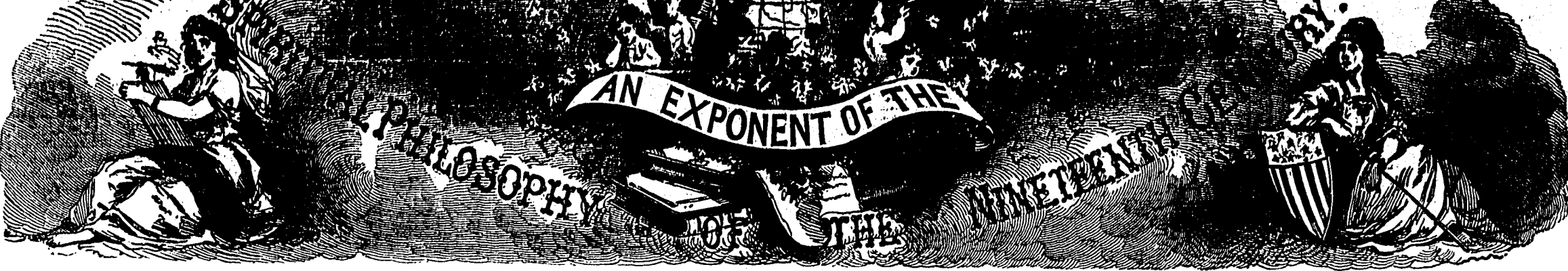


BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. LXII.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1888.

{ \$3.00 Per Annum,
Postage Free. }

NO. 21.

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The Spiritual Rostrum.

Spirit-Phenomena.

A Discourse Delivered through the Trance-Mediumship of
MRS. R. S. LILLIE,
Before the Boston Spiritual Temple Society, in
Berkeley Hall, Boston, Mass., Sunday
Morning, Jan. 15th, 1888.

(Reported for Banner of Light by Miss Ida L. Spalding.)

INVOCATION.

We ask your presence, O! spirits of wisdom, love and power, and we ask for that illumination which ye are able to lend, by which to read understandingly the truths revealed to us. Aid us first to enter the temple of our beings and drive therefrom all such thoughts as have held us in bondage. May we be willing to see the idols, before which we have hitherto bowed, broken and lying in fragments at our feet, if demolished by the power of truth alone. Lead us by your thought upon that higher plane of wisdom where we may be enabled to discern the way and the truth, and to walk therein henceforth in steadfastness of purpose. Alone and unaided, we are weak and often fail; but, your strength supporting us, we may meet and overcome all obstacles and difficulties. As we rest under the shadows to-day, and there falleth over us the silent mist of rain, may we rise in the spirit above the spiritual clouds, if any there be—above the mist and the darkness that obscures our vision, into that realm where the eternal sun of truth, of life, and of the spirit, is glowing in radiance. Aided by your presence, strengthened by your words, we return our glad thanksgiving to you now and evermore. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

We have chosen to give you a few thoughts on "Spirit-Phenomena." Spiritualism, differing in a great measure from any other form of religion of the present time, is alike open to criticism of its methods and misunderstanding of its teachings. We use the phrase "Spirit-Phenomena," or "Phenomena of Spirit," rather than "Phenomena of Spiritualism," realizing that there is a power underlying this movement which is in reality its substance, but which is not confined by forms nor appropriated by any class of people.

Looking back over the history of the human race, we perceive that there ever has been a power which, in its manifestations, has given rise to every form of religion extant and extinct, and that power is spirit. The phenomena of spirit taking place nineteen hundred years ago in the villages of Judea round and about Jordan, form the foundation and cornerstone of Christianity. Jesus, as one of the workers of wonders at that time, stands out prominently as an illustration of this power. We do not believe, as reasoners to-day, that he was any more the son of God than are others, but that he was endowed with this common power, which is the power of spirit, to a greater extent than many of his fellow-beings. There were, however, faculties that were not developed to the degree that they are in many organisms or individuals. That power of brain or mind that makes a clear-headed business man was lying dormant in his case; while the power of spirit, taking possession of the faculties that responded thereto, endowed him especially in that direction. His was not an isolated case; there were many others. He possessed the ability to penetrate the guile of matter that ever veils the spirit of man, and when he detected spiritual gifts lying unused, he touched their possessor with the magic power that permeated his own being, and commissioned him, saying: "Go forth and preach this gospel of truth."

The two worlds, as we sometimes denominate them, or rather the two conditions, that of the material and that of the spirit, are so closely related that there is no line of separation between them which will permit us to say: "Here ends the one, and there begins the other." These two forces are commingled throughout the universe in all expressions of life. We may go back to ancient forms of religion as far as you can verify our statements by history, and you will find that spirit phenomena have given rise to them all; the peculiar forms of belief being the result of that externalism with which man always clothes spiritual things. Thus we have the ancient Buddhism of the older religions, and we have our Christianity based upon the phenomenal experiences of the people of nineteen centuries ago, marking a period of man's spiritual history which stands out prominently above many of the others. Two thousand years prior to this we have another marked period of spirit phenomena, when seers and prophets, those whom

we call mediums to-day, walked familiarly among the people, by whom they were regarded as oracles, or the nearest possible approach to the godhead. Man, with his strange ideas of God, has given himself greater credit than belonged to him according to our understanding; or, in other words, according to his idea of this power which he possessed, has he attributed to himself more or less of the god-power, claiming to be a specially endowed being, a son of God, a Messiah or messenger of God. In most instances, however, the claim has been put forth by those who afterward idolized and deified the individual, rather than by the individual himself.

It is unnecessary for our purposes to-day to trace Christianity through all its varied changes to the time when we find it crystallized into form and ceremony. This was the result of a belief that the past held all revelations of God, all manifestations of the spirit. The phenomena that were called miraculous were recorded, that mankind might read what the power of spirit has been, and live in the letter alone. But the spirit of man as related to the vast spirit of the universe; the spirit of man as an immortal something which ever reaches on beyond his present condition—which makes inquiries, and desires to know—kept asking the question, which to many minds remained unsettled: "Why does not that which took place in the past, take place now?" Thousands worshipping at the altars of different denominations, prayed that the signs that were given to the early Christians be given to them, that a demonstration of spirit be made, but it did not come—in the Church! The main body of that institution was satisfied; but hungry souls outside, yearning for more facts, dissatisfied with what they had received, and unsatisfied in spirit, waited for the time when God should be manifest in the flesh again, or when the spirit should again show forth its wondrous power.

At length it came, but as it always has done, in an unexpected way and in unexpected quarters. It came in the outside world, as it were, for we trace our modern spirit-phenomena back to the early manifestations taking place in the Fox home nearly forty years ago. It came in a Christian home, but not in the Church; for when that praying mother in her perplexity went to it for advice, it was not the priesthood that could give her an answer, that could tell her what it was, why it was, whence it came, or what she might expect. She bowed upon her knees in earnest prayer, day after day, to the God of her fathers that he might remove from her this which caused her so much trouble, but it was not removed. The Church believed that this family were possessed by devils, who were holding high carnival in this Methodist home. Here is the argument: "You must have grieved the Spirit of God, and it has departed from you. This is the spirit of the Evil One. Pray earnestly that it be removed from you." But prayer did not remove it, and the manifestations kept on in their course until they had spread like a fire over the prairies swept by a mighty wind, and were heard of in many other homes. In these forty years the power of this movement has been felt in every land by every people, and its utterances are given in every tongue.

Different ideas, to be sure, are held in regard to it, and the old conception of good and evil, of God and the devil, is at work to-day just as it ever has been in the past. In our enlightened land, in this age of knowledge and wisdom, there are plenty of people that stand behind pulpits as their entrenchments and cry out: "Diabolism," and "Verily I say unto you this is the work of Beelzebub," even as did the Jews when the same power rested upon the man of Nazareth nineteen centuries ago. It is the cry of humanity to-day, ignorant of the true causes that underlie these facts; hence we must meet it with reason, understanding and our Philosophy.

