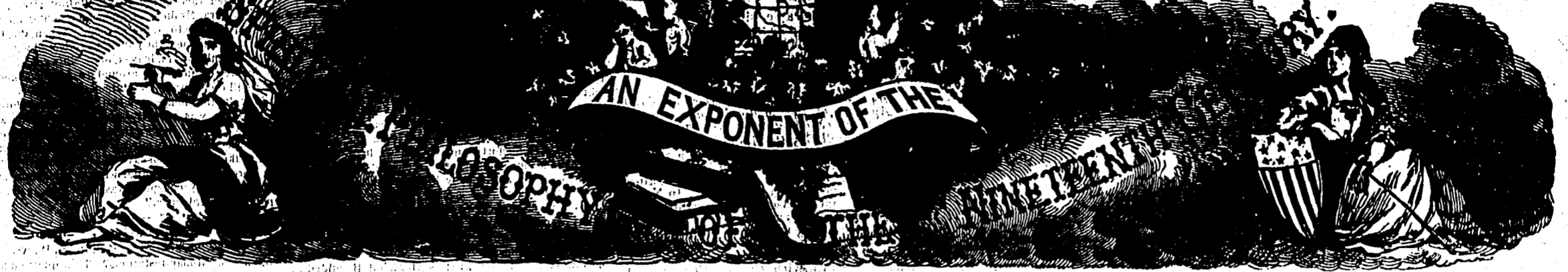


# BANNER OF LIGHT.



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## Original Essay.

### MAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

BY JOSEPH WOOD.  
PART II.

It is just here and now that we declare, as the law of mortal life, that words and deeds as they affect one life by direct influence, also affect others, who may be influenced or controlled by conditions and circumstances brought about by the first or initial sensation and impulse.

Like as the pebble, dropped into the lake, projects a series of circles upon the surface, widening as they increase in number, so does the responsibility of a word, and of an act or deed, ring out to the extent of the influence, carrying to its ultimate an accountability for all results here and hereafter.

In the conjugal relations new and important responsibilities are imposed, and the man and woman, as husband and wife, take upon themselves, severally and jointly, very important duties, as evinced by the important offices of the family, the domestic relation, paternity, etc. The condition and relation of mother! Oh! that blessed name, that sacred title; how urgently, how vehemently does her heart express in discreet and loving precept and example the yearnings of her deep and enduring natural affection. Oh! that we could impress upon woman's intelligence that, in her prospective or positive conjugal relation, in the distinctive characteristics of her nature, she is first and last in her influence upon the activities of the life-giving principle and the development of living souls. How vastly beyond ordinary comprehension, or human calculation, are the responsibilities of woman! She feels through all life-for it is an innate principle, an inherent law (a necessary and just law) of her nature-to cherish and love her offspring, and tenderly and earnestly follow her children through the vicissitudes of existence, with desires and expectations (hopes) only known to maternal solicitude. This law, while it imposes the responsibility, cancels it in the devotion that a mother exhibits in her love and care for her child or children.

The paternal responsibilities are scarcely a whit less in the relation of husband and father, guardian, protector and provider for or to the family—none of which can be remitted, nor will they be canceled but by a constant and direct performance of the duties of educator, cultivator and moral trainer of the tender and growing nature of the household. Let none forget or ignore the responsibilities and duties of the home, for be it remembered that our domestic relations go with us into the life continued; and how anxiously, then, should each one aspire to make the family circle here pure, bright and happy, and hence such in the long future.

It would seem as if man was altogether a selfish being; that all the thought of and all the aimed at or sought for was his own personal enjoyment or aggrandizement. This is a law of his nature, and operates prominently above every other law, or influence, but can be modified and controlled to such an extent as to remove or obviate any injurious effects. There is indeed no other faculty or attribute of the mind, or a thing like the active principle of thought, but may be disciplined, and cultivated to beneficial results. Thus shall we acquire ourselves of responsibilities. The principle of life is a gift or power worthy of our deepest gratitude, and when we know that it exists and we can exercise it in the development of our spiritual nature, in the exhibition of our moral nature, how important is it, then, to school each faculty right, to know what our nature is by earnest study of our interior organization, is truly a task, but yet a pleasure when we realize how much of good fruit we may enjoy by proper culture.

