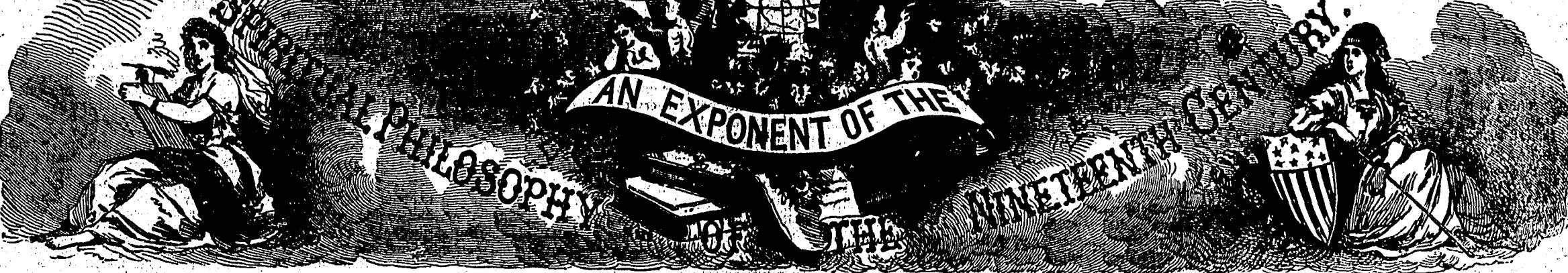


BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. LX.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1887.

{ \$3.00 Per Annum,
Postage Free. }

NO. 18.

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THIS PAPER, B.L., Q.O., B.N., etc., is published by GEO. P. ROWE, 111 Broadway, New York City.

The Rostrum.

SPIRIT PARENTAGE.

Delivered to the Members of the Society for Spiritual Culture and Investigation, of New York City, by
JOHN FRANKLIN CLARK.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

In our endeavors to attain a knowledge of ourselves, and of the relations that we sustain to the vast universe of being outside ourselves, we need to hold ourselves ready to carefully consider and investigate all questions that may be presented to our minds, to the end that we may learn the truth in regard to each.

Necessarily some of the questions presented for our consideration will have a much greater practical bearing upon our every-day life than will others, nor is it probable that the same degree of importance will be attached to the same question by all the members of this Society; yet, if any question be carefully and thoughtfully considered, each one of us can derive some benefit therefrom, and by judicious application advance in spiritual culture, and its consideration will be in the direct line of investigation.

The subject of this paper, "Spirit-Parentage," may impress some of you as possessing little of practical interest for humanity at large to-day, or for ourselves, and as something altogether beyond our ability to learn anything definite concerning, even granting that there is such a relationship existing between spirits and mortals. It seems to me, however, the question possesses great importance, that the investigation of it comes legitimately and clearly within the declared objects of this Society, and to be no more difficult of investigation than any question relating to the supermundane states of being.

The first question that presents itself in connection with the subject is:

What reason is there for supposing that such a relationship exists? and second,

If it does exist, what is its nature, and how is it effected?

In answering the first question perhaps it would be as well to admit that the principal reason is that spirits declare spirit-parentage is with them a demonstrated fact, as much so as is natural parentage a demonstrated fact with us; and not being able to perceive wherein spirits would benefit by telling a falsehood in regard to it, we accept their statement as being true, and then by the use of such knowledge as we possess, try to discover if it is in accord with those laws of nature that we are familiar with, and is a necessary result flowing from the orderly operation of such laws, and the character it must assume in obedience to such laws.

It is already a matter of knowledge with us that the mental condition of a mother, especially during the period of gestation, exerts a determining influence upon the mental and moral characteristics of the child she bears.

It is also a matter of knowledge with us, acquired through the use of Spiritualism, that all persons during the whole period of their earth-lives are surrounded by spirits who are attracted to them because of their peculiar physical, mental, moral and spiritual qualities, and that as often as any radical change of character takes place in people, especially in their predominating love, in their likes and dislikes, their desires and distastes, either a similar change occurs in their attendant spirits, or else such spirits are repulsed and leave them, and other spirits in sympathy with their new state of feelings will be attracted to them.

We further know that the mental states of individuals are largely determined by their environments, and to a still greater extent by their environments. We also know that spirits can and do exert a powerful influence over the minds and feelings of persons living here in the mundane state; therefore it follows as a result of that principle in being that causes one mind to influence, and modify the action of another mind with which it is intimately associated, that those minds that exert the greatest influence over the mind of a woman at conception and during the state of pregnancy, will contribute most in determining the characteristics of the child she bears, and the person so influencing the mother will be the spirit parent of her child, and, in strict conformity with this law, it may chance that persons still in earth-life may have much to do with the spiritual generation of children they have never seen or heard of.

It is a fair inference, however, owing to the close and intimate relationship that spirits form with mortals, constituting, as it were, their human environments, that they at all times exert a much greater and more continuous influence upon the persons to whom they are attracted than is exercised by persons still in the flesh, and with whom we come in contact.

It will thus be seen that while a child is, first of all, indebted to its natural father and mother for its physical organism, and that it can have but one physical father and mother, those same parents, being acted upon by other minds, are so affected thereby, as to their own mental and spiritual nature, that the child born to them may, through the law of heredity, inherit from the influencing minds characteristics very dissimilar from those possessed by its natural parents when in their normal condition.

We also learn, through Spiritualism, that all persons while in the mundane plane of life have certain spirits who are far above them in development, who hold toward them the relationship of guides or instructors, and that this relationship continues after the passage of the individual to the supermundane plane.

Therefore we perceive that spirits as well as mortals have other spirits more advanced than themselves, who stand to them in the relationship of guides.

Thus we perceive that all persons on the mundane plane are, through their guides or guardian spirits, in direct connection, through an unbroken line of guides or guardian spirits, with the most highly developed spirits in the highest supermundane spheres of spirit-life, and through the living chain thus constituted, with its first and highest link represented by a spirit in the highest supermundane sphere of a world, and its last and weakest link by a person on the mundane plane of such world, there is ever a train of thought descending and ascending, that has its effect upon all the persons constituting such a magnetic chain.