We are asked by those holding controversies upon the subject: "What is the reason that individual spirits bring us many times false communications, or those which give rise to the suspicion that they emanate from evil spirits?" This assertion comes more especially from the Orthodox world, or from those who claim that the devil and his angels, or evil spirits, are allowed to go forth over the earth, but that good spirits do not return.

The communications received through undeveloped mediums, and called evil because they are not understood, are used as an argument to prove this statement. We have all these things to meet, all these things to look in the face, and to give some reasons for their existence. Spirit-phenomena are, at the present time, as they ever have been, bound by the limitations of matter, or of the individual mediums through whom the manifestations occur: Their action, their ability to do injury or to do good, the extent to which their power can be exercised, are questions which cannot yet be fully answered, because experiment has not brought sufficient knowledge in this direction. Still there is enough to enable every intelligent being to understand that mind in the body as well as mind out of the body influences their character, and that even the condition of mind acts either as a barrier or an impetus to the truth. Thus we find mediums to be very sensitive and susceptible beings, and as such they should be treated by those making investigations.

Nothing is perfect, so far as we are able to learn. If our earth had perfected itself, or ripened up to a condition that we believe it is just growing toward, we should find human beings in a riper or more perfect state of being, and we should also be able to find clearer and purer channels through which spirit could operate. Therefore we say to you, you must ever use reason and intelligence in your researches;

and we are glad that the exercise of these is held as among the most important of the requirements of Spiritualism as a philosophy to-day. The religions of the past have not called for reason, but for faith. When reason asserted itself, and you inquired why such and such things were demanded on faith, you were instantly hushed, and told that you must not ask these questions; you must not use reason, you must accept by faith. We have passed that line now; we do not ask you to accept by faith; but we do request you to exercise your reason; and that is why spirit-phenomena as a part of your Spiritualism have been given you once more from the spirit side of life.

When the question is asked: "What are the phenomena of Spiritualism?" Spiritualists are very likely to divide this array of experimental testimony into two distinct classes—the physical and the mental; but they are, both and all, spirit phenomena. The making passive of the will of another and the controlling of an individual mind is as much a phenomenon of spirit as is the controlling of physical forces in order to produce certain other results. A child is entranced, and while in this condition gives utterance to words of wisdom only equalled by those of the most learned men of the period. Can you not class this manifestation, and do you not, with the phenomena of spirit?

Sometimes we ask the mediums whom we have chosen for a special work upon the mental plane, to give us an hour a day for development: "What shall we do?" they ask. "Sit passively," we answer; "that is all we require of you; the rest we do on our side of life unseen by you." Sometimes our request is granted, sometimes it is not. Whenever it is there is growth, and after perhaps months of this work on their part, simply sitting quietly, it is found that some power, or spirit, has gained control of the brain to such an extent that the vocal organs will respond as readily to its touch as to the touch of the master mind or spirit that has its habitation upon the mortal plane in this temple of the living God, the body human.

In the course of development in this direction for a time everything moves on smoothly and satisfactorily. Beautiful communications from loving friends, that bear the stamp of identity and truthfulness, are received, and then suddenly there is a change. Communications are received as before, but they are unsatisfactory at times, and untruthful. The medium is disturbed, and often the friends are discouraged. They say: "If deceiving spirits come to me, I do not want anything to do with the matter," and they stop in their investigations and experiments at that point. If we were as easily discouraged in our pursuit of every other object as we are in the pursuit of truth, we should not accomplish a great deal here on earth.

The first thing to do at such times is to inquire why these things occur: You have opened a doorway and invited the angels to enter; but that doorway admits both the light and the dark, the true and the false; and just as they did in the past and as St. Paul said in his letter to the churches in early days, you must try the spirits to see of what nature they are. The other world is continually receiving spirits from this side of life. They are entering the field of existence over there, not to be shut up in some bottomless pit or some four-square Paradise, but to have freedom and liberty for growth, progress and development. Perhaps the medium has, in such cases as those just mentioned, invited, or some one has thrown upon him something antagonistic. Some members of the family, for instance, begin disputing; one believes, another does not believe: Do you know what power thought has? Do you know how very forcible and tangible it is? Do you know how easy it is to make a mesh, as it were, of these threads or cords of power, that will bind and hold the medium in such antagonistic elements, thus permitting the approach of spirits that cannot enter the inner circle where love and harmony reign? Of necessity the result, in such instances, is mixed spirit-phenomena.

I speak of this as a possibility, but we know it is a fact. In order to attain to the very highest and best in spirit-manifestation, we must work earnestly and thoughtfully. I do not believe in organizing a circle with as little thought as you would give to the selection of a few tea-table guests, and yet this is often the case. We are in pursuit of the truth; we are endeavoring to communicate with the spirits of men arisen, with angels in the life beyond; and if there is anything that we should hold pure and sacred, that we should enter into with deliberation, forethought, earnestness and sincerity, it is this work of opening the doors between the two worlds.

A great variety of phenomena has grown up in the last forty years—from that of the child made sensitive to the thought of spirit, on to that of the spirit returning clothed temporarily in matter, each doing all in its power to prove immortality, to prove the reality of the life that lies beyond, and to disprove some erroneous teachings which have been given to man in the past, and to which he clings so tenaciously as to retard his growth spiritually. In these many and diversified manifestations we find a great variety of expression. Every medium differs from every other medium. Those whose gifts are of a mental character, such as clairvoyance, clairaudience and test mediumship, differ in a great measure from those through whose instrumentality physical phenomena are presented. Even as Spiritualists we find ourselves divided just here. The cry of "fraud" is raised against mediums whose phase is materialization, by those who have investigated the subject earnestly, seriously and sincerely. Individuals enter a se-

ance-room, pay their fee, take their places, the manifestations occur, and the observers pass out about equally divided in opinion. One-half of them are satisfied that what they have witnessed is spiritual in its source, and that they have seen their friends; the other half are equally satisfied that it is the veriest deception they have ever looked upon. In this way controversies arise that are taken into courts of justice, and you then discover of how little account is this proceeding in settling the vexed question either one way or the other. We do not feel that this course is or should be necessary.

Spiritualism should be so organized as to control its phenomena by holding mediums above the power of temptation; and spirit manifestation will not be based upon the solid foundation that it should be until such time as you hold it so sacred that you will raise a fund and prepare a place for the carrying on of the work under holy and pure conditions. Your mediums who publicly represent Spiritualism should be cared for beyond "the dollar limit" as far as they individually are concerned. When that time arrives, the earnest, investigating public can come to you as an organization or society, to recommend to them a medium for the particular phase they desire to witness, as they would come to you for a minister. "But," perhaps some of you will say, "we cannot afford it as societies." If the money that is thrown promiscuously about to-day, a dollar at a time, so many times a week or month, in places that you have doubt concerning, was gathered in an organized way, and systematized, it would be enough to present the phenomena of Spiritualism to a skeptical world under conditions that could not be gainsaid. Such mediums then as valued the truth for its own sake, and prized their high and holy gift, would willingly place themselves in a position to be cared for by an organized body that would see them protected, cared for and supported in a way that the needs at least of the body should not lead them into temptations of a pecuniary order.

Some of our spirit phenomena are already of such a character that the spirits producing them through certain instruments can give you almost any condition that you require. Some slate-writers, for instance, are able to give the manifestations in such a way that no reasonable human being can dispute their origin, and those who are so unreasonable as to doubt it need to grow a little before they go any further in their investigations into that which they have not wit enough to understand even when they behold it. Such mediums as these do not, perhaps, so much need your care and consideration as those of another class.