We live to enjoy life; it is our first thought, our ever-abiding desire. Nor do we wish simply to live, though the life-principle is ever active and always a predominating aspect; we seek to live for something as a belonging to life, something to make it more convenient, more beautiful, more respectable, more honored, more happy, more blessed in its gratifications. For all this we have the faculty to work on the results of all our varied responsibilities.

There is such a thing as being very acquiescent, seeking, penurious, covetous and sordid, and adopting money-making as the idol of our constant worship; and oh! what a rook of disaster has this love of money been to thousands, millions, myriads.

Let us say in this relation: Man, study thy nature well and thoroughly, and thou wilt find that the true policy and duty of life will be, or is, to live between the extremes of poverty and riches. Cultivate to this end and be happy.

If, then, the possession of a faculty that is acquisitive in its nature is valuable to inspire us to seek for and to obtain the necessities and even the luxuries of life, there is a responsibility attached; and to avoid the excess of inordinate desire or the incentive to steal, we have a duty to perform to ourselves first, and then to society, in the strict discipline to be exercised over the inspirational influence, or the organic power, whatsoever or wheresoever it be.

In our investigations of our subject we have passed upon the attributes and functions of the human organism which affect the physical or natural conditions and relations of man, and are more or less exhibited in his mental sensibilities and his moral activities. These, we have said—and we repeat—should be disciplined and cultivated to their true purpose of good to man.

The question, then, is started: are there not other faculties, attributes, propensities, that, having moral and spiritual tendencies, require the care and attention of close cultivation? The answer is in the affirmative, for while there are such as require the restraints of severe discipline, there are those that only want the tender culture of moral and spiritual nursing and training. The higher order of moral sentiments demands our most emphatic regard. The love of justice and truth, the inspirations to charity, beneficence, and, in fact, to all honest and upright duties of life, should be cherished as jewels of most inestimable value. They require tender and appropriate means of development, hence our responsibility in that direction.

The consciousness of duty is to be educated, so as to realize that we are to be long-suffering, patient, kind and just, and to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, which, we contend, is the highest of the higher laws of moral life. Man is responsible for the cultivation or non-cultivation of the sentiments that constitute his spiritual, and will culminate in his celestial and eternal progress and development. He should, therefore, covet and encourage a communion with spirit intelligences, and in that intercourse learn what his responsibilities are, and endeavor so to live in the fulfillment of duty that they will be fully cancelled.

Coming, then, into the light of spiritual truth, we live in the bright side of hope; and inspired with a strong sense or conviction of immortality, we are not confused with doubts and fears, nor in dread of a baleful and woeful future.

Looking, then, upon the bright and the beautiful from the standpoint of spiritual truth, we see everything to love and nothing to hate; and we feel to venerate that which gives us the ecstasy of inspired fact over the vagaries of fancy or the delusions of mere faith.

Thus have we traced the responsibilities of man from the age of discretion, or of his power of reasoning, to that of full human development. We have seen him in his home, under the parental roof; we have traced him into domestic life, with its obligations and duties; in his social and civil relations we find he has responsibilities and duties imposing upon him a sense of honor, of justice, of magnanimity and generous impulse; nor less are the obligations of benevolence, of mercy, and the fullest emotions of love! The duty of honest fulfillment of all obligations of a political nature, whether of the form and law of a contract, or by implication of moral or civil accountability, is upon him. He has responsibilities as a reasoning being relative to his parents, his kindred, his friends, his neighbors, his fellow-citizens, his countrymen, and duties binding upon him which must be discharged without mischance or failure.

With faculties mental and spiritual, properly disciplined and cultivated, man presents to himself the condition of giant strength for the development of his powers and the refinement of his spiritual attributes. He has, then, only to covet earnestly the best gifts, and, in rapport with the pure and enlightened of the better world, he will be inspired to the highest conceptions of his responsibilities, and will discharge them in the light of love and gratitude.

Reason, which is endowed with such superior powers, will not be called upon often to decide as to man's responsibilities and duties, for mostly does man receive his spiritual instructions intuitively. We reason only from what we know, and reason may be at great fault from several causes, but the inspiration of a superior power and divine nature comes with the force of fact, the force of truth.

Let us, then, know our responsibilities, and knowing them, let us cancel them in the honest and faithful discharge of every duty to ourselves, to man, and to Him in whom we live, move and have our being.