We further learn through Spiritualism that it is the chief concern of spirit-guides or guardians to aid and direct their charges in their spiritual unfoldment and growth, and that they are more earnestly devoted to the accomplishment of this object than are the natural parents in their efforts for the education of their children.

Now here we have a series of facts, and it is our purpose, as it is our duty, to ascertain what these facts signify, and the results that must necessarily follow in consequence thereof.

It being a fact that the characteristics of a child are largely determined by the affectional and mental status of its natural parents at the time of its conception, and the affectional and mental status of the mother during the state of pregnancy, and it being a fact that the guardian spirits of every person desire above all things else the spiritual welfare of their charges, it would follow that as often as the conception of a child takes place, those two spirits, male and female, in the magnetic chain of guardian spirits, who could exert the greatest modifying influence for good over the natural parents of the child, would at such time exert such influence to the fullest extent possible, and in consequence of such action by such spirits upon the natural parents, such spirits would become the spirit-parents of the child conceived, and would acknowledge and sustain this relationship, ever faithfully discharging toward such child the duties that the relationship imposes.

Owing to the peculiar sensitiveness of highly developed spirits, they are easily repulsed by persons whose affectional and mental states are opposed to their own, hence as a child begins to develop its selfhood and to manifest, as it ever will, the traits and characteristics inherited from its natural parents, its spirit-parents gradually lose their control over it, and can only exercise it in an indirect way through a chain of guardian spirits or guides, the lowest of which may be but little in advance of the child in spiritual unfoldment.

It is a common and true saying that all babies bring angels into the homes of their parents and have angels for their companions. Yes, indeed, they have angels for their companions, and angels of a high order of development, too; for at early period of their existence their spirit parents can approach closely to them, but soon the characteristics inherited from their natural parents become predominant, and the lowest angels of light must needs retire for a time.

Of all the questions that Modern Spiritualism has presented for our consideration, I know of none more practical, or of greater import, or that has a more direct bearing upon our every-day life here and now, than the one we are now considering.

What can be more important to two human beings than to know that their own affectional and mental state at the time of conception, and during the period of gestation of their child, will determine its characteristics?

And what can be more important than for them to know that they are themselves watched over by a chain of guardian spirits that range in development from their own spiritual level, up to the highest spiritual development attained by those in the highest supermundane spheres, and that it is in their own power, by outliving pure feelings and high aspirations, to attract to themselves spirits of a high order of unfoldment, who, on their part, by exerting their influence upon them, help to attain for their child that is to come to them more desirable predispositions and tendencies than could be secured in any other way?

Certainly this knowledge, if possessed and applied by those who are to become parents, will have the most practical as well as benevolent results, and be of the greatest benefit to the child, and be preeminently practical in the almost inestimable service rendered to the child born to them.

And if we will look into the question further, we shall find that a comprehensive knowledge of this subject is of the first importance to those who may not become the natural parents of children, as well as to those who shall become such, for every person exerts a more or less modifying influence upon the minds of those with whom they are intimately associated.

Therefore it is not only possible, but quite probable, that we may by our acts and conversation, and by the influence we may exert over a woman during the period of gestation of her child, be responsible for some of the mental and moral characteristics impressed upon that child.

The knowledge of spirit-parentage brings home to us, with a force never felt before, a sense of our responsibility for our every thought and act, for our thoughts and feelings are powerful agencies for good or ill, and it passes the capabilities of our finite understanding to trace out their ultimate effect, as it shall be manifested in the lives of ourselves and others.

A Veteran Spiritualist.

Celebration of the Seventy-Fourth Birthday of Hon. Warren Chase, in Grand Army Hall, Worcester, Mass.

This northern New England climate is rather a cold place to be born in, even with all the conveniences and comforts of modern civilization, but to be born up in Pittsfield, N. H., on the 5th day of January, seventy-four years ago, under the circumstances of destitution and pinching poverty with which the Hon. WARREN CHASE first saw the light, must have been a very daring undertaking for one of his size and age!

Evidently he was determined to be born! That shows courage at the start; and that he has succeeded in life for seventy-four years, shows that pluck soon developed into activity and energy, exhibited in his useful labors in public life, as an author, legislator and public speaker for forty years upon and in favor of all the great important political, religious, social and economic questions and issues of the times. Especially has he stood forth as a brave and fearless champion of the then unpopular themes of "Abolition of Slavery," "Woman's Rights," "Rights of Labor" and "Spiritualism." All this, which has been woven as the warp and woof of seventy-four years of history in the eventful life of this now venerable hero of many a battle—the success achieved, the triumphs won, the good unknown and unmeasured outwrought—must in a large measure be attributed to a New England birth, and inherited New England ideas.

These were among some of our passing recollections as we sat and mused, or chatted with old acquaintances, while the numerous friends of "Father Chase" were assembling in Grand Army Hall, to celebrate the seventy-fourth birthday of this aged worker, who, notwithstanding his fully whitened locks and venerable appearance, moved about so lightly and cheerfully among his friends, showing that in his mental and spiritual forces he was as young as ever in his earthly journey.

Evening Exercises.—Our reveries were cut short by Mr. Thomas W. Sutton—Chairman of the Committee for the evening—calling the assembly to order, and opening the exercises by asking Mrs. Lizzie J. Moulton to play and sing.

By-and-by, Mr. Sutton then made a short and appropriate speech of welcome to "Father Chase," as he termed him, in behalf of those who had assembled to congratulate him, and celebrate his successful passing in health and happiness, of his seventy-fourth "mile-stone" of his earthly journey.

He referred in touching words to the occasion of his birth, the sad conditions surrounding it, the poverty-stricken state of his mother, all alone in a miserable, rickety, old log house, no one to care for or love him! And yet, he said, out of these extremely untoward conditions came forth a man who had been one of the pioneers in extending and developing our broadening civilization in the West, of great use to the world, and of real service to mankind. He spoke of the fearless, earnest, honest efforts made by Bro. Chase during his long life; of the sturdy battle for truth he had made with pen and tongue; on all the great reform questions of the day—by being the first public platform speaker and advocate of Spiritualism, commencing that service with a discussion on "Nature's Divine Revelations," with Rev. H. H. Van Amringe, in 1847—the year the book was first published.