Many manifestations put down as spirit phenomena, and for whose character we are brought to account before the bar of public opinion, bear no relation whatever to them. It is enough to make the blood of any honest Spiritualist boil to take up the paper of a Sunday morning like this and read that "the greatest medium of the age" will perform so and so; that "the great trick of slate-writing will be shown," etc., the notice closing by stating: "If any have been foolish enough to believe, let them come and behold, and let their superstitions vanish." This is called by outsiders an exposure (b) of Spiritualism. It is no more like spirit-phenomena than black is like white; it no more represents true spirit-phenomena than the night represents the brightest day. The conditions under which such manifestations and the manifestations of spirit are produced bear no comparison whatever. I hope no Spiritualist, seeing a little flimsy trick performed, will say: "Well, that operator, whether he knows it or not, must be a medium," because it is not so. There are tricksters and jugglers, as there have been ever since the Egyptians met Moses, and as I suppose there were for thousands of years before. When the true manifestation meets the false, face to face, there is a wide difference, to the careful observer, between them.

"You had better keep within your own ranks," some one says; "there is enough for you to look after there. Many, claiming the gift of mediumship, give us the false instead of the true." This may be a fact, and it undoubtedly is. If so, Spiritualists are the ones who must meet it, weigh it in the balance of their own judgment, and not leave it for the outside world to do. But, remember, Spiritualists are not the only ones who have deceivers in their ranks. There are those representing themselves as Christians, who wear as heavy masks and as long cloaks to cover their iniquities as do the worst of bogus mediums. This, I know, is no excuse for dishonest mediums, but I desire to state just here that, in reality, I believe there are very few who actually practice fraud. There are, then, two kinds or classes—the real mediums and the pretenders. Again, some one says—and he may be a Spiritualist: "I know that some genuine mediums practice deceit." Very well; I am not surprised; I have seen a man that could tell the truth a part of the time, and lie like a villain the remainder. In this cause, as in every other, we find the mixed compound of human nature, the good and the evil, the true and the false; we find much that is crude, much that is not understood, and much for you yet to study.

Spiritualism, as a modern movement, with all its manifestations, is to-day what it is after only forty years' growth. In that time it has moved the world; it has gained adherents from the ranks of every denomination in Christendom. Some of the wisest men back of church pulpits have been obliged to admit its truth, and some of the best of these say to-day: "Although there is a great deal mixed up with Spiritualism that is spurious, there is a large

portion on the side of truth that cannot be explained away."

I wish at this point to say: Be ye diligent as Spiritualists! You read that there is no law that can touch a spirit medium. Some of you sincerely believe that, for the good of the cause, those caught in the use of real deception in manifestations purporting to be genuine should be punished; but in your zeal be cautious that you do not call for a law which, when once enacted, can be taken into the hands of any petty tyrant and used on any medium in your ranks. It were better to bear a little in your own home circle, wisely and with your eyes open and single to the truth, than to assist a world in throttling you, as it would like to do even to-day. So I say be vigilant, be cautious, and you will find that at length, by God's own law, the truth will come uppermost, right will prevail and error vanish.

Spiritualism is passing through an ordeal out of which it will come brightened, purified, uplifted and exalted; and while we may stand in fear in a measure of law used unwisely in the hands of man, let us remember that we are citizens of America, and that as such the Constitution itself stands by us as a religious body. Do not be too anxious to step out of the protection of a law that says it shall be yours, as citizens of America, to worship God according to the dictates of your conscience. We believe, however, that there is wisdom and strength enough in Spiritualism and in the ranks thereof to carry our mediums, our mediumship and spirit phenomena forward until we shall all realize what a mighty power it is that is brooding over the nations, seeking to bless and uplift humanity. Though the truths that have come from this source are often misunderstood and misapplied, still, with God and the angels on our side, we feel that we are in the majority and that the truth will prevail by-and-by. I am looking for the time to come when spirit-phenomena, in all their phases, will be lifted above doubt, and I believe it is coming just so surely as I know that I can to day see demonstrated the fact that a thought can be ticked out over a wire by sounds only intelligible to the few, or be whispered by the telephone along a highway in language unmistakable. As these achievements have been accomplished on the mortal side, we may reasonably hope that still greater results may be attained on the spirit side, and that spirit phenomena will yet be elevated above the possibility of duplicity, or of any little sham being taken for the real, the true and the genuine. Then such advertising as we see in the papers to-day will call only the foolish to listen, for the truly wise will understand that there is no comparison between the two.

That you may avoid the rocks that have wrecked so many upon the shores of time, we pray you "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." With earnestness of purpose and with the spirit within turned toward the truth, seek ye the light and it shall be given you.

Billous Attack.

This is the popular name for an affection with which most are familiar. The name, however, is somewhat deceptive, and often leads to injudicious treatment. It is doubtful if there is any special ailment of the liver in the case. It is probably only a brief, functional disorder of the digestive system. This is the general view of the medical profession.

It is a mild form of acute, as distinguished from chronic, dyspepsia, induced, it may be, by indigestible food, over-eating, physical exhaustion, excessive brain work, violent emotions, or by general care and worry. It is more liable to occur in the spring, because while one continues to eat the same food and in nearly the same quantity as in winter, the power of the system to assimilate food is reduced.

The most prominent symptoms of "billiousness" are loss of appetite, nausea (sometimes vomiting), coating of the tongue, an unpleasant taste, headache and a general sense of alling (malaise).

These may have been preceded by a feeling of fatigue and aching in the back and limbs. Sometimes, in persons inclined that way, the headache becomes what is known as "sick headache."

As to treatment, aside from medicine and tonic, the malady usually presents little difficulty. Says Quain's "Medical Dictionary": "Such attacks are most effectively prevented by careful regulation of diet and the careful avoidance of exposure to cold, fatigue and undue mental exertion and anxiety; when they come on, abstinence from food is desirable, with rest in the recumbent posture and perfect quiet."

The writer in Reynolds's "System of Medicine" says: "In the milder form, a tolerably complete abstinence from food for four or twenty hours will frequently do much toward effecting a cure. This abstinence secures for the stomach that rest of the organ so essential to the cure. After this rest, light farinaceous puddings may be allowed, followed by a cautious return to a more nourishing diet."

The too common practice of people who fancy that they are "billious" of dosing themselves with cathartics, to "clear out the system," should be discouraged. In most cases nature will cure the patient if he will give her a chance.—Ex.

A Spiritual Book.

"OUTSIDE THE GATES" and other Tales and Sketches, by a Band of Spirit-Intelligences, through the Mediumship of Mary Theresa Sheehy.

The publishers, Messrs. Colby & Rich, are very kind to send us so many of their spirit books, considering our materialistic proclivities. It is friendly on their part to keep us posted in their literature, and we are obliged to them for the numerous favors they bestow on us.

"Outside the Gates" is a large book containing 115 pages, and is full of descriptions of spirit-life, what the employment of the people is, their language, society, literature—and, in short, everything concerning them. All which seems to be candidly related, and will no doubt prove interesting to believers. For sale by Colby & Rich, 9 Bowdoin street, Boston.—Boston Investigator.

They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.—Emerson.

GOOD-NIGHT!

BY M. T. SHILHAMER.

"The world is weary, friends," he said,
"And darkness is the light;
The stars are struggling overhead;
'Tis time to say 'Good-night!'"

Oh! lone and dreary night,
And rugged was the road
O'er which I pressed my toilsome way
With many a heavy load.

"The burning heat has cooled at last,
The din and noise are still,
The strife and discord all are past,
I know our Father's will;
His tender hand supports me now,
His smile to me is light,
Beneath his touch I gladly bow
To thee, old World: 'Good-night!'"

Out through the portal dark he passed
Into the clear ether-shine—
All suffering and pain at last;
Rebathed for peace divine;
All earthly prospects growing dim
Before his quickening sight,
Till heavenly greetings brought to him:
"Good-morning!" "Not 'Good-night!'"

