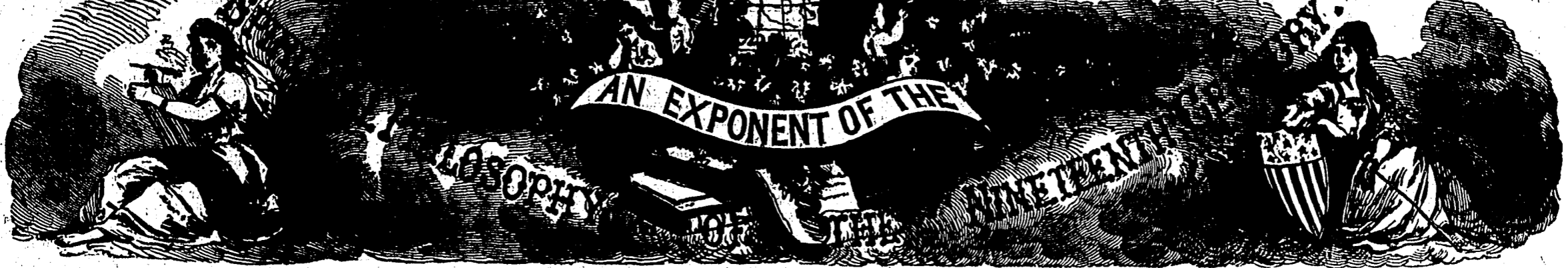


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The Spiritual Rostrum.

Experiences of the Soul in Search of God.

Inspirational Discourse through the Mediumship of
W. J. COLVILLE,
Delivered in Parker Memorial Hall, Boston,
Sunday Morning, Feb. 14th, 1887.
(Reported for the *Banner of Light* by Harry Fitzgerald.)

The question is continually asked, "What are the evidences of the Divine existence?" And another question is asked following closely upon it and naturally connected with it: "If there is a Supreme Being, why does not God reveal himself plainly to all intelligent human creatures? And if he is a God of infinite love and wisdom as well as of almighty power, why does he not answer the prayers of those who are continually calling upon him?" We shall endeavor to answer these questions in the course of our present remarks, and while we do not expect that a subject embracing infinity and eternity can be quite satisfactorily dealt with either by ourselves or by any speakers, as we know there are limitations in most human minds beyond which a revelation cannot be made, we are nevertheless convinced that a diligent and reverent perusal of the theme, an intelligent encounter with the obstacles it presents, a sincere and honest hope, desire and effort to solve this most wonderful of all problems, will not leave us without some recompense for the time and thought we bestow upon our subject.

The first question which naturally arises is: How did the universe come into existence? No one can reasonably suppose the universe came into existence out of nothing; it must either have been created or have always existed. To say that the universe could have made itself is absurd; to say it was made out of nothing is equally absurd; we can form no idea of how anything could make itself, neither can we of nothing; nothing signifies nonentity, and can therefore make no appeal whatever to the human mind as a source whence anything could possibly have sprung. Something is necessarily greater than nothing, nothing is necessarily less than anything, therefore to put nothing at the back of the universe and say that everything sprang from nothing is simply to state what is self-evidently absurd. And yet despite all the absurdity of such a statement it may be so modified in thought by those who make the statement as to really mean that everything sense can recognize has been evolved out of nothing; they mean to say that the eternal something, divine energy, infinite force, call it whatever you will, brought all things into existence and organized everything into Nature's myriad forms; that this energy is ever beyond the perception of man and certainly is nothing material. Force is nothing substantial, using that word in its sensuous or materialistic interpretation. That which lies beyond all our thought and fancy is the eternal life of the universe, the one infinite and all-pervading intelligence whose life is the cause of all vitality and all forms of existence with which we are familiar or unfamiliar.

If the question is asked "If there is an Eternal Being, an Infinite Mind in the universe, why does not this Infinite Spirit reveal himself plainly to all his creatures?" we answer as follows: We must take the universe as it is and endeavor to deal intelligently with existence as we find it. There is no reason in denying anything because something does not exist in the manner in which we would wish it to exist; there is no sense in finding fault with the constitution of the universe, because in our ignorant pride, arrogance and self-conceit some of us imagine if we had been consulted at the commencement of things we should have made them different from what they are now. We must, as sensible men and women, as intelligent scientists and philosophers, take things as we find them and make the best of them; or, to speak more correctly, strive to discover the good of everything.

A universal law unquestionably ordains that we can have nothing in the way of real information without an effort or endeavor on our part to obtain it; we cannot point to a single fact in astronomy, geology, chemistry, or any other science that has not been discovered by man through his own persistent application and research; there are no truths or facts in the universe which become plain and palpable to human understanding without an effort on the part of those to whom the revelation is made. A great many religious teachers to-day, both in the Jewish and Christian fold, declare that revelation is, after all, discovery; and these maintain that instead of supernatural religion having come down ready-made from heaven in a bygone age, men have gradually climbed up to those glorious heights, where, standing upon the summits of intellectual and spiritual mountains, they have been able to command a view of the surrounding territory, which otherwise would be utterly unknown to them.

If inspired or revealed religion is a something we ferret out, a something we discover, that will repay well all our energy in seeking for it, we are led to ask at once, "Are there not two important factors in divine revelation?" One necessary factor is surely a disposition on the part of the Being who reveals himself, to reveal himself; the other important factor is ability on the part of the one to whom the revelation is made to comprehend the revelation. In regard to spiritual revelation we must apply the very same tests and illustrations that we are hourly compelled to use with regard to all material

things: Take the sun in the heavens; the sun you may say is perfectly willing to reveal itself to the earth; it is truly stated in the New Testament that the sun shines impartially upon the good and evil, upon the righteous and the unrighteous; there is not the slightest reason for supposing that the sunlight has any preference. There is no partiality on the part of the orb of day; it shines serenely in mid-heaven upon all mankind, yet some people see the light and others do not; if you are blind you do not see it—not because the sun is unwilling you should see it, but solely because of the absence of sight in yourself. If two men go out into the fields at noonday when the sun is shining in its fullest brilliancy, and one is stone blind and the other has perfect sight, one exclaims, "Oh! how bright the sun is!" He may declare the sun's light to be so dazzling he cannot gaze upon it; the other says, "What do you mean by the sun? I see no light and no sun." You point him to the heavens and say, "There is the sun," but he still says, "I see nothing."

There is a case in point in the position taken inevitably by two such individuals in regard to the physical orb of light. If we were to conclude there was no genuine revelation from a spiritual world, no revelation to man's spiritual being because that revelation is not understood and accepted by everybody, or because every one cannot understand and accept it in his present condition, we might on the same lines of argument and false logic, by the same process of reasoning, declare there is no sun, no light, because a blind person cannot be made to see it.

It requires a certain condition of our brain and of our eyes to enable us to see anything in nature. As everybody has not the requisite development of brain or of visual organs, as all do not therefore behold so common and universal an object as the sun and the light that shines down from it, we affirm with regard to a divine revelation that if such a revelation has been made to certain exceptional people and not to the whole world; if certain spiritual truths have been apprehended by the few and not by the many; if there have been intellectual and spiritual giants who have been able to behold spiritual luminaries which those lower down intellectually and spiritually have not beheld, we are only saying it requires a certain development of mind, a certain evolution of spirit, a certain unfoldment in the region of capacity to embrace ideas, before one can take an extended view of the spiritual horizon and behold the glories of the spiritual state.

Now you will perceive that while we admit phenomena ordinarily termed supernatural, we deny the distinctly supernatural character of the phenomena. We admit that a Moses, an Isaiah or a Samuel may, in olden times, have discovered truths others knew nothing about; we admit there may have been a Jewish lawgiver who received and understood the ten commandments, while those around him did not behold essential truths in the same light and beauty. We will allow there were spiritual beings who could make themselves known to the child Samuel, while the learned and aged priest, Eli, was not able to discern their presence. We can well understand how, in certain instances, the eyes of gifted people have been opened, so that they saw the very hills covered with spiritual hosts fighting on their side, while others saw nothing whatever of these spiritual armies, and yet maintain there was nothing supernatural about these visions; it was only further development of natural power than ordinary; only an unusual stimulation of powers which are the heritage of all humanity. Spiritual gifts are not supernatural, strictly speaking; they are not the result, as we understand them, of divine favoritism or partiality in any sense, but simply spring from the fact that some minds are further developed than others; some having more unfolded capacity to drink in spiritual information than others, so they partake of the bounties spread out before them on the heavenly banquet board, bounties which no one can appreciate until his spiritual nature enables him to behold and enjoy these spiritual delicacies.