In closing his remarks, Mr. Sutton grasped Bro. Chase by the hand, and in fitting words expressed his own earnest congratulations and those of the audience assembled, which as Chairman he represented. His remarks were received with applause.

Mr. Sutton then spoke very warmly and feelingly of Mrs. Amelia H. Colby's necessitated absence on account of failing health, which great disappointment he well knew her many friends would share with him, as they would unite their sympathy in her behalf in a sincere and earnest prayer for her speedy recovery. The Chairman then read a letter from Mrs. Colby, expressing her regret that she could not be present, and sending greetings and congratulations to Bro. Chase.

Among the congratulatory letters received and read was the following: N. Y., Jan. 4th, 1887.
To the Worcester Association of Spiritualists, assembled at Grand Army Hall to celebrate the Seventy-Fourth Birthday of Warren Chase:
The Society of Friends of Spiritualists of Troy, N. Y., sends fraternal greetings, and joins most heartily "in spirit" in the exercises of the evening in honor of "that grand old man."
W. H. VONBURAN, President.

Mrs. E. B. DUFFY, Secretary.

The Chairman then introduced "the Boy that was born seventy-four years ago to-morrow morning, Hon. WARREN CHASE."

As Mr. Chase arose and stepped to the front of the platform, he was warmly greeted by the audience, and when the applause had subsided he said, in substance:
I am glad to be here; glad I was born, or I presume I would not be here; glad to see you all present. I regret exceedingly the absence of our esteemed sister Colby on this occasion, and I still more regret to learn of her failing health, which prevented her being with us. But I realize very sensibly that she is doing the wise thing in leaving the field of lecturing for a time, and seeking needed rest from her long-continued labors on the platform, which have so exhausted her vitality and brain forces that unless she does take the rest her system requires I fear she will not long remain in the physical body. We cannot spare her yet, for she is one of the most able, brave and earnest workers in the great struggle of free-thought and justice with ignorance and oppression.

I am not going to make a speech on Spiritualism to-night, but in what little I have to say I shall run along in the line of briefly recounting to you some of the circumstances of my birth and some of my experience in the past seventy-four years of life.

New Hampshire is a cold State. It is a cold climate in January, and as I have learned, must have been desolate indeed in that weather-bitten dwelling where that stricken woman, my mother—no house within a half a mile, and poor as poor could be—suffered all night long, when near morning, Jan. 5th, 1813, I first saw the light. No one was near or with her but an old woman. No doctor, no father present, no friends; she suffered for my sake—all alone! Think of that condition which gave me birth. No one seemed to care for us, whether we lived or died; and why we did not die, and

have birth and death in the first and last act of the drama of our earthly existence, some one wiser than myself must explain.

At the time of my birth my father was away in the army, and was killed in the battle of Plattsburg, N. Y., in the war of 1812. Soon after my birth, my mother was taken, with myself, to the old rocky homestead of her parents, where they eked out a meagre subsistence by hard work. I visited the old place last fall, now in the hands of strangers, and viewed the twelve graves, with their rude granite headstones—not a word or line to designate either, yet containing the dust of my mother and her father's family—located in what was once the old orchard, now gone to decay.

At three years of age my mother put me in the care of a Quaker family, that she might be the better able to work for my support. I remained there but a few months, when she suddenly passed to the spirit-world, becoming, as I have reason to know, my watchful guardian angel through my early years of suffering and trial.

The kind Quaker family being unable to support me, soon turned me over to the selectmen, who were the "Overseers of the Poor." They bound me out to a man, whose name I will not mention, but whose cruelty, with the many stripes and severe hardships I had to endure, caused these and shoulders and this bent form which I have carried all my life. He too was long since passed to spirit-life, and is no doubt settling his accounts of ten years' cruel injustice to the poor orphan, "according to the deeds done in the body."

At the end of ten years, having lost his property, he moved away from the town, carrying me with him; and one Sunday afternoon, when he was absent, I left his home forever. It was in the month of May that, with bare feet, scantily clad with tow-cloth, and wearing the "chip hat" commonly used by poor children, I made my way to a distant relative of my mother, in a neighboring town, where I spent the night. The day advised me to return in the morning, but, availing myself of the opportunity, I pursued my journey to my native town, which I reached late in the evening—having had nothing to eat since morning—and spent a frosty night in the hotel barnyard with the cattle, being too tired to go through the woods to my grandmother's, whither I went in the morning.

That day the selectmen held a meeting, and a kind woman, one of their neighbors, a Quaker, named Mrs. L. B. Batchelder, took me home with her, provided me with clothes, and gave me a place to live with Mrs. Batchelder's brothers of his wife, John and Samuel Jencks. They were Universalists, and I received with the utmost kindness. With them I spent three years, and began my education in the district school.

I then went to serve my time on the adjoining farm of Moses and Bracket L. Norris, where I remained until I was twenty-one, with the best of care and continued kindness, attending school and working for my support. For my services one hundred dollars, most of which sum I expended in an academic education in the Gilmanton and Pittsfield seminaries.

I have never intimated; was never sued; I have never used profane language; I have never belonged to any church, and never expected to. I may have been a great sinner in the estimation of some, but I was probably owing to my birth, and yet I fail to see how I could be very much to blame for that.

Having secured all the education my limited means would permit in those early days, long before that great philanthropist Horace Greeley uttered the sage advice: "Go West, young man," I caught the spirit of it, as it were, and then a terrible storm broke over me in Michigan, and after some severe struggles always incident to frontier life, I secured a little home, and settled in Monroe, Mich., and always had a home after that until my wife passed to spirit-life.

In the year 1838 I moved to Wisconsin—then a Territory—and aided in establishing a small society or "Colony," under the "Fourier System," the only one in the country that ever paid its debts.

I was somewhat of a politician then—and a Democrat; but though I was opposed because I was a Fourierite, a temperance man and an infidel, (I) I was elected to the first Constitutional Convention, and returned to the second, which framed the Constitution for the now great State of Wisconsin.

