spiritualism. He knew they and he could hate that in common, and hating something together he regarded as the next best thing to their loving something in common. By assailing Spiritualism he thought he could help to make himself "solid" once more with his Presbyterian associates and allies, and in fact with the Orthodox class generally.

He set out in his discourse with a recital of the familiar biblical story of Dives and Lazarus, which he took to prove that God was opposed to the return of spirits to earth. Now, said he, giving his logical screw a whole turn, if this story is true, and God thought it useless and unnecessary to bring the dead man back to earth, do you think that he considers it necessary at the present time to allow beings from heaven to roam about here at will? Do you suppose that God has changed his mind since that time, and deems it necessary to send souls back here in human form, and, above all, through a medium? No, he answers promptly and positively to his own question. "He has not changed his mind, and it is against his will that such things should happen." Mr. Messaros thinks he knows all about it: As Sidney Smith once observed of another and a far more distinguished man, "Science is his forte, and omniscience is his recreation."

But we have a very different and a much more rational answer to make to Mr. Messaros's question and assertion. He says it is against God's will that such things should happen as everybody knows are happening. Now, if any fact or event can happen in the universe against God's will, then manifestly he cannot be an omnipotent God, and the reverend gentleman confesses himself the worshiper of a created, imperfect and fallible being. "All this theory of raising spirits," says he, "is a fraud." "In reality, the Spiritualists have no ground to stand upon." If spirits do come back, it must be through some will, and it is surely of no will either of God or Satan." But he had just previously declared it to be "against God's will," and, therefore, in his judgment, there must be a human will that is greater than God's will. And so on in a similar strain of inconsistency he denounced all mediums as frauds, which it is a perfectly easy matter for any one to do; but he presented no new observation, no fresh proof, nothing but a bald *ipse dixit*, telling his hearers to wait till they got to the other side and saw for themselves.

Whether this harangue of our clerical friend and good evangelist has done him any appreciable benefit in the quarter aimed at is of course more than we can tell. He ought to know best about that. But we would kindly suggest to him that he is forced to purchase favors of his ministerial brethren at a very dear price when he feels compelled to wallow after this fashion in their presence and placate prejudices quite as hateful as the cast-iron rules he has but just assailed. Let him proceed in the path of duty in another and a better way; rather, in all humility and charity, in a spirit of inquiry after the living truth; not thinking either to make friends or to save them by burning incense to the idols of prejudice and hatred and the worn-out gods of dead superstition.

Mrs. EMMA HARDING BRITTAN is to be the subject of a portrait and biographical sketch in the Medium and Daybreak (London) on June 25th. The article will give an interesting account of her remarkable career as a medium and be greatly appreciated by hosts of the friends of that lady in this country and Europe.

Talmage on the Labor Question.

The Rev. Dr. Talmage remarked, in a recent discourse on the conflict between labor and capital, that many people were looking for a chaotic condition of society in consequence of it. But he said No. There have been, and there yet may be, terrific outbursts of popular frenzy, but there will be no anarchy. And one way to avoid anarchy, said he, is to let people know what anarchy is; the wreck is to be pointed out in order to be able to steer clear of it. This is the way he proceeded to define it: It is abolition of right of property; it is wholesale robbery; it is every man's hand against every other man; it is arson, and murder, and rapine, and lust, and death triumphant; it means the extermination of everything good, and the coronation of everything infamous.

He openly declared the mutual dependence of labor and capital. Just as Paul, the tent-maker, said, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of thee.'" Relief will come to the working classes through a better understanding between employer and employed. Before the contest goes much further, it will be made plain that their interests are identical; what helps one helps both, and what injures one injures both. The great publishers of New York and Philadelphia were once book-binders or printers on small pay. The carriage manufacturers of the country used to sandpaper the wagon bodies in the wheelwright's shop. Peter Cooper was a glue-maker. The capitalists of the twentieth century are, in these last fourteen years of the nineteenth century, sitting with their feet on the shuttle, or standing up swinging the pickaxe, or doing some kind of hard work. Henry Clay was the "Millboy of the Slashes"; Hugh Miller was a stone mason; Columbus was a weaver; Halley was a soap-boller; Arkwright was a barber; Hogarth was an engraver of pewter plate; and Horace Greeley began his life in New York with \$10.75 in his pocket, his all.

It is only a step that takes a laborer over to the capitalist. The leading combatants in this great war are really and chiefly, on the one side, the men of fortune who have never been obliged to labor and who therefore despise it, and on the other those who could get labor but will not have it, or will not stick to it. Relief will only come through a cooperative association. Dr. Talmage meant by this, the plan by which laborers become their own capitalists, taking their surpluses and putting them together and carrying on great enterprises. Cooperation he holds to be the one and only solution of this question; the sole path by which the laboring classes as a whole, or any large number of them, will ever emerge from the hand-to-mouth mode of living, and get their share in the rewards and honors of our advanced civilization. Cooperative association has been favored by men like Thomas Hughes, Lord Derby and John Stuart Mill, who have devoted years of their lives to the study of this question.