If the doctrine of the new birth—which has been preached so constantly in the Christian Church for hundreds of years—were to be clearly and distinctly understood, it would mean no more than this, just what the gospel declares it to mean; for what can be plainer than the words "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God?"

What does such an expression mean? The kingdom of God is here, right before you; when spiritually blind you cannot see it, but when you have undergone a spiritual change from darkness to light you behold it. Such spiritual transformation is equivalent to the opening of the eyes of the blind. When a blind man receives his sight nothing comes into existence because his eyes are opened; everything around him remains just as it was before; but to him many things apparently start into being which had no existence to him before; therefore, while abstractly there has been no change wrought in the universe for his benefit, relatively the entire universe of form and color have just awoke from nothingness. When one who is born deaf hears for the first time, sound must be to him as a new product of the universe; it seems to have just come into being for his individual delectation.

In all spiritual matters it is precisely the same; the universe goes on in the orderly tenor of its way. The spiritual truths of the universe are like the stars, which have been shining for ages without number in their places in the sky; but as in the Pentateuch we read that on a certain day those upon earth imagined that

the moon, the sun and the stars were created, so spiritual stars, always glowing, are not visible to the spiritual eye of man until that eye is opened. The sun is necessarily much older than the earth, the stars are worlds and suns stretching away into infinitude. Many of them are countless ages older than this little world, and yet there were long periods in the history of this earth when it was enveloped in such thick fogs and vapors that the light of those distant worlds could not even, ever so faintly, penetrate its dark atmosphere; at that time the stars, though in existence, were not revealed to man. After a long time the atmosphere became clearer, so that some of the stars became visible; at length man invented the telescope, and then the number of the stars was apparently increased by hundreds and thousands; for while the naked eye can only behold a few thousand stars in the midnight heavens, by the aid of the strongest telescope now in use millions of worlds are brought within the scope of human vision. You can know nothing about these distant stars until the telescope reveals them. The telescope can create nothing, but it reveals much. The microscope creates nothing, but it reveals worlds of infinitesimal life within a drop of water. As the achievements of modern science are continually leading to new revelations, so that we hear about new sounds and new colors, and are continually talking about new stars, new comets, and even new planets; though we are constantly talking of new forms of life in the very air we breathe, and of new facts concerning our own physical organisms, yet these facts we call new are all so old that no one can tell how ancient they are; to us they have all the charm of novelty, because the modern discoverer they are for the first time brought within the province of man's comprehension by his unfolding genius.

Just as it is with all material facts, with facts concerning the starry worlds, concerning the motion of the earth, concerning our own bodies, concerning the air we breathe and the water we drink, as all the knowledge we acquire we acquire gradually, so as a result of our slow but sure refinement and spiritualization, as our minds become triumphant over sense, the more thoroughly we subdue all material limitations, and overcome every opposing force arrayed against us through our ignorance. As ignorance gives place to knowledge, folly to wisdom, darkness to light, the world, the universe enlarges to our view with the development of our moral and spiritual nature. In the material world there was a time when the sun could not be seen at all, owing to the befogged condition of the earth's atmosphere; there was a time when the earth appeared to be very near the sun—only about ten thousand miles away—and the sun seemed but a little ball of fire rolling round the earth, only a little luminary set up in the heavens, very small in comparison with the great planet earth; the stars when they first became visible appeared as feeble lights hung up in the firmament for the benefit of the earth; and this world, small and insignificant though it be in the scale of planetary bodies, appeared to be the theatre for the exhibition of all the greatest events in the universe; it seemed to be the centre of everything, everything going round it. Now we have changed all such opinions, and thrown all such theories to the winds. As all such ideas came into the mind of man as the result of his observations in the days of his ignorance, so it is with regard to all spiritual truths, with regard to the existence of the deity, with regard to the attributes and character of the Eternal One; with regard to man's attitude to the Supreme Being from the very earliest inception of that lowest phase of natural religion, fetichism, to the most glorious heights of spiritual humanitarianism, which will be the religion of the future; all the way from the worship of a stick or a stone, a lion or a bear, to the adoration of an infinite intelligence who cannot be bounded by any human thought or fancy of the human mind, man has gradually arisen.

God has never changed, the sun has not changed, nor the stars, nor any facts in the universe. The constitution of nature is unchangeable, but man's ideas have changed about every fact in nature, and these changes have been made slowly and naturally through man's ever increasing intelligence. Man's ideas about God, about his own destiny, and everything lying outside of the realm of sensuous perception, have also changed with intellectual and spiritual advancement. Some people talk of God changing; they change, and imagine God changes. People talk about God's anger being appeased by the sacrifices they make to him. God's feelings toward them have never altered; but when they have appeased the anger of their own consciences they are no longer burdened with the feeling that God is angry with them; they imagine God has put away his anger when they themselves, in their desire to placate his offended majesty, overcome the barrier in their own condition which has shut out from them a revelation of the Supreme Goodness.

Thus all the doctrines of Orthodox theology, especially the doctrine of atonement, appear in an entirely new light, and must be regarded in a perfectly new manner, by those who are ready to apply the development theory to the idea of God, of our relations to the Infinite and to all the laws and forces of the spiritual universe.

A very learned writer, Dr. Drummond, a few years ago wrote a book entitled "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." That work, being written by a clergyman in good standing in the Episcopal Church, created quite a sensation among theologians and the public alike at the time of its first publication. The ground taken by the author is that one law of God, one law

of Nature, prevails throughout the entire universe, and therefore there is a perfect analogy between the natural and spiritual worlds and between religion and all the facts concerning spiritual life we can observe and discover.

Now what do we really know concerning the history of religion upon earth? Two views are entertained to account for the origin of man's belief in God, both of which have many adherents. One view is commonly called the natural, the other the supernatural; but people talk about natural religion and revealed religion as though they were distinct, when the two are really one.

What is revealed religion? According to Orthodoxy it implies that God purposely reveals himself to some men but not to all, while natural religion declares that man through his own soul finds out God. God cannot reveal himself to you unless the power is in you to comprehend the revelation; you cannot find out God unless you have the ability within you to find him out. Therefore if it be a fact that God reveals himself, and that is how man comes to know of his existence, then as some people know of God's existence and others say they do not, people to whom divine revelation can and does appeal must have the ability to comprehend divine revelation, or there could be no revelation to them.

On the hypothesis of the natural religionist, who discards the supernatural altogether and insists that man by some faculty within him is capable of discovering the Supreme Being, some have superior advantages in spiritual development over the rest of their fellow-beings; thus the revelation is in both cases unequal. In historic research into the origin of religions we come to a point where two classes of religionists and two ideas of God—the one very high and the other very low—stand in the face and occasion momentary bewilderment. As we turn to Egypt or India, or to any other mystic clime, side by side with science, philosophy and pure spiritual religion we find the darkness of Fetich-worship, the groveling conceptions of barbaric hordes. Without doubt the principal difference between the civilization of to-day and that of long ago is that the civilization of to-day is democratic, while the civilization of past times was aristocratic. There were times in the old world when none were acknowledged as great personages who had not great spiritual endowments coupled with intellectual powers. There was a time in Egypt when all members of royal families were members of the priesthood, and the priests and nobles were worshipped with almost divine honors because of their superior intelligence coupled with remarkable spiritual vision. They could do what others could not; they knew what others did not know, and the people bowed down to them by reason of their superior attainments in spiritual and mental directions. The only reason to-day why people will not bow to the priest and the king is because the king and the priest are no wiser and no better than the people. But let one arise who is spiritually, morally and intellectually the superior of the people, and multitudes will bow to him naturally, and it is quite right and reasonable they should, for genuine superiority must ever command homage. So long as the priest or the religious teacher is in advance of his hearers in mentality and morality—so long as his spiritual culture is in advance of theirs—so long is it perfectly right and natural that they shall bow before so royal a priesthood. But if there is only an assumption of holiness and dignity—if only by force of man-made law, aided by material arms, they compel obedience—it is inevitable that priest and king drop down in popular esteem to the limit of the common people, while the people declare, "We are all kings and all priests." Let any one arise to-day head and shoulders above his fellows morally and intellectually, a true spiritual giant, and people will be willing at once to bow to him and do him honor; let it only be seen that there is some one who knows more than others, and the multitude will flock to do him homage and pronounce unstinted eulogies in his honor. All the world over the people are not unwilling to bow before a genuine superior, but they will not bow to an equal, and most certainly they will not bow to an inferior. In many, many instances the pattern kings and priests, yea, some of the most renowned gods and goddesses, even angels and archangels (and we say it with all reverence, though it may sound shocking to some people's conceptions of the Almighty) are so low, debased and groveling that we can well understand and sympathize with men who say that they themselves are better than the God that some people hold up before them as an object of supreme adoration.