I made the motion in the convention to strike out the word "white" in the qualifications for citizenship. Although I was a Democrat it made about as much stir in that convention as a boy has often made by running a pole into a hornet's nest, and they said: "We will see how many lunatic Abolitionists there are here. And they found there were just six! Then the great majority breathed freer! Then I moved to strike out of the Constitution the word "male" whereupon they sneered and shouted: "He is two hundred years ahead of his time." But I spoke and labored for these and kindred issues, telling my opponents that I should live to see the accursed system of negro slavery abolished, and also the accursed woman vote. Well, where is slavery? And do not women vote now on questions and matters of interest in education? And the two hundred years are not passed yet!

I also secured a provision in the Constitution of Wisconsin that no man should have any of his civil rights abridged on account of his religious or infidel views.

The State of Wisconsin was admitted into the Union, and I was elected to the State Senate.

When General Lewis Cass of Michigan was nominated for President, and wrote his famous "Nicholson letter," recognizing slavery, I bade adieu to the Democratic party.

I called the first convention in the United States, which was held in Wisconsin, to organize the "Free Soil Party," and was named as its candidate for Governor of Wisconsin. Then I was opposed because I advocated Spiritualism, holding a discussion with Rev. Mr. Van Amringe regarding the claims of a book entitled, "Nature's Divine Revelations," the same year it was published.

I attended the National Convention of the Free Soil Party, held at Pittsburg in 1862. Gerritt Smith, Joshua R. Giddings, Fred Douglass and myself made the four principal speeches before the convention.

I moved to Battle Creek, Mich., to educate my children, where I lived several years. I lived also in Southern Illinois, for a time, and knew personally Abraham Lincoln, John A. Logan, Stephen A. Douglas and Horace Greeley, who was a personal friend. Moving to St. Louis, Mo., I was nominated and chosen a Presidential Elector from that State on the

(Continued on eighth page.)

[illegible]

BY IRENE ACKERMAN.

BY HENRY LAOROIX.

the banks of the muddy, like or yellow—and not
the "blue"—Danube, are high and pretty. The
stream is wide and swift. Left Passau at 3
P. M., and arrived at Linz at 7 o'clock. This

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BY JACOB EDSON.

ptions. The writer is not even willing to adopt the

1

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1887.

PUBLICATION OFFICE AND BOOKSTORE,
9 BOWDOIN ST. (formerly Montgomery Place),
corner Province Street (Lower Floor).

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL AGENTS:
THE NEW ENGLAND NEWS COMPANY,
14 Franklin Street, Boston.

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,
33 and 41 Chambers Street, New York.

COLBY & RICH,

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It is shown Letters must be addressed to ISAAC H. RICH, Editor of Light, Publisher, 9 Bowdoin Street, Boston, Mass. All other letters and communications must be forwarded to LESTER COLBY, Private letters should invariably be marked "Personal" on the envelope.

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

The Trial of the Andover Professors.

A brief summary of the proceedings at the trial in this city of the five Andover Professors on the general charge of departure from the iron-clad creed of Calvinistic Orthodoxy was given in last week's BANNER, to which little that is of essential interest is to be added besides the statement that the trial has been brought to a close, and that the Board of Visitors, who constitute judge and jury in the case, have taken the evidence and arguments into their consulting consideration. It is not necessary to pursue this trial in its details, nor do we propose to do so. The people of thought and advancing tendencies do not especially care to stop to pick over the mouldy crusts of juiceless theological disputation. They are more interested in living things.

The trial began on the 24th of December and ended January 31. Prof. Smyth's case was taken up first, after which the other four Professors were heard, in a lump. The contesting parties have been clergymen, either graduates or officers of the seminary, while the lawyers were introduced to hold the two parties in dispute closely to the points of law involved. The main question was, whether the terms of the creed adopted by the associate founders of Andover Seminary have been violated by Prof. Smyth's teachings. The accusing plaintiffs declined to bring their complaints in the form of specific charges, lest if they should fail to prove them their whole case would go with the charges and thus make an end; so they presented to the Board of Visitors what they called statements, refusing to call them even arguments, the main purpose of which was to maintain the traditional interpretation of the associate creed. The defendant, Prof. Smyth, put forward Prof. Dwight, an instructor of law in New York, to clear away the obscurity that envelopes the origin and early reception of this creed, which was preliminary work. Then he stood forth himself to show that his position as a teacher in the seminary was but an interpretation of the creed and the rules which the founders themselves and their followers felt compelled to adopt. And he proceeded to show further that thoughtful men who are teaching theological beliefs with any view to influencing our own time could not well accept any other interpretation without making their work ridiculous in the eyes of all.

The characteristic features of this trial were, that no specific charges were brought against the offending professors, and that the defense was altogether a matter of explanation, and not one of argument. If there was indeed any dispute at all raised between the parties, it was in reference to what constitutes a definite charge; and this supplied a wide margin for the defense to put in a general statement of their case, and thus gave it a wider range of treatment. Prof. Smyth aimed throughout to avoid everything like subterfuge, while he held fast to the broadest construction of the creed. The defense pointed out that the Board of Visitors are already committed to the qualified subscription to the creed made by certain professors before, and that they had already sanctioned the construction of it which was allowed and expected by the founders. Hence they were bound to see that Prof. Smyth was not judged by any narrow and rigid interpretation of the creed.

The defense further pointed out that when the Board of Visitors chose Dr. Newman Smyth to fill the position he does in the seminary, he was known to them to hold opinions similar to those held by his brother, the present accused professor, in regard to probation after death, and therefore that the board did not consider the holding of such views inconsistent with fidelity to the terms of the associate founders' creed. Finally, the defense showed that a decision was given seventy years ago by a judge who personally knew the founders of the seminary, and was fully conversant with what they meant their creed should teach, to the effect that the founders had no desire that their creed should be interpreted in a narrow and technical sense, but were desirous that it should permit a wholesome intellectual liberty. It is mainly upon these considerations, not the least important of which was that of the board's own action in similar cases, that Professor Smyth rested his vindication and defense. He sought to establish the fact that the interpretation of the creed had been from the beginning on the side of liberty.