Free Thought.

(Read at the First Spiritual Temple Society, Eve Jan. 16th,
by Mrs. E. M. MASON.)

SOUL-GROWTH.

AFFIRMATIVE QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION.
How can we Account For and Reconcile all the
so-called Accidents and Incidents of Life—
the Calamities that Befall and Afflict the Just
and True, as well as the Depraved and Incon-
gruous—with the Doctrine of a Perfect Cause?

BY JACOB EDSON.

(Concluded.)

In soul-growth, ought we not to distinguish between the development of the faculties of the mind, the functions of the body, and the progression of the soul which possesses and uses said faculties and functions? Does not the former exhibit the capacity that may be utilized, and the latter, the plane of thought, the sphere of love and affection—soul-growth—the utilizer has attained? Is not probation the time and condition required to obtain and unfold our individual identity? Does it not commence at the time of our first conscious transgression of the higher law, and continue on until it ends in our conscious at-one-ment with God, or until the identity necessarily ceases to be, because of the disintegrating effect of persistent degradation, moral disease, debasement and crime? Is not pain either physical or spiritual evidence of life? Is not pain medicinal—corrective in its nature and tendency? If it were not so, who is there among us that would have a finger on his hand or a toe on his foot? Should we not all of us have burned, bruised or frozen there? Is it not true in the spiritual as well as in the physical that "as long as there is life there is hope"? Is not repentance a state—a condition—rather than an act? Does it not precede and produce action? Is not regenerative transformation the ultimatum of persistent repentance? Can there be full and complete forgiveness for us so long as we remain vindictive or unforgiving? Is not prayer a receptive state or condition in which the Infinite Father and the finite child, the coming man, are conjointly demand and supply? Is not the spiritual food being prepared while the child is being unfolded to need it? Is not repentance and forgiveness in accordance with inexorable law? When we comply with the conditions, is there not a sense in which we forgive ourselves, take the effect, and go on to attain and upward in soul-growth until we know by observation, as well as by a best experience, that "all things work together," not only for the good and the true, but also for the most depraved and incorrigible? Do not "the pure in heart see God" and rest in his love and Providence, as the lily rests receptively on the bosom of the lake?

Is it not true that tadpoles will grow to enormous size in the dark, and remain tadpoles until they receive the invigorating rays from the sun in the light, which necessarily transform them into frogs, changing their nature, mode of life and habits of living? Are they not, because of this transformation, so to speak, like the symbolic Jonah thrown upon dry land? Is it not also true that the Adamite man may be developed intellectually into enormous proportions, and still remain unprogressed in soul-growth until he receives the transforming rays of divine life, reflected through the spiritual sonship of God in man? Is not this sonship the metaphysical expression of our subjective self, in which the kingdom of heaven with its king enthroned? Is not the kingdom of heaven subjectively within us? Is not the perfect personage there, the Christ in the new tomb, as Lazarus was in the grave, or Jonah in the great fish, waiting to come forth?

Are we not gods in embryo? Is not the finite soul in essence, the eternal, the uncreated part of man, that exists as a part of the infinite, and in spirit which expressly embodies itself in matter, in which it may unfold and be regeneratively transformed into higher life? Is the fact that brutalized animal men live on and manifest themselves after leaving this world reliable evidence that they have attained to immortal life and consequently can never cease to be? Do not evil and debasing desires and communications corrupt and debase, and, if persisted in, may they not ultimately in the entire destruction of the evolving capacity in the thus brutalized animal man, so that he ceases to be? Is not spiritual health as well as physical disease contagious? Is not the perfect Cause the fountain of all good, and may we not so relate and condition ourselves as to become channels for the communication of the higher life? Are not stars and flowers keepers? Do they not reflect the beauty of God in nature, and reflect his glory above? If we keep company with the lily, the violet and the rose, may we not so unfold our nature as to emulate their beauty and use?

Is not this new theology based upon fundamental truth? Is not the uncreated cause our eternal Father? Do we not inherit our Father's nature and attributes? Are not love, justice, mercy and truth hereditary? Was there not a point, a condition, in the endless chain of causation, in which the infinite and the finite came into such a close relationship that they conceptively began the finite child with inhering spiritual capacity to become the son of God? And does not such conceptive begetment bespeak spiritual gestation, travail and birth? Are we not spiritual as well as physical beings, dualities, sons and daughters of Father and Mother Nature? Did we not, on our Father's side, inherit eternal life? Is it not within us an expectancy? Did we not, on our Mother's side, obtain states, conditions, environments, through which this eternal life is to be evolved? For aught we know, may there not be millions upon millions of unfolding spiritual entities, occupying every conceivable standpoint in the discrete degrees of spiritual evolution, from the lowest all along up the spiral stairway, in the spiritual sonship of the living God?

As differentiated out-births of the divine, with inhering divinity seeking personification through us, must not the distinguishing differences that constitute our different identities remain? Can any amount of soul-growth or spiritual culture obliterate or extinguish them? May we not go on and on in spiritual culture, improving, perfecting, and progressing, opening up these distinctions, and through them our inhering personality, and by so doing con-

tinue to demonstrate over and over again that we are the same individuals we used to be? Is the exception we have been invited to the new theology, the doctrine of a perfect Cause, its spiritual evolution, and are now in the transitional condition of regenerative transformation from the animal through the human into the divine department of eternal life? We know that God is love, that he is subjective, and that it is our privilege as well as duty to objectify him—his perfect personage—within ourselves. Can the hatched chicken ever get or be put back into its broken shell? If we, as embryonic substance, existed from all eternity in the unconscious consciousness of the uncreated Cause, and have obtained veritable entities and still survive, growing stronger and more God-like every day, are we not among the survivors of the fittest? Who, tell us who or what, can prevent us from living on and on as conscious entities in the eternal, never-ending now?

XX.
If we are to live on and on in the eternal, is there not a history being written by the finger of time on the tablet of the soul concerning each and every one of us? Are not these histories to constitute in each his own identity, by and through the unfolding of the divine not the Christ—the metaphysical substance of justice, mercy and truth, that has been evolved through the unfolding sonship of God within us—to be the judge? If so, is there not a sense in which the day of judgment has come—the motive has been touched, and the heart to indicate which drop fulfilling its mission through the execution of law, so also may it not be with us, no large, no small, each a perfected spirit, a polished stone in the spiritual temple of eternal life?

XXI.
Is there not an exact standard of absolute justice, mercy and truth? Does it not exist in the uncreated Cause, the infinite, the infinite soul of the universe? Did it not inhere in our finite begetment? Is it not now subjectively within us, seeking to evolve and express itself? Is not absolute justice to be given and received in such a manner as not to admit of doubt, discrepancy or error? May we not, through persistent animalism and gross brutality, so demoralize and degrade our spiritual nature—so shrink, shrivel, dwarf and obliterate our consciousness of right and wrong, our manhood with its inhering divinity—as to leave nothing but the mark of the beast, and when what had been, and through the execution of law, absolute justice, mercy and truth had ceased to be? On the other hand, is not humane justice tempered with wise mercy, judiciously applied, the chief factor in the ways and means of soul-growth, such that by and by when we get home to our Father's house—"the city of light"—our transformed affectional nature may be so illumined by the light of infinite love and life that our conception and application of justice may so exhaust the element and function of mercy that from disease it will cease to be? Then, and not till then, may we be enabled to perceive and comprehend the sublime fact that everything that is, has been, or is to be, is absolutely right, and that the rule, the ruler and the ruled, are but three distinct departments of the all in all of life, not unlike the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

XXII.
If we out man loose from the object of his affection or the religion that bound him, without giving him the new theology to which to attach himself, will he not straightway fall into a pit of despair? But if induced day by day to fix his affections on more and still more worthy objects, will he not approach, step by step, nearer and nearer, and reflect more and still more clearly the spirituality and attributes of the perfect Cause?