Now as soon as your idea of God is above the highest level of human attainment; whenever your thought of a Supreme Being pictures him as in advance of man's highest human ideal, if you keep the thought of God always far removed above the petty weaknesses and infirmities of mankind, man will naturally bow to so superior a Being and gratefully acknowledge God as the object of his unflinching trust and love. But when in these days of enlightenment and civilization certain people endeavor from among the relics of antiquity to erect an image of God which is nothing more than a base ideal of barbaric ages, and ask the public to bow down before a deity who, though a being superior to the then attainment of mankind, is positively inferior to man's present highest attainment, man's natural idea of what a Supreme Being ought to be and must be, they will revolt against paying adoration to any such a God—a God who embodies an idea which grew up naturally in a past age, but is now ready to be supplanted by something infinitely higher. Our ideas of God necessarily change with our

growth; every time we change, though we do not make a new God, we form a new idea of God, and that new idea of God must always take the place of the old idea. Col. Ingersoll said that an honest God was the noblest work of man. An honest idea of God is the noblest attainment of man; an honest thought of God, an honest conception of the Supreme Being, is impossible to a really dishonest person, and we do not hesitate to say that murderers worship in idea a murderous Deity; people who have not risen above the plane of partiality cannot worship a being who is no respecter of persons. We find all through the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as in other ancient revelations, that almost every one believed in one Supreme God, only nations and individuals entertained widely different ideas of God. The idea of God entertained by Moses in his superior moments, the idea set forth by David in the Psalms, and the most magnificent passages of the Bible, by Isaiah when with feelings of ecstatic rapture he soared beyond all material limitations and prophesied of a day when there would be a glorious and perfected humanity, by Micah and Joel when they declared the only sacrifice God required were those of honest deities and straightforward integrity—such ideas culled from the pages of Hebrew sacred literature loom up before us to-day as part of the most glorious revelation that has ever been given to the world. Those grand and ennobling thoughts of God, those wonderful revelations born of the unfettered soul, how did they come into the world? It seems as though they must have come through riven skies; it seems as though the heavens must have opened and shed down their refulgent beams upon those ancient people whenever we read such glowing truths aflame with loftiest moral import.

Moses had figuratively ascended to the top of a mountain before he could receive the Divine command; so we all have to rise above pride and sensuality into a brighter and clearer air of moral perception; we have to clear away all the darkness which has hitherto shrouded our intellect before we can receive a revelation from on high. Moses, spiritually speaking, stood on the mountain while the multitude of Israel were in the valleys beneath. Those who cringed in fear at the foot of the mountain could not receive the revelation Moses received when he stood upon its glorious, light-crowned summit. When he came down from that mountain his countenance was so radiant and bright, he was so transfigured, that the people could not look upon him without a veil. The veil signifies the mere external sense of the word, the outward means of delivering the spiritual message so as to adapt it to the comprehension of their less enlightened spirits; they could not understand the glorious truths he had to give them; they could not comprehend the beauties of the revelation that had come to him, therefore he had to convey it in simpler form to their childish comprehension.

When we spiritualize rather than literalize the experience of men of olden times, and compare them with the experience of men and women to-day, do we not find that in our modern world there is not only a Moses standing upon a mountain, beholding the glories of the spiritual state and prepared to deliver messages of truth divine, but also a multitude at the base of the mountain able to listen to the Divine Voice and able to endure the glory that shines from a high spiritual elevation as the ancient Israelites could not?

We are told that when Jesus was transfigured before James, Peter and John they fell down on their faces and became as dead men; and have none of you ever been, as it were, struck to the earth by a higher idea coming in upon you, a more glorious revelation of life paralyzing you for a moment, but reviving you almost directly afterward and then strengthening you for further duty and higher work?

Travelers in mountainous regions have to get up early in the morning, go on a long march, and climb to the very top of a lofty mountain before they can see those splendid panoramas displayed by nature which are celebrated the world over; you stand on a lofty physical elevation as the result of your labor to get there; so you will never behold higher spiritual truth, never take in higher ideas of God, never know anything about the perfect equity governing all things, the perfect compensation that awaits all spirits in the universe until you have climbed the steep ascent of spiritual development, and no longer remain in the valleys and the lowlands in the mere search for merchandise and material possessions.

When a man like Robert Ingersoll says if he had been consulted in the framing of natural laws he would have made health catching and not disease, he simply displays how ignorant he is of nature's laws as they are. People already catch health, but if in a condition to contract disease they do not attract health; as long as we are in a condition to take on disease we shall contract it; but as soon as we are in a condition to catch health we shall catch health, for health is circulating everywhere, and will be throughout eternity, while disease is a mortal state, eventually to be overcome in every instance.

If we are on a high plane of thought and aspiration the higher and more glorious truths of the universe are revealed to us, but if any of you were always to walk through the world with your eyes upon the ground you would see nothing but grubs and ants, and all kinds of insects, while if you turned your gaze to the sky you might just as readily behold the glorious blue heaven, the floating clouds and golden sunbeams by day, and the myriad stars by night. Many men in a spiritual sense look in the dirt, and find only grubs; others look to the sky, and discover stars. In the pursuit of science we do not discover the movements of planets by delving among fossils; so if our thoughts are always concerned with lower things we get no idea of the higher spiritual truths; but whenever our thoughts are turned upward, and we look to the things above rather than to the things below, we enjoy experiences which are impossible to those who look only in another direction, as they have experiences which, happily for us, are impossible to us when our eyes are turned heavenward instead of earthward.

Now when we find that many tribes have worshiped the most frightful and repulsive things, the largest and the fiercest animals, the most deadly and venomous reptiles, we naturally inquire how did man ever come to worship such creatures? Quite naturally; men were on the animal plane; they had developed neither their moral sense nor their intelligence; they had not as yet developed mental power enough to devise instruments for protecting themselves against the beasts of the field and the snakes in the grove; and as they were overpowered by animals and serpents, and found they could not

kill them in return, men bowed down before the larger animals, because they were superior in physical strength. We do not hesitate to say if you had never been taught the use of weapons, and had no psychological power over wild animals and poisonous reptiles, you would be ready to go down on your knees and worship them in your frantic endeavor to prevent them from killing you. But as soon as man's higher intelligence enabled him to control these creatures, he could worship them no longer, they must then yield to him; thus did fetich-worship originate, and thus does it pass into decay.

You are the superior being when your mind is unfolded; you are inferior and weaker than many animals when you have only the body to depend upon. Thus in the earliest ages of man's career on earth, being a defenseless creature, and having to fight his way with the beasts of the field, he bowed down to their greater physical power; but when the growth of mind enabled him to invent weapons; when the days of Tubal Cain drew near, what was the result? Then great warriors began to be deified, and the worship of such divinities as Jove or Jupiter was instituted; the great and mighty thunderer who coursed through the skies with armies powerful enough to destroy even the multitudes of the gods who opposed his will, became the honored idol of the Pantheon; in Greece and Rome warlike deities became the supreme objects of adoration; the all-powerful though invisible forces of nature were deified and personified as Zeus or as Jove.

Then man developed the love of beauty; his deities were embodied ideals of loveliness and grace; he introduced a beautiful Juno, a lovely Venus, a magnificent Apollo as objects worthy his adoration; then he bows down to forms of humanity not so celebrated for their physical strength or mere intellect as for their humanity and loving kindness as his tenderer susceptibilities unfold; and Jesus and Mary, the ideal man and woman who fight their battles with the sword of truth sheathed in love, and depend on spiritual prowess instead of upon carnal weapons, become at length ideals of divinity made manifest to man.

We find it was a large part of the religion of all ancient civilized people to adore the sun and stars; and was it not natural, as we depend upon the sun for all life upon the earth, and upon the moon and stars at night for our light in darkness, that man should bow down to those luminaries? When he did not rightly understand the phenomena of nature he would naturally suppose that those constellations which constitute the beautiful summer signs were powers of good, while those which reigned in the winter, commencing with Scorpio of October, were evil powers warning against the good.