The prosecution practically paid no attention to all this, which is the only vital thing in the case, but held on their course in maintaining that it was the purpose of one set of the founders to follow the Westminster Confession. The defense aimed to show that the creed as finally adopted was the result of a compromise, and that the two parties to its construction, who together represented the entire Orthodoxy of New England at the time, which was at the beginning of the century, were scrupulously careful to yield nothing that was deemed essential on the one side or threatened to narrow the faith on the other. Each party thought a perfect work had been accomplished, knowing not that such work is an utter impossibility in the line of creeds.

The responsibility, in the ecclesiastical sense, that devolves upon the few men composing the Board of Visitors who have the decision of this question of faithfulness to the Orthodox creed, and therefore of the interpretation of the creed, can hardly fall to be appreciated even by themselves. Upon their decision turns the future of Orthodox belief. If they shall decide against the Smyth party of professors, they inevitably drive away from the seminary and the church it feeds and nourishes the larger brain and the humaner heart which are more needed in this time than anything else. If they shall decide in favor of the professors and their increasingly liberal interpretation of the creed, then they deliberately confess the narrowness and bigotry which it embodies and illustrates, and admit the necessity of breaking down the rigid barriers it imposes. In the one case, the Orthodox church is rent asunder; in the other, the creed goes to pieces. And they might well reason that it is better to break up an iron-clad formula of faith and get it out of the way, than to break up the church in a bigoted determination to preserve it. This trial is to be taken merely as another of the many signs of the times, showing how steadily and surely the human spirit is emancipating itself from the fetters which the tyrants of the past regarded as safer for it than freedom.

Plain Talk with the Clergy.

A recently published discourse by Spirit Thomas Starr King, through the guides of Mrs. Richmond, in the vein described in the phrase above written, abounds with trenchant and timely expressions on the subject of religion and religious worship whose distribution cannot well be made too general. After reciting the history in brief of the various churches, sects and denominations which have arisen since the time of the founder of Christianity, the addressing spirit sums it all up in the assertion that during two thousand years there has been given to the present generation no less than two hundred different interpretations of the professed Word of God, the same Word; and that Word altered by permission of ecclesiastical bodies. But it is the spirit that is abroad in the world of to-day, and not mere dogma and doctrine. It is not a theory, nor a school, nor a catechism, nor an ecclesiastical body, nor any organism; it is a presence and influence outside of and beyond the earth—the manifestations and the whole subject of Modern Spiritualism. And the priests and preachers can offer no excuse for their ignorance of it, since it is their special business to know all that is to be known about the spiritual domain concerning which they claim such rights of pretension.

If the clergy answer that they do not know, then they confess their blind ignorance. It is their business, however, to inform themselves; just as an astronomer would direct his gaze into that quarter of the heavens in which a new planet or star was announced to have made its appearance; just as a teacher of any branch of knowledge would instinctively regard it as his duty to know all there was to be known, from whatever source or in whatever way, respecting the subject in which he was giving instruction. If such persons are forced to confess their ignorance, it certainly does not qualify them any better to discharge the duties of their office. The preacher cannot dismiss the subject by sneeringly, or even indifferently, asking what he has got to do with Spiritualism or any other ism, and protesting that it is foreign to his chosen vocation. He certainly has to do with whatever throws light upon man's spiritual life. No matter to what church or creed he belongs, if while he is discussing and disputing on points of belief there is heard a voice from the other world that claims to be able to settle so many vexed questions, especially as to the absorbing problem of immortality and a future state, he has no right to refuse to listen to it.

This new and welcome voice is able to decide whether any or all of the various religious denominations hold the truth, or any portion of the truth, respecting a future state. It can declare whether the Roman Catholic or the Presbyterian is correct in his professed belief, the former in adding purgatory to an everlasting hell, the latter in relegating souls to heaven or hell. It can decide clearly all the theological disputes and clarify all the ecclesiastical dogmas, but the clergy, as a body, persistently refuse to listen. They do not think it worth the while. What do they mean when they answer that? Nay, nothing is plainer than that it is their positive duty to meet this fact, if it be a fact, and to confront it just as it stands before them. They were solemnly summoned to do this nearly forty years ago, when this new light was at its dawning; when little children were made its readiest instruments, and young men and maidens were made to speak publicly to others when the clergy merely came forward with their dry and dead interpretations of the Bible and denounced it as sorcery and necromancy.

First the clergy cried out "Humbus." Then, finding that useless, they thought to sweep the new manifestation of the spirit away with conventional explanations, ingenious and familiar. Finally they resorted to the epithets "witchcraft" and "demonology." But all this failed to frighten away the spirits, whether it affected mortals or not. In the face of this clerical abuse and denunciation the spirit-child came forth and gave its blessing to the parent in bereavement; the mother bent over her son or daughter with affectionate words of love and wisdom. No ecclesiastical interpretation of the Bible was able to drive away the ministering spirits; they could answer text with text, proving themselves to be authorized of God. The clergy after a time withdrew into a stony silence, or else they secretly offered Spiritualism a partial assent and acceptance, hypocritically borrowing from it what they really could not do without, and rejecting the rest; which explains their latest inclination to talk of the spirit-land, the summer-land, and the land of the soul, while giving no syllable nor lip of credit to what brought it to them, which

makes them scan with eagerness the literature of Spiritualism, appropriate what they professionally need, and thus win the plaudits of their hearers.

If they regard Spiritualism, on the other hand, as a scientific movement, to be investigated only by those who make it their business to investigate scientific subjects, why do they from time to time comment on the movements of science? Or if they regard it as too secular for the formal recognition of the Church, why do they so often comment on secular themes? They certainly speak often in support of Mammon, and that is secular enough. And if they consider the whole subject unworthy of them, and Spiritualists as weak-minded and foolish, what have they to say to the notorious fact that many an one has voluntarily and from conviction left their own pulpits in order to help spread abroad the larger and more blessed knowledge of this new dispensation? A man like Theodore Parker could see in Spiritualism the religion of the future. A statesman of the eminence and erudition of Lord Brougham could see in it a little cloud no larger than a man's hand which would in time cover the whole sky. Professional men in all walks consider it worthy of their grateful acceptance. And it is steadily working its way into the churches themselves, silently passing by the hollow warnings and denunciations of the pulpits, and promising eventually to occupy them as well as the pews.

