

BANNER OF LIGHT.



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VOL. V. {BERRY, COLBY & COMPANY,} NEW YORK AND BOSTON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1859. {TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR,} NO. 24.
Publishers. Payable in Advance.

THE SUNDAY MORNING SERMONS
OF REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER AND EDWIN H.
CHAPIN are reported for us by the best Phonographers of
New York, and published verbatim every week in this paper.

"BERTHA LEE," OR, MARRIAGE.

To the Memory of my Husband this tale is dedicated.

BY ANN E. PORTER,
Author of "Dora Moore," "Country Neighbors," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

The baby grew fast, and before many weeks it would smile, and kick its little feet, whenever Willie or I came in sight. It was a very pretty baby, fat and fair, with dark-brown hair and blue eyes, and very white skin—and a good baby, too, for it would take long naps, and was easily quieted and amused when awake. Willie and I took a great deal of pleasure in waiting upon it, and were taught that little Eddie's comfort must be consulted first, at any sacrifice of our own pleasure. While he was "the baby," this seemed all right to us; but as we grew older, Joe, who always kept his eyes open, and, most of the time, his mouth shut, began to see things which did not please him.

When I was twelve years old, my mother said that I must be sent from home, to school. This took my father by surprise, and he inquired if the schools in Oldbury were not good; he thought they were of the highest order, especially the academy, which he hoped I would be qualified to enter soon.

Yes, the schools were good enough; but it would be better for Bertha to be sent away from home; she knew of a school where the discipline was very strict—just what was needed!

My father shrunk for awhile from sending me, at that tender age, among strangers; but my mother's will was imperative, and brooked no thwarting. Little by little, she won the husband to her way of thinking, and before I was informed of the proposed change, she was preparing my wardrobe for school.

I recollect now, to this day, the keen anguish which filled my heart when informed that I must go from home—leave my father, and Willie, and Joe, and the baby. I had not learned to love my mother, but my fear of her was exceeding great, and I fancied that the teachers of her selection were like her, and that I should have no Willie or Joe there to go to in trouble.

Charlie Herbert declared it was a cruel thing; and he hoped if the teachers were cross to me, I would run away. If I could get word to him, he would meet me on the turnpike road, near the old Rowley meeting-house, with his uncle's horse and chaise; and if my mother sent me back, we would go to "Sailors' Island," where the moor-hens live, and I should keep house, while he would fish and shoot birds for our dinner. When Charlie talked so, I would laugh, and ask him how we should bake our bread, and what we should do for sugar, and who would make our clothes for us.

"Why, how did Robinson Crusoe get along, Bertha? I'll take his book with us, and when we are in doubt about anything, he will help us out!"

"And Joe, poor Joe, Charlie—we must take him with us; he'd be so lonely without me, you know."

"Yes, he shall be our man Friday; that will be nice, and he can take care of you while I go hunting."

This Imaginary Arcadia was quite a help to me in overcoming my objections to school; but when I told Joe of it, he shook his head; it did not meet with his approval at all.

"But, Joe, you will go with us, if we go?"

"No, no—yes, yes, Joe will go!"

About this time, an aunt sent me a small trunk, containing some of my own mother's dresses and jewelry. I dressed myself in a crape gown, put on a necklace, ear-rings, and rings, and curling my hair as it was curled in my mother's portrait, I went to the dining room, where I knew my father was reading the newspaper, and throwing my arms round his neck, kissed him, and asked, "Do I look like my mother?"

He held me a moment at arms' length, looked eagerly at me awhile, and then, drawing me toward him, kissed me again and again.

"Yes, my child, you look like her, but you will never be handsome as she was; she died in the full bloom of her beauty. Come here, daughter;" and as I sat upon his knee, and laid my head upon his shoulder, I felt, though I did not see it, a tear trickle upon my hand, as he held it. Old memories were stirred within him. "Bertha, I ask nothing more of you than to be like her, modest, gentle, warm hearted and good. I am hoping that she will be the first to greet me when I pass away to her home in heaven!"

It was the first time that my father had ever spoken so freely to me of my mother, and I whispered, "Tell me more about her, father—talk to me—" There was a step outside, a hand upon the door latch. He made a slight movement, as if to push me gently from him. I rose, and at that instant my mother entered. She stopped short, and looked at me, in real or affected surprise, I could not tell which, but suspected the latter.

"Well, really, Miss Bertha, are you going to a masquerade, or to a costume party? Your dress is quite antique. You had better go to your room, for your father can take no pleasure in seeing you so unsuitably dressed."

I had no word to reply, for I was choking with vexation and an attempt to keep back the tears. My father resumed his newspaper in silence, and I went to my room, where I gave full vent to my dislike of her to whom I so unwillingly gave the name of mother.

I was sitting there still, my dress unchanged, when she entered with an open letter in her hand. I recognized it as one which I had written to my aunt, and handed to Willie that morning to put into the post office. I felt my heart swell, and the indignant blood rush to my face, and rose hastily and extended my hand. She held the letter more closely, and said, in a bitter, taunting tone:—

"And so these are the letters you write! Two pages of sentimental stuff about a mother of whom you have scarcely a recollection, and not a word for one who is daily and hourly tried with your faults and striving to subdue them. There, see what becomes of such letters!" and she tore it in fragments before my eyes.

Anger made me bold, and I turned as the hunted beast to bay upon his pursuer. "You are a mean woman to open another person's letters."

I was frightened when my own ears heard the words. I had never spoken to her in that way before. I believe I should have apologized had I been allowed time to cool. But my mother was too excited for that; she raised her hand, and, exerting all the strength which passion and a vigorous physical frame imparted, gave me a blow which sent me reeling against the wall, and for the moment stunned me. Few who saw the tall, self-possessed woman in society, would have recognized my mother as she looked when she gave me that blow. I was not aware before of the violence of her temper, and while the act increased my dislike, it also swept away much of my respect.

"Remain in your room for the rest of the day," said my mother, "and be assured I shall inform your father of your conduct."

"And I shall tell him of yours," I muttered to myself, as the door closed. I found my slate upon the table, whereon was the first draft of my letter; and, copying it carefully, I folded and directed it. It was as follows:—

"MY DEAR AUNT—I received the trunk containing the dresses which belonged to my mother, and the little box of jewelry. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, for every article of hers is more precious to me the older I grow.

It is a sad thing to lose a mother's love and care so young, for no one can fully supply her place. I wish I could see you often, that you might tell me about her, and keep her "memory green," as the books say.

Joe tries to tell me about her, and I think he mourns for her yet. My father does not speak to me of her, but I have reason to believe that he thinks about her a great deal. Willie has no remembrance of her, and loves every body that is kind to him, and does not get as angry as I do with those who are not good to him.

I am going to school in two or three weeks, away from home.

I do not want to go, but my mother thinks it is best, and I must submit. Charlie Herbert and I have a plan in our heads, if the teachers are not good to me; but we do not tell any one our secrets. I hope you will write me long letters when I am at school, and tell me all about my mother when she was a little girl of my age.

I wish you could see Eddie. He is a pretty boy, and I love him very much; but I wish I did not have to give up all my rides, so that he can go every time with father and mother. But, as he is the baby, I suppose it is right.

I have no more to say to-day. Your affectionate niece,
BERTHA."

I wrote a postscript on the slate, but I did not put it in.

"P.S.—I think my second mother does not treat me very well, and I do not love her at all."

But, for good reasons, I did not copy it into my letter. I was in a disturbed, and therefore wrong state of mind. My will was roused, and I determined my letter should go, my stepmother to the contrary notwithstanding. Unfortunately for me, my mother had a nephew who was a clerk in the post-office, and, if she wished, would take my letters and deliver them to her.

I heard Betsey setting the dinner-table, and the clatter of knives and forks when the family sat down; and I was sure it was roast chicken that I smelled—its savory perfume came to my room, as if to mock my hunger and increase my animosity toward my mother.

I read Robinson Crusoe a little while, and amused myself with thinking how nice it would be to live on the island with Charlie. I should never get angry then; or if I did, Charlie would laugh, and say something so droll—as he always did when I showed any temper—that I should soon forget it. By-and-by I was so hungry I could not read any more, and I searched all my pockets for some sugar plums, or bits of cracker, but in vain. At last I found two figs, nicely rolled up in silk paper, that Charlie had given me one day when we were going to Sunday school; but, just as I began to unroll them, Betsey came in. I had always disliked her, and now I knew from her face that she thought I was a sinner above all others.

"Bertha, your mother says that you may come down and have some dinner, if you will ask her pardon for speaking so improperly to her. You had better go now; they are all at table."

As she opened the door, I thought I perceived, mingling with the odor of chicken, the fragrance of pudding and wine sauce. Hunger put in a strong plea, but willful temper a stronger.

"I do not want any dinner," I said. And I took up my book.

"You are wicked girl, and something terrible will happen to you." And with that consolatory remark, she shut the door.

The figs were very welcome, though they were old and dry, and needed a close inspection.

The afternoon passed rather drearily. I tried to sleep, but my nervous temperament was such that I never slept in the daytime, nor at night, if any trouble annoyed me.

"I wonder if they will let me have any supper," I said to myself. "I cannot ask her pardon, if she starves me. Well, if she does, then people will know what an unkind mother she is."

There was some comfort in that, and I debated within myself whether it would not, on the whole, be best to die now. I knew she never would yield; so, gathering all my resolution, I concluded to write a farewell letter to Willie and Charlie, and tell them that they must not forget me when I was dead, and be sure to plant a white rose tree over my grave, just like the one at my mother's tomb. I had written it on my slate, and was about to copy it, when I felt very weak and faint. I never had any appetite for breakfast in those days, so that the two figs were all the food I had taken since the evening previous. I went to the window for fresh air. This window looked down upon a lower building—a little wing of the house, that opened into the garden. Upon the roof of this wing was the shaft of a tall chimney; and peeping from behind this chimney was a brown, curly head, that I knew at once belonged to Charlie. He put his finger on his lip for me to keep silence, and creeping carefully along on the ridge-pole he raised a long stick, to the end of which he had fastened a piece of cake. I took it, and was going to whisper, when he gave the sign of silence, and raised the stick again, with a piece of cold meat and cracker. I knew my eyes brightened when I saw that; but I dared not speak. The third time he raised the stick, and I took from it a note. Just then I heard a low whistle, and looking round, saw Joe, perched up, like a monkey, in a tree. He was on guard, and had spied danger. Charlie ran down stairs, like a cat, and curled himself up behind the chimney, and then made motions for me to retire from the window.

I ate part of my supper, and hid the rest for future need. I am sorry to say that hunger had so got the better of me that I ate before opening the note. It surprised myself to find that as soon as I had eaten, I had lost my willingness to die; and I rubbed out my farewell letter, and wrote another, in answer to Charlie's, which was as follows:

"DEAR BERTHA—I have just learned, from Joe, that you are shut up, a close prisoner, without rations, as they say in the army. Now, as I do not believe in starving folks, even if they are wicked, I shall manage to carry you some supplies at once. What a strange fellow that Joe is! He knows everything that is going on, and he has managed, by nods and signs, to tell me that you and your mother have had some difficulty, and she is going to starve you out, as they do besieged cities that I read about in history. I know you are an obstinate little girl, and might starve before you will yield; but as I want you dreadfully to help me through those miscellaneous examples in Compound Numbers, I must try to find some food for you. 'Oh, Charlie,' I said to myself, 'is that all you want me to live for? What a selfish world this is!'

Now I want you, as soon as you have eaten—or, as Parson Dana says at grace, 'partaken of these fruits of God's bounty with humility and gratitude.'—to sit down and write me a full account of your trouble, and the causes which led to the war. I will appoint myself umpire, and try to bring about a truce, or a treaty of peace. Tie your note to a string and suspend it from your window. I hope you will be released soon, for Willie will cry his eyes out if you are not, and Joe's face, which is none of the handsomest now, will be as wrinkled as a cabbage leaf, making faces at your mother when her back is turned.

Be sure and write a full account of this affair, that I may judge impartially. If you are to blame—and possibly you are—let me know, that I may do justice to the belligerent power. I read that word in the newspaper, and got the meaning in the dictionary. I shall look for a letter in the morning.

Your faithfully ally,
CHARLIE."

I was half vexed at Charlie's letter; he certainly was no flatterer, and yet the fellow would risk his neck to bring me food. I sat down at once to answer his letter, but was interrupted by a knock at the door, which, on opening, I found to be Betsey, with a plate, on which was a slice of dry bread. I knew by a glance she had picked the hardest and driest to be found in the pantry.

"Your mother sent you this, and says if you prefer you can come down and take tea with the family—you know the terms."

"I am not fond of dry bread," said I; "you may take it back again, and I do not care about any supper."

She looked surprised at my refusal, and persisted in leaving the bread, which she laid upon the table; but as soon as she was out of the room, I placed the bread outside also, and locked the door. I gave Charlie a faithful account of the affair, and then went to bed. I fell asleep, and dreamed that I was taken captive by the Indians, but, just as they were about to kill me, Charlie came to my rescue, and, in my fear lest he should lose his life in the struggle, I awoke. I was greatly frightened when I opened my eyes, to see some one sitting at my side.

"Hush, my child; don't be alarmed—it is your father," and the scream which was on my lips was suddenly suppressed, and his kiss warmly returned.

"I have been gone all day, Bertha, and have just heard from your mother that you have been a naughty girl—so naughty that you have not eaten a mouthful of food."

I knew my father so well, and understood the ex-

pression of his face so thoroughly, that I saw at once that he was quite as troubled, lest I should make myself sick, as he was about my wrong-doing, and I hastened to relieve his anxiety.

"Oh, father, I have eaten a nice supper—some cracker and cold meat, and some cake;" and then I told him about Charlie. "You can't think how cunning he looked, peeping round the chimney, and then Joe up in the tree, making the drollest faces, and looking so happy when he saw me drawing in the food; and, father, I wish you would read Charlie's letter; here it is under my pillow."

I could see the corners of my father's mouth curl up a little, and a slight wrinkle of his eyes as he read; but he tried to look very grave when he finished, and turned to me:

"Bertha I hope you will look at this matter carefully, and do right. If you have spoken improperly to your mother, be willing and ready to ask her pardon. As my wife, I trust you will treat her kindly, for my sake, if for no better reason, and with respect, too, as one standing in the place of your mother. You know how much it would grieve me to have any difficulty between two that are so dear to me."

My tears flowed freely now; I could not keep them back, and I promised my father I would do anything that he wished. A kiss sealed the promise, and when we bade "good night," I knew that two hearts were more quiet for that interview. I awoke with the first light of day, and, on opening my window, I saw Joe perched in his tree, making signs to me, and then I perceived that there was a note within my reach under the window. I drew it in, and read as follows:—

"DEAR BERTHA—I have been puzzled how to decide in this case. I do think that your mother was the *causæ belli*, as my Latin grammar has it, and that the blow was unworthy her dignity, and insulting to you. But my mother says that children should not speak disrespectfully to their parents, even under provocation, and there you did wrong. I had to go to you, you see, as I do in all difficult cases. (I haven't told her about my climbing up the roof, though; she is always so afraid that I will kill myself, that I have to keep such things from her for fear she will worry herself sick.)

I do not like opening letters; and if any one, besides my mother, should open one of my letters, I should certainly bring an 'action for trespass,' as Squire Hall would say. But then I suppose parents think they have a right, before their children are of age; and, as Mrs. Lee stands in the place of a parent to you, I suppose we must swallow the insult, as we would one of the doctor's bitter pills—down with it, and forget it. I think if I had the power I should decide that your mother must apologize for striking you, (I shall never respect her as much after this,) and that you, in return, ought to be sorry that you spoke rudely to her. Now, as we have not the power to bring her to terms, one only way is for you to do right, and leave her to the judgment of her conscience. But, as the offence was in private, your apology might be, too; and my advice is to tell her you are sorry, before breakfast, and then go down to the table. Joe says you are going to have toast and cold chicken and boiled eggs for breakfast, all of which are very good. I want very much that you should get through with this affair early in the morning, because mother and I are going to Aunt Towle's, blueberrying, to-day, and we want your company.

Hang a white flag (a handkerchief will do), out of your window when the truce is concluded. Willie feels better this morning, but Joe will not eat a mouthful till he sees the flag of peace.

Your true friend,
CHARLIE."

I had hardly finished reading my letter when my father made his appearance, and again that curious look about the mouth and eyes, as he read; but he made no other remark than merely to ask if I was ready to follow the advice.

I told him, "Yes, if my mother would come to me."

"No, Bertha, we will go to her; she is alone in her room."

I think I was rather awkward and not very hearty in my apology; but my mother was unusually gracious, and when I had finished, said:

"You know, Bertha, I wish to fill a mother's place, and do my duty to you; let us kiss and be friends!"

What evil spirit possessed me, I do not know; but when she kissed my cheek I was passive, and did not return the salute. Alas! I am afraid that the little white flag was the sign of as hollow a truce as was ever concluded between belligerent parties.

It was pleasant and soothing to be with Mrs. Herbert that day. She was a widow with this one child—her pride and idol. She was a pale, delicate, lady-like woman, well educated and refined. Her income was very small, but she managed to make it meet the wants of herself and child, and her quiet home bore the marks of taste and good housekeeping. It seemed to be her aim to make a pleasant home to her child, and I believe Charlie thought that his mother was superior to all other women in this wide world, and he would sacrifice every pleasure, rather than give her one moment's pain.

In the settlement of her husband's estate, there had been some trouble, and she was indebted for the wreck of property which was saved, to a gentleman in the West Indies, who had been a consignee of her husband when he was doing business. Mrs. Herbert and this gentleman's wife were friends and school-mates, and had passed some time together at the islands whither Mrs. Herbert had gone for her health.

This family never had visited Oldbury, and I know nothing of them, not even the name; but once in awhile a valuable present would come, and Mrs. Herbert would say, "We are much indebted to them, and indeed we should have been left destitute if they had not defended our rights."