XXIII.
Upon what other than the spiritual hypothesis, with its theosophic doctrine of a perfect Cause and Providence, can we base a satisfactory argument in favor of prayer? Is not our perfect Cause, with its differentiated agents, omnipresent and all-controlling? Can he not do through finite agents—ministering angels—what otherwise could not be done? Is not this idea gloriously adapted to the wants of the human soul? Is it not the only one by which may be produced the results each man knows he needs? Is such an idea unreasonable? Is such a course a mark of fickleness of mind on the part of God? Are we not to be guided by his providences ever changing, the latter always adapted to the circumstances and conditions of the agent's influence? May we not as well charge him with fickleness of mind, because from the same soil, expanded by the same sun, watered by the same showers, and by the same side by side, as the daisy, the rose and the violet? May we not as well accuse him of inconsistency because the acorn planted in the deep soil expands into the splendid oak, while another dropped in the crevice of some granite rock becomes a mere sorby shrub? Is it inconsistent with the infinite perfection of the Omnipotent to make blessings dependent upon the action of the recipient? Let the skeptic question the necessities of his own soul, to deny the efficacy of prayer in toto. To hold that the unchangeable God cannot be moved in accordance with his will, leads to a fatal trap, to the doctrine of fatalism, which, believed in, renders the soul apathetic and incapable of advancement; but to hold God to be asympathetic Father, ever ready to hear the cry of his children, a wise and beneficent creator, who has made the bestowal of his blessings dependent upon our effort, leads to a fatal trap, to a warm gushing love, and a life of devotion to his service.

Verifications of Spirit-Messages.

SOPHIA SCOTT—S. B. WING.
In the BANNER OF LIGHT of Jan. 7th is a message from SOPHIA SCOTT. We were close friends for twenty-six years. She was always replete, very brief and to the point in her remarks, and this message is entirely characteristic of her. The names mentioned are a wonderful test to her friends.

I also wish to verify the communication from S. B. WING, in same issue. It is a complete test, true in every particular. I am at present time at home with my aged parents, and sister, Mrs. Annie Lord Chamberlain, who is still suffering greatly from her accident. She is grateful to the friends who have written and taken so much interest in her case, and will respond soon as able. The injury was to the head principally, therefore she is unable to do much writing. I agree with my friend, Mrs. Almira McLaughlin, that THE BANNER is the leading and best paper published in the interest of Spiritualism. Long may it wave.

Sincerely yours, in truth,
JENNIE L. WEBB,
Box 56, Mattapan District, Boston, Mass.

ROBERT BYRNES.
In the BANNER OF LIGHT of Jan. 14th, 1888, is a communication given through the mediumship of Mr. J. W. Fletcher, which I fully recognize as coming from my son ROBERT, who passed away some eighteen years ago. Although but seven years old he was quite conversant with spirit control, being quite mediumistic, and used to enjoy having a chat with Solo, who is one of my spirit controls; he also had great love for his grandmothers. I often feel his presence when traveling from place to place. It used to be a great saying with him, "When I go to the spirit-world I will come and watch over you." Long may the BANNER be unfurled to open the way between the two worlds, is the sincere wish of the writer.

Yours for truth,
SARAH A. BYRNES.

From the Flower-Land.

Letter from Mrs. Clara A. Field.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I left the bleak and wintry city of Boston on the 6:30 P. M. train, Jan. 18th, for the land of sunshine and summer called Florida, arriving in Jacksonville in forty-two hours without delay or accident. Mrs. Dr. Brigham, of Fitchburg, Mass., made the journey with me. The change from ice and cold was so great as to be thoroughly appreciated by us; we arrived at high noon, and found the thermometer at eighty degrees in the shade; the drive from the depot, through streets shaded on both sides by orange trees loaded with their golden fruit, gardens bright with roses in full bloom, as well as many other lovely blossoms, made a contrast which was delightful in the extreme.

We took rooms at the pleasant, quiet Hotel Glendora, where a nice lunch awaited us. We were assigned very pleasant rooms by the genial host, Mr. Gerrard himself, who personally looks well to the comfort of his guests—seconded ably by his amiable wife and the gentlemanly clerk, whose name has escaped my memory.

After a day's rest I sallied forth to find some of the friends of our cause. I called upon Dr. Johnson and wife, and found that I was well known to them by reputation. I received a cordial welcome, and from them learned that our good worker, Mr. Geo. P. Colby (who is under engagement to travel for the Southern Spiritualist Association), was to speak for them on three evenings, commencing that (Wednesday) evening. I attended the lecture, of course, and had a treat—it being the first time I had ever seen Bro. Colby. His discourse was a fine one, as also were the others in the course, as I learned afterward. I only attended one of them, as I had been invited by "mine host" of the Glendora to entertain his guests in the parlors of the hotel (on the evening of his second lecture), which I consented to do—the local papers speaking very flatteringly of my efforts. So the ball is started, and earnest workers, such as Dr. Johnson and wife, with a few others, will do all they can to keep it moving. May the angels be very near and help them in their efforts.

By invitation I left Jacksonville for St. Augustine, to be the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Whitney (old time workers and pioneers in this great movement), and to lecture for the Society Sunday, Jan. 22d. There is much interest manifested here, and both sessions were well attended. Arrangements are being made to keep me here for the winter as their speaker; Mrs. Margaret Fox-Kane is expected also. This is just what all speakers need at the present time—the corroborative evidence offered by a good test medium—and Mrs. Kane comes in excellent time to fill this requirement with us.

The cause needs the services of all our workers; it is time that we all realize the necessity of cultivating harmony—each helping the other, and thus aiding our angel friends in their efforts to make this world what it ought to be—a place of happiness and peace!

I shall do all I can to increase the circulation of the BANNER OF LIGHT, being sure that by so doing I am helping to spread the light in the dark places of the earth.

Fraternally yours,

CLARA A. FIELD.

Magnolia Hotel, St. Augustine, Fla.,
Jan. 23d, 1888.

Palatka, Fla.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

By the article in the BANNER of the 21st, under the head of Palatka, by "Octo," your readers will be perhaps misled. The entertainment referred to was given at St. Augustine—that part of "ye ancient balliwick" known as North City.

We have, however, had the pleasure of listening to a series of lectures from Prof. George P. Colby, the well-known and popular trance-medium. I can only say that "He came, he saw, he conquered."

A Spiritualist society was organized, and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: Mr. J. G. Mangold, President; Mr. W. C. Nicholas, Vice President; E. A. Kiskern, Secretary; Mrs. M. Mann, Treasurer; Dr. J. A. Hall, Mrs. Nicholas and Mrs. Kiskern, Trustees.

In conclusion, allow me to say to the host of readers of the BANNER, that although we cannot boast of an ancient city whose foundations were laid over three centuries ago, yet we do wear the proud title of "The Gem City of the St. Johns," and that we will unite with our "friends in the cause" at St. Augustine, in extending to all Spiritualists and Liberals of the North, who contemplate coming South this winter a warm invitation to visit us and attend our meetings while here, and we will assure one and all a hearty welcome.

N. K.
Jan. 23d.

PREAMBLE AND CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRST SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY OF PALATKA, FLA.

E. A. KISKERN, SECRETARY.

Whereas, It is our belief that there is a spirit-world, with its objective and subjective realities, and that mankind, in the way of orderly and progressive soul-development, is dependent upon the aid and assistance of the spirits of the departed; and

Whereas, We believe that we may, under certain conditions, receive communications from such spirit-world; and

Whereas, We recognize as a truth that progression is the animating principle of both the spiritual and the material plane; and that the latter is to be an educational course and necessary developing experience in attaining to the higher or spiritual life; therefore, be it

Resolved, 1st, That the spiritual-minded and sincere truth-seekers of the city of Palatka and vicinity do now organize themselves into a society to be known as "The First Spiritual Society of Palatka," for the purpose of further investigating the above-said forth claims, and disseminating the same to the world; and that we recognize as Spiritualists all who believe in communion between the spiritual and material planes of existence.