As a material organization the Christian fabric is falling apart and coming down. Being but the work of man, it cannot expect exemption from the decay which follows all human contrivances. It is man alone who created denominational religion, and that, too, from selfish interest rather than from spiritual necessity; but truth, unlimited and free, comes of inspiration, and belongs to all ages alike; and it speaks to day from the lips alike of children and women, of gray-haired men and men of the world. It is no uncertainty, and it is not afar from the reach of any of us. Unless the doors of the so-called sanctuaries are voluntarily opened to it, it will surely find a way to enter itself; it will stand beside the speakers in the pulpits, as it has done time and again, and through ministering spirits it will utter its voice and that voice will be heard. People may ask the preachers, after they have spoken, if they are Spiritualists, and they will deny it with all emphasis, and still they have spoken its word, proclaimed its gospel, clad themselves in the raiment of the message it bears, and the veil has been torn aside. Every man must sooner or later leave the pulpit, where he professes to minister to man's spiritual nature, who refuses to accept the voice of God's inspiration. And he can no more stay there and bottle up a little of it for private use than he can bottle up the sunshine. Ministering spirits are continually passing to and fro in the pure, open air of heaven, and are speaking to mortals words that the preachers do not understand.

Mrs. H. W. Cushman.

Wesley to call the attention of our readers to the condition of Mrs. H. W. Cushman of 212 Main street, Charlestown District, Boston. This lady is one of our best known and oldest workers in the spiritual field. For many years her wonderful musical mediumship accomplished grand pioneer work for our Cause, and many have been convinced of the reality of spirit-communication through her instrumentality. For a long time Mrs. Cushman has been a victim to paralysis. Added to this infirmity, she is at present afflicted with hemorrhage of the stomach.

It does not seem right that a faithful and conscientious medium, who has spent her best years in laboring for the spirit-world and humanity, should in her declining days be left alone to battle helplessly with sickness and poverty, and we therefore bespeak for Mrs. Cushman the warm sympathy and pecuniary assistance of those who have been blessed with the light of spirit-communication.

Mrs. C. still holds séances for the physical manifestations in her peculiar line, as will be seen by her advertisement which we have placed upon our seventh page.

A New York correspondent wrote to us recently querying whether or not all who possess the divine gift of mediumship were "devil mediums." That some who possess the gift pervert it at times there can be no doubt, and are still doing so—simply to aggrandize themselves, with no view whatever of promoting the truth of spirit-communication; but these people, we are glad to know, are in the minority, and even they will ere long lose the power to manifest if they do not change their unprincipled course. There are many spiritual mediums, on the other hand, who are devoted workers in the cause, leading pure and holy lives, hence drawing to themselves spirits who are in deep sympathy with their earthly labors. We have had ample evidence of this fact for many years. As an illustration we append to these remarks a communication recently received from a spirit mother through the agency of one of our most refined lady mediums, showing as it does the anxiety manifested by the mother who was obliged by death to relinquish the personal care of her darling. This mother knew ere she left the earth-life that the gates were open between the two worlds, and she had taught this fact as well as she could to her child:

"MY DEAR BABY—Mamma never forgets her darling, and she has no greater joy than to come and send her love to her dear little girl. I am very glad that you are trying to be so good. It makes mamma feel very nicely. I come to you every night and watch over you while you sleep. Sometimes mamma can make you dream of her, and that is very pleasant. I want you to know, darling, that I have a very lovely home in the spirit-world. Your dear grandma lives there, and she is as good as she can be. We have everything pleasant there, and we shall have a beautiful place for papa and for you when you come over to our world to live."

You must think that it is a real world, full of nice buildings and schools, and such nice temples. Then we have pretty homes where people are well and happy. Some day you will see all this, and I want you to know of it before you come.

Now, darling, be a good girl and love papa. Mamma will be with you often and will always love her little girl. I will write you when I can, but I will be with you even when you do not hear from me.

I send you many warm kisses.

MAMMA.

December 24th, 1886.

The Medium and Daybreak of the 24th ult. publishes reports from over one hundred places in England outside of London in which Spiritualist meetings are held, and a great and growing interest in the truths of Spiritualism exists. In many of these a Children's Progressive Lyceum is established—the first having been formed at Nottingham about twenty years ago.

Sergeant William Ballantyne, the noted English barrister, is dead at seventy-five. This gentleman was employed by the Spiritualists of this country and England, to defend Dr. Slade several years ago, when he was arrested by the agents of London for being a spiritual medium.

Benefit Entertainment at Parker Memorial Hall.

On the evening of Thursday, Jan. 6th, the entertainment for the benefit of Children's Lyceum No. 1, of Boston, occurred at this hall, as by previous announcement, and proved a pronounced success—a large audience, a fine programme, and good pecuniary returns combining harmoniously in the pleasant sum total.

The order of exercises comprised well rendered selections by a fine orchestra: vocal selections by Misses Hutchinson and Hall, Messrs. Chute and Adams, the Mendelssohn Ladies' Quartette, Mr. J. Aldrich Libby, and the Ardine Sisters, Katie and Cora; "Reminiscences of the Revolution," by Charles W. Sullivan; readings by Wyman Marshall, Esq., Lucette Webster, Maria Fells; piano solos by Miss Maud Banks and Miss Etta Parr, a violin solo by Mr. Louis Poole, and an inspirational poem by W. J. Colville, the subjects for which, viz: "The Children's Lyceum," and "Music," were furnished by the audience.

This entertainment for the worthy object of pecuniarily assisting the Children's Lyceum in its work was organized and carried out by Mrs. Maggie (Folsom) Butler—to whose liberality, and that of her husband, W. S. Butler, Esq., the enterprise owes much of its practical success—assisted by Mrs. Lizzie Clapp, Messrs. David Brown, W. B. Johnson, and others. The benefit cleared \$130 for the Lyceum treasury. On motion of Mr. E. J. Cobb, a vote of thanks was passed to Mrs. Butler and her co-laborers for the kindly action they had taken in the interests of the young.