Charlie had an exalted idea of these friends, and used often to say, "I am going to see Uncle Carlos some time, and thank him for all his presents." So "Uncle Carlos" came to be quite a character in my estimation, and though I knew him by no other name, he was, to our fancy, a "Prince Bountiful." I remember they talked about him that day when we were crossing the river in the ferry-boat, as we did, instead of going round by the bridge. Charlie said that when he got older, and had earned the money, he was going to take his mother to the West Indies, to visit Uncle Carlos; it would make her strong and well, as it did before.

We picked berries enough to make a cake, and a little basket full for Joe and Eddie, and the rest of the time we wandered round, while Mrs. Herbert sat in Aunt Towle's little parlor. This was my last play day with Charlie before I went to school—the last of our childish sports.

CHAPTER IX. SCHOOL DAYS.

It was a cold, gray day in November when I left home to commence my school life in Rockford. This school had been selected by my mother, because the discipline was very strict, and the religious views of the teachers agreed with her own.

"There will be no staying at home from church now," she said, "and no hiding in secret places to read; there will be enough to watch over you, and the least disobedience will be severely punished. You are to write home once a fortnight, that will be often enough; you are always scribbling letters, but it is of no use; one a fortnight to your father and myself is sufficient, and remember there is to be no correspondence between yourself and Charles Herbert. That silly habit must be broken at once; the laws of the school forbid all such things, and your own good requires it. I give you due warning now, that if you venture upon it, you will be severely reprimanded before the whole school."

I made no reply to these remarks of my mother; I was learning to keep silence, but it gave me such a dread of the school, that I was pondering in my own mind some mode of escape.

The stage was to come at nine; my trunk of clothes and my little box of books were packed, and my father was waiting to see us off. I ran over to Mrs. Herbert's to say "good-by" to her, but met her coming to me with Charlie, who had a little basket of fruit and confectionery.

"Oh, Charlie!" I began at once, "isn't it too bad? We can't write any more letters. My mother says that the teachers will not allow it."

He stopped short, and looked quite dismayed for an instant, then broke out hastily—

"They're a set of tyrants there, and we'll see if!"

"Stop, my boy," said his mother, "you are wrong to judge hastily; Bertha should have added, 'without the consent of your parents.'"

"Oh ho, is that, it then; all right. Here, Bertha, I hear they don't give school-girls any too much to eat, and I brought you a little supply in case of need."

Nothing more was said about writing, and we walked into the house, where my mother, who was to accompany me to Rockford, sat rather impatiently awaiting my return. My father was reading the morning paper. Willie and Eddie were rolling a ball upon the carpet, and Joe was looking out of the window for the appearance of the stage.

As Mrs. Herbert entered, my father rose to greet her, and give her a seat; and Charlie, as soon as he had bid them "good morning," walked toward my father, his cap in hand, and standing erect, his curls brushed from his forehead, and the slightest blush upon his fine open face, said, "Mr. Herbert, will you give me permission to write to Bertha while she is away?"

I shall never forget his look at that moment; the frank, manly boy, grave and earnest just then, looking up to my father for his reply. My father had not heard the remarks of my mother that morning; moreover, Charlie was a great favorite with him, and he often said—"That boy bids fair to make a fine man." I can recall now that twinkle of the eyes, and that peculiar expression of the mouth as he looked at Charlie. Mrs. Herbert smiled, rather approvingly, I thought; an ominous frown gathered on my mother's brow, and she tried to catch my father's eye, but whether purposely or not, he avoided the glance; Joe was rubbing his hands and looking eagerly at them; Willie stopped with his ball in his hand in half wonder at Charlie's manliness.

"Yes, Charlie, I see no objection to it; you may bring your letters to me, and I will envelop them for you; it will be an amusement to Bertha, when she is away from us."

This was in the days of high postage and Charlie's supply of pocket money was rather limited. At this moment Joe exclaimed—"The stage is coming." I rose, and accidentally caught my mother's eye. Never shall I forget its expression. I quailed before it, for I read there the future vengeance of a stern, implacable woman, and from that moment I believe she hated Charles Herbert.

The ride of sixteen miles that chilly morning was not agreeable to me. I was packed away in a corner of the stage, and could only get glimpses of the road, now and then, between the heads of the passengers on the middle seat. But I knew when we were on the turnpike with its rows of Lombardy poplars, and its broad level road, looking upon the fields and orchards and swelling hills on either side; then came stretches of stone fence, and here and there an antiquated farm house; and now the stage stopped.

at the post-office, which was in a little store close to a square, peagreen house with white trimmings, with a sign in front, "Entertainment for man and beast." Opposite on a hill was a large, old-fashioned meetinghouse, and near by the great elm, where I was to be waiting for the appearance of Charlie with his Uncle's old horse and chaise.

The men in the stage got out and went into the postoffice, or tavern, and I had a fine opportunity to make my observations of the locality. There was a theological student in the coach, with a black coat, white neckcloth and a very glossy black hat, all showing that, though still a student, he was a "licentiate," or a preacher, though not yet ordained. My mother had a strong predilection for clergymen, and she entered earnestly into conversation upon the controversy then going on between Stuart and Channing, and from her remarks I gathered that the latter was a very dangerous and bad man in community. "I never open his books," said my mother; "it's enough to learn his views from our own papers; I consider all his writings as so much moral poison, to be carefully guarded against."

"It is my own opinion," said he, "that it is doubtful with untimely mortal to have anything to do with them. Is this your daughter, madam?" turning to look at me.

"Yes; I am taking her to Rockford school."

Ah, indeed; you are doing a wise thing—good discipline there. I am going there myself to visit a friend."

My mother smiled, and he observing it, added, "The students are allowed some privileges in consideration of our profession."

I wondered what this meant, as I supposed "Rockford Female Seminary," as it was called, (the word female meaning by implication, I suppose, the feminine of the human species,) was guarded as strictly as the famed garden of Hesperides, from all intruders, especially from men whose brows were not silvered over with age; but I was not left long to study upon the subject, for the gentleman with a very grave visage, as if he were about to announce my execution, said, "My young friend, have you made your peace with God?"

I was taken by surprise, and hung down my head like an awkward school-girl that I was, and began twisting my pocket handkerchief into knots.

"Bertha," said my mother sternly, "answer the gentleman, and tell him the truth."

"I don't know, sir."

"Ah, if you don't know, then I am afraid it is not well with your soul."

"No, indeed," said my mother, "she is an alien and a stranger from the commonwealth of Israel—still in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity."

"Then remember," said he, as he changed his seat and was about to lay his hand upon my shoulder, but I shrunk into the further corner, at which he bent over his head and tried to get a glance at my face, which was however bowed too low for him to see, and said, "Then remember you are in danger, any moment; one turn of this stage, or the ceasing of your heart to beat, will plunge you into endless torment; into that place where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

His manner and his words, falling as they did upon a nervous, susceptible temperament, that had that morning felt every nerve strong to its utmost tension, were too much for me; I trembled all over, and burst into tears. At that he seemed encouraged, and moved nearer to me, while I crowded myself almost through the side curtain, and had half a mind to leap out; but a voice, like a pleasant bass tone in music, said—

"No offence to your profession, sir, but that little girl is under my special protection. Good morning, Bertha; you hardly know me, I suppose, but I am your mother's old friend, John James. I came on in the other coach that started a few moments after the other, and learned from your father that you were here. Good morning, madam," turning to my mother, and raising his hat as he did so, "happy to meet you."

"Excuse me a moment," said the minister; "I have a few words to say to this young lady, and then I will resign my seat."

"Bertha, you are in danger; a rebel against your God—a sinner without hope—no good thing in you by nature—stop now in your career of sin—repent and be saved from the eternal fire which awaits the impenitent."

I was so agitated that I trembled and shook so that all around me perceived it. Mr. James looked at me, and turning to my companion, said—

"The driver has taken his box, and we are about to start; I will trouble you to resign your seat."

My mother looked angry, and the minister returned her look with sympathy; but my friend placed his portly self beside me, put up the strap, and whispered, "Here, child, is a noble orange; is n't it a beautiful one? It was raised on my own plantation. I always have a number of boxes sent on to me."

I took the orange, and tried to smile and acknowledge the gift; but I was so much agitated that I could not command my voice. I was afraid that the stage would turn over and I meet a sudden death; and once it seemed as if my heart was going to stop beating forever. I held the orange in my hands, unconsciously to myself, turning it over and over.

"I think an orange tree is a pretty sight," said Mr. James. "Did you ever see one with fruit upon it?"

"I saw one that belonged to our minister's wife," I said, "that had three ripe oranges on its branches, and some blossoms also. It was very beautiful indeed."

"But if you could see a grove of them—their beauty and fragrance would delight you! I never walk amid them but I admire the wisdom and love of God. Take one tree, for instance, and examine it minutely. The delicate bud, with its folded petals just peeping from their green covering; then the unfolded flower, with its delicate petals, its golden centre, and its rich fragrance; then the large, perfect fruit, like great, golden balls, glowing amid the smooth, glossy leaves—a perfect picture and a rich feast, offered by our great Father to his children. You never have been in the tropics; there the fullness, and richness, and beauty of God's works are more fully seen than in these northern latitudes. But here we are not forgotten. Just see that apple tree yonder, near that old farmhouse—the one near the well with the long sweep. That apple tree must have battled the northeast storms for fifty years. See how rough the bark looks, and the moss is gathering on its trunk; but every bough is laden with fruit, and those ruddy cheeked apples peep out from beneath the brown stems and rough leaves

like the pretty children from the doors and windows of these old, weather-beaten farmhouses.

"Yes, God is here with his tokens of love, as everywhere—a father to all his children, folding them all in his kind arms, and giving each a portion in due season. It makes us very happy, you know, to have somebody to care for and love; and if we can lift a burden from some poor, suffering heart, how much happier we are for the act. It is as Jesus Christ said—the more we give, the more we receive. If it is so with us, how happy then must God be, who has all this world to care for, and many more beside."

"Hollo! wait a bit, driver."

The driver had been watering his horses, and just as he was about mounting the box, three or four little girls, with baskets in their hands, came out of a little red schoolhouse by the side of the road and curtsied to us. My companion took off his hat and returned their salute very politely, and happening to think of his oranges, he wanted the driver to hold on a moment, till he could throw some out. What bright eyes, and what an overplus of "kircheyas," as the children called them, followed; and as we rattled away, I could not help putting my head out of the window to look after the group. There they stood, with the oranges in their hands, apparently astonished at their good fortune, and looking after us, as if eager for another sight of the broad, jovial face that had shone so pleasantly upon them for a moment. They were made happy for one half day.

As I turned back to the group within the coach, I noticed my companion was paring an orange with a little silver knife, and insisted upon my enjoying the fruit thus prepared. My mother and the "licentiate" were not forgotten; and while we were eating, my friend told me about the fruits of the West Indies, of the graceful tamarind tree, the sugar cane, the pine apple, and so forth; and of the little colored children, running round without any clothes, as happy as birds and chickens, if they could only have the sun and sugar enough. Time passed rapidly, and, without my being aware of it, my little pale face was turned to his broad, somewhat weather-stained visage, but ruddy yet as that of a schoolboy, and I was drinking with eager ear every word that fell from his lips.

I was sorry when the driver, by his horn, announced that we were at Rockford, for here we must part. This was the old stage road to Boston, and Rockford the dining place; and Mr. James alighted at the hotel, and after giving me a basket of oranges, whispered, as he glanced roguishly at the licentiate, "Do n't forget that God is good, and loves all his creatures."

I replied only by returning, with childish warmth, the kiss he impressed upon my cheek.

Ten minutes later we were ushered into the parlor of the boarding-school—a stiff, formal room, like most parlors of its kind in that day, and my mother said to me, "We will see Miss Garland (the name of the principal), here, and you will then be shown to your room."

The door opened, and I turned with anxious look to the lady's face—it was no lady, but the "licentiate," our companion of the stage-coach.

"I thought, Mrs. Lee, I must see your daughter one moment before the day closed," then turning to me—"I came to warn you that there are those who cry 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace. I have seen the smile upon your face to-day, when there should have been the sadness of an alarmed sinner, or the tears of a penitent one. I had fastened an arrow in your heart, but a false friend has extracted it and sought to heal the wound. God is not good to the rebellious—to him he is a consuming fire and a flaming sword; until you can bow that stubborn will and rebellious heart, there is no peace for you, but an endless looking for of judgment and fiery indignation."

As he spoke, his face wore an expression of intense sternness, as if he were already my accuser and my judge. It was strange what power he had over me; I felt like a wand in his hand—a wand with human feelings, that he could twist and turn and roll up, I, meanwhile, conscious of the torture, but with no will to resist. He came near to me, and took one of my hands, and though I shrunk from the contact, and felt a shiver of repulsion run through my frame, I could not have passed through the walls of the room, and taken wings for home.

"I leave you," said he, "perhaps never to see you again till the day of judgment—there, perhaps, to see you upon the left hand of the Judge, listening to the sentence—Depart from me into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

He pressed the hand which lay in his, but no answering pressure was received, and I stood like one stupefied, or, as I have seen a frightened bird, unable to move. The door seemed giving way beneath my feet, and I, sinking into a deep gulf of liquid fire, and yet, unless he helped me, I would sink sooner than ask his aid, for that last pressure of his hand gave me such a loathing, that I would have recoiled if I had the power; but, unable to move, I felt stifled, oppressed, as if in a heavy, poisonous atmosphere. I was suffocating, and unable to draw a long breath. The door opened—the noise was a relief, and on the instant my hand was released, and the gentleman bowed to a tall, graceful woman, apparently about forty years of age, and then introduced my mother and myself. My first impression of Miss Garland was very agreeable; she had a fine, bright eye, and a sweet smile; and, though I was suffering keenly at that moment, I remember a pleasurable sensation of disappointment in my teacher. After a little general conversation, Miss Garland asked my mother into her own room, and requesting the gentleman to excuse them a few moments, adding, that she hoped to meet him at the tea-table, they passed out, while I, seeing that he remained also, rose to follow my mother.

"Wait here a few minutes," she said; I hesitated, turned, and would have still gone on, but my mother said hastily, "Bertha, remain here."

I sat down. The gentleman, as soon as we were left together, said—

"You shrink, perhaps, from my warning, but better suffer now than eternally; kneel, and I will pray with you."

As he spoke, he went toward the door, with the intention of turning the key, but a sudden impulse moved me, and I sprang before him, opened the door, and ran out, I knew not whither.

TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.

Profane language is to conversation what ten-inch spikes would be to veneering—splitting, shivering and defacing it. It is in bad taste, offensive to a majority, and gratifying to none.

Written for the Banner of Light.

LIFE MUSEINGS.

BY J. ROLLIN M. SQUIRE.

Where tends the willow by the babbling brook
That leaps and dances to the solemn sea,
By these eternal hills which overlook
And cast their lengthened shadows o'er the lea,
I stand alone and muse, oh, Life, on Thee.

My weary heart, where troubling passions throng,
Seeking to rob it of its only ease,
Grows glad where Nature sings her ceaseless song
In lonely glen, or where the scented breeze
Is whispering its low music through the trees.

Our fleeting days are full of mysteries,
Through which the future's morning dimly shines,
Before whose light shall fade the miseries
Of life, o'er which each human heart repines,
Unable still to fathom God's designs.

Year after year Hope's lamp still flickering burns,
And we delight to slumber in its ray,
And strive to grasp the joy, which lost, no more returns;
Yet sorrow comes, and from our brightest day
It seeks to steal life's latest hopes away.

But we have still a comfort, dear indeed,
To touch Hope's chord that in our bosom lies—
Though oft unmerited our present meed,
In that glad realm beyond the shoreless skies
Justice is ours, and duty claims the prize.

There is no peace that this poor world can give
To equal that its passions can destroy;
It cannot give us Hope—Hope bids us live;
Through every hour be fraught with sin's alloy,
Hope is of God, from God, a steadfast joy.

Then live in Hope, though dark the present hour;
Go proudly where Death leads, nor fear the doom,
A life of duty done, shall give us power
To safely walk through all earth's doubt and gloom,
And stand, triumphant, far beyond the tomb.

Written for the Banner of Light.

TO BIBLE CHRISTIANS.

"THE LABORER IS WORTHY OF HIS HIRE."

Those who have completed the voyage of earth-life, and arrived in the second sphere of man's existence, gladly commune with those left behind, and impart useful instruction. So he who has performed the voyage from traditional religion of ignorance, fear, and torturing doubt, to the God-given knowledge of truth and love, which casteth out the torment of fear, should be able to give to his Christian brethren left behind, the reason of his faith; for any other kind of faith can do a man no good. A mere declaration that he believes the Bible, is no credit or advantage to any man. A living belief in its truth may be—a belief that impels a man to act on its precepts, to endeavor to understand its meaning, to try to reconcile its apparent discrepancies, whereby the man's mind is exercised, his reasoning powers improved, his spiritual perceptions awakened, the windows of heaven, as it were, opened, and the long lost communion of saints restored. This belief, and this action, will profit any man.

True, many Christians have from the beginning professed to believe in the communion of saints; they have weekly repeated the form of words, but they have so perverted their substance, and misconstrued their spirit, that they will not now listen to the saints, when they desire to communicate with them. Christians profess to believe in the Holy Ghost, (Holy Spirit,) and they pray to the Father to send them this Spirit. But when, agreeable to the promise of Jesus, this spirit of truth is sent to guide them into all truth, its teachings are so contrary to their traditional and educational rules for handling the Bible, that it causes the sincere seeker after truth to doubt his church creed; yet, through ignorance, he fears to follow the teaching of this heavenly guide, and asks the priest what he shall do with these impressions—the questioning voice? The priest, though ignorant as the questioner, assumes to know the truth, condemns his honest doubts, and declares these spiritual impressions to be temptations of the devil, to lead him away from the fundamental doctrines of the church, and counsels him to resist this enemy of the human race, and pray to God to be delivered from his wiles. Thus Christians who are in bondage to tradition, pray that God would send them his Holy Spirit; and when the precious boon comes, the door of their hearts is closed against it. Yet this is the same spirit which Jesus promised should be sent to his followers, and abide with them forever, if they would only open the door of their hearts to receive him.