In addition to the foregoing, Dr. Talmage thought it was best for the employer to let his employes know from time to time just how matters stand financially and otherwise in his business. It is often the case that the workmen blame him because they suppose he is getting along finely, when he may be oppressed to the last point of endurance. Employers will find out, after a while, that it is for their interest, as far as possible, to explain matters to their employes. Frankness on one side invites confidence on the other. Said he, "The hard hand of the wheel and the soft hand of the counting-room will clasp each other yet, and in congratulation." But there must first be a full and complete understanding between labor and capital.

Dr. Bartol on Spiritualism.

Dr. Bartol took the ground, in a late discourse, which was exclusively devoted to a consideration of the subject, that Spiritualism and Christianity "join hands against materialism as a common foe; not against matter, but against the theory of matter that it is the cause and precedent of which mind is but the blossom and consequence." He said that "with one voice they proclaim that matter is the tool and not the workman, the servant and not the lord, the accompaniment of this beautiful universe and not the piece, a composition and not the composer, being itself by mind composed and produced."

He characterized materialism as a hypothesis without a base. He asserted that the materials are not the builders, far less the builder; that the pigments are not the picture, far less the painter; and that matter is not the human body, far less the human soul. "Christians," said he, "believe in the recognition of friends in heaven, and Spiritualists believe also that they will, after a little time, meet their friends in the great temple of which this earth is but the ante-room." He was not inclined to dispute it, but he inquired if friends are not the same whether they be on the threshold or within the porch, or within the palace of the New Jerusalem. My friend, said he, is my friend in the valley darkly or on Mount Zion, at the table, or in the long procession to the grave. For as a candle lightens up a cave, so a good soul lightens up and turns everything into paradise, for it is paradise wherever that dear soul is. "What is our body," he asked, "but like a heavenly form for the pure atmosphere in which it swims? and what is sin but sickness in the mind? and what is sickness but sin in the body? For every particle, invisible as it may be in this organism, is a preordained and infallible servitor of virtue, or executor of judgment for transgression, an avenger of guilt. For the judgment seat of God is not in the skies, awaiting the last trumpet for its erection, as a scaffold in the jail-yard is raised at the stroke of a bell; but is announced now for every excess of passion or slothful neglect; and what are these but perverted operations of the mind?"

Dr. Bartol is a man possessed of the courage of his convictions, and he is an investigator always. And as such, he has discovered that Spiritualism is a vast truth that includes other truths thought to be comprehensively final.

The Cleveland (O.) Lyceum

Will hold a Basket Grove Meeting—its twenty-first annual—at Geauga Lake, on Sunday, June 20th. See official announcement on our third page, for particulars.

Mrs. E. W. Gullford (of Cincinnati) in a business letter to us says: "I must tell you of my delight on reading the spirit communications [first page, BANNER, May 22d] through Mr. Mansfield to Allen Putnam from Prof. Agassiz and Walker in regard to the Willis proceedings in Harvard College. The article was grand in truth."

John B. Gough a Medium.

It is not so long since this great and eloquent apostle of Temperance passed to his reward in the land of souls; neither is it many weeks since the Christian ministers of Boston—or at least some of them—called and attended a memorial meeting in honor of the life-work of Mr. Gough. But we doubt if any of them suspected him to have been, as he walked among them, an impressional or inspirational medium! And yet the evidence is accumulating, since his demise, that such he was.

An article appearing in the Hartford (Ct.) Times records that he (G.) never in his life wrote out a speech beforehand, and never prepared the notes for one, trusting to what is called by the world in general "the spur of the moment"—but which Spiritualists better understand to be the influx of thought from unseen intelligences friendly to the object to be subserved—for what it should be given him to utter. One particular fact was made much of, as it well might be; and that was, that a man who had gone over the civilized world making thousands of addresses for the long term of forty-three years, should confess to suffering from "stage fright" every time he rose to address an audience, up to the very last. "I have never known the time," he said, "when I did not dread an audience. Often that fear has amounted to positive suffering, and seldom am I called on to face an audience when I would not rather by far run the other way; and as I grow older this suffering is increasing."

But, this writer continues, after his first fright began to subside, he became semi-conscious, and grew eloquent and affecting beyond modern example. Describing his own personal experience to others, he (G.) has said: "After the first nervousness has passed I have but little sensation, except the desire to make my audience feel as I feel, see as I see, and to gain dominion for the time being over their wills and affections. If I succeed in this, or think that I have their sympathy, and especially should they be responsive, the fear is all gone; then comes a consciousness of power that exhilarates, excites, and produces a strange, thrilling sensation of delight."