Now we wish you to observe that the reason which led man to believe both in God and in the devil was, he had already discovered that certain influences were good to him and befriended him; but as he had not learned to control all destructive material forces, and was not sufficiently developed mentally to understand the good of all things, he naturally believed in adverse as well as in beneficent divinities. Has not electricity often been looked upon as an unmitigated evil? Have not people prayed against thunder and lightning? Have they not dreaded, as avenging messengers of heaven's wrath, the earthquake, the cyclone, the volcano's eruptive breath, and all those wonderful and mysterious phenomena of nature which are to-day being scientifically explained? Electricity is now being applied to manifold uses, and therefore you know it as your friend and not your enemy. You are learning that this planet is growing more beautiful and divine through the agency of every upheaval; and as you learn the use of everything and come to know that all things in themselves are good, you will hear the music of the spheres with no discord interblended with its harmony; you will know that all is good, and you will believe in one God and no devil. The devil represents what we do not understand, those material forces we have not yet conquered; the devil stands for all the enigmas and mystery that surround us; the devil stands for our own ignorance and our own imperfection, while God stands for all the good that is already revealed, for all the glory, beauty and truth already made manifest in the universe.

Now if you ask us about an individual or personal God, we are obliged to say candidly once for all, we know of no intelligence worthy of credence either in this world or any other who claims to know everything about the deity, or who is able to define deity to perfection. It is axiomatically certain that the finite cannot comprehend the infinite; the eternal power infinitely superior to ourselves must to a large degree be unknown to us. Where is the child who thoroughly comprehends his parents, or any persons older and wiser than himself? You may have a boon companion continually with you in all your walks, and with whom you are constantly engaged in conversation, but if that friend knows a great deal more than you know and has capacities you have not, no matter how constant and intimate your intercourse may be, that companion will always be to some extent a mystery to you. If an angel were to appear before you to-day and offer to escort you through his home in the spiritual world, show you all the beauties of the spiritual state and invite you to listen to the songs of celestial choirs, you might be able to hear some of the music and see something of the beauty, but the most glorious scenes and exquisite sounds would be far beyond your ken; you would understand something beyond what your present condition enabled you to realize, though as your intelligence advances you will become able to demonstrate problems you are now unable to solve.

There is a power beyond ourselves; surely there is no one so utterly foolish as to deny this; no one who has the slightest intelligence, and uses it, can say there is no power in nature beyond ourselves; it is sheer absurdity to say there is no power in the universe beyond man. If the atheist says he is the highest power in the universe, then we ask him to prove it. How can he prove it? Let him seek to control the stars in their motions, and if there is one star he cannot control, then the power that controls that star is greater than any power in him. He insults our reason as much as our intuition when he tells us there is nothing beyond himself; we ask all infidels and atheists every where, who pride themselves upon their own sovereignty, what is that nature, that law, that energy, that power which controls them, but which they cannot control; which compels them to obey it, while it will not obey them. The simple fact that such a power manifestly exists proves their philosophy false.

If you accept the idea that the ancient Greeks did, that beyond all the gods and goddesses there is a fate, or necessity, what is that necessity but a term that stands for what is

superior to man and angels? We affirm, as logicians, that as we know that intelligence controls all material forms, we must all at length come to the inevitable conclusion that the power above us is greater mind, superior intelligence. If you seek individualized expressions of that power, you may travel on and on through spiritual spheres, and find angels and archangels, powers and powers above man, orders upon orders of celestial hierarchies, but one after another will tell you, "We are not the highest; go higher"; and those still higher will say the same; all exalted spirits acknowledge Deity, though many earthbound minds cannot conceive of His existence.

Forever and forever the soul may search for God, yet never discover the infinite to perfection; still, every soul will find out something of God, a sufficient revelation of God will assuredly be made to satisfy its every yearning. The soul may forever ask, who and what is God? and throughout eternity pray the old prayer, "Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee"; nearer to a perfect knowledge of the infinite, nearer to a perfect understanding of the eternal laws of being; so that with continual growth and progress there will always be room for the acquisition of further knowledge. The soul's capacity for immortal hope will fill eternal life with joy; but a time will surely come when, looking down from your happy home in the higher life upon all the trials and infirmities of earth, you will see how they have all resulted in good, and nothing but good. You will then be able to act as guardian angels and ministering spirits to those yet struggling upon earth, and give them the benefit of your experience to help them along the rugged way which once yourselves have trod. The soul will never arrive at the end of its journey, but always going on and on, it will find there is still more to learn, more to discover; from the infinite springs of divine existence knowledge will keep pouring itself out upon you throughout eternity, as water from an infinite fountain.

And thus while you can know enough of God to fully satisfy you that all is good and all is for the best, the zest of eternal existence will be found in the continual opportunity to ask for more and the continual capacity to receive more truth and wisdom.

Our closing word is this: The reason why God does not answer your prayers in your way is because God knows infinitely better than you do what is really best for you, and is not so unkind as to fulfill your ambitious desires, born of pride, when such fulfillment would inevitably lead only to your own destruction. The reason why God never answers any prayers except in accordance with immutable law, is because God never changes, and can never improve on his own plan of infinite goodness. Every logical mind must arrive at the conclusion that if there is a perfectly good God, such a God can never alter any of his decrees and never change his law, for were he to change any of his designs he would necessarily alter them for the worse, which would not be in keeping with the character of a being absolutely kind and altogether perfect. We maintain that prayer is of no avail to change any of the laws of the universe, but we also maintain that prayer for a change in ourselves, for more light, more love, more truth, more understanding, does alter us for the better, though it can never alter God. Prayer never changes the universal law of life, but the law of being ordains that prayer should improve us and our relation to the law; our prayer accomplishes a spiritual revolution in our own being whenever our prayers are in conformity with truth, in harmony with eternal and immutable law. Even when our prayers do not remove a dreaded obstacle out of our way they help us to overcome that obstacle, and are the golden ladders filled with angels which unite the earth and the heavens.

True prayer has been well defined by the poet Montgomery, who sings, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." Prayer is the earnest aspiration of the soul after God; it is work that the soul does, and the soul is compensated for its efforts; it works in obedience to spiritual law, and receives a recompense, as man's material energy and intellectual activity are always rewarded by some new discovery of truth and a more perfect control over matter.

THE DAWN OF SPRING.

BY DR. DEAN OLARKE.

Cold Winter's reign at last is o'er,
The snow and frost are gone;
The balmy breezes blow once more,
And Spring begins to dawn.

The April skies alternate weep
And smile through rifted clouds,
Which hover o'er the valleys deep
Like dark or misty shrouds.

The vernal sun with heat doth glow,
The air with warmth is rife,
The dormant earth begins to show
The signs of coming life.

All nature feels the quick'ning power
That thrills the balmy air,
And floating clouds their blessing shower
To make the earth more fair.

The germs that slept through winter's cold
Within the frozen ground,
With quickened life now pierce the mould,
And spread their verdure round.

The streams long bound by icy chains,
To which they murmured low,
Now swollen by the spring-time rains,
In rushing torrents flow.

The fields arrayed in brown and white
Through months of wintry gloom,
Are clad in garments green and bright,
And soon with flowers will bloom.

The trees with arms raised high in air
To catch the sunlight glow,
Are nursing buds with tender care
Which soon to leaves shall grow.

The joyous birds return once more
Their roundelay to sing,
And from the tree-tops o'er and o'er
They greet the dawn of Spring.

The nimble squirrel blithe and coy,
Now jumps from tree to tree,
And like some careless romping boy,
He joys the spring to see.

The leaping, croaking, peeping frog—
To greet these sunny days—
From dismal swamp and reeking bog
Attunes his notes of praise.

And so all things that live and move
Are having a being here,
Their joy of living daily prove
As Spring-days now appear.

So let us join all Nature's throngs,
In joy of life to sing;
Let earth resound with grateful songs
To praise the Dawn of Spring.

Boston, Mass., April 20th, 1887.

Literary Department.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE SINGING SHELL.

BY MARIE MACOMBER WESTON.

"And this, Aunt Felice," said I, taking a delicately tinted shell from her cabinet of treasured souvenirs, "has this a history too?"

We were sitting in the wainscoted old library, Aunt Felice and I. All day long the rain had beaten against the windows, till now the clouds had lifted, and, tired of books and weary with pen, I had sought out Aunt Felice. I found her surrounded by her well chosen friends.

As she sat there, the crimson glow of the sunset filling the room with a charmed atmosphere, the soft firelight falling on the silver-white curls clustering round her face like a nimbus, the carpet of dim, deep, Persian tints, giving back, in its reflected light, just enough of color to harmonize the whole, I thought I had never seen a picture so lovely, and I could scarcely persuade myself that one of the old ancestral portraits, bearing the impress of Copley's master pencil, had not stepped out of its frame and become again a sentient being.