When Christians really believe that the Holy Spirit can communicate with them; when they believe it would be desirable that it should do so, then they will be willing to open the door of their hearts, where the Spirit has been standing till his head is wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night.

Oh, Christians, truth is not a changeable thing. What was true eighteen hundred years ago, is true now. But humility being the condition of truth, it must remain hid from us until we so hunger and thirst for it that we can thankfully receive, and rightly use, the precious gift. Would you obtain the pearl of great price? Learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and taught the way.

The precepts of Jesus were not given as a code of laws, or rules of conduct, applied merely to the then existing circumstances, by which men were required to perform a certain routine of action, or worship, or of forms and ceremonies called worship; but they were living and ever-enduring principles, intended to govern and direct men how to form rules of conduct for all circumstances, in all countries, and in every age. They were to be the exponents of a progressive religion. They were the perfect principles to which all men should desire to attain, and make their own principles conform to. But since the great body of Christians left that high, ascending, spiritual plane, on which Christianity started, and became a State engine, and run on a low, material plane, these principles have been so wrested from their true meaning, so roughened into other shapes, so fixed as barriers to advancement, and made the foundation of unchangeable creeds and unprogressive churches, that they are now to be restored to their original purity, and shine with more than their original splendor, because they will be better understood, and more extensively than ever before, since they came from the lips of their Divine Author.

As by the introduction of the Christian dispensation, one jot of the law and the prophets could not fail, so in this new dispensation, one iota of the principles of Jesus shall not fail, but all will be fulfilled in every soul. He had no narrow views of saving from sin and misery a family or a nation; but all the inhabitants of earth, being equally God's children, were equally intended for the receipt of his love, manifested in his proclaiming the great truths relating to man's acceptance with God, and relating to man's conduct, socially, politically and morally.

This spiritual dispensation comes according to Scripture; it comes not to supercede the teachings of Jesus, but to revive and establish anew his long lost doctrines, that they may be fulfilled, not merely by profession, but in practice.

In this dispensation the principles of Jesus are to be preached in a new form of words adapted to the age; but not in a new substance—not in a new spirit. They are to be revived, and, together with the many new and higher truths which his disciples could not bear, are to reanimate, and recall to life, dead churches, dead men—so far as they are willing to be brought to life, by receiving the spirit and knowledge of God.

When Jesus sent forth his disciples to preach the *logos* of God, (not the Bible,) he commanded that they should take nothing for their journey; no bread, no

gold, no silver, no money of any sort—not even a brass farthing in their purse; for said he, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." They had their support guaranteed to them by God, and by their faith in spirit-power they nobly trusted to him for the whole of that support—eating and drinking those things which were set before them as the free offering of the sons of peace, for whose benefit they labored. If upon them was bestowed money, they received it as a free offering, and held it as Christ's stewards, to be by his direction disbursed.

They were spirit mediums, and freely received from the spirit-world what they preached, and what they freely received they freely gave.

When, in the progress of this new dispensation, the people shall become so far released from bondage to tradition—from theological fetters of the age, as to dare as much free inquiry into religious matters as they are accustomed to exercise in political affairs, they will become the free spirits for which God made them. Then, indeed, will the voice of the people be the voice of God, and the time soon follow when (as says the Book,) they shall take and possess the government.

When spirit mediums become so passive as to be willing to take their direction from an unseen Being, and from an unseen direction act, they will have such faith in spirit-power, as to be able to devote their lives to the cause of truth, regardless of all earthly considerations. Then, with cheerful confidence, they will trust to spirit-power for the whole of their support—trust to the free offerings of those whose hearts are in the hands of God—to those who may be spiritually benefited through their mediumship; eating with thankfulness such things as are set before them, and holding and disbursing, as faithful stewards, such money as may be freely bestowed. When this condition of things arrives, (as it soon will,) that people will become impassive to, and uncontrollable by priests, and mediums will become passive and obedient to God, this spiritual dispensation will receive a new impulse, and begin to advance at a rapid rate.

Men will learn that it is better to receive than to deliver, when the thing transmitted through the medium is from God. But the things of earth being the opposite of heavenly, it is better to give than to receive from men. Then it will not be considered "a great thing" for mediums who sow spiritual things, if they reap earthly things. Then brotherly love will more abound, and people, being less selfish, will entertain strangers, and thereby some will entertain angels unawares.

Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus asked his disciples this question: "When I sent you without purse and scrip, lacked ye anything?" and they said, "Nothing."

After his ascension, he who was ordained by God to be a high-priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, continued to select and raise up preachers after that order, who, like Paul and Stephen, spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit, and sacrificed their lives in the cause of truth. But in a few years the churches began to show signs of heresy. Then, by direction and inspiration of the spirit of Jesus, John wrote the warnings and promises to the seven churches, declaring that Christ would give spiritual gifts, or withdraw spiritual presence. There were many more churches at that time, and they were all tainted with heresy. But these seven were placed for all churches, at all time, in all parts of Asia, and in all parts of the earth, and in the early, and in the latter time or times, until the second coming of Christ, and until the full establishment of his kingdom on earth.

Through the medium John, (in reference to his second coming,) the spirit of Jesus said, and still says to all churches, "Behold, I come as a thief in the night, and if you would be ready you must be ever watchful." These warnings were, and still are, without much effect upon the churches. Yet Christ has always come to the spiritually minded—to those who were willing to receive him in the way of his coming; but he now comes in an unwonted manner, with his holy angels, working wonders. He now comes to set up his kingdom on earth. While he has tarried, Christians who have no spiritual oil in their lamps, have slumbered and slept in the dust of earthly pursuits. Having rejected the spirit, and suffered the light within to go out in darkness, they are spiritually dead, and entombed in traditional religion of ignorance, fear and torturing doubt.

Amongst the errors against which John warned the angels, or mediums, appointed to express God's will to the people, was that of the laborers' support, for which they were losing faith in God and striving to secure by donations of land and settlements of money upon themselves. In this way the churches were corrupted. And, through the medium John, Jesus assured them that the church's candlestick should be removed, unless the angel did the first works; and the first works were preaching to the people in faith and spirit, without settled salary, or compensation.

The angels, or mediums, instead of keeping in union and harmony with the spirit and will of God, began to act in their own will, which separated them from God, and from high spiritual communications.

The church, they thought, would be better governed, and more successfully advanced in power and extent by their reason, rather than by the apostle's inspiration. But, as the holy spirit cannot dwell with those who have low affinities—those who are actuated by impure motives—those who are governed by sordid selfishness, the angels, one after another, lost their spirit-power to work miracles, and finally the great body of them, by their own folly, repulsed from themselves all spirit-communication, and all spirituality. In this way they became dead. The presence of the spirit was the life of the churches—its absence was, and is, their death.

As the bishops, which the fallen angels now styled themselves, lost their heavenly spirit and power, they increased in earthly spirit, and sought earthly power, till after three hundred years, Christianity ascended the throne of the Roman empire! Thus allied with the powers of earth, the Emperor used the church to secure the power of the State, to increase the prevalence and power of the church. The great and imposing general council of more than two thousand bishops, from all Christendom, soon assembled—manufactured a creed to be binding on all churches—proclaimed bloody edicts against non-conformists, and the State enforced their profane and mad decrees.

From the time Christianity became the religion of State, its downward course was accelerated, and its authority so rapidly increased, that in the year 616 the power of the Pope was fully established, as an abomination that has since desolated Christendom. The daily sacrifice, too, was then taken away. This was the sacrifice of the heart to God, which was no longer required; but indulgences, and pardons for sins were granted from that time by popes, bishops and priests. The hierarchical power also leaped the two witnesses of God in the world, by declaring revelation to be at an end, and that reason should no longer be used in matters of religion.

This done, man's salvation fell into the hands of the priests, and the people were no longer allowed to look to God for pardon and salvation, but only to the priest, and the priest would no otherwise forgive than for money; urging that the laborer is worthy of his hire.

This usurpation and fraud, so foreign to the church of God's truth, who can contemplate without abhorrence? Do Bible Christians owe any obligation to the teaching of creeds—any allegiance to ecclesiastical authority? Is not the teaching of revelation, and the authority of God sufficient? If so, away with all man-made creeds—away with all human authority. Can a man

be religiously benefited by force? Is it not very promising for uninspired men to attempt to teach God's children inspiration, when it is declared in the Bible, they shall all be taught of God?

Do you ask, How taught of God? They shall be taught of God through his inspired mediums, who will give themselves no anxious thought about what or how they shall speak, but they will speak as moved upon by the sent spirit of God. They will also be taught of God by the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who will give higher and nobler manifestations of doctrine and direction to every man who will open the door of his heart to him. He will preach personally, spiritually, if he will only hear him, and seek to know the truth. And, as says the Bible, if the spiritual anointing which ye have received of him abide in you, ye need not that any man teach you; but the same anointing teacheth you all things, and as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in it. Doing this, man requires no creed—requires no spiritual teaching from uninspired men, and will no more thirst for the outward observance of forms and ceremonies, which are ready to vanish away.

Through inspired mediums we may receive instruction more pure than from uninspired men; yet if we would have truth most pure, we must receive it ourselves from God, through his sent spirit, the Christ within.

No man can teach another as God can teach him. Truth may be taught others so far as comprehended; but he who would limit truth to his own creed, or to his own mental attainments, is on a sandy foundation, for there is no teaching which comes from uninspired men that can lastingly benefit others. As Christians become more and more unfolded in their spiritual nature, they will see and know that upon the ever-living truths of God they must rely to be saved from the traditional religion of ignorance, fear and torturing doubt.

Jesus said to his disciples, "The princes and rulers of this world exercise authority, and are called great; but it shall not be so with you, but whosoever will be chief among you, let him be servant."

The disciples of Jesus should be humble, and they who best know God should be the humblest of mankind, and not seek to govern, but to teach—not seek to be chief, but to be servant of all. Having freely received, they should freely give. They should be ambitious to appear great in the sight of God, not in the sight of men.

Priests who are slaves to creeds, and mediums who are slaves to money, have a veil over their spiritual vision, and cannot speak for God. His voice is freely given, and must be freely expressed. Priests will yet acknowledge their errors, and mediums will yet give God the glory of all their attainments, and of all that is done through them. Such mediums cannot be obsessed, and cannot be deceived, for God is in them, and no demon can eject him.

Jesus said, "There are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last." Of his followers, those who are the humblest—the last and most despised of earth, are first with God. The proudest—the first and greatest of earth, are last with God. Thus the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

No one is to be judged by another man's conscience. Every one must stand or fall to his own master, the Christ within. Christians are called to liberty; and if they stand in the liberty of Truth wherewith the Spirit hath made them free, they are judged by no man.

The gospel is a system of perfect liberty. Do you ask, "Can its believers do just as they please?" We answer, yes. So long as they continue in the law of liberty, they are judged only by the law of liberty, and can do just as they please, because that law worketh ill to no man, but continually seeketh the good of all.

It is the mission of this new dispensation to bring into universal action this gospel law of liberty. First, in these United States; then progressively throughout the earth. A generation will not pass away, before one faith will pervade and move to action the people of this nation. It will be that faith, without which a man cannot please God. That action will be such as no man can perform without faith. It will be the action whereby each will do good to all, to the extent of their ability, as they have opportunity.

Let us all, then, pray for the speedy consummation of this glorious day. Let us prepare ourselves by faith to know more of this heavenly dispensation, and to keep up with its progressive movement, which commenced in the year 1851. That was the expiration of the last of the time mentioned by Daniel—the beginning of the end of the old dispensation; in reference to which time it was said, "Blessed is he that cometh to it." Blessed, because in that year Jesus of Nazareth caused spirits to deliver written revelations through his servant Hammond, entitled, "Light from the Spirit-World."

Educated for centuries in erroneous views of the teachings of the Bible, it is hard indeed for Christians to believe it possible for these things to be true. Yet they are not called upon to make so great change as were the Jews. At the first coming of Jesus Christ their religion was blotted out, and they were required to adopt a new one. At his second coming, we are only asked to return to the old paths, the good way, and walk therein, that we may find rest to our souls from ignorance, fear and torturing doubt. We are only asked to humbly and thankfully receive what Christians and Christian priests have so long prayed for.

Priests, like other men, are fallible. Mediums, like other men, are fallible. And the only way they could, eighteen hundred years ago, or can now, keep themselves in union and harmony with the Spirit, is by a constant sacrifice of their own will upon the altar of God's love, and in submission, entire and unwavering, to his slightest spiritual impressions, which is internal revelation, and which will always be found within man, if he will attend to it, when he prays for it. Thus every one may and should be a medium for the reception of revelation from God, through the Comforter—the Spirit of Truth—who will guide us into all truth, and so open our spirit-sight as to show us things to come. See John 16:13.

He who sends the Comforter, desires that all should seek for this revelation, each for himself, and each in his own heart, where God will manifest himself.

The Comforter is a loving and gentle spirit, to which men should ever be passive and obedient. It is the still small voice, heard by the prophet of old. When we diverge to the right hand or left, if listened to, it will softly say, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

The Comforter is repulsed by the froward. But if with sincerity it be cherished as a friend, it will abide with us forever, and always tell us what to do, and how to do it. They who are obedient to the teaching of this master will not worship a different God, but they will all worship the same God differently; and God will manifest himself to each one differently, according to their capacity, their experience, their spiritual attainments, and their spiritual aspirations.

True worship is spiritual, and consists in man's worshipping God as within himself revealed. Though all men are equal before God, yet no two, while on earth, are alike in their experience or attainments. Each man's sin is graded by his own scale of attainments. They who know their master's will and do it not, are punished, and their stripes will be in proportion to their knowledge of his will.

To whom much is given, much is required; and so the reverse is true. Still these last should not shut their eyes to the light that is shining for them, and, like the Jews, in their self-will and blind conceit, say, "We see;" lest, like them, they be left to perish in their own blindness. They who will not see must remain blind; for neither God, nor any being acting in the will of God, will ever interfere with the will of man. Jesus exhorted the people to seek; and God has ordained that the seeker shall find, and that what he

he shall find. If he seeks for truth, he shall find it. If he seeks for objections against the truth, he shall find plenty of them, and sufficient in magnitude to condemn and crucify Christ at his second coming, as the Jews did at his first coming.

Christians should live up to the light they have, and continually seek more light from the source of light. They should hold high their light, and let it shine on all with whom they have intercourse, but compel no one to look at it; neither should they say to another, "Do as I do," for all have a different task to perform. Many may seem to err in our sight, when, in the sight of God, they are doing their best—doing that which is for their greatest good.

In Jesus's religion there is no proselytism. He directed his disciples to offer the truth to the people in every city; but if they were not prepared for, or fitly disposed to receive it, to pass on.

Too much importance is attached to uniformity in faith and practice. The uniformity to which Christians should aspire, is harmony with the Spirit of Truth—is oneness with Christ, as he is one with God. The greatest uniformity now prevalent in Christian churches, is the uniformity of spiritual death; which uniformity was anciently obtained by the assistance of creeds and penal statutes, and transmitted to us by tradition.

The hour is near at hand when, as Jesus said, "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." He will soon give power to his chosen mediums to raise from their tombs the spiritually dead, to a knowledge of God, which is life, and to reconcile to the Divine influence now beaming from the spirit-spheres, all who are sick at heart and lame in spiritualities.

From this view of the teachings of Jesus, let us return to the laboring compensation. For the last three hundred years the payment of the priesthood is a question which has been the subject of much discussion in the churches. That is, what compensation, if any, should a man receive who devotes himself to preaching the Word (logos) of God to his fellow-men? Instead of complying with the teachings of Jesus, and following the apostolic example, on this subject, the hireling priesthood follow the lead of the fallen angels, in dividing for money, and practice according to the traditions handed down from the holy fathers, as they delight to call those pretended preachers of God, whose virtues were obscured by their vices. In this way, the hireling priesthood found their authority upon, and derive their divine right to fleece the flock, from the Bible declaration, "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

Let us examine this saying of Jesus and of Paul, (neither of whom ever received money for preaching,) and see if it contains any such authority, or conveys any such right. Each individual case of payment for preaching must stand on its own merits, and be governed by the law that men reap as they sow—that law of necessity, by which the fruit of actions must be borne. He who preaches for money, shall have his reward according to his desire. He who preaches from a higher motive, shall also have his reward according to his desire. Not always by increased temporalities, but often by increased cares, more confining duties, and more overwhelming responsibilities. When Paul became a chosen vessel, the spirit of the departed Jesus said to the medium—Ananias, "I will show him how great things he must suffer." For thirty years what a catalogue of suffering was his! Besides, there was a thorn continually in his flesh to show him his own weakness, that he might the better know from whence came his power, and be able to say, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

God's rewards are very generally in the nature of trials. This life in the body is for the express purpose of trial, and of proving to men what they are, and of providing them with a knowledge of good and evil by experience; that by their memory in the future, they may be ever able to compare the happiness of immortal bliss with this frail and finite life in the body. Thus present trials, which continue but for a moment, are the foundation of future unutterable happiness, and work out for us an eternal weight of glory.

The laborer is worthy of his hire; and the compensation of the preacher is regulated by the law—he that seeks shall find, and what he seeks he shall find. The preacher goes out into God's harvest to labor. His field of action is man, and the result of his labor is the regulator of his reward. His glory depends on the motives which actuate him, and upon how many sheaves he brings home with him at the end of the day. If he hides away his time in divining for money, and in seeking glory of men, what he seeks he shall find, and when the night comes, and he is required to give an account of his day's labor, behold, he is empty, and so will be his reward; for he is worthy of his hire, and has fixed his own price.