Here are all the experiences of the exceptionally impressive nature. They plainly show Mr. Gough to have been, in reality an impressional medium, and fully explain both the secret and the marvelous extent of his power over others. A magnetism flowed from his speech, gesture and presence that came to him and was employed by him, unconsciously as he himself admits, as he never could have hoped to exert his own individual store unaided. The "stage-fright" he refers to in terms of complaint, was only the effort made by those who inspired him to come into still closer relations to him, to come nearer to him; and all genuine mediums of the same class are prone to feel similar peculiar sensations described by him without his being able to explain the reason for it. Thus do we discover the uniform operation of the laws of spirit-influence wherever and under whatsoever circumstances they are put in motion.

Strong Testimony in Favor of the Banner Messages.

In the June number of the Carrier Dove, published at San Francisco, Cal., we find an extended editorial from the pen of Albert Morton, its able assistant editor, in defense of the Banner of Light Message Department, and the bona fide character of the verifications (of spirit-messages) from time to time appearing in our columns, which was called in question in rather an unbrotherly fashion by "C. C. M.," a correspondent of London Light, some time since. Mr. Morton remarks in this connection, as regards his own personal experience with these communications and the verifications in question: "We are among the parties implicated by this unjust and baseless accusation. Many times have we been requested to write acknowledgments of the correctness of messages published in the BANNER, by parties whose tears of gratitude were to us—lacking the remarkable acumen of our legal censor—sufficient evidence of their sincerity. We have surprised and comforted bereaved parents, husbands and wives—strangers to the consolations of Spiritualism—by the presentation of these messages, which were accepted as truthful evidence that the loved ones still lived; doubts have been removed and sorrow has given place to comfort; in this work we have felt that (unknown, even to the medium, whom we consider one of the most indefatigable, conscientious and worthy mediums living) we were doing the angels' bidding. Alas! our censor leaves us only the choice of two evils: we are a credulous dupe, or that most infamous of all creatures, a swindler, imposing on the most sacred hopes and aspirations of humanity."...

Mr. Morton takes occasion further on in his article to state that in the answers to questions, numbers of which are given in reply to those presented orally, after the medium is entranced, much is furnished that is interesting and instructive—many obscure problems are solved, presenting evidence of an elevated and highly intelligent control. He concludes his statement with the following outspoken sentence, embodying a fact (tallies our own) in the history of the Message Department which ought to convince any unprejudiced mind of the entire honesty of all parties concerned: "We are cognizant of a vast amount of good having been done through the agency of this department of the BANNER, which has been maintained at great expense to the publishers, without reward save the consciousness of having been faithful to the duties entrusted to their charge. May the good BANNER long float to carry information to hungry minds and consolation to mourning hearts."

Aid for the Eddys.

Harriet E. Beach of New York informs us that both William and Horatio Eddy are prostrated by disease—the former having been an invalid for eight months, the latter four months—and have exhausted their means, consequently are obliged to look for assistance to the Spiritualist public. Those who feel that in the past they have received satisfaction at seances through the instrumentality of the Eddy Brothers, cannot do better than to practically acknowledge the fact by coming to the front in a pecuniary sense. Funds for their relief may be sent to them at Chittenden, Vt., where both at present reside.

Dr. Hodges's vigorous address recently before the Massachusetts Medical Society contained a great deal of good common sense relative to the health of young women. "Refined emaciation, fair anemic complexion, eyes made brilliant by dilated pupils, decorous concealment of undeveloped busts and slender arms, excitable and restless temperaments," the Doctor declared to be "the retributive symptoms which betray a lack of food, sleep, fresh air and repose."

Spiritualism in the Secular Press.

At the request of the Cleveland (O.) Plain Dealer, who, with a liberality highly commendable, announces its intention to give place in the columns of the Sunday issue to representatives of all religious beliefs, a lengthy elucidation of the principles of Modern Spiritualism was given, on the 9th ult., by Thomas Lees. After thanking the publishers for the opportunity of addressing their readers on a theme which, under the very erroneous belief that its discussion is not acceptable to their patrons, is ignored by many, Mr. Lees says:

"The free thought of science has made sorry work of the old creeds of our forefathers, and it is well that they have spent their force. The sacred wall built round theology's castle as a protection against the assaults of skepticism is crumbling to pieces through the persistent thought of honest doubters and the intrepidity of modern investigators."