Instinctively I glanced at the portrait; but no, there it hung, this representative of noble lineage, looking serenely down on Aunt Felice, as if tracing with approving glance the marked family likeness.

"Yes, dear, that has a history too," and Aunt Felice took from my hand the treasured shell, and gazed at it long and reverently, while into her soft, hazel eyes, crept that misty lustre which reminiscence oftentimes calls up in sight grown dim with age.

I did not intrude a word upon the sanctity of her reverie, but waited patiently for her spirit's flight to drift back into the realities of the present.

Suddenly a bright smile illuminated her face, and drawing me to her, she held the shell to my ear:

"Listen, dear, and you will hear the Lorelei singing their sad, sweet songs, luring the unlucky sailor on to his destruction; or, mayhap, 'low, and loud, and sweetly blended,' the beautiful wild chimes from the belfry in ancient Bruges, sending their mellow voices over the land."

"I fear my ear is not attuned to mermaid's song, nor to the chimes which ring their changes in that quaint old Flemish town. I hear only the monotonous moan of the sea. You listen," said I, laughingly holding the shell to her ear.

"Draw that screen a little to the right, dear, and I will tell you what the shell speaks to me."

My heart gave a throb of delight, for, from my earliest girlhood, I had been in the habit of going to Aunt Felice in hours of mental weariness, and had always found her a fountain of cheer and restfulness. She was a person of rare attainments, and, in very truth, her mind to her a kingdom was. Her voice was flexible and melodious, and tuned to touch the deepest chords of the heart, and to mark with rare perfection the finest shades of thought and feeling. Many a poem had been read and valuable lesson learned through these *souvenirs* which ever and anon the cabinet disclosed.

Obedient to her desire, I placed the screen so as to shade her face, and seating myself at her feet, with my "soul in my eyes," as she laughingly assured me, I listened in rapt attention to her

SONG OF THE SHELL.

She closed her eyes, and for a moment seemed drifting away to the silent land of trances, but presently the sweet cadence of her voice broke the stillness with a sound that brings the delicious feeling of a dream:

"I hear the voices of the night; they whisper, 'Come, be a child once more,' and then their lips are mute, and they depart in silence, but as their trailing garments sweep through the marble hall, the refrain of some old familiar lore floats back to me:

'In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife!'

Presently, slowly advancing, comes one who dwelleth by the castled Rhine; he speaketh in a language quaint and olden, and, taking me by the hand, he leads me into a wondrous land of flowers. Everywhere around us are blossoms of rarest hue; some, their 'blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,' stand like Ruth amid the golden corn. All give evidence of a great Creator.

'And with childlike, credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our greater resurrection,
Emblems of that bright and better land.'

Then my Rhineland cavalier follows the voices of the night, and I am alone. Out from this beautiful garden my reluctant footsteps stray, past the cottage of the peasant, past ancestral homes with crumbling towers, till I find myself in a wooded dell surrounded by fairy elves, whose homes are 'underneath the white thorn,' or where the silver brook slips down through moss-grown stones with endless laughter, or pours its waters over the white cascade, rollicking on till it loses itself in the distant sea.

These are the spirits of Poetry, whose presence in the silent majesty of the woods uplifts the thoughts from earth.

But hark! a funeral hymn is heard where the soft breath of evening stirs the tall, gray forest. A band of grim-visaged warriors, with measured tread,

'Come winding down beside the wave,
To lay the red cloth in his grave.'

In solemn Indian file they march, bearing the body of their slain:

'They buried the dark chief; they freed
Beside the grave his battle steed;
And swift an arrow cleaved its way
To his stern heart. One piercing neigh
Arose, and on the dead man's plain
The rider grasps his steed again.'

The soft-flowing cadence of her voice grew fainter and fainter, but my ear still caught the musical rhythm as a phantom ship bore us to the land of the Alhambra, where the "soft, Emerald-eyed" Spanish *senoritas* danced to the sweet music of the lute and gay tambourine; thence to the Rhine, rich in legendary lore, past the "golden bridge" where the spirit of Charles the Great each year disperses among the people the wealth of the Lombards and the immense treasure of the Huns. On, still on, across the "deep-voiced ocean," till I hear the "murmuring pines and the hemlocks," and list to the mournful tradition still sung by the trees in the Arcadian forest.

But what is this sound that breaks on my enchanted senses with jarring discord?
"Will you have the lights brought in now, me laddy?"

I rub my eyes and try to collect my bewildered senses. By the dim flicker of the firelight I see Norah's square, honest face, peering in at the door, and hear the response to her inquiry.

"Yes, right away, Norah," and then comes the glare of the lights.

"You were sleeping so sweetly with your head resting in my lap that I had not the heart to disturb you. Do you feel refreshed, dear?"

"Sleeping, Aunt Felice? Why, every word of your song has filled my soul with secret rapture. Did you think I was sleeping? But the shell—what is the history of the shell?"

Aunt Felice smiled softly, and while stroking my hair with a soft touch she told me this story of the shell:

"Long years ago, when your uncle was a student at Bowdoin, he invited to his home for a day's recreation one of his classmates. Toward evening, as they were strolling on the beach in that 'beautiful town killed by the sea,' his friend picked up this shell, and with much mock form and ceremony presented it to your uncle. It is really a curiosity, for, if you observe it carefully, you can trace in its indentations a plainly marked L. Your uncle was much attached to this friend, whose initial letter was L, and he ever after regarded the shell as a treasured souvenir.

When it first came into my possession its songs were limited, but peculiarly sweet and melodious. Year after year its voice has gained in strength and beauty, until now it is heard and known and loved throughout the land. My sands of life are nearly run, but the songs of the shell will ever abide with me, bright gems in memory's casket. I give the shell to you, Irmen, as an especial mark of my love and esteem."

Dear Aunt Felice! her spirit has passed into the Silent Land, and

"The bells were tolled in that far-off town,
For one who had passed from cross to crown."

But sometimes I steal away from life's "discord, strife and clatter," back to that quiet Maine home on the banks of the beautiful Kennebec, and alone in the quaint old room, replete with many reminiscences, I take my treasured shell, lean my head on the cushioned chair and dream sweet dreams.

"And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and quiet,
Looking downward from the skies,"

or, spirit with spirit, we wander through the long avenue o'ershadowed with trees, past the old elm at the door, pausing a moment on the verandah to drink in the beauty of the scene, through the hall where "half-way up the stairs" the ancient time-piece mournfully reverbates the sad refrain:

"Forever, never!
Never, forever!"

Past the picturesque reception-room, where the Venus de Milo stands in classic beauty; past the library, dark and rich in tone; spacious, elegant and home-like. The thin, spirited face of Liszt looks out from his portrait on the wall, and we hear again his eloquent interpretation of the music of those grand old masters, Bach, Handel and Beethoven; pausing again at "Lady Washington's drawing-room," to admire an exquisitely graceful agate urn, carved by the master hand of Benvenuto Cellini, then on to the study where, before a massive table laden with books, bends the stately poet.

We are in the spirit presence of the singer who touched our English words with the golden wand of poetry, breathed into them the life of his magnetic imagery, and they stand perfected. Poems elevated, purified, inspired. Then read from the treasured volume the poem of thy choice,

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

New Publications.

THE PRACTICAL HORSE KEEPER. By George Fleming, LL.D., F.R.C.V.S., Principal Veterinary Surgeon of the Army. 12mo, cloth, pp. 264. London, Paris, New York and Melbourne: Cassell & Co.

A work that will be found of great value to all interested in horses and their management, and a reliable guide to purchasers, owners, breeders, trainers and others whose experience has not been so extensive as those of whose knowledge the instruction it gives is based; or that of the author, whose practice in the English army qualified him in an uncommon degree for the successful accomplishment of the task he undertook when he began its preparation. A study of the book will enable a purchaser to avoid being imposed upon by the tricks of speculating dealers, and save horses from cruelty that often, through the ignorance of their keepers or drivers, is unintentionally inflicted upon them.

THE MATHEMATICAL AGENT OF POTSDAM. A Humorous-Social Romance. From the German of A. Von Winterfeld. By El. Rapha. 12mo, cloth, pp. 479. New York: Thomas H. Knox & Co.

Gives an insight into German life with which the American is seldom favored. The leading character is a woman who, without any pecuniary motive or hope of reward, employs all her skill to procure rich wives for fortune-seeking men, and rich husbands for the same class of women. In these efforts she is successful for a long time, but finally meets with disaster.