Though the laborer is worthy of his hire, no preacher can be idle in God's harvest, and still gain a reward. It cannot be done. In the very nature of his existence, man has need of labor. God hath designed it for the employment of his exalted powers, and they cannot be developed without it. All must work out their own salvation. None can be saved without their own efforts to save themselves. In this respect, priests and mediums have no advantage over other men. All alike, and all like their great exemplar, must work out their own spiritual salvation. Work, therefore—strive to do the Father's will; for in the labor is the reward, which consists of that peace the world knows not of, and which cannot be taken from us by others. Jesus said to his disciples, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." The laborer is worthy of his hire, and in the labor is the hire, while working for God's glory, for it redoundeth unto the glory of the laborer, to whom even a short life given to God, by benefitting himself and his fellow-men, insures a life of endless happiness.

A new dispensation has dawned, which is confirmed by more signs and miracles than any previous dispensation ever witnessed. It will be the most glorious dispensation ever vouchsafed to men of this earth. It is the second coming, to prepare the way for the reign on earth of the Christ-spirit in the hearts of men. As it was at the first coming, so it is now: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

Oh, Christians! ye can discern the signs of approaching change in earth and sky. Can ye not discern the spiritual signs of the times? Why of your own reason judge ye not what is right? Christ has come according to general expectation, but as no one expected. He never did come as the people expected. And he never will follow the lead of any church. If we would receive him, we must receive him in the way of his coming.

Heretofore the light of the logos of God shone into men's dark minds, and was not comprehended. Its general reception was reserved for another dispensation. A time has now come when men are prepared to receive the light of the logos, and God will have it preached unto them, raising up for that purpose such instruments as shall give Him the glory, honor and praise, of all that is accomplished through them, and being willing to receive from Him their equal penny with other laborers who may have done less.

In this spiritual dispensation—in this contest between truth and error, the battle will not be to the strong; and when the struggle is over, God will have the victory, through humble and submissive mediums of His will, who will be satisfied with the rewards of a good conscience.

The laborer is worthy of his hire; and if a laborer would make himself truly worthy of his hire, in man he will find a broad, uncultivated field, where flesh hath encroached upon the spirit; where hatred, envy,

and unkindness, have almost crushed out the fragrant flowers of love; where error, superstition and bigotry, have assumed the garb of truth, and, in their repulsive uncouthness, have frightened the sincere seeker after truth from its beautiful simplicity; here, in this broad field, he will find his labor spread out before him. And, as the light removeth darkness, let him preach love; as love removeth unkindness, let him preach love; as truth removeth error, superstition, and bigotry, let him preach and practice the truth. Like Jesus, let him bear witness unto the truth. This will give him sheaves in abundance, whose fruit angels will enjoy when he takes them home; and his Father will sound in his ear the greatest of all rewards—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the perfection of that truth which hath sustained thee in numberless trials; ascend the heights of purity, and there reap, as thy reward, the never-ending communion of thy God."

Philadelphia, Pa., Aug. 18, 1859.

THE AGE OF VIRTUE.

BY GEORGE STEARNS.

First Paper.

PRESAGES OF ITS EARTHLY DAWNING.

There is, if I mistake not, a very common apprehension of what I here advance as a philosophic truth—that Human Nature has never as yet been fairly represented on Earth; but that mankind are susceptible of culture to a more harmonious and happy state than has ever been realized by any people in any age of the world.

Every socialist asserts this principle as the ground of all his arguments for a re-organization of society; every republican admits it in regard to all the older dynasties; and every partisan in a republic puts the lever of popular excitement upon it, as the fulcrum of elevation to his special platform.

As to despots and all the tenacious usurpers of arbitrary power, they are not expected to foresee a better social state than is compatible with their precious prerogatives: certainly not to acknowledge their injustice before resigning them at the pressing demands of popular progression. Nor is it consistent with the policy of those minions of Divine Partiality, who assume to be the "ordained pastors" of mankind, to profess a doubt that men and women, as sheep, are always to be ecclesiastically herded, fenced, and fleeced as now. Yet it is easy to discover that such a notion is not in accordance with those ancient guides whom priests and kings affect to follow.

Did not Reverend Isaiah profess to be "anointed to preach good tidings to the meek?"—"to bind up the broken-hearted?"—"poor with the liniment of Hope's Gospel?"—"to proclaim LIBERTY to the captives?" of ignorance, error and wrong, and "the opening of the prison" of condemnation "to them that are bound" in the chains of judicial and priestly arrogance? Did not Right Reverend Jesus define his mission in the very same terms, adding that he was "born to this end," and came into the world for no other purpose but to "bear witness to the Truth" whereby all the slaves of foolishness are yet to be made free?

The preaching of Jesus did not, like that of the Church, concern a state of human salvation wholly posthumous. His disciples were encouraged to hope and pray for the substance of Heaven on Earth; to "seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness," as the medium of all present as well as future good, trusting that food, raiment, and all things needful to their temporal welfare, would follow, as the natural consequence of personal and social rectitude. And I fancy that Elder Daniel had a foresight of the prospective Reign of Right, when "the Ancient of Days" appeared to his spiritual vision in the act of overturning the old empire of human domination, and crowning "the likeness of the Son of Man." Will any Christian demur to this? Should not all believers recognize that "voice from Heaven," which Brother John heard in Patmos, touching the future "tabernacle of God with men," when "he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God," wiping away the tears of suffering, childlike error?

Can any believer in "Holy Writ" reject the earlier assurance of Jeremiah, as the divine response to his devout and humane lamentation in view of the stupendous woes of Humanity, when he wished that his head were waters and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night—not for the mishaps of his own people merely; but for the political subjugation of old Jewry, the coming terrible destruction of Jerusalem and the virtual annihilation of Judaism itself; not for these alone, but for a broader scope of the long, dark age of human wrong—a rational foresight of the later history of mankind, in which he saw the arch-demon of Antagonism; caught a prophetic glimpse of the huge, ugly, heartless, beastly, devilish, priestly "Man-of-Sin," sitting in the nominal temple of God, and crushing out the hope of Man for a time, times and a half; heard the ceaseless din of war, the clanking of slavery's chains, and the prayers and imprecations of the scorned victims of human blame, through the tardy revolution of three thousand years; and saw the religious crucifixion of Truth, the license of Belial in Christendom, and the persecution of Liberty by dungeon, fire and sword, even to the nineteenth century, of the uttered Gospel of "Peace on earth and good-will to men." I ask if any believer can reject this divine answer to human despondency?—"After these days" of immeasurable wickedness and misery, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds. I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." That is, in the language of modern intelligence, the time is coming when there will be an end of preaching as well as legislating among men; for all mankind, having learned the Art of Living, will choose Virtue, and find the long-sought boon of Happiness.

Now, if any of my readers are unable to accept these bits of old parchment as infallible revelations of the coming Age of Virtue, it may be only because they find themselves wise above what was written aforetime for the learning of their predecessors. They stand on the doctrine of Progression, whereby we all have come to know more than our forefathers, and reaffirm by rational conviction what ancient seers and sages wrote by impression. They repudiate the notion of a race descending from Adam. Having traced their own ancestry backward and downward to one *Incongnitus Ignoramus*, they maintain also that the rising and risen generations have verily ascended from the lowest depths of unfathomable ignorance to their respective planes of acquired intelligence. But none can thus discern the superiority of the present in relation to the past, without also foreseeing the comparative elevation of the future. Such will demand no labored induction of my pen to establish the point of my assertion—that Man is maturing in a social as well as individual capacity; that just as childhood develops into manhood, so the juvenile race grows by experience, conserving wisdom and worth. Now young Humanity has its haubets and plays its pranks, but when it comes of age it will put away childish things. The Age of Virtue will dawn on Earth when adult men and women begin to multiply. To such as have scaled the heights of rational observation, there are visible indications of the near approach of this golden era. I shall in this connection only glance at the most obvious and promising of these cheering Presages.

1. The birth of Reform in Government.—We have, for

many years, had asylums for the unfortunate—maniacs, idiots, orphans and deaf-mutes; but formerly there appeared little or nothing for the erring. Of late the pale of human sympathy seems to be extending for the embrace of the *efficius* and criminal. An asylum for leprosy has recently become almost a verity, and another for prostitutes is at least thought of. The project of a reform school for unruly boys has fairly succeeded, and will soon become the parent of a like institution for lawless men. Meanwhile, there is a gradual relenting of "punitive justice" in our halls of legislation, and an auspicious shirking of "judicial vengeance" as represented by judges and juries. Men are not hung so sportively as of yore; the gallows does not flaunt to public gaze; and even jailers are putting their heads together for the better treatment of incarcerated culprits. These and other equally novel movements in behalf of the guilty—the quondam outcasts of society—indicate that ordinary brains are being impressed with the expediency as well as duty of overcoming evil with good. Common sense is beginning to cry out against the old method of dealing with crime, as an intolerable blunder; and self-interest, in keeping with all the better incentives of Human Nature, is ready to demand the *Reformation* of criminals, as being easier than their punishment, and the timely *Education of all to prevent crime*, as being less expensive and more effective than government.

This thought will be the sire of Character, Which is the only empire of the soul; Which fathers Love, the final conqueror Of selfishness, whose throne is Self-control; Which makes of Right the only living Law, And fosters Liberty without a flaw.

2. The death of Old Authority.—There has been a woful howling all over Christendom—"a weeping of the priests and ministers of the Lord, between the porch and the altar"—as the good prophet said there should, because "the heathen" out-siders have invaded their heritage, and raised the question, "Where is your God?" and it has grieved them to answer, since Authority is dead. It may not be possible, nor is it very important, to say precisely when this event took place; but let us note its sequel. *Reason is emancipated!* This is the result in which I glory, for it gives me leave to act myself. I think now as freely as I breathe. I can write, too, as truthfully as I think, and I find a Free Press to echo my inmost thought. How different this from twenty years ago, when I feared to think, lest I offend the surly Lord, (Authority,) and could not speak my thought to my better purpose, for want of tolerating ears. But Reason is now an implement of worthy use. This is a bright presage to every earnest soul. Why, when I first emerged from the fog of religious error, I seemed as one born alone. My sphere was Solitude. I had an inexpressible longing for sympathy; for none could, and few would, understand me. But since then thousands have had a like experience, and now I have companions enough. Then they called me infidel; now they call me Brother. What makes the difference? *Authority is dead, and*

Reason has broke the withes of hellish fear. Henceforth my soul will leap for joy of life; And Man shall weed Progress's upway way, Till all to each become Immanuel.

3. Last, but not least, I mention the present active part of angels in the work of human culture, as a forcible indication that the era of Universal Rectitude is drawing near. Some are condescending, by interposing their gentle powers for the removal of disease. I have been credibly informed that more than fifteen hundred invalids have been sensibly relieved through the agency of a single medium, in Worcester, Mass., and this at a cost of only one cent each. There are seemingly opposite examples, a plenty; but let the shrewd detector of imposture bear in mind that no number of counterfeits were ever supposed to invalidate a genuine bank-bill. Other angels are doing what they can to elevate Humanity, intellectually and morally, and win men and women to the highest aims and objects of life. They are preaching the Gospel of Jesus all over Christendom. They enter every accessible pulpit, sometimes impressing the mind of the officiating clergyman, but more commonly commanding the organism of some youthful and unprejudiced person; and crowds are often astonished at the profundity and pathos evolved through the mediumship of a girl. They are also writing books; and to their authorship and oratory, more than to any earthly cause, may be ascribed the grand emancipation of mind just referred to. But my aim in this paragraph is not to describe, but simply to call attention to the fact, and note its significance, that angels are visiting the abode of Man to-day in the character of Reformers, co-working with the foremost of living workers for the common weal. This demonstrates that the climate of departed spirits is not isolated from the human world; that men and angels are still allied by sympathy; that interblended interests make it necessary for the highest in development to serve the lowest; and, therefore, either Earth must be raised to Heaven, or Heaven be lowered to Earth. On this point the angels say, by one of their notable mediums,

"God has declared that Earth, From this time everforth, Shall rise, forever rise;"

And Man below these same cerulean skies Shall find his amaranthine Paradise.

"See the recent call for a Convention by keepers of Penitentiaries in several of the States. "Epic of the Starry Heaven," page 178.

ORCHESTRA OF THE STARS.

BY J. C. SMITH.

A twilight stillness sinks upon the town,
And misty dews are jewelling the grass;
Night's starry sentinels are gazing down
Through arches broad and heaven's cerulean glass.

The moon nocturnal, like a Persian maid,
Hides half her face from the up-gazing crowd;
The beauteous birds have sought the forest glade,
And Nature all has donned death's mystic shroud.

Save where the church-bells to the world proclaim
The solemn hour of worship and of prayer,
And songs all glowing with a Saviour's name,
Freight charged music on the ambient air.

This Sabbath eve, all silent and alone
In inspiration's deep, enrapturing power,
My fancy rears a bright, imperial throne—
Divine her crown—the goddess of the hour.

Clairvoyant vision ranges through the spheres
Swift as the lightning's world-encircling flight—
Nature's great hymn salutes elated ears,
And wakes to melody the drowsy night.

Great suns, all lurid with eternal fire,
Buzz as they fly along their endless road,
The deep, full basso of the starry choir,
Themselves the mighty Orpheus of God.

Planets in other that careering swing,
Held by God's hand, with gravitation call,
Make heaven's high concave with their treble ring—
Grand clarionets and bugles are they all.

Yon asteroids—those mysteries of the skies,
That hide to all but telescopic gaze—
List! how they make their mellow tones rise,
Like rich cellophane in the hymn of praise.

Not ye erratic wanderers on high!
Hermits of God—ye cometary train,
Whistling like penguins along the sky
A shrill soprano in the mighty strain.

Thus to a soul attuned to strains divine,
Is Nature's anthem sung by every sphere—
Suns join with suns, and stars with stars combine,
And roll orchestral music on the ear.
St. Louis, Aug. 7th, 1859.

He that is himself weary, will soon weary the public.

From the Boston Daily Dec of August 20th.

JOHN BEESON AND THE SPIRITS OF WM. PENN AND RED JACKET.

MEANS, EDITOR.—The following circumstances are the occasion of my name appearing in the above connection. I have been a witness to the deep wrongs inflicted upon the Indians on our western frontiers, and to the enormous waste of public treasure arising from wars which are got up for speculation, and of the moral blight which these induce. While reflecting on this sad state of affairs, and believing that no ordinary means would be sufficient to arrest the growing evils, I attended the morning prayer meeting at the Old South Chapel, (Boston,) and observing that persons in various circumstances of need were prayed for, it occurred to me that there is no class of persons who are in more need of sympathy and help than the poor hunted and defenceless Indians upon the frontiers, the greater portion of whom consist of widows and orphans. I therefore presented a written request for the prayers of the congregation in behalf of these people, as well as for those who are destroying them. Prayers were accordingly offered, during which it seemed to me that the great Father had already done his part, and that appropriate action in the love of our neighbor was the main thing wanting. But unfortunately, a sickly prejudice sprung up in the minds of some leading men, and instead of an earnest inquiry as to how we can help our suffering neighbors, and stay the progress of wrong, it was asked, Is the mover of this enterprise orthodox in his faith?

And at a subsequent meeting, in one of the churches, a brother arose, and after making some rather uncharitable remarks, called for the prayers of the audience for one who, he said, is pleading for the Indians, but being a Spiritist, he really more need of being prayed for than the Indians.

Having no opportunity at the time to respond to the good brother, and perceiving that a National humanitarian enterprise is likely to be opposed by unreasonable prejudice, I feel called upon to give the following statement of facts, premising that I stand as an advocate of the Indians, and address myself to all American citizens, irrespective of sect or party, but at the same time I invoke all good influences, and am ready to receive help from any quarter. Feeling the need of sympathy and instruction, that I might rightly prosecute the work in which I am engaged, and finding none who could give it, the thought occurred to me, perhaps the wise and good on "the other side of Jordan" will communicate, so I addressed a note to the late Col. McKenny, of the Indian Department, and another to William Penn, and wrapping them in several folds, I carried them to the office of Mr. Mansfield, a medium, and laid them upon his desk. In a few minutes he wrote in my presence an appropriate answer to each letter, signed by their respective names. William Penn concluded by inviting me to call upon mediums whenever I desired an interview with him, and said that he would communicate with me, providing that he could control the medium through whom I applied. Notwithstanding that I had read of similar cases of spirit intercourse, I was somewhat startled to have such a detailed answer, apparently coming direct from the spirit-land.

Mr. Mansfield promised to aid me in intercourse with the good folks above in this behalf, without charge. Accordingly I made another call, having a note in my pocket containing several questions, and without taking it out of my pocket, Mr. Mansfield's hand wrote the following answer:—

FROM WILLIAM PENN.

"Dear Beeson: I have long since been cognizant of thy heart's desire. Thy work is praiseworthy; would to God that I lived in the form to assist thee—that is all for which I would think of returning again to earth's life. But, dear Beeson, I am with thee, and couldst thou but see the host of Indian spirits who are working in this globe, I am sure that you would be satisfied to wander up and down as the servant of so noble a race of beings. I may not be able to answer the questions in thy pocket, but ask them one at a time, and I will try."

Thy friend, WILLIAM PENN.

Satisfactory answers were given, which would occupy too much space in your columns to repeat. I was leaving the office Mansfield called me back, saying that some other spirit wished to address me. At the same time his hand was influenced to write as follows:—

A LETTER FROM RED JACKET.

"My Brother, I take you by the hand, and welcome you to this spirit-land. In your column I have read of Red Spirit, which surrounded you. And, my brother, though your face is pale, and my face is red or tawny, yet our souls have been made one from having the same cause at heart. The final restoration of the noblest work on the Great Spirit—the Red Man. And my brother, let not your heart fall down nor your knees tremble; you are sustained and ever will be by Him who made both the Red Man and the White Man. And by and by, after a few more moons shall have passed away, you shall see your preaching will not have been in vain, but that the great Spirit has called you to this work. Yes, go on, and you shall have to say, as one of old,

"Alli pulla ho hovichim-kra-kra kha nrnhi cha havalpa kanvili, okvilia-hak. O pit ih okvutashko im achi cha chukvhi met anuck lochi ik im iksho amba nana ho misha tuck ut achi ik hi hi yimmi loch met im al ah-oh-oh."