Mr. Lees then arraigns the clergy as a class for their studious neglect of informing their hearers of the truths of Spiritualism, either avoiding all reference to the subject, or if venturing to allude to it, giving only distorted views for the purpose of misleading their congregations. Says Mr. L.:

"Every age has its special needs, as we by growth become fitted for higher truths. By ignoring Spiritualism and its teaching we shut our eyes to the light in refusing to correct old errors. In the economy of nature new truths are unfolded, certain things seem to come at opportune times; and in all spirit of humility I would say to the clergy it may be possible that Spiritualism is here through what is often spoken of by them as 'God's special grace.'"

For thirty-eight years this new heaven-born dispensation has been stigmatized by those who should have welcomed it, as anti-Christian, heretical, etc., yet after running the terrible gauntlet it still lives and shines to-day, brighter probably by the friction and jostling it has received. Its different modern phases are but an outgrowth and continuation of the Spiritualism of the Bible, and other sacred writings attesting that much-prized book....

All hail, then, to Spiritualism, which has been such an important factor in giving us the present liberation, for it is through this free and progressive thought that means will be devised to escape from the many growing evils and horrors that surround us."

The Coming Religion.

GERALD MASSEY's concluding lecture of the series given by him in St. George's Hall, London, was delivered on Sunday, May 30th. His subject was "The Coming Religion," speaking in the name of which, he said, as reported in the London Daily Chronicle:

"We mean to do our own thinking, and to have absolute freedom of thought and expression. We mean to rescue our Sunday from the sacerdotal ring. But we do not mean that the day of rest and recreation shall fall into the hands of the capitalist. We mean to rescue this world from the clutches of those who profess to have the keys and the keeping of the other—they who hold up the other world in front of that beast of burden, the 'producer,' as a decoying lure, like the bunch of carrots before the donkey's nose, in order that the suggestion of plenty in paradise may induce him to forego his common right to grazing ground on earth. We mean to have the national property restored to the people, which the churches and other bodies have filched from the people. We mean that the land, with its inalienable right of living, its mineral wealth below the soil, and its waters above, shall belong to all. We mean for woman to have perfect equality with man, social, religious and political, and her fair share in that equity which is of no sex. In short, we intend that the redress of wrongs, and the righting of inequalities which can only be rectified in this world, shall not be put off and postponed to any future state of existence. The religion of the future has got to include the salvation of humanity for this life. It has to be a sincerity of life, in place of pretended belief; a religion of science, in place of superstition; of joy instead of sorrow; of man's ascent instead of his fall; a religion of fact in the present, and not of mere faith for the future; a religion of work rather than of worship—of reality versus delusive idealisms; and in place of the deathly creeds, with all their hungry parasites of prey, a religion of life actual, life here, life now, and no longer the mere promise of life hereafter."

Here It Is Again.

At the recent Seventy-Eighth Commencement Day of Old Andover Seminary, June 10th, after the regular graduating exercises were over, the alumni, officers and faculty, together with invited guests and other friends of the Seminary, sat down to dinner, and of course the customary speech-making occurred when the eating was done. The report states not only that the number present was larger than usual, but that the enthusiasm was at times so great that ordinary demonstrations of feeling were found inadequate to do justice to the after-dinner oratory. Among the speakers was Mr. Sheldon of the graduating class, who humorously referred to the dissatisfaction which prevailed among the undergraduates with the Seminary sanitary arrangements. He said that the blankets provided for the beds in the dormitories were too short at one end; also that "the pump is too far from the seminary and too near the cemetery"; and that, as the question has been asked "Who ate Roger Williams?" because the roots of an apple-tree were found to have penetrated his coffin; so in some future day "it may be suggested that one of our number has derived his inspiration from drinking Moses Stuart," which created "immense laughter." After the laughing is over, we suggest on our part that a serious comparison be made by these theologians between the sanitary as well as inspirational effects of cemeteries and crematories.

The Blair Educational Bill.

There was a large gathering at the June meeting of the New Hampshire Club at the Revere House in this city recently. President J. C. Moore occupied the chair. An able address was made by Maj. Bingham, of North Carolina, who directed his remarks toward the Blair Educational Bill. He said he was pleased to know that a New Hampshire Senator was the originator of the bill, a measure which he considered would do more toward settling the differences between the North and South than anything else. The two greatest blessings, he remarked, that ever befell the South were the failure to establish itself as a nation, and the abolition of slavery. The South intends to imitate the good of the North; and the more we see of the North the better we like her people. We regard with pleasure the interest taken by the latter in the endeavor to promote better education in the South. The Government owes to the South something besides the ballot. The masses of the people of the South are in sympathy with the Blair Bill, and eight of the nine Representatives in Congress from North Carolina voted for it. The speaker earnestly hoped that the measure would become a law. He characterized the bill as "the greatest educational measure ever conceived."

We understand that Dr. B. M. Lawrence, of Hartford, Conn., is writing a volume of Spiritualism for the use of Spiritualists and Liberals. They will be published in the autumn.

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