BENEFIT SEANCE.

At the request of Mrs. Butler, presiding, Mr. Cobb stated from the platform that Mr. G. T. Albro would give a benefit séance in aid of the Lyceum's finances, at 55 Rutland street, Boston, on Tuesday evening, Jan. 18th, at which Geitrude Berry would be present, with others.

SOCIAL RE-UNIONS.

Mrs. Maggie Butler announces that she will commence on Thursday evening, Jan. 20th, and continue for the present, twice per month, at Langham Hall, Boston, a series of meetings for the benefit of the poor and destitute—Mrs. Lizzie Clapp assisting her in the enterprise. The exercises at first named date will take the form of a "Turkey Supper"—for which the modest fee of fifteen cents per plate will be charged.

The one hundred and eighty-first anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, and the sixty-third anniversary of that organization, will be celebrated under the auspices of the Franklin Typographical Society on Monday evening, Jan. 17th, at the United States Hotel. A dinner, vocal and instrumental music, and remarks of an eloquent and practical nature (as they always are at these anniversaries) will make up the programme of exercises. We have always felt a peculiar interest in Benjamin Franklin, aside from his historic position, as he was the first returning spirit who interested us in the phenomenon, and encouraged us—with William Berry, our former partner—in establishing the BANNER OF LIGHT. We well remember the great interest he manifested in spirit-life, as evinced by several written messages we received from him, while the erection and dedication of his statue, now to be seen in front of Boston's City Hall, were in progress.

THE SPIRIT MESSAGE DEPARTMENT opens this week with a communication from Frank Page to friends in Portland, Me.; and in due course, similar utterances are presented from Cordella Evans, to her daughter Isabel in New York; Carrie Henderson, to her mother in Boston; "Olive," to a lady then present at the circle; Andrew Peabody, to those who knew him in East Boston; Catherine Smith, of Baltimore, Md.; Sarah Rush, of Philadelphia, Pa.; Henry Davis, of Topeka, Kan.; John Stacey, of Watertown, Mass.; Rebecca Wilson, to her mother in Los Angeles, Cal.; and George Markham, to friends in Detroit, Mich., Cleveland, O., and other points in the West and South; the questions treated by the Controlling Intelligence are interesting as bearing on the conditions of life in the spirit-world, a prophecy of coming illness in children, etc.

A NEW CREED.—The American Board of Foreign Missions, flushed with its victory over the more liberal "second probationists," is now aspiring to build a new creed. Copies of the same are being sent out from its Boston office on Beacon Hill, and the Christian Union (progressive Orthodox), of New York City, wants to know who pays for the printing, and where the representatives of the [presumably Foreign] Board in this city got their authority for promulgating a creed in America! "Echo answers 'where?'"

Mr. A. E. Newton, in a private note to us, says he has carefully perused Mr. Charles Dawbarn's lecture lately delivered in Worcester, Mass., which appeared in the last number of the BANNER, and desires to reply to it. Mr. N. thinks some of Mr. D.'s points are not without pertinence, but there are others the lecturer evidently had not thought of. We should be pleased to hear from Bro. Newton upon the subject under consideration whenever his convenience permits.

GOD'S POOR FUND, which the angel-world requested us to establish years ago, has been the means of keeping the wolf from the door of many a destitute person, and is still doing so; but the call for aid the present season has increased so rapidly that the funds on hand are getting short, and consequently need replenishing; therefore we hope the philanthropist will remember the poor whom our spirit-friends call upon us to befriend.

It is said that our new Governor tried to get shaved on a Sunday morning recently in Boston, but could not—so he has recommended in his inaugural message that all such "blue laws" be repealed. Hope the Legislature will take the hint, and revise our statute laws at once, and, while they are about it, enact a law taxing all wealthy church corporations. A great majority of the tax-payers of the Commonwealth demand this reform.

Mrs. E. A. Wells, the genuine materializing medium of New York City, who has just recovered from a severe illness, is once more able to give regular séances at her rooms, 822 Sixth Avenue, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings of each week. The materializations of forms which appear in her presence are very remarkable.

SPIRITUALIST EXPERIENCES.—Prof. J. W. Cadwell, on our second page, continues the interesting series of Experiences which in times past he has been contributing to the BANNER columns. He is at present giving highly successful mesmerism entertainments in Dover, N. H.

Specimen copies of the BANNER OF LIGHT will be sent to any address upon application to this office. Subscriptions always in order.

New England Spiritualists' Association.

The Board of Directors of this corporation held their annual meeting at the Crawford House, Boston, Jan. 8th. The Board was quite fully represented, and important matters pertaining to the future of Lake Pleasant occupied the attention of the officials most of the day. We were pleased to call the friends by the hand and once more have a social chat with them all. But one thing puzzles us very much. The Lake Pleasant camp grounds are located in Massachusetts, yet these officials, who meet each year at our hotel, fail to give us a list of the officers chosen at such meetings. It was promised us positively this year, but our reporter makes no mention of the fact. The annual camp-meeting the coming season will be held July 30th to Aug. 29th inclusive.

Too True.

Several of our lecturers write that they are continually surprised at the apathy shown by the officers of the Spiritualist societies in different sections of the country, "who nearly all," they say, "fall in posting our journals as to place, times and speakers at their meetings, and who, in a majority of cases, seem never to report any doings. It is too bad!" Yes indeed! We have called upon the friends many times for information in regard to the movements of our workers, and have been disappointed at the lukewarmness manifested.

DR. FRED L. H. WILLIS.—We have received a letter (which we shall print next week) from A. B. Brown, of Philadelphia, Pa., paying a merited tribute of praise to Dr. Willis as an orator and inspirational improviser. Spiritual societies should keep the Doctor busy. His address now is 123 Amity street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The First Unitarian Society of Hartford, Ct., inaugurates a series of public lectures this winter which will consist of three each on Temperance, Woman Suffrage, Labor Reform and Spiritualism. The lectures are to be given by able exponents of each subject, and will undoubtedly attract large audiences.