Then go on, my pale face brother, and victory yours."

RED JACKET.

I asked for an interpretation, and it was immediately written.—"In due time you shall know." About two weeks afterwards I was in company with Dr. Cooper, from Ohio, who, without any expectation on my part, became entranced by an Indian Spirit, which spoke to me for about fifteen minutes, in the most kind and encouraging manner. I inquired of this spirit if he could tell me the meaning of what I had received from Red Jacket. He said that it related to an ancient tradition, which the tribes have had long before the "big canoe" (ship) came to their shores, that white men should come and teach them, and that they would all become friends and brothers. Mansfield, coming into the room while I was asking these questions, was taken possession of by a spirit, and wrote, "Yes, it is a prophecy, in the Choctaw language, and it may be found in the ix. chap. and 23d verse of Mark." Now, Mr. Editor, as neither Mansfield, or myself, or any one that I have seen since that day, know anything about this language, perhaps some of the numerous readers of your paper can send us a translation.

I had said in a public school, a few days previous, that not another fourth of July should pass away but the red children of the forest, as well as the white children of the city, should rejoice together in a day of Independence. But afterwards I doubted whether I had not been too sanguine. I now ask, will not the millions of American freed men who glory in the Monument at Bunker Hill, and Washington, and Plymouth Rock, see to the fulfillment of this prophecy?

Learning that Mr. Mansfield was about to leave the city, I called at his office, a week after the above occurrence, and laid upon his desk the following note, wrapped and sealed with care:

"Will Wm. Penn or Red Jacket give me such direction, before the Monday goes away, as they conceive would be of service relative to my mission for the Indians?"

Mansfield sat down, and his hand wrote the following joint answer:

FROM WILLIAM PENN AND RED JACKET.

"Dear Beeson—Thou comes to me and thy friend Red Jacket for what we believe to be an encouraging thee in thy great work. Thou has done well the last month; I thee has at last arrested the attention of minds who will help this nobly of works."

Oh, my dear mortal one, could I but be associated with thee in the form, as I would be, I feel that we could revolutionize the world by particulars in which thee seems so enthusiastically engaged."

There has nothing to fear; go forward. Avoid sectarianism; meet all denunciations of Christian people as thy brothers and thy sisters. For we are not all of one family? Have we not all one Father?

Thou wilt meet with sympathy thee now little expects. Then, be thee faithful, and take courage. Thou shalt not meet with any obstacle that thee shall not have the strength to surmount. Keep thy eye single, and look to Him whose thou art, and from whence cometh all thy strength. Thou shalt yet see the satisfaction of thy soul."

RED JACKET.

The signatures are in different hand-writing; and as Mansfield did not know to whom the note was addressed, and of course I did not know who would answer; so that the idea of its being a mental response to my own question is utterly precluded. I have ascertained from inquiry that Mr. Mansfield is a gentleman highly esteemed for his many excellencies, and that he is a member of the M. E. C., and that before his numerous calls as a medium he was a class leader of more than common usefulness.

It is thought proper that these statements should be made to the public, because the movement in behalf of the Indians is of too much importance to both races and to the country at large, to be slighted through unfounded prejudice. And, moreover, it is conceived to be an infringement on the right of private judgment to be held up in public by a signer above others, because of one's belief, and it is believed that our Friends will not give the cold shoulder to the enterprise on this account, when they recollect that Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley, and the Society of Friends, with the fathers of both the Catholic and Protestant churches, were believers in spiritual manifestations, and that patriarchs and seers of old had frequent communications with this kind.

St. Paul tells us that we are encompassed by a cloud of witnesses; and, in alluding to the departed ones, he asks, Are they not all ministering spirits? Indeed,

the records of those communications form the chief interest of the Bible. Take these from its pages, and it would be but the dull details of common history. If, then, in the government of the world, God has in mercy opened unto man a more direct and renewed intercourse with spirit-life, surely this should not be a cause of ill-will or unkind feeling among Christians. It is well known that the investigation of the modern phenomena has cured some of their selfishness, and inspired many with hope and faith in immortality, who were before unbelievers.

I do not offer the above as a vindication of Spiritism, but only to show that if I and others believe in it, we have some reason for our faith—as we are exhorted by the Scriptures to "try the spirits," and to "prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good."

I respectfully submit to a candid and discerning public the communications purporting to come from William Penn and Red Jacket. The question is,—From whom did they come? Not from Mr. Mansfield, because his character and the circumstances under which they were given make it impossible. Not from the devil, because they bear the stamp of truth, and the nature and tendency of the communications are good, and only good, and so superlatively good that it seems impossible that they could have come from any source but that which is good; therefore we must (according to Scripture) "hold them fast," until they are proved to be something else than what is claimed.

In regard to the unknown language: it does not matter whether it shall prove to be a veritable Choctaw tradition, or something else,—our duty to the Indian will remain unaltered, and we may safely conclude that three things are certain:—

1st. That whether prayers are offered for Indians, or for Spiritists, or for any others, to be effectual must have works as well as words. Fred. Douglass says that he prayed a long time for freedom, and God helped him to get it when he prayed with his tears. So God will help the pulpit and the press and the people to better conditions, as soon as they unite more fully to promote peace and love and justice among all nations.

2d. That the affirmation relative to the Indians' participation in the joy of the next Fourth of July can be, and therefore ought to be, made true.

3d. That a practical faith in the foregoing will realize (so far as Indian wrongs are concerned) the fact, as it is recorded in the 11th chapter and 23d verse of Mark: "For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the midst of the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith."

Let all the people say, Amen.

Respectfully, JOHN BEESON,
No. 18 Lagnage place, Boston,
August 16, 1859.

DEALINGS WITH THE DEAD.—NO. 2.

From early childhood I believed in ghosts and spirits, but never had a realizing sense that the objects of my belief had any relationship to human people—in which I resemble thousands of to-day who believe in ghosts, &c., but have no idea that in so doing they are believing in the spirits of mortals over the veil. I long strove to find out, by reading, and conversation with my elders, if this earth-life was all we had to hope for or enjoy. I was told and read that man had an immortal soul, but what this soul was, where it went, what its nature, I could learn nothing, for every answer was to me as unsatisfactory as would be the Platonic theory to a modern Spiritualist. Full of doubt, I inclined toward atheism, and left the church of my parent, (mother,) the Roman Catholic, in disgust. Years of doubt, infidelity, elapsed, during which I held many and oft conversations with "ghosts," but could never realize that they were human spirits. The history of my life and psychological experience is before the world, and has been read by thousands, hence I bound at once from my childhood to the year of the "Rochester Knockings." I heard them; I believed, but did not know that human souls produced them. I studied intensely upon the subject, visited many learned men and women, spent three weeks with Andrew J. Davis in Hartford, Ct., made the acquaintance of his first wife, and was by her proposed as a member of the "Harmonical Brotherhood" of that city, and owing to the fact that I had given many and incontestible proofs that I possessed the faculty not only of seeing spirits, but of clairvoyance, also, was admitted. About this time Davis was writing his second volume of the Harmonical Series, and he had made some splendid *eyrion sketches*, illustrative of his renowned hypothesis of cosmic form, as detailed in the first sections of the second part of Nature's Divine Revelations; and one of these *eyrions* was the means of causing my soul to perform, what in certain aspects was to me, at least, a frightful voyage to the sky. Previous to this experience, notwithstanding all I had seen, heard and read on the subject of the soul's immortality, I found it utterly impossible to actualize my theoretic belief; and that, too, at the very time that scores of persons through my instrumentality or "mediumship" were triumphing in a firm, unshaken faith in an hereafter. Strange, was it not?

The experience I am about to relate occurred at a time when the skeptical mood was on my soul, and it overtook me as I wandered on the borders of the regions of despair; but it lifted my struggling soul to heights of glory and grandeur, from whose sublime summit my vision swept the plains of immortality. Had I profited as I should have done by that immense experience, I should have been saved from many and many a bitter hour. But it was my lot to learn in the severest of all schools.

One morning I chanced to go into the rooms of the Brotherhood, and, while there, closely examined Mr. Davis's drawings, endeavoring to picture the reality before my mind. I failed. It was utterly impossible to comprehend the stupendous conception, and, sick at heart from my failure, I left the rooms, and mechanically strolled into the country. I had wandered perhaps an hour, when feeling a double oppression, fatigue of body, and despondency of soul, I sought the deep shade of a natural bower in the wood, and reclining on the soft green turf, abandoned myself to meditation on the all absorbing topic. How long I lay thus I cannot say; all that I remember of the external world, is that I framed the following questions, and interrogated my deepest soul for an answer:—"What is God, and where does he dwell?" The next experience that I had was a strange and awful one, for I felt that I was dying.

The overhanging branches of the trees seemed suddenly changed to funeral palls; the busy hum of myriad insects no longer pleased by their soft, low buzz, but smote upon my parting soul like a knell, while the songs of the birds seemed changed into the sepulchral chant of Eastern story. All grew dark by degrees; I gasped for breath; the effort seemed vain, and the dreadful possibility that I must die alone there beneath the blue sky and the green trees, flashed across my soul, and the cold beads of perspiration that trickled from my brow attested the mental agony that I was undergoing. Good-by all ye beauties of the world of sense. I

gaze penetrated the surface, and beheld the essence of whatever material things lay beneath. This, to me, was most perfectly demonstrated in the following manner: Surely, said I, this is eternity, and I am now a free soul! Oh, that I might behold another soul than mine, that I might understand something of its marvelous nature! Scarcely had this wish been formed, than I felt myself rising perpendicularly in space, until it appeared that I had ascended far above the clouds, and condescended, from the appearance of the hills, and the city itself, which I now could plainly see, that I had attained an elevation of not less than five and twenty miles. At this point I stopped for an instant, and then descended by a grade, reaching the immediate surface of the earth in the vicinity of Utica, New York. Near me stood a house, embowered in trees; in this house was a study, and in that study a man engaged in reading. What I then saw convinced me that the theories founded by Newton, and now prevalent, in relation to sight and sound, are by no means correct, or even approximately so. In the first place, I saw the rays of light strike the book from two sources at the same time, viz., the solar light, from without, and a finer, more subtle, and perfectly white light from the eyes of the man himself, which convinced me that we gain our knowledge of forms external by means of an absolute and positive irradiation from the central brain, through the optic nerves, the retina, and other delicate organs. Secondly, while I gazed upon the man, I heard a bell ring, clearly and distinctly! That bell was not rung within two hundred miles of the spot where my body lay in a death-like state of insensibility, as was proved by the action of the man within the chamber; for he instantly rose from his seat, not to respond to it, but to bid his little children make less noise, and not disturb him by his ringing. But what most attracted my wondrous attention, was the fact that I discovered that sound was not, as scientific men assert, a mere vibration of the air, but was, and is, a fine substance, which leaves the object in greater or less volume, in pointed rays, broad sheets, or undulatory waves, according to the nature of that whence they, or it, emanates.

I still, at times, possess the powers I did on that day, and will submit to a course of experiments, by properly qualified persons, to determine these very curious points. I saw that from the man's ears proceeded innumerable fibres, as of pale-green light, and that the waves or rays of sound (which fill all contiguous space), reached his spirit by coming in contact with these fibrils, directly within the rim of the external ear. The question here naturally arises, how was it possible for me to become cognizant of sound, under the circumstances in which we were relatively placed, for the time being? I reply, the soul's faculties belong and pertain exclusively to it, and to the spirit which is but its caskey; that these fibrils emanate from the spiritual, and not the material man, and hence that the free soul experiences no difficulty in hearing or in seeing. And this explains why some of the dead can only be communicated with by vocally putting our questions, while other spirits require us to put them in writing.

But my space is occupied. In my next you shall have the sequel, concerning what I saw a human soul to consist of.

Yours, fraternally, LE ROSCIORUIN.

MAN AND HIS RELATIONS.

BY S. B. BRITTON.

CHAPTER XI.

MENTAL ELECTROTYPING ON VITAL SURFACES.
In the organic chemistry of the living world electricity and light are the ever-active agents on whose subtle powers the most delicate processes in Nature constantly depend. We are assured by curious scientific experiments that the growth of plants has been immensely stimulated by electrical currents artificially generated, and directed to their roots. When this agent is thus set free, it moves the grosser elements through which the currents are transmitted, or as far as the electric excitation extends, stimulating molecular attraction, changing the relations of the ultimate atoms, modifying and determining chemical affinities and combinations—so that the assimilation of foreign particles is greatly accelerated, and the vegetable organism correspondingly enlarged. It is also worthy of remark, that such trees as have pointed, needle-shaped leaves, like the pine, are invariably evergreens. This fact suggests the idea that possibly the innumerable points which such trees present may so attract the atmospheric electricity as not only to preserve the fluidity of the sap in the lowest temperature, but also to prevent its receding from the exposed surfaces of the branches when the mercury falls below the freezing point.

That light is indispensable in the chemistry of the vegetable kingdom, must be apparent to every observer. The meanest shrub, or the humblest wayside flower, makes silent but significant proclamation of this truth. The germs that are buried in the soil sprout upward toward the ethereal regions of the atmosphere, and never downward toward the centre of the earth. By a law of Nature they all reach out after the light. The flowers open with the morning, and close when day retires behind the evening star. The rich verdure that clothes the fields and forests is fresh and beautiful, as if, at the world's baptism, an emerald sphere had been fused in the sun; and all the gorgeous colors of the floral empire are born of light! The flowers are the living prisms in whose delicate and beautiful structures the primal rays are mysteriously separated, variously combined, and reflected with such purity and intensity as admits of no successful imitation by human effort, aided by the most accomplished art.

The rays reflected from the outlines of an object to the eye leave its image on the retina; or, passing through the camera, produce a semblance of its form, with appropriate lights and shadows, on any delicate surface made sensitive by a suitable chemical preparation. In a similar manner the forms and, to some extent, the colors of objects may be electrotyped on the external surfaces of living human bodies. I believe there are several well authenticated facts illustrative of this singular susceptibility. It is not long since it was stated in the public journals that a man who was standing near a tree when it was struck by lightning, immediately presented a vivid picture of the tree on the exposed side of his body. While he was not fatally injured by the shock, it would nevertheless appear that the passage of the current so near him acted on the chemical constituents of his body with such power as to electrotype the nearest object on the cuticle. It is also alleged that the bodies of several persons killed by lightning have exhibited a similar phenomenon.

The singular effects produced on the unborn child by the sudden mental emotions of the mother are remarkable examples of this kind of electrotyping on the sensitive surfaces of living forms. It is doubtless true that the mind's action, in such cases, may increase or diminish the molecular deposits in the several portions of the system. The precise place which each separate particle assumes in the new organic structure may be determined by the influence of thought or feeling. If in the mother there exists any unusual tendency of the vital forces to the brain, at the critical period, there will be a similar cerebral development and activity in the offspring. A lady who, during the period of gestation, was chiefly employed in reading the poets, and in giving form to her day-dreams of the ideal world, at the same time gave to her child (in phrenological parlance), large *ideality* and a highly imaginative turn of mind. Some time since I met with a youth who has finely molded limbs and a symmetrical form through-

out. His mother has a large, lean, attenuated frame, that does not offer so much as a single suggestion of the beautiful. The boy is doubtless indebted for his fine form to the presence of a beautiful French lithograph in his mother's sleeping apartment, and which presented for her contemplation the faultless form of a naked child.

Any object of intense desire, or that occasions sudden surprise or extreme fear, is liable to be visibly impressed on the features. This is most likely to occur with persons whose minds and nervous systems are most active and impressible. By this psycho-electrical action external objects are instantly pictured on the delicate surface of the living form. This sudden involuntary action of the passions of the mind on and through the forces of the body, has produced many startling effects, and thousands of human beings carry with them through life the living illustrations—sometimes mournful in the extreme—of this mysterious power. On one occasion, after the delivery of a lecture in a small town in Central New York, I went to the house of Mr. C., to pass the night. My theme had been, the power of the mind as exhibited in the organic formation and vital action of the body, and also in the various expressions of which the human face is susceptible. Mrs. C., who was a member of the household, intimated a desire to exhibit a marked illustration of the subject. Accordingly, calling her little son, of the age of three years, to her side, she exposed his back to the inspection of the company. Between his shoulders there was a most perfect representation of a mouse. The mark—which was elevated somewhat above the surrounding surface—was literally covered with a thick coat of fine hair, like that of the animal represented; and, what was still more surprising, the cuticle also precisely resembled the skin of a mouse. This was the mind's work of an instant; and while such facts demonstrate its supremacy over the elements of matter, they also indicate the danger—under like circumstances—of yielding to sudden impulses, and the importance of a supreme self-control.

The operation of this psycho-physiological law has subjected more than one innocent person to grave suspicions. And yet when the impressions made on the sensorium—from external objects, and through the outward organs of vision—are unaccompanied by any sudden action of the mind, they may possibly be reproduced in the offspring.

More admiration of a person—if the feeling be continuous and strong—may suffice to impress the image of the admired object—more or less perfectly—on the offspring. That remarkable effects are produced in this way, the intelligent reader will not be disposed to deny; and surely the philosophical observer will not be the first to indulge in uncharitable suspicions of female infidelity, should his children resemble some one else rather than himself. Some years since the writer was acquainted with a married lady, who lived in Fairfield County, Conn., and was universally respected and esteemed for her exemplary life and unblemished character. She was strongly attached to her church, and her pastor—who was an earnest and forcible speaker—realized her ideal of early and uncorrupted manhood. The lady was accustomed to listen—on each succeeding Sabbath—to his eloquent discourses, with reverent and rapt attention. She possessed a lively imagination, and a strong, but doubtless a strictly legitimate interest in the young clergyman; and the image so often presented to the eye and the mind, was transmitted to another. During the second year of the ministry of Mr. —, in that place, the lady referred to became the mother of a son, who, from his birth, was observed to resemble the minister; nor is the likeness less apparent since the child has become a tall and graceful youth.