If, as Spiritualists, we enjoy the influx of the celestial inspiration as we ought and as it is our privilege, we will feel a responsibility resting upon us to enlighten in the glorious cause of heavenly truth all who know little or nothing of it. May we not show them the way? May we not induce them, by counsel and exhortation, to accept the testimony given, and seek in the light of spirit-communication the seats of truth, and thereby be enabled to live in the enjoyment of a divine philosophy?

How much should we love to impart to others the knowledge of our holy and happy experiences, and thereby prepare them for better lives here and in the life beyond.

We should let no dark and undeveloped soul pass to the world of spirits if we are able in any manner to enlighten, such before the change. Let our light shine—this is the command—that others may be benefited thereby. The angel-world asks and expects this contribution from us, and thus shall we be co-workers with them.

What, then, is the argument in this direction? Neither more nor less than that every spirit prepared for the spirit-world finds on its entrance there a more happy field for the immediate participation of the joys of the Summer-Land. Then let us make sure of doing our duty here in all that is expected or demanded of us from our surroundings, and then the happy greetings on the other side of life will more than compensate us for the sacrifices we may have made here in canceling our various responsibilities.

Philadelphia, Pa.

**THROWING STONES.**

How easy 't is for us to give  
A sermon to our friends,  
Whose sharp and burning eloquence  
Our neighbors' faults condemn!  
How clear and deep our logic is,  
Our arguments how strong!  
And our conclusions—oh! what force  
And power to them belong!

Meanwhile, we do not touch upon  
Our own peculiar "cranks";  
We'd rather teach our neighbors,  
And condemn their frolics and pranks!  
Our peccadilloes—oh, but they  
Are very, very few!  
Correcting them is not the task  
We've set ourselves to do.

No, we prefer to teach the world,  
And set it all to rights;  
We'd have our neighbors shape their course  
By our peculiar lights.  
Because we're sure that we can give  
The very best advice,  
And all our neighbors' home affairs  
Can settle in a trice.

We have the whole thing inside down;  
We've caught the wrong end first.  
"Tis by this very meddling,  
The whole world is stirred;  
Let each one mind his own affairs,  
And leave his friends alone;  
And while we're in a house of glass,  
Don't let us throw a stone."

**New York Medical Act.**

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

AY, the conspiracy has succeeded; money and corrupt trickery have effected their work, and there is a Medical Statute in New York.

Gov. David B. Hill signed the iniquitous measure on the 23d of June, seemingly after a delay for a back-door argument.

The matter was the outcome of a corrupt bargain between lawyers and their clients, purporting to represent the Old School, Homeopathic and Eclectic Medical Societies. The former two had been acting in concert a long time, and the Eclectics were "roped in." The managers of the latter party were promised by some one the appointment of a State Medical Board, which should embrace them and their satellites, on condition that they should procure a vote of the Eclectic Medical Society of the State of New York in favor of the so-called "Codification Bill." Every effort was put forth, money spent, and a bare majority obtained at the meeting of the Society in March last.

The harlotry having been perpetrated, the bill was finally forced through the last week of the session. The betrayers were very nervous to the last; but they have succeeded. Eclectic Medicine in New York is a lost cause.

Apparently the bill is but a reshuffle of old statutes, only annulling the People's Act of 1844. Actually, it is a tortuous screw. The old twenty-dollar fee to College Deans for endorsing diplomas received outside of the State is left off, but this enables corrupt college officials to extort blackmail at pleasure from the victims of their rapacity.

The bill also authorizes every county medical society to employ a lawyer to harry and harass at pleasure every "irregular" whom he sees fit to ply his infernal game upon. As all county medical societies are of the Old School, and we have the same old sooty-skinned Ethiopian as we had fifty years ago, it is easy enough to see what it all means. The State of New York is to become hunting-ground for the sleuth-hounds of the Old School profession.

The artful wording of the new statute makes the case of magnetists, spiritual healers, electro-mancers, etc., more unfortunate than before. They are virtually outlawed; they have no rights as human beings or citizens in this matter. They must champion their own cause or go to the wall. If they consent to it all, I have only to say they deserve it. Every one of them is an offender if he pursues his vocation, liable to fine and imprisonment, besides heavy costs to a miserable starveling attorney.