Resolved, 2d, That while we recognize the fact that positive knowledge of immortality must necessarily precede any ethical or moral system based thereupon, and that external phenomena are indispensable in the acquisition of that knowledge, we hold that such knowledge and accompanying phenomena are not sufficient in themselves to spiritualize mankind; and especially the currents of inspiration flowing through inspirational speakers and writers, are dependent in their force and moral value upon the purity of the instrument through which they are transmitted.

Resolved, 3d, That all spiritual teachers, or those who appear before the world as such, should be held to strict accountability for their moral conduct and life acting in said capacity.

Resolved, 4th, That this Society will not undertake the pressing of special moral codes, or the imposing of the individual consciences of the members, but will insist—as a qualification of membership and respectable recognition—upon the observance of those general rules of life that constitute good citizenship.

Resolved, 5th, That this Society shall be organized as an auxiliary to the Southern Association of Spiritualists.

MEMBERSHIP.

Article I. Any person may become a member of this Society by subscribing to its preamble and accompanying resolutions, and the payment of one dollar as a

franchise fee.

Article II. Any member convicted of gross im-

morality may be expelled by a two-thirds vote of the Society.

OFFICERS.

Sec. 1. The officers of this Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Trustees; and these seven shall constitute an Executive Board, five of whom shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

Sec. 2. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, to issue calls for special meetings, and perform such other duties as devolve upon presiding officers of similar organizations.

Sec. 3. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to preside in the absence of the President, and perform all other duties imposed upon the President in the absence of the same.

Sec. 4. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep the minutes of the meetings, and the records and books of the Society, issue certificates of membership, and perform such other duties as may be directed by the Executive Board.

Sec. 5. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all moneys, and render just and true accounts thereof to the Society, at least once in three months, paying out said moneys only upon the written order of the President, countersigned by the Secretary.

Sec. 6. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to hold in trust all properties, real or personal, which may, by will, gift, deed, purchase or other conveyance, become the property of said Society, and to invest the same in a good and sufficient bond for the value of the same.

Sec. 7. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to transact all business relating to the Society, to engage lecturers and mediums to disseminate the principles herein set forth, and to perform such other executive duties as may devolve upon it.

Sec. 8. The term of office of all officers of this Society, except the Board of Trustees, shall be one year, or until their successors shall be elected and qualified. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Board.

Sec. 9. The term of office of Trustees shall be three years.

Sec. 10. The deliberations of this body shall be governed by "Cushing's Manual."

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Spiritual Phenomena.

IN THE SEANCE-ROOM.

BY E. A. DRACKETT.

No. 3.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In 1776 Mead published his discovery of Animal Magnetism, and for more than a hundred years, amid the jibes and sneers of educated men, it struggled for recognition. Now, under the name of hypnosis, it is an accepted fact. During the period of its forced probation there never was a time when it could not have been demonstrated in a few minutes to the entire satisfaction of an unprejudiced mind.

As mesmerism is the foundation of trance-mediumship and the so-called materialized forms, its acceptance must eventually lead to the recognition of all its different phases.

The opposition to mesmerism, with increased bitterness, has been transferred to materialization, and men who are considered respectable in the ordinary walks of life, demean themselves by the false charges they make against this last and most advanced phase of spirit manifestation.

While we may depise the ungentlemanly, and in some cases brutal attacks, we should not forget that among the strongest promoters of Spiritualism are those who so unjustly opposing it; they are forcing those who know its truth to a vigorous defense and exciting the public to investigation.

No truth was ever crushed out by its opponents, and no one need fear that the attacks made in the present instance will retard the progress of the spiritual forces that are throughout the civilized world moving to the front.

It is not from this class that Spiritualism has anything to fear; the danger, if danger there be, comes from pretended believers, whose limited knowledge and narrow minds lead them to promulgate ideas and theories adverse to the great principles which underlie the whole movement.

I assume that the moment the existence of one of these beings is demonstrated by or through the phenomenon termed materialization, the fact of a spiritual world is assured beyond a doubt, and the quality of the manifestation may safely be left to its unfoldment. A phenomenon of such transcendent magnitude cannot fail, under the laws of evolution, to develop a character in keeping with its origin. The charge that they are evil spirits, demons, is but a relic of barbarism still nursed and cherished in the bosom of old theology.

I have studied hundreds of seances, some of them in my own house, and have never seen one where the moral tone of the manifestations fell below the average character of the audience. On the other hand, I have seen much that was so beautiful that it is impossible to convey an idea of it by any known language.

My object in these brief sketches of the seance-room is, if possible, to point out some things which may aid those who have had less experience.

In a former article I spoke of a male form that came to me at the Berrys', in whose intelligence I had confidence. By this I did not mean to be understood that all the forms coming to me there, as well as at other times and places, were not equally as intelligent, but that the different individualities lead to different lines of thought and expression.

This spirit claimed to be my brother-in-law, who served in the late war, and was struck in the inner corner of the eye by a buckshot, which penetrated the brain. He lived some days, and passed away in an unconscious state. On his first coming to me at the Berrys' he came so weak that it was difficult for him to give me his name; his garments were ill-fitting, and in every way he appeared, if such a thing were possible, to be made up of the odds and ends of the seance.

On one occasion he came wearing coarse hair on his head, arranged in such a way that I felt certain I could have removed it without hurting him. At another time he called me "Father." Remembering the old adage, I wondered if that were not the beginning of wisdom on his part. His confused condition lasted through more than a dozen interviews, and while I treated him kindly, I was, for that reason, but little interested in him.

At one of the afternoon seances I made up my mind to tell him that my meetings were not profitable, and that he had better retire. I was busily conversing with a lady on my left when a heavy hand was laid on my shoulder, and starting from my seat I found George standing beside me. Reaching out his hand with a hearty grasp, he said: "Are you glad to see me today?" With a sudden impulse I said: "What I you here, so far from the cabinet, and talking plainly too?"

Putting both hands on my shoulders he replied: "Yes; but it takes more strength to talk than it does to materialize." In both the tones of his voice and the light of his face there was an expression of great tenderness. Gently stroking my beard, he said: "This is longer than it was when I knew you. How do you think it would look on my face?" I replied, "It is too old; it would not be becoming." Instantly he remarked: "Look at me." As I looked, there came upon his face a perfect *acsimile* of my beard. Placing one of my hands upon it, he said: "I want you to be sure about this; pull it; do anything you please." I not only pulled it, but traced it up to its union with his face, and found it to be as firmly attached to his face as my own beard to mine.

After satisfying myself fully, I said: "This is very remarkable; still I have not changed my opinion; it is too old for you." "How is it now?" he said; and instantly the beard disappeared, and his face was as smooth as a boy's. I had ample time and light to study this remarkable manifestation, and if I was prejudiced, it certainly was against him. Both his hands were on my shoulders, or on my beard, during the whole time. If what I have described did not occur, then trilled human perception is worthless.

As he retired to the cabinet he shook hands with me, and said: "I should be very glad to meet you again." From that time he has rapidly improved.

Had my experience up to this interview been confined to the meeting of this one form I could not have been very much interested in materialization. My perplexities did not altogether cease with the sudden awakening of his faculties. As he grew stronger, his tone of voice and manner of speech grew very like those of one I knew on this side of life. He came to me at Mrs. Cowan's seances with the same peculiarities; and is one of the few spirits who appear through different mediums with little or no change.