A gentleman of our acquaintance, who has very dark eyes, hair and beard, is wedded to a lady with brown hair, and a complexion not lighter than his own. Of nine children—the offspring of their marriage—six are living, and, with a single exception, they all have dark, straight hair and hazel eyes. Indeed, for several generations, not a single member of either family has had curly hair. The exceptional case is a fair youth with large, blue, expressive eyes and golden locks, with a natural tendency to curl. Some time before his birth the parents had occasion to spend a month with a family in Boston, where there was a radiant child with delicate skin, mild blue eyes, and a profusion of sunny curls. The lady visitor became deeply interested in that beautiful child, and often gazed at it with rapturous admiration and delight. The strong impulse of the mind thus electrotyped the image on her own offspring, so regulating the subtle processes of the vital chemistry, as not only to determine its general complexion, but also the precise color of the hair, and even blending the sublimated elements in the organic chemistry of the eye with such nice precision as to fix and reflect the violet ray.

The human mind thus leaves a multitude of images—beautiful and terrible—not only on the delicate organization through which it perpetually manifests its powers—and which doubtless contains the mystical records of all its feeling, thought and action—but the mental impulses, when sufficiently intensified, are reproduced in those who come after. If such external objects and scenes as occasion the mental excitement, leave no visible outlines on the face or the form, they may still be expressed in another way, and be no less distinguishable. A gentleman who resides in Le Roy, N. Y., in an interview with the writer, some time since, related a singular fact, that may be appropriately introduced in this connection. His wife had a beautiful picture of John the Baptist hanging in her room. The figure was in a nude state, except the loins, which were encircled with the girdle of camel's hair, supported by a single strap passing over one shoulder. The lady being in delicate health for some time, (antecedent to the birth of a son, now some fifteen years of age), had occasion to spend much of her time on a couch from which the picture was constantly exposed to view. The youth referred to presents one of the greatest novelties in the category of psychological phenomena. It is a curious fact that he will never tear but one suspender! If commanded to put on a pair, he will obey; but he is quite sure to have them both over the same shoulder that supports the strap and the girdle in the picture.

I well remember a young man, whose earth-life, of some thirty years' duration, was the frightful embodiment and expression of one terrible scene. He had not opened his eyes to behold the light of the natural world, when a desolating tornado passed over his native town. The tall oaks, which had braved the storms of centuries, bowed low as the slender grass bends in the summer's breeze; or, rather, as the grain is leveled by the reaper's sickle. It was a fatal hour! The sufferings of many years seemed condensed into one awful moment of unspeakable horror, and the terrible scene cast its dark shadow over the whole life of a human being. That tempest was reproduced in that man. For nearly thirty years—and until the close of his mortal existence—his eyes rolled in their sockets with a strange, delicious expression. Ever and anon he sighed heavily, as the winds sigh through the tall trees; and his head and all his limbs swayed to and fro, perpetually, as the forest boughs are moved when the breath of the tempest sweeps over them. Poor mortal! his melancholy life is over, and he has found rest at last where the storms of earth and time shall disturb his repose no more!

This case graphically illustrates the action of a law that operates as irresistibly as gravitation throughout the realm of our organic existence, and which is scarcely less manifest in its ordinary effects. By disregarding

this law our children may be monsters in their physical conformation; or, with respect to mind and character, they may be the breathing, conscious shadows of gigantic wrongs—for all moral, social, and political evils are but the reflected images of the imperfect conditions under which we live and move and have our being." On the contrary, that law be wisely respected, and those who shall succeed the present generation—in the drama of practical life and the records of authentic history—will present superior types of womanly grace and manly perfection; and thus the Race may advance, in all that imparts a real value to life and a true dignity to the human character, until the glory of a moral transfiguration—like a mantle of light and a crown of joy—encircles the universal Humanity.

Banner of Light.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1859.

PUBLICATION OFFICES:

31-2 Brattle St., Boston; 143 Fulton St., New York.

All letters must be addressed,

BANNER OF LIGHT, Boston, Mass.

EDITORS:

WILLIAM BERRY, LUTHER COLBY, J. R. M. SQUIRE.

THOS. GALEZ FORSTER, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Single copies per year, \$2 00
" six months, 1 00
" three months, 50

All subscriptions must be paid in advance, and the paper will be discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for, of which due notice will be given.

CLUB RATES.—Clubs of four and upwards will be furnished at the following rates:
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Six months, 75

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Address, "BANNER OF LIGHT," Boston, Mass.

Berry, Colby & Co.

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THE SPIRIT OF REFORMERS.

A little examination makes it appear that even those who seek to reform the race, do not always themselves understand from what motive they work, what distinct object they are aiming at, or by what means they are going to effect the purposes they have set before them. Nothing is easier than for a man to set himself up as a reformer of this kind, for the capital required to enter upon the business is so trifling as hardly to deserve mentioning. Hence we see a great number of would-be reformers, both of the spirit and the body, who know little or nothing of the laws on which all reforms are based, and scarcely know of the laws after which their own individual progress is secured. They adopt certain catch-words that by chance have fallen in their way, and expect to use these as a sort of hinge on which to turn the world.

A genuine desire of reform will manifest itself chiefly by the wish to *know* what is true and good. That must necessarily be its very first effort and aim. But we too often behold in its stead, merely a pugilistic desire to overcome, and overthrow. The hasty and crude reformers, who have not yet learned, from the observation of the laws of their own being, that the laws of other natures are very similar, entertain fancies respecting the renovation of the race that have no sort of root in nature, that cannot therefore be put in operation, and that imply destruction rather than advancement, and annihilation rather than expansion. It is quite as necessary, to-day, to remember the old Greek injunction—"Know thyself"—as it has been in any age of the world. In fact, the more talk there is made over this very business of individualization, the less proof is there—we sometimes think—that the work of individualization will really and truly go forward.

More complaining is not advancement. To point out faults is not all there is to do, either with men or institutions. It is a mistake to suppose so. And those preachers of reform, who go here and there before the people, finding fault only with this custom and that habit, and hurling damnable phrases against this institution and that, ought to be made aware that they are of no assistance in the work of popular advancement, but rather aid others in entrenching themselves still more securely behind traditional prejudices whose force is not to be broken in this way.

There is another class, allied closely to that of the whiners and fault-finders, who live by denouncing every thing that does not instantly give way before the light of their ideas, and grow correspondingly wrathful to find that the old and mossy institutions seem to stand all the more firmly in consequence of their assaults. These need never expect to make headway in their work, for it is after a mode directly at variance with the fundamental laws of human nature. Denunciators should pause to consider, first, that there is not a principle, in any true and abiding sense of the word; and, secondly, that the course they pursue is the very poorest policy, also.

Let us look at these two propositions, separately.

If the principle of reform is conveyed and communicated by the employment of denunciatory language, and in that way chiefly, then it is safe to infer that the reform cannot be an improvement upon the abuses themselves. The radical meaning of the word reform is—to put into a new shape. That is, if an institution of to-day fails to express the experience of to-day, it must needs be re-formed, cast in a new mold; but it is a fatal mistake to suppose that its life and spirit must be assailed, those who subscribe to it, or "belong to it," be insulted, or wrong motives be imputed to those who have been educated to think that nothing so good of its kind can be again constructed. The first thought, and the last thought, too, with a reformer, should be with reference to the *true* and the *good*; not with reference to the molds and formalities in which they may happen temporarily to have been cast. The central thought, idea, or sentiment, must be kept steadily in view, and not made subsidiary to the purpose or wish to overthrow the fabric in which it is inadequately confined. This view alone is consistent with the notion that true reform is growth, and not merely a fight or a series of squabbles, grandiloquently termed a "battle."

The recently published letter of Mr. Theodore Parker to his congregation, in which are set forth most eloquently his individual experiences as a minister, contains a very emphatic and admirable passage to this same effect, namely, that he ever aimed, during his ministerial work, to lead back his hearers to the primary sentiment of pure morals and genuine piety; knowing very well that if that sentiment was only developed to its utmost, and cultivated with the greatest care, the old scales of form must in due time be shed by the natural movement of the soul's growth, and

questions of ceremony and rituals, of institutions and organizations, would silently settle themselves, taking that subsidiary position in the process of improvements which is all that in reality belongs to them.

Here is the true starting-point. This is the only genuine standard to which all schemes and projects of reform must finally be brought. The inquiry of a professed reformer is not, how much noise can he make, or how energetically can he assail and denounce; but, how much water does he draw; what is his depth; has he yet discovered the secret and fundamental laws of his spiritual being; and is he aware that every individual and social reformation is an honest and healthy work, and not a mere hurrah, a crowding down of those not able to defend themselves, nor a cramming down others' throats the food he has considered best for them. If the central principle is healthy in the reformer, all he can do is to awaken it into activity in the souls of others. If he believes in freedom of conscience for himself, he must certainly believe in the same thing for everybody else. And his effort is mainly to consist of conducting others into the same blessed privileges of which he makes a boast in his own case. They must have their spiritual sensibilities pricked and stimulated; their perceptions must be quickened; they must be awakened to behold what they never have beheld, in the life that lies all around them; they must be inoculated with new *vices*, and not be attacked in their prejudices; they must be made to see that there is a wider scope and a larger vision than any they have ever yet embraced; and, in fine, understand that in the first place, there is an eternity of work for them to perform; and, in the second place, that nobody can do it for them, but they are to do it entirely themselves.

The other proposition we laid down, was, that reforming by denunciation is an extremely unprofitable and ineffectual policy. If work is to be done, and especially by influencing the natures of other men, it is highly important that it be done in the easiest, that is, in the most natural way. There is nothing like taking hold of matters by the handle. There are some reformers—would they were not so many in number—who inwardly hold that all easy work is not work at all; and that, to make progress, it is essential that as many obstacles as possible be thrown in the way. The harder the work, with them, the greater the results secured. They would not lift up their voice except to sound a charge to some imaginary battle, and believe that mankind are to be made permanently better by first heartily drubbing a part of them.

These men chiefly cry out against the leaders and managers who keep the necks of the rest bent with their yoke, forgetting that the shortest way to remove the yoke is to show the sufferers how to lift their heads, and not to murder the overseers. For if a community are quite willing to be bowed down in servitude to the traditional opinions and prejudices of a few others, bowed down they will be, and nobody can get them out of the body of such a death save themselves. If they are to be freed, "themselves must strike the blow." If they wish a larger liberty, they must, first, fully understand what they want, and, next, be prepared to seize it with their own hands. To seek merely to excite such against the men who make and keep them subordinate, is in no true sense to free them from their bondage; for the bondage is, after all, that of their own souls, which they must break through as they need. And as fast as the light of heaven dawns on those souls, they will break it through, and do it, too, without any other aid than that with which nature beneficently endowed them.

Then, again, there is a high and true policy in all sorts of reforms. To say that this is not to be duly considered, because, perhaps, it is unworthy to associate policy with principle, is to talk without knowledge either of human nature or of the subject itself. There is always a policy to be consulted, in all things; and no plan or project, whether spiritual or material, can gain ground and hold it, unless constant reference is made to so plain a fact in nature as this. We get hints from above, and proceed to act upon them when we see their exact applicability to circumstances; we therefore pursue, to that extent, a course of policy. Every person of prudence and the least degree of reflection does the same. Society, man, and all his fleeting institutions, bear witness to the same truth, and we are compelled to accept it as something from which we cannot altogether cut loose. Hence it is far better, for any cause, to promote it by simply stating it in love and faith and charity, than by holding up to ridicule or denunciation those who still feel obliged to adhere to the prejudices of their life-long education.

We have listened to too many discourses, in doors and out, of professed reformers, not to have observed that a great many of the speakers fall into the unfortunate error of first firing into the creeds, the churches, and the other existing institutions, instead of appealing, as they should, to that deep and eternal religious instinct which is imbedded in every human heart; as if the forms must be got away before the substance could assert itself, and all obstacles must first be carefully removed before the soul could make advancement. The result is, besides, to excite in their hearers just those prejudices, and oftentimes those passions, which they affect to deplore in the very institutions they denounce. They appeal to the feelings of opposition, and of partisanship, instead of to those better and truer instincts that are founded in the human soul, and that would of themselves, in time, wear away all the institutions and forms that appear so objectionable. We would prefer seeing them do their legitimate work, and do it honestly and thoroughly, to see them run off into the business of assailing others, or building up a sect of their own after the self-same methods which they find fault with.

All reform is potent and permanent, in reference to the spirit and temper in which it is undertaken. Nothing stands that is not genuine. A new creed may be built up after the old ways of doing such things, but, even if it does profess to be an improvement on what has been, we do not see how that will make it so. We who hope to leave the world better than we found it, must be liberal and large in our sympathies, must give ample time for arguments to do their proper work, and never forget that we are but slowly emerging out of the darkness into the light ourselves, and not a whit faster than our spiritual vision can endure the brightness of the same.

The Atlantic Telegraph.

It is reported, on good authority, we believe, that the Atlantic Cable will be laid again next summer, the necessary arrangements having all been made for that momentous undertaking. Mr. Cyrus W. Field has been in Europe to oversee the business of getting matters in proper trim, and, it is said, has met with all the success he desired. Now that the subject is revived, we noticed an account in one of the New York papers, a few days since, of the number of messages and words that had been successfully sent over the old cable, beginning with the very first, and ending with the fragment of the very last. The proof is unquestionable, it strikes us, that messages have been sent; for it is known that the English Government saved, by one despatch, £50,000, which would otherwise have been spent in the embarkation of troops not wanted. The spirits said that the cable would not work much at first, but that it would prove a grand success eventually.

Sensibilo.

The *Waterford Sentinel* advises its readers to think for themselves—not adopt an opinion upon an important or controverted subject, simply because this man or that one broached it. There is too much of "talking things for granted." Think—think earnestly, untriflingly, and think aloud, if needs be. Suppose Mr. Censor does denounce you because you fail to agree with him—what of that? You, and not he, are responsible for your opinions and their consequences. You will never be of much use to the world, nor to yourselves, until you learn to think for yourselves. Our sentiments, exactly.

WHERE WERE THE LAWS OF NATURE?

DEAR BANNER.—A young lady from Portland, Annie M. Lord, has been spending a few days with us, and, as was expected, we have had the spirits for our guests also. We are aware, as Mr. Emerson has said, that where two people meet together there is always the unseen third. And we are also impressed with the cheering thought that those who have loved us and left us, revisit the familiar scenes of their earth-life. We see them not, we hear them not, but in our moments of reverie, or, may be, in our dreams, we have mystic thoughts dimly blinding of the fact. But the foot-step, and the voice, is never heard as when clothed in mortality; and how they are with us, and how they influence us, is so much involved in mystery, that the cares and desires, the hopes and prospects, of this life, fill up all our hours, with only a stray moment to devote to those, as the poet says,

"Sweet, welcome spirits from afar,
Who visit us in happy dreams,
Or leave the door of heaven ajar,
Through which a flood of glory streams."

But our youthful guest is a medium, and a remarkably good one for the physical manifestations—one of the best I ever sat with; and with her in our quiet family, it seemed almost as though we had an open door between us and the shadowy world, so real and unmistakable were the demonstrations.

Such things are not new to you, Mr. BANNER, neither are they to me; for you and I have had the positive proof that ponderable objects will move without mortal agency—Professor Felton's *ipsi dixit* to the contrary notwithstanding. You know he made a mistake once on his own classic field, where a Greek never should, where he publicly, and perhaps thoughtlessly, stated that Socrates never claimed a spirit for his authority. But the wisest and greatest of men will sometimes err, and Homer, you know, sometimes nods; and the copious Professor may make another mistake.

But to return to our medium. Everybody may not have had our experience; and for such, with your permission, I will describe, as well as I am able, some of the manifestations witnessed while Miss L. was with us.

These manifestations were performed in the dark, and were very satisfactory to those who were present, a majority of whom were skeptical on the subject of modern Spiritualism. During the performance, the medium was entranced, and unconscious. All present (generally from six to eight comprised the circle), joined hands—the two nearest to the medium, and the two next nearest, putting their hands together, which caused a break in the circle where the medium sat, who then gently patted the six hands with her right and left, as if beating time, which gave evidence to four of the persons of the constant occupation of her hands. The two nearest to the medium putting their chairs on her dress and keeping them there, and sitting close, precluded any rising up or change of position. Without waiting long, the implements for these Spiritual manifestations provided, consisting of a guitar, tambourine, table-bells, drumsticks, pans, &c., were alive with noise and motion, sometimes altogether; but generally the instruments gave delightful music. And, as a finale, preceding a "kind good night," the table behind the medium would, without any noise, rise over her head, and stand on the table in the centre of the circle.

Every conceivable precaution was taken to prevent any imposition, had such been possible under the arrangements; the whereabouts of the medium's hands being constantly within feeling distance, she could not move undetected, and any confluence with her in our family would be, and was, by all unquestioned. The lifting of the table, as a finale, was a physical impossibility for the medium to accomplish. The unconscious state of the medium was a matter tested, and circumstances also corroborated the fact.

We said these manifestations were in the dark; we also had a few sittings in the day-time, and in full daylight. At first, sounds were heard on the guitar, and sometimes a little music. The guitar was under a small table, and wholly covered with a large table-cloth, to keep the light from the instrument, which appeared to be an essential condition. On one occasion the guitar played a great many tunes, and played them well, and also accompanied; there was no mistake, and no cheat in these performances. There was a bell under the table, keeping company with this intelligent and apparently self-acting guitar, which had been often rung in the dark circles, but was stubborn now, and refused to answer our calls upon it to ring. The guitar was more accommodated; and we must confess that if we were going to use our toes to amuse the gullible, it would have been an easier matter to have rung the bell, than to have played "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" on the guitar.