HINTS ON WRITING AND SPEECH-MAKING. By Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Sq. 16mo, cloth, pp. 70. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

A manual of literary composition profitable for individual study and for the use of schools. The contents first appeared in two of our leading periodicals, and were so highly commended that at the request of several teachers they are issued in this more convenient and durable form.

THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE: Discourses upon Holy Scripture. By Joel Parker, D.D., Minister of the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, London. Vol. V. Joshua—Judges. 8vo, cloth, pp. 860. New York: Funk & Wagnalls.

The work of which this is a new volume, is held in great esteem by the evangelical clergy, and is highly commended by Spurgeon and others, who predict that it will be a valuable source of enlightenment in sentences to come. The rapid progress of thought, and the change of views the world is now undergoing upon the subjects discussed, will hardly warrant any in making such a prediction. This "Bible" is to be completed in twenty-five volumes.

LITTLE LESSONS FOR LITTLE FOLKS. By Aunt Elmina (Mrs. E. D. Slenker). Square, 16mo, boards, pp. 98. New York: The Truth Seeker Company.

Short sketches and descriptions of scenes and objects in nature, adapted to interest and instruct the youngest child.

MURKIN'S "ONION BEHIND PILATE." T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa., have brought out a faithful copy of this great picture in a fine steel plate engraving, done in line and stipple, measuring 22x32 inches. They have decided to sell the print at the low price of one dollar a copy, so as to bring it within reach of all classes of purchasers. It is really an admirable work of art. Can be had of the Messrs. Peterson & Bros., by mail, as above.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY F. W. BROWN, 107 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, Pa., and at all bookstores.

The Eastern Star is now published weekly. See announcement on fifth page.

✂ We are informed that Dr. Henry Rogers and wife, the excellent spirit-mediums, whom the BANNER has recently noticed in full, will soon leave the city for a brief sojourn at Onset. We are sorry to learn that the Doctor's health is not so good as could be wished. He however feels that the bracing air from the Bay will speedily restore him. Those who have not visited these worthy mediums will do well to make engagements with them in season at Onset.

ings of Incipient Insanity," Published in the Boston
way, New York.

ALL SORTS OF PARAGRAPHS.

A STRING OF TRIANGLES.

NO. V.
I have dined well to-day;
Shall I dine well to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
I have dined well to-day;
For the bill I must borrow.
Money now I must borrow.
I have dined well to-day;
Shall I dine well to-morrow?

Why is a New York dude like a boiled potato? Because he is easily mashed.

Maxie was the little six-year-old daughter of a clergyman who had taken great pains with her religious instruction, and had held before her the goodness of the Supreme Being, so that she should have in her mind always his kindness and mercy as well as power. One morning her mother, passing the open door of the room in which the child was playing, saw Maxie standing on a chair before the mirror, with her face close to it, scrutinizing her little phiz with great earnestness, and with a long sigh she remarked: "I don't see how God could have given me such a nose, when he knows how particular I am."—*Harper's Magazine.*

The Ohio Legislature has passed a law making a married woman's rights coequal and coextensive with those of her husband, as far as the acquisition and disposition of property is concerned.

The Boston Journal does not touch for the story, but it is said that a gentleman of this city, who has a dog in Hingham, had him brought to a telephone in the latter place, and when his master in Boston called him, the dog went wild with delight.

A DIVISION OF LABOR.

He: Where are you going, my pretty maid?
She: I'm going to the mill, sir (she said).
He: Can I not help you, my pretty maid?
She: You can work the pump-handle, sir (she said).

The question whether it is beneficial or not to smoke, was worked out in a cricket-match at Melbourne. The findings of the non-smokers closed for 583 runs, while the smokers had 303. The argument was considered conclusive.

What can be the meaning of this? Somebody has been writing about a certain house in Boston where "Buddha" sat enthroned in his ineffable calm, and his worshipers, baptized and confirmed in a Christian church, murmuring when they turned about the jeweled prayer wheel, "Om mani padme hum." What does this paddy yama signify? Is it a mixture of Irish and Indian, and is the "paddy" referred to on Cork? And if so, how in the name of Mohair did he ever get into Brahminical official Philadelphia waits for information.—*Boston Herald.*

A Chicago ink and bluing manufacturer has for some time been using a paper bottle for his products, finding it safer as regards risks of breakage and freezing than the glass bottle.

"What is that big iron thing full of holes?" asked Laura, "Locomotive boiler," said Tom. Laura looked thoughtful. "After a moment's silence she asked, 'Why do they boil locomotives?' Tom looked amazed. 'To make 'em tender,' he said, slowly.—*Rarebit.*

A little boy came to his mother recently and said: "Mamma, I should think that if I was made of dust I would get muddy inside when I drink."

"Don't ask me to go to church with you again," said a Minneapolis citizen to his wife; "it won't do you any good." "Why not, John?" she asked. "Didn't you enjoy the sermon?" "Enjoy the sermon?" he repeated. "Why, the preacher's boom in St. Paul, an' never said a dinged word about Minneapolis."—*New York Sun.*

Queen Kaplani and suite (of the Sandwich Islands) are "doing" Boston at present—expressing great satisfaction at all they have thus far seen. Boston has extended a "royal" ovation to its titled visitors. Queen Kaplani is nearly forty-five years of age. Her kingdom, in point of population, is about as large as South Boston. She is a limited monarch, the same as Queen Victoria, and draws a yearly salary of \$800.

First Omaha child (proudly).—"We are going to St. Fashion Springs this summer." Second Omaha child (sympathetically).—"I'm sorry your papa is so poor."

Why, is that being poor?" "Of course. We don't have to go to any spring. We've got a filter."

She was admiring a big Newfoundland at the dog show, and throwing her arms around his neck said: "You dear old fellow, I love you!" A youth who heard her remarked: "How I wish I was a dog." The answer came from the same sweet lips: "Never mind, dear; you'll grow."

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

Are you almost disgusted with life, little man? I will tell you how to be contented if anything can. That will bring you contentment if anything can. Do something for somebody quick! Do something for somebody quick!

The Mortuary Clerk of St. Louis says that ninety-nine out of a hundred cigar-makers die of consumption. The trade is a most unwholesome one. The stooping position of the workman and the constant inhalation of tobacco invite diseases of the lungs.

One of our esteemed contemporaries takes 20 lines about 150 words, and it is a wonder how he can write so fast. And yet he might have told it in one word, to wit, namely, that is to say, "Everywhere."—*The Randolph (W.Va.) Radical.* Yes, most everywhere.

The Garfield Statue will be unveiled in Washington, D.C., May 12th.

Here is encouragement for enterprising girls to "go West." Miss Ellen Callahan, who located in Sierra County, Nevada, some years ago, and known as the "Maid of the Valley," is a stock raiser, and worth \$10,000. She can harness a team, break wild horses, run a mow, feed the stock, or do any kind of work on a ranch.

Life is full of disappointments, and a man realizes it a while after he has planted some bird seed with the idea that he was going to raise canaries.—*Somerville Journal.*

A Kansas minister recently joined in marriage a young couple a few minutes before the departure of the Kansas Central train going east. The groom gave the clergyman five dollars and departed happy. A few days thereafter the minister was surprised to receive a letter from the new husband enclosing another five dollars. The letter stated: "My wife is so much better than I expected that I feel I owe you five dollars more."

The Seaboard (N.H.) Selectmen have decided that a hen is not an animal. Wonder if they reckon her as a vegetable because of her crop, or a mineral because of her gizzard?—*Lovell Courier.*

Tucson, Ariz., dispatches the past week have been laden with news of great earthquakes in the San Joaquin and Santa Catalina mountains, whereby it is stated hills have been brought low and valleys exalted, lakes have disappeared, hitherto dry canyons have been filled with water, and new and promising veins of gold brought to light.

After many long and weary centuries of waiting, the holy city of Jerusalem is experiencing a boom at last. The railway train rumbles through its ancient streets, the sound of the carpenter's hammer is heard, the population is increasing at an unprecedented rate, and suburban lots are rapidly rising in value.

The best teacher of all is experience, and if experience is gained at some sacrifice, it will be more likely to be appreciated and remembered. The best instruction is that which gives the instructed an intelligence developed from and based on self-reliance.—*Boston Herald, April 1st.*

It is said that from the little commencement of a Dutch galliot loaded with Dutch lobsters wrecked in the early history of the country on Bell Sea, New York Harbor, the great lobster interests of our country have grown up.