To a person of limited experience the resemblance of which I have spoken might be considered evidence of a confederate, but I am satisfied that such was not the case. My interviews with this spirit have taught me an important lesson. The shortcomings, the apparent blunders and mistakes made by these forms are often the best possible evidence of the truthfulness of the seance.

I have elsewhere given Bertha's explanation of the confused or dazed condition of some of these spirits on coming into the seance-room. If they are not strong enough to assert their individuality over the magnetic influences, they are liable to blend with or take on something of the interview which has immediately preceded their appearance.

The visitor often adds to this confusion by his disappointment and suspicion of fraud, even though these are not expressed, spirits being cognizant of mental conditions. With some, this has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding. Had they understood some of the laws governing these manifestations, they would have helped the spirits out of their bewilderment instead of wrongly accusing them.

There is a class of spirits connected with these manifestations with whom I have had but little acquaintance. At Mrs. Cowan's seances there sometimes comes a tall, well-proportioned male form, dressed in Oriental costume. Twice I have seen him come out into the room and in a clear voice address the audience in a very impressive manner. I have had opportunity to study this figure and to satisfy myself that there were no appliances independent of his form to account for his great height. Although generous and open in his bearing, I did not find him very communicative, not because of unwillingness, but apparently from inability to converse to any great extent. Wishing to know more about him, I asked the materialized form, George, if he knew him. "Yes," he said, "perfectly well. He is one of a band of ancient spirits who are connected with all materializing seances, aiding and encouraging your friends to reach you. Having no particular affection for any individual at the seance they do not often appear outside of the cabinet."

"Then," I said, "if they are controlling these manifestations, I suppose we shall have a rehash of all the old occultism of India and Egypt. Do these spirits still regard those teachings as true?" "That," he replied, "depends on how you understand them. What was taught in those days by the spirits was true enough, but has been so perverted and mis-stated that to your understanding, it is not true. If your best friend was so disfigured and covered up you would not know him. The disposition to pervert spiritual truths to selfish ends has been and is inherent in all nations; the priest of ancient India and the priest of today differ, in this respect, only in methods. In your free republic, where every man should be master of himself, we hope for an honest hearing. This communication with another life is now open to you, and will go on developing facts as fast as you are able to receive them, and it will make all the difference possible whether you listen to the pure, simple teachings of intelligent spirits, or draw your conclusions from the distorted relics of the past."

We are passing through a revolution of materialistic and spiritual ideas, and it becomes the honest seeker after truth to avoid, as far as possible, the false statements and equally false theories which such an unsettled condition always gives birth to.

The rapid disintegration of old forms of religion has set free from their sectarian prisons a class whose minds are drifting through the realms of unrestricted thought. Many of these persons are attracted to these manifestations. All this would be well enough if they would leave behind them the *debris* of old creeds and the mental dyspepsia engendered by decaying ideas. The orthodox heaven and hell, the effete spiritism of India, the revival of Theosophy, with its elementary spirits, its floating human shells and the mythical brotherhood of the Himalaya Mountains, have no direct bearing on the present phase of Spiritualism.

Whatever of truth those early communications may have contained, they come to us laden with speculations and conclusions adverse to our civilization. New wine is not for old bottles, neither can the evolution of thought in its onward march carry with it these lifeless remains.

There is, probably, but one Principle or Intelligent Force which governs everything. It creates matter and all its varied changes, calling out from space invisible forms that are made visible to our outward senses, and rendering them again invisible.

The eruption of volcanoes, the storms that inundate the valleys, the gigantic upheavals of the earth, the almost incredible phenomena of life, whether called good or bad, are alike due to this all-pervading Force.

High and low, good and bad, are only different degrees of unfoldment. Nature leaves, for a time, the waste material of her handiwork to be changed and molded into other forms.

The temple she builds is sacred to the indwelling spirit, and all esoteric or other teaching that tends to debase the body, as fasting, penance or self-inflicted punishment, is a perversion of that which in itself is noble.

While spirit is united to what we call matter, a vigorous, healthy mind and body must ever remain the best expression of the Divine Force in nature. Science has paved the way to a more realistic method of thought, and the dominant materialism compels us to walk with our feet on the ground. If we build at all it must be upon solid facts, and not upon the mystical vapors of a bygone age.

To meet this changed condition, intelligent spirits have descended to the sensuous plane of materialized forms, demanding recognition. Until the mental atmosphere that surrounds these phenomena is free from the poisonous influence of falsehood and distrust, we can form only imperfect conceptions as to what may be their future development. Their present outcome is the one great fact of spirit return through that harmony which love alone creates. Like the pure and affectionate teachings of the early Christians, Spiritualism is in danger of being engulfed by attempts to engraft upon it theories and ideas entirely foreign to its present mission.

Make yourself nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know, for none of us have been taught in early youth what fairies tales we may build of beautiful thoughts, proof against all adversity. Bright fancies, cherished memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure-house of precious and useful thoughts, which care cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, poverty take away from us — houses built without hands, for our souls to live in. — *John Ruskin.*

Hotel Waterbury. "You are late for lunch, sir." "Eminent Physician." "Yes, I had to finish my materializing article on 'The Law of Health,' so as to get it into the next mail. What have you to-day?" "Hot rolls, omelette, plum pudding, apple dumplings, mince pie and fruit cake." "Bring 'em all." — *Omaha World.*

Passed to Spirit-Land.
From her home in Warwick, R. I., Jan. 24th, 1888, Mrs. L. W. Brown (formerly Mrs. Pease, of Putnam, Conn.), in her 64th year.
She was a firm Spiritualist and a good healing medium. This truth she proved by curing many without fear or reward. She was a kind, generous-hearted woman, and in greatly lamented by those who knew her. She was a great sufferer for months, bearing her affliction with composure and great patience, knowing that on her departure from her body she would be ushered into the higher world of unfoldment, where life is real.
— *LESLIE CARPENTER.*
Providence, R. I., Jan. 24th, 1888.

From Plymouth, Mass., Sunday, Jan. 15th, 1888, Mr. Nathan Churchill, aged 70 years.
Mr. Churchill was a veteran Spiritualist, earnest and conscientious, and in his own way did a good work for the cause so dear to him. He was a subscriber to and occasional correspondent of several spiritual papers, and an outspoken friend and advocate of mediumship, realizing that through its channels only can the Spiritualist claim any superior knowledge of the hereafter.
— *I. C.*

From Needham, Mass., Jan. 10th, Mr. John Thomas Saville, formerly of Annisquam, aged 66 years and 6 months.
[Obituary Notice not exceeding twenty lines published gratuitously. When they exceed that number, twenty cents for each additional line will be charged. Ten words for every extra line. No poetry admitted under this heading.]

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We do not read anonymous letters and communications. The name and address of the writer in all cases indispensable as a guarantee of good faith. We cannot undertake to return or preserve manuscripts that are not used. When newspapers are forwarded must contain matter for our inspection, the sender will confer a favor by drawing a pencil or ink line around the article he desires specially to recommend for perusal.

When our patrons desire the address of the BANNER changed, they should give us two weeks' previous notice, and not forget to state their present as well as future address.

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1888.

(Entered at the Post-Office, Boston, Mass., as Second-Class Matter.)

THE BANNER IS ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY MORNING FOR THE WEEK ENDING ON SATURDAY.

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

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

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, 88 and 41 Chambers Street, New York.

COLBY & RICH,

PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

ISAAC B. RICH, BUSINESS MANAGER. LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR. JOHN W. DAY, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

Business Letters must be addressed to ISAAC B. RICH, Publisher of Light Publishing House, Boston, Mass. All other letters and communications must be forwarded to LUTHER COLBY. Private letters should invariably be marked "Personal" on the envelope.

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

Confession at Last—Truth is Mighty.