I was describing some of this to a skeptical friend, who had too much faith in me on general matters to doubt me in this, who said I must have been psychologized—a state, by the way, which the learned Mr. Felton thinks very common among well-meaning, ignorant people. In his abusive tirade upon people who believe their own eyes instead of his, he quite forgets how often, and almost without an exception, every great truth has been poohed at by the world's exponents of knowledge, when in conflict with their own notions, until at last it forced them (as they will be in this), to spread their charmed circle round it. The fact should teach him a little humility.

A few evenings after, I found room for this friend at the circle, and during this mystic musical orgie, I asked him if he was psychologized. Says he, "I am not psychologized, and I am not drunk, and I should not be surprised now to see a block of houses dance." Then said I, "It must be the devil," (an individual, by the way, I am skeptical of) when I received a rap on my nose with the guitar. The operation in that instance purported to be an Indian; he made good aim, and I have a slight mark there, which convinces me that I was in my normal state.

The question was and is often asked, If such things can be done in the dark, why not in the light? I am not surprised at the question; and one of these days I will give you a few simple ideas on that point, which are, in a measure, satisfactory to me.

We had the pleasure of witnessing the manifestations, as given in the presence of Miss Lord, and can but bear our testimony to the utter absence of all deception on the evening we were present. Our friend has forgotten to state one part of the performance. The company are seated at one table, while the instruments are placed upon another table, behind the former. The guitar accompanied, while the company sang a variety of melodies, sacred and secular. It was played while floating about the room above us, its passage to and from us being felt in the displacement of air by its motion and in the variation in sound. It rested upon our head many times, (say ten times), and remained upon it, playing all the while, at each time from thirty seconds to a minute. Some, times it passed down the forehead and face, and rose again in the air, starting to a different part of the room. We say it was impossible for the medium to have caused this motion and music, and keep her hands beating time on ours incessantly, as she did. Tambourine and drumsticks also moved about us in the air. The medium had no accomplices at the table, at which seven persons were seated, all of whom went to scrutinize the movements. We noticed when the guitar moved above and settled upon our head, a peculiar density of the air about the instrument.

Although the manifestations were in darkness, they were, to us, none the less convincing; for the constant knowledge we had of the position of the medium's hands, rendered it certain that she had no visible connection with, or control over, the floating movements of the guitar; much less could she have played correctly, as they were played, the airs we sang.

The seance was held at the residence of a gentleman of the highest respectability, and was not held for pay. We think they would be highly pleasing and profitable to many investigators, could Miss L. be induced to receive pay for her sittings from private families.

Brother Beaver, of the Investigator, will say, probably that this could not have been; because no known law of Nature can account for it, they did not occur. But we have good ears, and good sense of feeling, and set both high above known laws of nature, when we are sure that they are acute as they now are. We believe we used this argument against Judge Edmonds a few weeks since, but he did not, it seems, keep matter from disobeying these time-honored laws. Some how or other the tables and musical instruments will laugh at philosophers of the old school, and persist in floating in the air, to the great scandal of the laws of gravitation.

Three Months' Subscribers.

Those persons who subscribed for the BANNER three months, and which term is about to expire, can, by remitting \$1.25, have the BANNER sent to them during the remainder of the year. If our friends who were instrumental in getting up these clubs, will attend to their renewals, they will receive a copy free.

No Circles this Week.

We shall probably resume our sessions next week; notice will be given in our next, if we do.

are essential contributions made, the inference is, that whatever they may be, they are what we may conventionally term *material, or spiritual*.

We recognize there are varied phases of mineral force in the soil, which science has classified and named as elements, while experience teaches there are special relations of affinity between them and particular species of vegetable life. Science is also now teaching that the degree of developed condition in a mineral force or element, qualifies and measures the affinity between it and such vegetable life. Thus there seems to be in the mineral kingdom numerous families of organized mineral force, analogous to the numerous and diversified species and genera of individualized life in the vegetable kingdom.

If the position is sound, that all individualized life originates from one common fountain-source, or Deity, and therefore is the same in essence, though so varied in condition of developed being, analogy will suggest and teach that all mineral forces also have a common origin, and are alike the same in essence, though so varied in developed condition. Hence I infer that the principle of economy exhibited in the differing species and genera of the vegetable, is also operative in the mineral kingdom. Thus reasoning, I conclude that what the soil contributes to plants, is simply and only mineral forces, as the needed nutrition of individualized life-entities therein, and that the life-principle of the plant is constantly through its roots attracting kindred mineral force, or unorganized life, and absorbing the same to sustain itself in its labors of unfolding and organizing its physical structure.

The theory that life draws on the atmosphere and temperature for the substance of its physical structure, and is the acting power in organizing the same, implies it is an entity. We recognize that all exertion of inherent power involves waste. Hence the labors of life-entities, in procuring and building its physical structure, involves a necessity of being constantly replenished and sustained with kindred power to repair its constant wastes; and this is found and supplied in the mineral kingdom. Though we cannot either measure or weigh life as manifested in the natural world, we can mentally realize that the germ-life of the plant is the subject of expansion and growth as an organized entity, and thus see the economy through which unorganized mineral life is ever progressing into the higher condition of individuality in the vegetable kingdom, by being attracted and absorbed, as suggested. It is because plants thus absorb unorganized life or mineral forces, that they expel the oxygen contained in the air they inspire, oxygen being but a more developed condition thereof, designed and adapted for the nutrition and support of individualized animal life-entities. While the animal needs material food for the growth and maintenance of its physical, and to repair the wastes thereof, oxygen must be constantly supplied as the needed nutrition of the animal life-entities, which, in associated combinations, constitute its life-entities. I say associated life-entities, because, without further discussing the point, I beg to avow the conviction that each organ embraced in the animal organism is pervaded by its own atomic life, and that these are held in combination by a life-centre, which constitutes the consciousness or I am of the animal individuality. It is this fact which renders so effective and curative the infinitesimal or homeopathic medicinal agent, where there is kindred affinity between the sensitive morbid organ and the mineral force administered. The chemist may fail to detect a mineral element in his analysis of homeopathic pellets, but the fact that they effectively act to invigorate and sustain the life-principle of the eye, the heart or the liver, is proven by careful observation and repeated experiment, and we may therein see exemplified the economy of mineral force, being a kindred nutrition for individualized life.

I want to offer some further illustrations and evidence of individualized life-entities in the vegetable kingdom, and of its intelligent action in defining and asserting its relations to mineral forces; after which I will try to apply them in detail, to show that carbon is, as alleged, a compound, consisting of oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen. But I must defer them for my next.

PHILADELPHIA.

August 20, 1859.

Prof. Felton.—Mr. Mansfield.—Remarkable Test.

GEORGE WHITE, CLARKVILLE, WIS.—"I have many times read and admired a description of charity (or love) recorded in the Testament, and I thought, while reading Professor Felton's late denunciation of Spiritualism, (his August letter,) that perhaps he had, in his zeal for truth, forgotten that this crowning grace was necessary to its development, and could therefore not be dispensed with. I had supposed that he was not only a professor of languages, but also of Christianity. Was I mistaken? "Charity unfeigned love, and is kind—envyeth not—vaunteth not itself—is not puffed up—doth not behave itself unseemly—thinketh no evil—rejoiceth not in iniquity, but in the truth—believeth all things—upon evidence—hoped all things—endureth all things." Now how does this description of charity comport with the spirit of that letter? If there was a particle of charity in it, my glasses did not magnify sufficiently to expose it. Vituperation, unfounded charges and slander, abounded in his attacks upon Spiritualists generally, and upon Mrs. Hayden, Mrs. Hatch, and Mr. Mansfield, in particular. Though I have no personal acquaintance with Mr. Mansfield, I know that Mr. Felton has abused him; and, instead of exercising charity, he has acted the part of the carrion vulture, which passes by an hundred living bodies, to prey upon one dead one. If he had acted for evidence of Mr. M.'s successful mediumship, multitudes stood ready, upon oath, if requested, to confirm his claims as an actual spiritual medium. If the Professor can explain, by any philosophy other than that of spiritual intercourse, the following facts, I will offer him my unfeigned thanks.

Last spring I wrote a letter to a deceased and only sister, and the first wife of Dr. T., of Michigan. I stated in my letter to her that the doctor was sceptical on the subject of spirit-communication, and I wished her to answer me two questions, first given as a test for the doctor and myself. I did not think, until I had sent off the letter, that the answers were known to me, and if answered by the medium, would not be any test to the doctor, as he had always admitted that the medium could read the mind of the inquirer thousands of miles off. In July, an answer, purporting to be from my sister, came to hand through Mr. Mansfield. The test questions I had written were unnoticed, as though my sister had anticipated the doctor's explanation, and a voluntary test was substituted. In answer to my question, "Do you wish to communicate with the doctor through me?" she says, among other things, "Toll the doctor little George is with you often." I did not understand this statement until I had written to the doctor, and ascertained that they had had a child by the name of George, and that he died at Rochester, at the age of three and a half years. The medium knew nothing of me or my family. I know nothing of their having a child by the name of George; and the letter, if it had been read by the medium, contained no possible clue to an explanation. If my sister did not write the answer to my letter through Mr. M., please tell me who did?"

Nature is Inconsistent.

The laws of nature are the unerring guide-posts along the pathway of existence, pointing the traveler to the direction he must take, if he would arrive at his journey's end in safety. In every department of nature, throughout all her varied manifestations, there can be discovered no clashing, no jarring of interests, but everywhere she would be found in harmony with herself, and all seeming inconsistencies will, with advanced knowledge, resolve themselves into beautiful harmonies. Like the dissolving views of the artist, who gazes upon some hideous picture, and while you gaze it melts away into some lovely vision, something of beauty, which you feel will be a joy forever.

And so is it in the realm of mind. To the casual observer, to the superficial thinker, this realm is one of monstrous incongruities, of startling inconsistencies; yet if we look in upon this world through the light of positive science, we shall find that even here—

"All discord's harmony, not understood,
All partial evil, universal good,"

and that each soul in its own standpoint, through a law inherent in its own being, is working out its own salvation; and all this upheaving of wrong, all these tempestuous billows of vice and crime, are so many escape-valves, in order that the soul may tread more securely the path of its upward progress.

We know that to some minds this may seem a startling doctrine, and, viewed in isolated cases, it may be; but when you look upon it in its length and breadth, its height and depth, you will find that humanity, individually and collectively, is striving to develop its higher nature, and however grotesque the shapes it may assume, however strange the weapons it may employ in the conflict, the end to be accomplished is one and the same. It is only of comparatively recent date that science has begun to analyze matter, to dive down into its deepest recesses and bring forth to the gaze of the world the beauty of its proportions, and the perfectness of its forms. And when the Arcana of Mind shall have been analyzed to the same extent, when its hidden depths have

been explored, there will be found the same law of harmony, the same noble adaptations of means to ends, and where you now see only a criminal, you will then see a brother or sister, striving through the fog and mist that surround them, striving, it may be, through perverted feelings and sensual indulgences, but still striving to come out to the light, and instead of condemning them to the prison, or the gallows, you will say to them, "By virtue of better surroundings, my brother, or my sister, I stand a step above you on the plane of being; not from any inherent good in myself; had I been where you are, I should have been as you are; here, take my hand, and let me assist you to get where I am, and then you can reach down and help some one else, and so will you fulfill your mission each to the other."

What, though in the physical world the mountain sends forth its belching torrent of fire and smoke—is it not true to the law of its being? Is not its volcanic action necessary to its own preservation? So, too, when from this great human crater we see issuing the flame of passion, lust, and avarice, we feel that when the smoke and dust shall have cleared away, there shall spring from its ashes a truer development of manhood, and from the rent and shattered fragments of broken humanity shall come forth a diviner structure, a temple fit for the living God.

E. R. H.

Poughkeepsie, N. Y., August 11, 1859.

Berlin Heights, Ohio.

The Convention and the Socialist.

For some weeks past I have been scattering tracks over four of the Western States and listening to the general complaints of windy days, frosty nights, short corn, thin grass, and the scarcity of money; yet I have found many happy homes, smiling faces, joyous hearts, and glorious hopes for the future, made brighter by the cheering visits of spirit-friends and full assurances of another and better life to come. On the three first days of July, according to previous notice, the Spiritualists of Berlin Heights and adjoining towns held a three-days' meeting in that place. The meeting was held in God's holy temple, under a canopy of oak and walnut trees. The audience increased on the last day to near two thousand, among whom were most of the Berlin Socialists, some sectarian Christians, many sceptics, and mostly Spiritualists, from all the region round about. Not a discordant note disturbed the harmony of the meeting from beginning to end. The meeting had no chairman, no business committee, no resolutions, except a vote of thanks to Bro. Finney for a speech, and to God for the use of his house. There were no signs of rowdiness, of prejudice, or even of bad behavior on the grounds, and I did not even hear a profane word at the meeting; saw very little smoking, and no signs of intoxicating drinks.

The inspiration of the spirit-world was given in their own way with great power and eloquence to the audience, through Mrs. Sophia Warner, who has long labored in that section as a speaker with good success for the cause, and who with her husband were the persons who called this Convention and secured speakers in season.

The cause of woman and man, of God and the angels, was nobly and ably vindicated by our sister of the Cleveland Agitator, and I know it had an effect, for I saw the crowd think the thoughts as they flowed from her heart and head. Bro. Darnum, who knows the Scripture as an astronomer does the almanac, put sectarianism in the shade, and vindicated nature and true religion against the falsehoods and blasphemies of the church, with words that will not soon be forgotten. S. J. Finney, one of nature's genuine orators, gave us two most eloquent, thrilling and logical speeches on the history, condition and destiny of Young America. I did and do yet deeply regret that they could not have been reported for the BANNER. His withering rebuke on the superficial life, or waste of life, in our young men, in drinking, smoking, gossiping, studying fashions, follies and theologies, was most eloquent and powerful, equaling any of Deocher's or Parker's best. Bro. Loudon, of the Welcome Guest, was there, and said good words in good time. Warren Chase said his say, as he always does, and Frank and Cora Barry sang beautiful words beautifully, and harmony, peace and love prevailed till the words were uttered.

But what of the Free Lovers? It is well known that at Berlin Heights is a little settlement of Socialists, known and stigmatized as "free lovers," against whom there is an exceeding fury of prejudice in the hearts of religious bigots and drunken libertines, neither of whom find fellowship with them. They publish a paper called the "Good Time Coming," which I would advise those to take who believe they are corrupt or more wicked than other sects or classes. Some of their principles and practices I do not approve or endorse, but I am not their judge, and neither do I condemn them as well I could say, for they looked as well and behaved as well to me, and to us, as any other citizens, and certainly much better than those who call themselves Christians; for, although few of them claim to be Spiritualists, or agree with us, yet nearly all came to hear, listened attentively, and treated us as Jesus taught his disciples to treat strangers. There are nearly twenty families of them. They have about one hundred acres of land—not in common—a small grist-mill, some shops, nearly a dozen dwellings, good gardens, &c., seem industrious, and about as happy as other folks. They have a fine hall, in which I saw the children dance most accurately and beautifully. They have a school of their own, for the children of professed Christians in the town schools were so vulgar and abusive to those of the Socialists, that the parents could not send them there. I also heard that, since the location of the Socialists in that place, the loafers of the town had become so vulgar and profane that decent people have to keep their children away from the places of public resort—that none of this odium attached to the Socialists; but they repudiate rum, tobacco, stimulants and condiments, and mostly meats, and seem to be temperate and candid in most of their actions; and although the signs of lust and licentiousness, which are ever hanging around persons and places of loose morals in our cities and large towns, are none of them to be found there; yet their plain neighbors endeavor to make strangers believe they are so corrupt and powerful that it is not safe for any person to visit them, and they treat them as the Priest and Levite did the man who fell among thieves, only adding insult and injury to neglect, and I was glad to see the Spiritualists ready, if necessary, to act the part of the Samaritan; and even though they had seven devils, I would not turn them over to the devils of modern churches for sympathy.

I heard of some people who did not dare to come to our meeting, lest they should have to share the abuse which their pure neighbors heap on these people, against whom their pure alone have a right to cast stones. For such we were indeed sorry. Persons who are entirely dependent on their neighbors for character and reputation, are indeed to be as much plied as those who depend on neighbors for bread, "beggars in the rarest spots arrayed." Such persons may rest assured that the character given them in that way will be first stolen from others—you Spiritualists are good because the Free Lovers are bad. The location, prospects and enterprise did not look to me very encouraging for its friends; but I must confess that many prejudices were removed from my mind and other minds by our visit to that town, where we could see them and their enemies.

WARREN CHASE.

Geneva, Ohio, July 30, 1859.

[Bro. Chase's letter was mislaid, otherwise it would have appeared sooner.]

A Note from Mrs. Townsend.

DEAR BANNER—I am in this grand old city again, and filled with admiration of its beauty when clothed in summer garments. As I look from my window out upon the fair scenery, it seems like a city in a forest. The distant spires and roofs seem to be grandly moving along among the waving boughs of the trees. Thank God I that shady trees and sweet flowers can grow in a city, to cheer with their natural freshness the weary hearts that are struggling on, they know not how, to climb "up higher."

I find Spiritualism rather weak here, though there are many believers. But few who have pecuniary means have stamina enough to go forth and do; hence it is hard for the few to sustain the meetings. I had a small audience, for such a place, on Sunday last.

On Wednesday I went to Exeter, to speak in the evening. I visited the jail in the afternoon, and I must express my gratitude to find so much manifestation of true humanity. Through the instrumentality of Dr. Johnson (one of Christ's real followers) they have a library of useful books.

Portsmouth, N. H., Aug. 20.

M. S. TOWNSEND.

Incrustations of Universalism Broken Through.

REV. E. CARR, JR., OREGON, MICH.—"I sit with feelings of profound joy that I sit down to send my first letter to the BANNER OF LIGHT. For many years I have felt the untold curse of denominational thralldom and ecclesiastical tyranny resting like an incubus on my soul, and have felt more and more determined to throw it off. The time has at last come, and I feel as Mazzapa did when unbound from the horse: 'Thank God, once more I'm free!' The movements and the spirit of this age are altogether too vast and too important to be cramped and confined by the narrow limits of denominational ecclesiasticalism. There is no man of thought or feeling, who feels free blood in his veins, or any expansion in his soul, who can for a moment submit to have his thought and expression clipped, cornered, rounded and squared by the few who sit as denominational gods and goddesses, and whose notions and opinions are the model and the law, as they think, by which all others are to be governed, at the peril of their salvation and future happiness.