Miss Soothill: "Oh! Mr. Blase, we had such a delightful European trip! I think it is so lovely to be able to go abroad." Young Mr. Blase: "Miss Soothill, I have been in Europe, Mr. Blase." Young Mr. Blase: "Oh! yes, occasionally."—*Harper's Bazar.*

Stanley, "the White Prophet," has arrived with his expedition at Banza Munda, Congo.

An earthquake occurred at 8:50 P.M., on May 24, accompanied by a terrible volcanic eruption, at Bahipe, Mexico, killing one hundred and fifty persons and igniting the woods in the vicinity. Twenty-seven persons were also killed at Opata by falling buildings. Many

persons were injured at Grenada and Guadalupe, which towns were almost completely destroyed. Local scientists predict that Mexico is about to undergo a general seismic convulsion, and recent records of earthquake shocks show that there is widespread volcanic activity from one end of Mexico to the other.

The blasted fruit of unrequited love writes for a Western paper.

MR. AVARICE has his eyes on the "Boston Common"—the city's lungs; but the people will never allow it to be cut up or dug under in order to put money in that individual's pocket, whether through the slimy guise of "railroad facilities" or anything else.

Lebanon, N. H., was, May 10th, devastated by a fire which consumed every mill and factory within its limits, together with some eighty dwellings and a dozen stores. Five hundred mechanics were thrown out of work by the catastrophe.

The crocus comes up smiling, but the croakers don't. "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

Those are always the most prosperous communities where all industrial pursuits are evenly balanced.

"Dot Abram Levi he opens a store next to mine. It was men in him." But didn't you say last summer, Mr. Dopenheimer, that competition is the life of trade? Yes; but I wasn't in no business last summer.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Only think of it! Sixty-five thousand persons in the Old World have purchased tickets for America—mostly from Ireland and Scotland.

There is the burnt stump of a cedar tree near Oakville, W. T., which is probably the largest on record. It is a hollow shell, fifty feet high and eighty-seven feet in circumference at the base. The cavity is twenty-three feet at its largest diameter.

LONDON, May 6th, 1887.—Mr. James Grant, the novelist, is dead. He was born at Edinburgh, Aug. 1st, 1822.

Mr. Gladstone's epigram, "Ireland blocks the way," condenses the British situation into four impressive words. Home rule alone can clear the track.

The New York Sun of May 9th republishes an article on its editorial page from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago, which fully endorses one of Boston's materializing mediums! It is headed "Remarkable Materialization."

"My friend," said a solemn passenger to the driver of a Third Avenue street-car, "do you know that you'll never get to heaven if you swear at your horses like that?" "If I did not swear at them horses," responded the driver, "I'd have even bitten in their reins!" "Is that the point I'm headed for now?"—*New York Sun.*

The Victoria Coal Company's mine at Nanaimo, on the eastern shore of Vancouver Island, was blown up by fire damp May 3d. One hundred and fifty men were at the time in the mine, nearly all of whom were killed.

The Piegans of Montana have made about 84000 this spring skinning the carcasses of cattle which perished in the snows. The Indians received seventy-five cents for every hide that they brought in.

The priest of the "new crusade" is Rev. Dr. McGlynn, and being a talented man, he says he's bound to win.

A manufactory of bogus old coins has been unearthed at Pittsburgh, Pa.

Sorrowful child to the pastor: "Mr. B., mother sent me to tell you that father is dead." Pastor: "Is he? Did you call a doctor?" Child: "No, sir; he just died of himself."

The Czar has decided that the sentences of death pronounced against the nihilists convicted of complicity in the recent attempt to assassinate him shall be commuted to imprisonment at hard labor for life in the cases of all but two of the condemned.

The Treasury vaults at Washington now contain two thousand tons of silver and forty-eight tons of gold. This is the limit of their capacity, and the Treasury officials are puzzled to know what to do with the constantly accumulating store of the precious metals. An appropriation for a new steel vault failed to pass the last Congress.

Have despatches of the 8th inst. announce that the steamer La Champagne, for New York, was on the 7th run by the steamer Ville de Rio, by which collision the Rio was sunk—her passengers and crew being saved. The collision, however, caused a panic among the Italians on board the Champagne, who made a rush for the life boat and caused it to capsize, thirty-five of them being drowned, in addition to three sailors who had tried to prevent the rush. The steamer Ville de Bordeaux rescued fifteen Italians clinging to the capsized life-boat. The Champagne was finally beached to prevent her sinking.

It is to be regretted by all who have the good of Spiritualism at heart that such disagreements as now exist in regard to physical phenomena should control the rank and file of professed Spiritualists to such an extent as to make them even bitter in their denunciations of those who do not think as they do, or who differ in their manner of investigation; especially in the case with the question of materialization.—*L. L. Whitlock, in Facts for April.*

New York City on Sunday, May 1st, was a genuine Sabbath day. The semi-political gun-mills have lost their grip. Such a quiet time was never known there by the "oldest inhabitant." All the grogeries, big and little, were closed. Truly, the millennium is near at hand, now that that great Metropolis has at last come to its senses.

Health is more valuable than wealth. But while poor rules self, health is a minor consideration. Hence the graveyards are rapidly filled—and the "regular" doctors and undertakers thrive.

Worthy of Aid.

As noted in a recent issue there are now living in very reduced circumstances, in a locality near Boston, two sisters and a brother—each of the trio being over eighty years of age. We trust the generously-inclined will feel moved to assist these needy Spiritualist friends in sustaining themselves a short time longer among the rough trials of life. Our call in their behalf has already brought out the following responses: Previously acknowledged.....\$35.00
C. G. G. Heileberg.....2.00
D. A. B.....2.00
G. A. B.....50

God's Poor Fund.

Since our last report we have received the following sums in aid of the destitute poor whom spirit-friends bring to our notice for relief:

From Eli Pond, \$1.00; Mrs. Phillips, 50 cents; Sagoyewatha, 50 cents; J. Emerson, \$2.00.

J. J. Morse.

Will lecture on Sunday, May 15th, at 10:45 A.M., and 7:45 P.M., at G. A. B. Hall, No. 170 Superior Street, Cleveland, O.

An Entertainment and Reception in honor of Mr. Morse was to occur on Friday, May 13th, 8 P.M., at the same hall.

Mrs. W. A. Rich has recovered her health and resumed business—as will be seen by her card on our fifth page.

Parents seeking a healthy, home-like retreat for their children during the summer can find one by addressing B. F. Clark, M. D., Belvidere, N. J.

To Whom It May Concern.

Any one desiring to make up a library of the early Spiritualist literature can have every number of the *Universalist* substantially bound, in three volumes—by sending me \$10 to 201 Summer Street, Worcester, Mass. I will forward the volumes by express, or deliver them at BARNES OF LIT. BOOKSTORES. I have some other books now out of print, which I should like to dispose of. WAREHAM CHASE.

For development of mediumship, consult J. W. FLETCHER, 6 Beacon Street, Boston.

Movements of Mediums and Lecturers.

(Notices for this Department must reach our office by Monday's mail to insure insertion the same week.)

Miss A. R. Colt will speak and give platform tests for the Spiritual Society, at Haverhill, Mass., on Sunday, the 15th inst., and will be at her rooms, 238 Tremont Street, the remainder of the week. She will be pleased to make engagements for the Sundays of May and June.

Mrs. H. S. Lake speaks at the First Spiritual Temple, Boston, May 15th, 22nd and 29th; at Bridgeport, Conn., June 5th, 12th and 19th; at Parkland Camp-Meeting, Penn., June 12th; at Onondaga Camp, N.Y., June 23rd and 24th; at Onondaga Camp, N.Y., June 23rd and 24th. Camps and Societies wishing her services will address 123 West Concord Street, Boston, Mass.

Dr. Dean Clarke holds a discussion at Parker Memorial Hall, Boston, with W. J. Colville next Sunday, at 2 P.M. He speaks at Salem on the 22nd, and at Fitchburg the 29th. Is open for June.

Dr. James Douglas has located at 21 School Street, Boston. Will accept engagements to lecture and give descriptive tests. Address as above.

We are informed that J. V. Mansfield, whose illness we have noted recently, has now fully recovered his health.

L. A. Cole writes that Miss May Scannell of Providence, R. I., lectured and gave platform tests to good advantage in Taunton, Mass.

J. William Fisher is announced to speak in Providence, R. I., on Sunday next.

Dr. A. W. S. Rothermel and Edwin Powell, it is announced, will leave Cincinnati, O., May 15th, for the Northeast, visiting Buffalo, Rochester, Albany and Oswego, N.Y., on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st. They will leave Pleasant Camp the latter part of August.