For years legislation has been going down hill. The next generation has a heavy work on its hands to undo the atrocious work of this. We, forsooth, have changed, negro slavery for white degradation; the next work will be to correct the latter, if it can be done. We are on the high road to imperial domination; official integrity is small. I must say, however, for my brother Eclectic, that the great majority do not and will not favor what has been done in New York and other States. But, unfortunately, good men are never as wary or totemically as bad ones. They are proverbially careful, even timid. While men sleep the enemy sows tares, and for the entire season there is the foul growth mingled in with the good grain. Go on, till the day of the furnace of fire.

Oh for a Long, a Bodwell and a Hoffman!

A. W.

## Literary Department.

### AN ARTIST'S STORY.

Written Expressly for the Banner of Light.

BY JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER.

#### CHAPTER III.

To-Morrow.

It was perhaps an hour later in the day when the footman touched the artist on the shoulder and with an obsequious bow said, "I am requested by my master to show you to the rooms you will occupy in the west wing."

"Well," replied Manning, as he arose and left the billiard-room, where he had been dozing over the morning paper. He followed the man up the stairs and through the long corridor to the west wing. Opening the door of a large apartment, the servant stood aside for him to enter. His luggage had been transported from the west wing and already placed in perfect order.

It was a beautiful apartment, furnished in a shade of light blue, with four large windows, from which could be had a fine view of the surrounding country, and was, in fact, almost the exact opposite of the sombre chamber he had vacated in the east wing. Its elegant appointments suggested the delicate taste of a lady, and, indeed, it was one of the chambers occupied by the famous Lady Gladdis, who had that day left for the continent. Everything was light and airy; not a shadow to be seen; not a thing to suggest aught of ghosts or hobgoblins. Everything here bespoke leisure, comfort and perfect quiet.

"Well," said the new occupant to himself, "this is a change! One might almost expect to see an angel step down from that wonderful cloud-work with which the ceiling is covered," the work by the way, of a celebrated artist. "No fear that I shall not sleep well to-night. No fear of the old lady's coming this way." So on and on he mused, wondering what was the secret of Raglan Court.

Soon after this, however, he lost his curiosity in the charming witchery of Lady Arden's eyes, and during the whole evening he fully sustained his reputation of being a most agreeable society man.

At breakfast the next morning he appeared to have been thoroughly restored by his night's rest; his host met him at the foot of the great staircase, and to his happy good-morning and earnest inquiry as to his repose, Cyril answered: "Well, needless to ask; I simply forgot to get up. Do you know, old fellow, I never had such a night's sleep in my life."

"Glad to hear it," said Sir Charles, with a sigh of relief, as they turned their faces toward the breakfast room. The morning meal was scarcely ended when Sir Charles, linking his arm in that of Manning, said:

"Come with me into the library. I want to talk with you about the portrait."

The room, one of the finest in the house, as a library always should be, opened upon a lawn which was filled with treasures that might have been the envy of a king. Seating themselves in a distant part of this room, Sir Charles in a subdued tone of voice began to relate the following story:

"I shall be compelled to take you back over the history of three generations, before I can throw any light upon the dark mystery that has thrust itself upon your attention. I had hoped that it was buried forever from human eyes. You may not know that my grandfather, Sir John Fitzherbert, whose deeds of bravery gained him his title, was twice married. His first wife was the Honorable Miss Foster, a slight, delicate English girl, who had lived much in India, and inherited a very delicate constitution. She lived with my grandfather scarcely more than a year, when she died, leaving one son. In about two years Sir John married Lady Clara Stanhope, the youngest daughter of Lord Richard Stanhope, one of the oldest and proudest peers in England. They settled here, at Raglan Court. Lady Clara was a proud, high-spirited woman, filled with ambition, and very fond of society. In due course of time she also became the mother of a son, whom she completely idolized. He was, doubtless, to her the only child in the world, after the fashion of fond mothers, and all the ambition of her strong and determined nature was centered in him. He also received from his mother much attention which rightly belonged to her stepson; in fact, she almost completely ignored the existence and entirely the welfare of the eldest son and heir, who would one day inherit not only the title, but also the extensive estates that went with it. She was not absolutely a bad woman, but it was her misfortune to be the second wife of Sir John, which position included little or no material prospects for her own son. Both boys were bright, interesting and intelligent lads, and passed all their youth here at the Court. When her son, Phillip—the elder son's name was John, after his father—was twelve years of age, Sir John fell from his horse while hunting, and was brought home, never to leave the house again. He lingered, it is true, for some months, in great agony, and then died from the result of his injuries. This accident seemed to bring Lady Clara to a greater realization of her position and that of her son. She seemed all at once erased with the knowledge that her husband's death would place her reign as absolute mistress here and elsewhere. There was no way out of it. This stepson, the first born,