The Universalist denomination, to which I have for the last twelve years belonged, and which I have served with all my powers of body and of mind, by the liberality of its views, by the grandeur of its sentiments, ought to be far in advance of the least—Orthodox denominations of the day. Not one of the mean, low sentiments of intolerance, pride, bigotry, which characterize other and narrower sects, ought to be found in its ranks. And yet I must be permitted to say, that I have rarely seen more mean, low bigotry, more hateful intolerance, practiced by any denomination or sect, than has been practiced by those calling themselves Universalists. I have had great reason to feel this, for I have been the victim of it; but, thank God, I will be no more. Let a man dare to write and speak as he thinks and feels, in this denomination—let him act as a man, and dare to castigate any of the wrongs and follies of the denomination, or speak a word against any of its pretended saints—and he is marked and avoided by the denomination, whatever may be his talents.

Within the last year or two I have been called a Spiritualist, with all the contempt and scorn that a Pharisee ever had. I have dared to address, on the Sabbath day, audiences composed of Spiritualists and others. For this I have been challenged as a "hypocrite;" charged with "leaving the denomination for perils of antagonism to it;" told to "pluck the beam out of my own eye;" during to "speak against the opinions of the fathers of the denomination;" &c., &c.

The truth is, the denomination has run the race of popularity, and will soon have its day ended. It has degenerated into a "Mutual Admiration Society." The very errors and follies that, with stentorian lungs, it has for years past cried out against in others, it is now adopting as fast as it can. Look at its costly churches, its high salaried ministers, its organs, and choirs, and bells, and stained windows, and frescoed walls, where thousands of dollars are worse than wasted, while poverty and misery, squallid want and sin, lie starving and dying around the very doors of its churches. I speak these things as a Universalist clergyman, who has opportunities of knowing. It is not from any change of sentiment or opinion on my part. The doctrines of the denomination I love with all my soul, and will defend as long as I breathe, as I always have. But I will not submit to any denominational domination or restraint, and I will henceforth and forever spurn the dogmatism and the claims of ecclesiastical and priestly despotism, as I would the racks of the Inquisition. If I have a great truth to speak, I will speak it, at any and all times, and in all places, as I have opportunity, no matter to whom, of what color, sect or nation. If I choose to address a band of Spiritualists, I'll do it, or a band of infidels or Atheists. It's no matter to me. All truth is of equal authority, whether Jesus or Socrates, Paul or Plato speak it. I wish it to be distinctly understood that I am free—that I am bound by no denomination, shackled by no dogmas, oppressed by no masters, or enslaved by any authority. Truth, beautiful and lovely, eternal and omnipotent, is all I bow to or serve. God—the God of full and perfect love, is all I adore.

When I read the sermons and productions of such men as Parker, Chapin, Beecher, May and others, and see their noble stand, and feel their great burning words setting my soul on fire, I utterly loathe and abhor everything that opposes individual freedom and goodness, and hate with a perfect hatred everything that dares oppose the spirit of progress and reform that so largely characterizes the age. I hail with gladness and joy every new truth, and every disciple of truth. And I look with the eye of detestation and as being no better than a Spanish Inquisitor, upon the mean, low bigot, man or woman, editor for preacher, who rears a brazen front to oppose it.

It has been my pleasure to speak, for some weeks past, to large and attentive audiences, in the new Harmonical Hall, at Sturgis, in this State, (Michigan) and am now expecting a call to go to Milwaukee, Wis., to spend several Sabbaths there. May the Father of all goodness help me, to speak and to feel as a man, that some single cord may be broken, and some single link rent asunder, in the chain that has so long fettered and rusted into the great heart of the world. I shall be glad to speak at any time or place, when requested. Addresses may be directed to Sturgis, Mich., to Mr. A. O., or Mrs. C. M. Stowe, or to myself, at Franklin P. O., Hillsdale Co., Michigan."

What Good does Spiritualism do?

This question is as often asked as it is answered. It may be answered a thousand times with truthfulness, setting forth the good results flowing therefrom through every phase of spiritual manifestation, from the healing effects of the various "diseases to which flesh is heir to," up to the highest exaltation and elevation of the human soul. All this may be repeated again and again, and accompanied with proofs—"demonstrations strong as holy writ," and yet some of our good friends will repeat the question, "What good does Spiritualism do?" Dear souls, can you tell us what good anything does? What good does the religion of the sects do? Here, it may be imagined, is a mighty, an overwhelming good. But is there no Spiritualism in these? If not, then it is temporary, fading away, evanescent; nothing real and lasting. "But," say these good friends, "we think much of spiritual Christianity, but not of modern Spiritualism." Well, how much good does ancient Spiritualism do? That is, as the majority of the sects understand it? "That," (say they,) is quite another thing. It makes people better, and saves them from sin and consequent condemnation." How many of the human family has it thus saved for the last two thousand or six thousand years? One in a million? Not more than that, according to their teachings. And what has all this cost during that time? Make an estimate on the salaries of the clergy, the cost of all the churches, the books, tracts, papers, periodicals of the sects, their traveling expenses, &c., and the question might well be asked, What good has their Spiritualism done?

It has cost millions on millions of money, and yet we might retort the question, What good has it done? Can these sects tell? "Oh, yes," this is all plain. "Clear as mud." It has saved millions of souls from the penalty of an endless hell in the future state." Are you quite sure of this, friends? Are you sure that such a penalty was ever attached to any of the laws of God? Are you quite sure that such a penalty enters at all into the Divine economy and administration?

Did God create man in his own image, with this object in view? Did he build an eternal hell, then subject man to its perpetual sufferings unless he believed? Believed what? Why, that an innocent being has suffered the penalty for him! If man believes this, he is saved from the penalty; if not, he suffers it! Is this the scheme that is so beautiful that the question need not be asked, What good does it do? Is this the plan of Salvation? the great scheme of ancient Spiritualism? And yet we regard ancient Spiritualism, in its purity, the truth of heaven, but not the Spiritualism of the sects. This is far otherwise, in our estimation. Let us place it in a nutshell, that we may see its deformity, or its beauty, just as the reader may apprehend.

God is good, wise, omnipotent, unchangeable. All this is well, and very true; but how soon contradicted. What says the scheme? God made man good, and yet He subjected him to a law and an agency which He knew would entail on him an endless curse. Was this wisdom? Was it goodness? When man sinned, He knew he would sin, and yet He became very angry. Was this unchangeability? If He did not know he would sin, He was ignorant. He then threatens him with an eternal hell, then repents, sends His wrath on Himself, endures the penalty in the person of His innocent Son! Not content with this, He subjects millions on millions of His own offspring, whom He saved in His own image, to the same penalty, unless the sects can save them from it through their ancient Spiritualism. And yet they have not done it—hardly made a beginning. What, then, is this scheme, but a failure? More than this: it is not a libel upon God and humanity? Could a scheme more defamatory possibly be concocted? Now we wish to answer the question so often proposed, "What good does Spiritualism do?" It is this: It shows that this abortive scheme, which has cost so much time and money, is a failure and a humbug. If our friends wish to ask the question again, let them remember that here

is one little item of good that Spiritualism accomplishes. It saves men from this outrageous humbug. More than this, it gives them an assurance of a glorious immortality beyond the tomb. In a word, it revives and demonstrates the Spiritualism of Jesus—the communion of the mortal with the angel world—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. All this was strongly inculcated by the Nazarene Reformer.

A. O.

Elbridge, N. Y., Aug. 23, 1859.

God Committing Arson.

"FRED," LAWRENCE, MASS., AUG. 23, 1859.—"Although, according to the Christian Church, the age of miracles has passed, yet occasionally we find it recording, at the present day, the 'wonderful works of the Lord.' Our city has, as you are well aware, recently suffered the most disastrous fire—the work of an incendiary. Some of the good people of a certain church, that was destroyed, plausibly tell us 'it is the work of the Lord!' One of these individuals, in a communication published in the last number of the 'Congregationalist,' states, at the outset, that the fire 'was undoubtedly the work of an incendiary;' and then, after dilating naturally and feelingly on the severity of the loss, winds up with the following language: 'Yet we do not fail to remember that this is the work of God. He will yet bring good out of this seeming evil, and we shall rejoice that we have been afflicted.' We hope that if the incendiary is brought to justice, instead of being sent to the State Prison for causing the loss of three lives and so much property, he will be received 'into the bosom of the church,' for carrying out so nobly 'the work of the Lord!' Little did the pious, law-abiding citizens of Lawrence, in the excitement of the hour, reflect, that in their earnest and manly efforts to subdue the flames, they were contending with the Almighty! Little did they consider, at least for the time being, that the God of some people was literally a consuming fire! Thanks to the efficiency of 'fire engines'—an invention of Satan—the ravages of the Orthodox God were subdued; but not, alas! until a valuable portion of our fair city was in ruins!

If intelligent men of the nineteenth century charge directly upon God such things as these, need we longer wonder that, in the days of Moses, unenlightened men should attribute to the Deity acts not less inconsistent or absurd than the one alluded to above?"

Religious Freedom.

DEAR EDITORS—We have now been a reader of the BANNER for about six months, and it has already become a *sine qua non* for our happiness. It is certainly doing a noble work, in directing men and women to the worship of the true and infinite God, who is perfect cause, and perfect providence; who is the Father and Mother of us all, and of all; who neither recognizes war, nor slavery, nor the degradation of women, nor any other wrong, even though done by an *Irredite* against a *Canaanite*, or by a Christian against a Heathen, or by an Orthodox to-day against a Spiritualist.

We think it is full time that men and women should worship a God who does not require them to sacrifice their common-sense and reason, in order to become his votaries. When men and women once come to fully recognize the true God, and to appreciate his glorious attributes, they will no longer do wrong, and expect to escape the consequences thereof by some clerical legitimism, or trick; they will learn to revere Jesus, as the type of their perfected humanity, and to make him the ideal of imitation in all their experiences, instead of doing wrong, and then, in their cowardly depravity, seek and expect to shirk the consequences of their wrong on Jesus. The idea of a vicarious atonement is not one which better than Hinduism, nor does it differ from it in principle.

We sincerely wish you God-speed. You are doing a good work—one that unborn generations will bless you for—having become pioneers in the cause of righteousness and truth.

Yours truly,

Cordova, Rockland Co., N. Y., Sept. 1, 1859.

I Am What You Are Not.

BREMEN, BREMEN.—"One day, in conversation with a minister, who has been many years a reformer, he said, 'I stood religiously, fifteen years ago, where you now stand.' I stood, in conversation with an editor of a Spiritualist newspaper—not the editor of the BANNER—he said to me, 'The crude views that you now have of all things, I had four of five years ago, since which time I have progressed with astonishing rapidity; my views are now correct, and well defined.' Not long since, in conversation with an old friend, who denounces Spiritualism in the most withering terms, and is a worthy member of the Universalist Church, he said, 'Your position now was mine twenty years ago.'

I thought over what these three men had said. I could not help concluding how youthful and green I was in my religious views; and I thought, too, of what Walt Whitman said, viz.:

There was never any more youth or age than there is now,
And never will be any more perfection than there is now."

TO MRS. FRANCES OSGOOD.

Wilt thou, dear lady, stir my soul to write
Thy own sweet thoughts, thy sentiments indite?
With thou reveal affection's glowing fire,
Touch thy sweet harp—awake an angel's lyre,
To sing of me, my darling now above,
In notes accordant with my deepening love?
Direct, control, and true expression give;
Say, does the guard, instruct, and love and live?
Art thou the same in yonder brighter sphere?
Love, as thou didst, while in this vale of tears?
If such thy song, and can this comprehend,
Thy power disclose, this favor now extend.

CHARLES ROBBINS.

On the 6th of April, purporting to be Mrs. O., I impressed me, and I wrote the answer. It did not suit; she could not control; and on the 9th introduced another to answer for her. The above lines to Mrs. O. I put in one of my books, as is my custom, and awaited an answer.

ANSWER.

There are some gifts that sanctify the shrine,
Whose power and charms pronounce them half divine;
Some flowering plant, whose interlacing powers
Fills with new joy life's ever hasting hours.
As morning dew, serene spirit's hush
Bore to your hearts and lips a heavenly care,
A darling one, your sympathies to share.
As mounting upward in the sun's bright ray,
New beauties gathering each succeeding day,
A star, at first, flickering, and faintly seen,
As time rolled on, a fixed star, serene.
A lifted casket, beautifully wrought,
Illumed by fancy and adorned by thought;
Here was a temple lit by keen, blue eyes,
That caught their radiance from the upper skies,
While soul of mirth, of life, danced in her face,
Her voice was music and her movement grace.
Thy treasured one's a gem by Heaven consigned,
By Heaven unkindled and by Heaven refined:
Thy superscription's on that soul of love,
Thus hushed to God, to harmonies above.

"It was in this home, when promise was so fair,
Our Father's voice rose on the morning air—
To Parents called—your yet took on His breast,
Inviting you, He took her to his rest,
Where light celestial glows fair Salem's spires—
Where joy and splendour wave angelic lyres.
Morn's beams stood still—winds paused, as if for breath,
And saw thy sorrow—what the world calls death.

To her 'twas life, unceasing joy and light,
A wreath triumphant, and a robe of white.
Thy bird of song, whose carol was so dear,
Still caroled sweetly near her Father's ear.
She guards parental steps—with watchful eye
Wooes light and wisdom—dangers dark decay.
But to conclude—love, once a ripple, gleam,
In this fair realm becomes a swelling stream.

Charlestown, Aug. 3, 1859.

Phenomena.

Z. E. PECK, WELLESLEYVILLE, ENRICH CO., PENN.—"Occurrences relating to man's immortality, as demonstrated by spirit manifestation, are undoubtedly interesting to the readers of your excellent BANNER. I relate one of the incidents that recently occurred in the presence of my home circle, for the purpose of showing that we in Northwestern Pennsylvania are not wholly neglected by our spirit friends. Last evening, about nine o'clock, while Mrs. P. was engaged about some culinary matters, (no candle being lighted in the room,) she partly filled a tin vessel with hot water, when immediately the water in the vessel became beautifully illuminated with small globes of light, each moving within the vessel in every possible direction. Soon these little balls of light began to roll up out of the vessel on to the table, and up along the sides of a cupboard standing near the table. A little hand, disconnected with any human form, moved quietly about the table among

the balls of light that were then floating in the air above it. The phenomena continued about fifteen minutes, making sufficient light to see every object in the room.

I know of no science taught in the books of natural or chemical philosophy, that will explain these occurrences."

Clouds.

There is a sublime beauty in clouds, a picturesqueness surpassing every other object of nature. Aerial wanderers congregated into a thousand varied forms of magnificence, and tinged with every hue that light can paint—how beautiful I love to look upon the earth, gay in the verdure and bloom of summer. I love to gaze into the firmament, brilliant with the scintillations of innumerable stars; but clouds, fair, beautiful clouds, there is something in them peculiarly enchanting, something that enraptures the soul, and fills it with the most exalted emotions. Oh, I love to look at clouds; emblems of purity floating leisurely through immensity of space; now rolling their tufted folds together, and piling one upon another, hugo palaces in the skies; now breaking and scattering like the fragments of a shattered billow, then reuniting and spreading one vast pall over the earth, shadowing it in deepest gloom, then again breaking and melting away to a mere speck in the sky. Oh, have I gazed upon clouds, until my soul, absorbed in their beauty, seemed to forget it was of earth, and heard sweet music, the chauntings of angel throngs, and spirits, long redeemed from this earth, whispered in my ear, "happy home." And ever have I awakened from such dreamings in sorrow, that I was still of earth. Gladly would I welcome death; yes, faint would I out the "aliver cord," and let the longing soul go free; let it soar away, far, far beyond the floating clouds, to the bright spirit-home, of which clouds, in their purity, are emblems, and for which they ever inspire deepest longings.

S. L. BARNER.

Geneva, Ohio.

OBITUARIES.

Died, August 6, 1859, at Lawrence, (formerly of Cambridge,) Walter A. Mason, Esq., aged 63 years 6 months. His departure from this mortal form, from the form, was a devoted companion, an affectionate parent, a true friend, and a honest man; yet we would not mourn his exit, knowing that he is in the enjoyment of the society of those spirits who sustained and cheered him by their presence ere he left the form. In his passing away we have the most glorious evidence of the worth of the harmonical faith upon which has been termed the bed of death. Brother Mason was one of the earliest investigators of our faith, and his devotion to the dissemination of its principles proves the sincerity of his belief. He joyously looked forward to the hour of change, assured that once that he would be with them in spirit, and that he had worked here, and should work hereafter. He made all the arrangements for the laying away of the casket, and passed on. The services were (as arranged by him) performed on the 11th, at his residence in Lawrence, at nine o'clock A. M., at which Rev. Mr. Jenkins, pastor of the Unitarian church, read appropriate selections from the Scriptures and offered a beautiful spiritual prayer, worthy our brother and the occasion. After which, the spirits appropriately and eloquently addressed the bereaved family and friends through Mrs. J. Abbott and Mr. J. H. Currier. His room in which three mortal bodies lay, where the funeral service was held at 2 1/2 o'clock in the chapel, (by his request,) when the spirit, through J. H. Currier, addressed the mourners and friends from the saying of our brother, "I have worked here, and shall work hereafter," and closed by a fine poetic invocation.

Died, in Andover, Mass., August 7th, John Gardner, infant son of Robert and Mary A. Bell, aged 4 months and 8 days.

Died, in West Danville, Mo., Aug. 23d, Mrs. Ann E. Foster, wife of Moses Foster, aged 29 years and 7 months, of consumption.