Dr. F. H. Roscoe, of Providence, speaks again in Portland, Me., on the 15th, and in Newburyport, Mass., the 22d. He has, we are informed, met with excellent success in Portland, where he went for two Sundays and has been engaged for four.

J. Frank Baxter concluded this week his present work in Connecticut, and started Wednesday for Wheeling, West Virginia. He will lecture in Pittsburgh, Pa., on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, May 15th, 16th and 17th; and in Lynn, Mass., on Sundays, May 22nd and 29th, afternoon and evening.

Jesse Shepard has permanently located in San Diego, Cal.

From a Foreign Correspondent.

W. I. Stuart, writing from Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, describes a new spirit-phenomenon exhibiting itself in his locality, which appears to be what is known here as *etherization*, but which our correspondent terms "the materialization of shadows." They are, he writes, "not blunt flesh forms, but shadows, which any ordinary sight can perceive: spirit-people, in fact, who walk about and declare themselves as naturally as if still in human forms. The phenomena appear to require nothing but a subdued light; for when the house is all but empty, the shadows come and go just the same. Through the open door, from my garden, I have watched them many times, and always see them most perfect when left to themselves. They tell me they condense the external form from the atoms held in the atmosphere, and are wholly indifferent to the supposed necessity of 'circumstances.' They are not sufficiently tangible for children to play with. My children see them, and understand them so well that messages are frequently delivered to them for me during my absence."

"UNANSWERABLE LOGIC" is the title of a series of spiritual discourses given through the mediumship of Thomas Gales Forster. Mr. Forster was eminent in the spiritual faith as a teacher and worker, and this collection of his views and thoughts stands as a particular representative of the most advanced culture and development of that school. A number of subjects are embraced in the contents, including "What is Spiritualism?" "Philosophy of Death," "What Lies Beyond the Veil?" "The Final Resurrection," "Human Destiny," "Joan of Arc," "The Spiritualism of the Apostles," "Heaven," "Spiritualists and Mediums," "Clairvoyance and Clairaudience," "Hell," "What Spiritualists Believe," etc. In these and other articles there is a great deal of new and striking thought. Published by Colby & Rich, Boston, Mass.—*The Saturday Evening Post, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Horsford's Acid Phosphate in Gastritis and Nervousness. Dr. W. J. HARRIS, Resident Physician, Good Samaritan Hospital, St. Louis, Mo., says: "It has achieved great results in several chronic cases of gastritis, and afforded great relief to very many cases of extreme nervousness resulting from debility of the digestive organs."

A Grand Lyceum Festival.

Every reader of the BANNER OF LIGHT is acquainted with the objects and aims of the Children's Progressive Lyceum of this city.

Mrs. W. S. Butler—a friend of children everywhere—has during the past season accomplished alone for its benefit what many people have been endeavoring to do for several years. She now purposes to give under her direction, on the afternoon and evening of May 27th—aided by a competent committee—a *Grand May Festival at Berkeley Hall, Boston*. The appointments of this hall are elegant, and Howard Richards' celebrated Orchestra will furnish the music.

The services of Messrs. Joseph D. Stiles, J. Wm. Fletcher, John Slater and others have been secured. Mrs. Rose Shepard Lillie will open the afternoon meeting with a poem for the children.

The entertainment will begin shortly after one o'clock; the first part to consist of readings and recitations, vocal and instrumental music. A large number of young misses will participate in Spanish and other fancy dances; the afternoon entertainment to conclude with a grand dance for the children.

Supper will be served between the two sessions—tickets for same being placed at fifteen cents.

The exercises of the evening will open with a grand entertainment, followed by fancy dances by the children, to conclude with a *Grand Ball for adults until 2 A.M.* Tickets for afternoon and evening, admitting to both sessions, 25 cents. A receipts above expenses go to aid the Children's Lyceum.

Mrs. Butler earnestly desires all Spiritualist Societies in Boston and vicinity to cooperate with her in making this Festival a grand success.

COMMITTEE: Mr. B. P. Weaver; F. B. Woodbury; Sidney Whitney; W. F. Falls; Mr. Geo. LeClair; Mr. M. J. Foster; Mrs. W. S. Butler; Mrs. W. E. Kille; Miss Lucette Webster; Mrs. Lizzie Clapp; Mr. Geo. LeClair (special on music); Miss Lucette Webster (special on literary exercises).

Mr. FLETCHER gives sances daily for development, also evenings by appointment. 6 Beacon Street, Boston.

ALLEN PUTNAM, Esq., will answer calls to lecture on "to attend funerals. Address him No. 610 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

Special Notice.

The date of the expiration of every subscription to the BANNER OF LIGHT is plainly marked on the address. The paper is discontinued at that time unless the subscription is previously renewed. Subscribers intending to renew will save much trouble, and possibly loss of a paper or two, by sending in the money for renewal before the expiration of their present subscription. It is the earnest desire of the publishers to give the BANNER OF LIGHT the circulation to which its merits entitle it, and they look with confidence to the friends of the paper throughout the world to assist them in the work. COLBY & RICH, Publishers.

ST. LOUIS, MO.—The First Association of Spiritualists, at the residence of Mrs. J. A. Hall, 1111 West corner of Franklin Avenue and Ninth Street. Friends of the cause invited to attend, and correspondence solicited. Commencement of the Association, May 20th, 8 P.M. Tickets 50 cents. Free will contributions. No. 20 South Broadway. Isaac S. Lee, Sec., No. 122 North 11th Street, St. Louis, Mo.

For Sale at this Office:

FACTS, A Monthly Magazine. Published in Boston. Single copies 10 cents; \$1.00 per year.
HALL'S JOURNAL OF HEALTH, A Progressive Family Health Magazine. Published monthly in New York. Single copies 10 cents; \$1.00 per year.
BUCHANAN'S JOURNAL OF MAN, Monthly. Published at Chicago. Single copies 10 cents.
THE SPIRITUAL OFFERING, Published weekly in Ottumwa, Iowa, by D. M. and N. F. Fox. Per year, \$2.00. Single copy 5 cents.
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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND QUERIES, with Answers in all Departments of Literature. Monthly. Single copy, 10 cents.
THE OLIVE BRANCH, Utica, N. Y. A monthly. Price 10 cents.
RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, Published weekly at Chicago, Ill. Per year, \$2.50; six months, \$1.25. Single copy, 5 cents.
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LIGHT FOR THINKERS, Published weekly in Chattanooga, Tenn. Single copy, 5 cents.
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THE PATH, A Monthly Magazine, devoted to Universal Brotherhood, Theosophy in America, and Aryan Philosophy. Single copy, 20 cents.
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Advertisements to be renewed at continued rates must be left at our office before 12 M. on Saturday, or a week in advance of the date whereon they are to appear.

Only small and light cuts will be allowed in the advertising columns. When accepted, our rates for that portion of the advertisement which is cut by the advertiser will be on a half price in excess of the regular rate.
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The BANNER OF LIGHT cannot undertake to vouch for the honesty of its many advertisers. Advertisements which are selected by the publisher upon their face are accepted, and whenever it is made known that dishonest or improper persons are using our advertising columns, we request patrons to notify us promptly in case they discover in our columns advertisements of parties whom they consider to be dishonest or unworthy of confidence.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

Andrew Jackson Davis's Medical Office established at No. 83 Warren Avenue, Boston, Mass. Consultation and advice, \$2. Every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 to 12 A.M. Jan 13w

Dr. F. L. H. Willis may be addressed until further notice, 123 Amity St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Apr 2 13w

Dr. Jas. V. Mansfield, at 28 Dartmouth Street, Boston, answers sealed letters. Terms \$3, and 10c. postage. Apr 23 4w

Consumption Surely Cured.

To the Editor:—Please inform your readers that I have a positive remedy for the above-named disease. By its timely use thousands of hopeless cases have been permanently cured. I shall be glad to send two bottles of my remedy FREE to any of your readers who have consumption if they will send me their Express and P. O. address.

Respectfully,
Dr. T. A. SLOUM, 181 Pearl St., New York. J88 26w

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To Foreign Subscribers the subscription price of the BANNER OF LIGHT is \$3.50 per year, or \$1.75 per six months. It will be sent at the price named above to any foreign country embraced in the *Universal Postal Union*.

H. A. Kersey, No. 1 Newgate Street, New-castle-on-Tyne, will act as agent in England for the BANNER OF LIGHT and the publications of Colby & Rich during the absence of J. J. Morse.

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MISCELLANEOUS.
Editorials.—Jesse Shepard; Make Honest Conditions. My 14

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New York Advertisements

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1887.

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