would in time, according to our English custom, become the absolute master of everything, and she conceived for him the most terrible hatred; his virtues were vices in her eyes, and his success in his studies became a matter of great annoyance to her. It is said that during her husband's sickness she would rarely ever allow Sir John to see his first-born, but she pushed Phillip constantly to the front. Oh! these proud English mothers! What strange mixtures of strong elements!" And the narrator stopped for a moment as if lost in the thought, and then going to the window, he watched the beautiful fountains on the lawn playing like sprays of molten silver in the sunlight; and the artist thought, as he looked upon the beautiful scene, so foreign to every thought of selfishness and crime, that it was positively sinful to open this grave, with its sad and bitter memories, or allow the dead woman's story to live even in memory. Sir Charles called the hounds, who had sprung in at the window, to his side, and as the magnificent brutes crouched beside him, the weariness faded from his face, and he said, as one half-waking from a dream:

"And she hated this elder son. She had hated him when her husband lived, because he stood between her and the entire possession of her husband's life, position and property; and when Sir John was no more—when the lawyers came down to arrange matters until the eldest son should become of age, she hated him—well, a thousand times more. I suppose she must have thought about it day and night; must have conceived of a thousand plans to rid herself of him before she hit upon the final and most horrible one. It was well-nigh upon a century ago, when one beautiful July afternoon she entered what was then the chapel room, the same chamber, my dear Cyril, in which you drew this surprising likeness of her. You remember that the glass is stained, the architecture of the wing ancient, and it was used for a long time exclusively for the chapel. Both of the boys had been out riding that day, and as she stood looking out of this window they came galloping across the park. The elder lad and heir came up the stairs and she turned toward the door of the chapel and called him in. They stood talking for some time by the open window, when, without warning, as if seized by a frenzy, she dashed upon him, and with the fury of a tigress threw him headlong on to the rocks below. He struck on his head, and his neck was instantly broken. Her own son, who was still riding in the park, passed the window at that very moment, and witnessed the terrible deed that his mother, through love for him, had committed. He sprang to the relief of his brother. The servants hearing his cries rushed out of the house. Everything was confusion. They carried the mangled and distorted body of the boy into his chamber. But Lady Clara was nowhere to be seen. Phillip went everywhere in search of his mother. Her apartments were empty, and when he loudly called her name, all he heard in response was the echo of his own voice. Finally he went to the chapel room, the door of which stood half open, and with fearful footsteps he crossed the threshold. The lights were dimly burning on the altar, at the foot of which Lady Clara was kneeling as if in prayer. She was clad in a dress of stiff brocade that swept far out behind her, and her neck and shoulders were veiled by her beautiful black hair, which had fallen from its fastenings. 'Oh, mother! How could you?' cried the lad as he saw her. His voice must have sounded like that of an accusing angel. He sprang to her feet with a wild, fierce gesture and rushed to the window, and then turned her face full upon him. He saw that it was the face of a mad-woman. In one hand she held a prayer-book, in the other a long dagger. Glancing for a moment out of the window to the cruel rocks below, she looked at her son in a wild beseeching way, and raising the dagger high above her head, she shrieked, 'It was for you, my son! buried it in her own heart, and fell forward at his feet, dead. They say—and here Sir Charles stopped for a long time, as if wondering whether he had better finish the sentence or not—"they say that her spirit, every year since the occurrence of this deed, haunts the spot where it was committed. Of course the room is no longer used as a chapel, and my father, for he was Phillip, had everything changed, although he never entered the room after that day. I have never slept there myself, and we never put nervous people into it. You will remember I asked you if you were nervous or superstitious."

"I remember," said Manning, who had listened to the recital with much interest, "and I shall never forget what occurred those memorable nights. All that you have told me interests me exceedingly, and only serves to stimulate in my mind a desire to know more. Pardon me," said he hesitatingly, "if I seem curious about this dead kinswoman of yours; but have you never tried to learn from her, in any way as a ghost, why she comes back?"

"Oh!" said Sir Charles impatiently, "once more a man of the world, 'don't be foolish! There are no such things as ghosts, and of course