THE CARRIER DOVE (Oakland, Cal.).—The contents of the January number are introduced by a frontispiece representing a scroll upon which a spirit message is inscribed and around which is a wreath of flowers in their natural colors. The whole is one-quarter size of the original painting executed by a spirit-intelligence through the mediumship of Mrs. A. E. Blair, while blindfolded, for Mrs. M. S. Fish, who gives a detailed description of the manner of its production and other particulars. Portraits and biographical sketches are also given of Prof. J. R. Buchanan, J. J. Owen and Mattie P. Owen of the Golden Gate, Lorenzo Painter and Franklin A. Davis. A story is contributed by J. J. Morse, an article upon "Dangers in the Line of Progress," by Prof. Buchanan, and a history of Spiritualism in its rise and progress on the Pacific Coast, by W. N. Slocum. Editorially are passed in review the Spiritualist papers of the United States. The above, with other instructive matter, constitute this New Year's number one of much excellence.

NEW SONGS.—Mr. C. P. Longley, the well-known composer, has just issued two new and beautiful songs, which will take the musical loving public by storm. So daintily sweet and spiritual are these new productions of the composer that they will appeal to the heart of every pure-minded person whose aspirations tend toward the elevated and the true. "Only a Thin Veil Between Us," dedicated to Miss Annie E. Lewis, of Springfield, just before her release from the mortal, is one of the most tender and hopeful of songs; while, "When the Dear One Gathers at Home," (inscribed to the late Senator Morrill of Worcester) is an excellent production, both in the words and melody. They appeal to the best impulses of the soul. We commend the attention of our readers to the beautiful songs above mentioned, which they will find on sale at our counters.

A writer in the Minneapolis Tribune, after referring to the strange burden by which a former President of Harvard College did not get invited to the recent festival of that time-honored institution, and so came on his own hook, to the great relief of the committee, makes the following additional point. Wonder if it contains the true solution:

"A strange omission from the list of invitations was the name of ALFRED ROSSER WALLACE, the eminent English naturalist, co-discoverer of Darwin and Huxley, and a man whose scientific research is a main reliance in Harvard's curriculum. Mr. Wallace was delivering a course of lectures in the Lowell Institute in Boston at the time, and another course was not but have been known to the committee, the failure to invite him was not accidental. It is rather hard to believe that the reason he was not invited was that he is a Spiritualist, but such is said to be the fact."

THE FREETHINKER'S MAGAZINE has changed its place of publication from Salamanca to Buffalo, N. Y., and in its January number greets its readers in a new, neat and attractive form. The contents open with "A Lay Sermon" by Robert G. Ingersoll, followed by an article upon "Prohibition" by A. B. Bradford, and the first of a series of articles upon Spiritualism by Lyman C. Howe, which gives promise of placing before the disciples of the agnostic school a clear and comprehensive elucidation of the subject. The literary and editorial departments are well filled, the correspondence extended and informative, and the work, as a whole, appears worthy of the patronage of all liberal minds.

"FACTS."—The December number contains a portrait of Dr. F. L. H. Willis, and editorial mention of events of thirty years ago that made him prominent in the history of the early days of Modern Spiritualism—referring the reader to Allen Putnam's recently published book, "Post-Mortem Confessions," for further particulars. Additions to the number of profiles already made public of the truth of open communication with the spirit-world are given by Mrs. E. K. Beach, Dr. W. Orichley, S. McClary, and others, sufficient in themselves to confirm the faith of believers and arouse the thought of skeptics. For sale by Colby & Rich, 9 Bowdoin street, Boston.

At a materializing séance held recently in Brooklyn, N. Y., by Dr. A. W. S. Rothermel, we are informed—five spirits (of different age and sex) were seen at one and the same time. A striking proof of the verity of the Doctor's medial powers.

Mrs. Carrie E. S. Twing has recovered from the severe illness with which she has been afflicted of late, and can be found by parties desiring her services at 13 Davis street, Boston.

We are pleased to note that the Social Drive now reaches this office regularly from its place of publication, Muskegon, Mich.

THE INDIAN REVEREND BILL passed the House just before the holidays. It was so changed that Senator Dawkes would hardly recognize it as his bill; and it is likely to be adopted. It will be referred to a select committee of the two Houses. The National Indian Defense Association has appointed a committee to oppose its final passage. This committee, with Rev. Dr. Sunderling at the head, will ask for a hearing before the conference committee. The amendments to the bill adopted by the House, with the exception of the one suggested by the N. I. D. A. that put it out of the power of the President or Secretary of Interior to break up any Indian reservation without the consent of a majority of the men of the tribe, do not improve the bill. It is still a measure that ought not to become a law.—The Concord Free Press.

THE BANNER OF LIGHT in this issue can be found the prospectus of the BANNER OF LIGHT, the oldest and ablest journal devoted to the interests of Spiritualism. Those desiring to investigate the spiritual philosophy will find the BANNER most valuable.—The Lake Pleasant Intelligence, Boston, Pa.

Now on Sale.

"Gentlemen," said an enthusiastic but rather "prolix" orator, just after the election of his favorite candidate, "The renown of this glorious victory will resound in golden letters through the corridors of the river of time."

A Frenchman left an order in his will that five hundred thousand francs should be buried with him. His nephew was thoughtful enough to have a check for the amount put in the coffin.

The truths coming through Miss M. Shelbamer, the BANNER of LIGHT medium and printed in that paper, are of more value this age than the combined teachings of all colleges in America. This may seem a sweeping assertion, but it is one I have heard at least one eminent Professor in colleges admit and is susceptible of proof. If a fair test was could be made, — *Foundation Principles, October 1st.*

publishers to give the BANNER OF LIGHT circulation to which its merits entitle it, they look with confidence to the friends of paper throughout the world to assist them in the work. COLBY & RICH, Publishers.

ALLEN PUTNAM, ESQ. will answer calls to lecture or to attend funerals. Address him No. 670 Tremont street, Boston, Mass.

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