So scientific thought really has its limitations. At least Prof. Josiah P. Cooke of Harvard University makes a public declaration to that effect. His frank assertion is that there is but a small class of the laws of nature which may be regarded as exact. He admits that most physical laws are not realized with mathematical exactness, but are ideal truths, more or less false in each particular case. When we are able, he says, to go behind the phenomena to their proximate causes, we shall undoubtedly find that the law and its variations are merely different phases of the workings of one complex system, but it is doubtful whether, by man's limited powers, the anomalies of nature will ever be fully developed or its discords resolved. In most cases the relations of phenomena are so complex as to admit of no simple, even approximate, expression.

This is an important admission, coming from the source it does. It is as good as a "give away" of their case by the scientists. Here they are, now, forced to own up that the relations of physical phenomena are too complex to allow of expression; yet when they are brought face to face with the far more complex relations of spiritual phenomena, they have no answer to offer but one of affected contempt. By what authority do they presume to discriminate after such a fashion, confidently expecting that other men, not professed scientists, will reverentially subscribe to all they utter? Professor Cooke sincerely protests against the sophistries of materialism, but if raw assumption is a whit better than raw materialism, we should be glad to know in what particular.

A law of nature, says Professor Cooke, is simply a declaration, or statement, of a certain order, sequence or relation obtaining among natural phenomena; simply a statement of observed relations. Causation is associated with a law of nature in the popular conception, which undoubtedly arises from the figurative use of the word "law" in this connection. Human laws may be cruel, but to call the law of gravitation pitiless is like calling the multiplication table inexorable. The problem of evil which the world everywhere presents is a fact of nature as well as a law, but is not to be confounded with law.

Man, went on the Professor, cannot increase by the smallest fraction either the material or the energy he employs; but he can introduce into the chain of causation conditions by which he is able to control and determine events, and even to alter the face of the earth. Why, then, he necessarily asks, may not new issues appear in nature? Why may not a new force overrule an old one? Why, indeed, may not unrecognized agencies which have always existed, and whose effects have been slowly accumulating, at any moment appear as important factors in human affairs and relations? He calls on his hearers to remember that it was only a century ago that the first indications were noticed of a power which is now one of the chief agencies of our civilization. What were these indications? Only the momentary twinking of a frog's hind legs. But the audible and intelligible occurrence of raps in a humble house at Hydeville is held up to ridicule by the same men who speak in such terms of respect of the momentary twinkings of a frog's hind legs. Why may there not be wrapped up at least as much meaning in one as in the other?

Now if it be true that there are unrecognized agencies which have always existed, that may at any time make their appearance as important factors in human affairs and relations, and if man can likewise introduce conditions into the chain of causation by which he may even alter the face of the earth, what have we at last but an out-and-out admission from a scientific Harvard professor that the very agency for which his class has had only contemptuous ridicule from the beginning is fully capable of controlling and determining events and changing the face of the earth itself? And if, also, the relations of physical phenomena are too complex to be even simply expressed, why

should it be so very easy for those same modest and self-abased scientists to find adequate expression for the infinitely complex relations of the phenomena of spirit? If the material is so plain, how is it that the spiritual is so plain that its mysterious and subtle claims can be determined by the very men who give up in the presence of the external and natural? The question answers itself. In this compelled confession of a leading professor of science is his surrender of all assumptions as to the worthlessness of Spiritualism.

If, as Professor Cooke allows, man in the bodily form can introduce new conditions into the chain of causation, he certainly ought to be no less, but even more, able to do it when he exists as a spirit. In that case, what should forbid such interference by him as a spirit being rightly called one of the "unrecognized agencies which have always existed," appearing as "an important factor in human affairs and relations"? We are only pursuing the train of thought laid down by Professor Cooke himself. We are simply accepting his suggestion in reference to the appearance of "new issues in nature," which he properly points out as likely to announce themselves by so ridiculous a herald as the movement of a frog's hind legs.

It was inevitable that the scientists would be brought round to this newly proclaimed position which is held with so much reason by Professor Cooke. He could not, indeed, stand forth and truthfully answer the questions awaiting an answer in regard to the operation of law, without conceding the fact that all law is at most but an ideal truth, and subject to conditions which man can control with greater facility as spirit than as mortal.

The Professor is ready to admit that what are called natural laws are not all equally definite or equally exact, and that very few of the recognized laws of nature are absolutely fixed and invariable. Yet his class are prompt to assert that the spirit-phenomena are in contravention of the laws of nature. After all, they know nothing certain about it. They are not to be permitted to plead ignorance in one case, and to assume omniscience in the other. If it is all mystery at best, where all is claimed to be known, much more profound must the mystery be where everything is unknown. Spiritualists ask for nothing unreasonable here. They have never failed to protest that they could do little more than observe and interpret phenomena as they were presented; and what more does Prof. Cooke profess for the scientists to be able to do in regard to the accepted laws of nature, ending at last with the confession that, at the best, they are but ideal truths, and wholly incapable of apprehension.

He goes further, and freely admits that they are so far from being wholly understood that agencies hitherto unrecognized and unknown, but always existent, may at any time present themselves in a manner that will compel recognition. In a statement like this, how plainly does he not put the case for the appearance of Spiritualism, with its manifold and mysterious phenomena. And in his felicitous, because truthful, statement that so common a circumstance as the jerking of a frog's hind legs may be employed for the announcement of an agency till then unknown in the great repertory of nature, how convincingly does he not put the case in favor of the simple phenomenon of the rappings at a child's pillow, the announcement of the appearance of an infinitely more powerful agency, which is destined to direct into new and deeper channels the life of the human race.

Why, then, do the scientists now back and scornfully refuse any longer to give recognition to the existence of spiritual phenomena equally with those which are called natural? Here is the open statement of mystery on every side, in what is both seen and unseen; here is the confession of inability to decide where knowledge either begins or ends; here is a complete overturn of all the conceived and clannish assumptions on which so-called science rests its claims; what is to hinder the application of the same conclusions to the phenomena of spirit that is made to the phenomena of matter? what makes truth true for one class, or kind, of phenomena and not for all? what shall be allowed to finally decide that one hitherto unrecognized agency in the production of phenomena is to be welcomed into the circle of knowledges, and another one contemptuously shut out?

Evidently the issue is rapidly narrowing itself in men's minds into a close compass. We need have no fears, either, that truth will not present its case in the most effective way in the court of human judgment. As we see already, the scientists who have superciliously turned their backs on its plea are unconsciously made advocates while they think they are critics and final judges. Even while they confess themselves baffled in their search for real knowledge respecting nature, the light of the spiritual streams along the lines of their limited attainment to show them that science is not to be arbitrarily limited by the visible and external, but is privileged and instructed to reach out after all forms and relations of truth, which ignorance can neither distort nor prejudice color.

The Gift of Vision.

A verse in Proverbs (xix: 18), says: "Where there is no vision the people perish." Then, as now, there was a vital need of vision. There is a great deal to be said, as there is also a great deal thought, on this matter of Vision: It is oftener called visions, and so its real meaning suffers disintegration. The person who sees visions is generally thought to be unbalanced, if not flighty, and his judgment on ordinary matters is considered unreliable. Whereas the person who possesses what is called the power of insight, of penetration, is regarded as superior, in point of gifts, to those around him. It is all one and the same thing, however; at any rate, it would baffle anybody's acuteness to draw the line between the one and the other. If there is any difference between the one who sees visions and the one who possesses ready insight, or vision, it is in the practical sense only, and that is always to be held subordinate to the unlimited and spiritual sense.

A suggestive discourse on this most interesting subject of Vision, uttered by Rev. Mr. Houghton, Universalist minister at Storm Lake, Iowa, has recently fallen under our eye, which merits perhaps more than ordinary attention. After an ascription of gratitude for the gift of sight in general, without which we should be robbed of many of the higher joys of life, the speaker propounds the significant question whether sight implied merely the observation of the varied objects of the physical world; because, if that is all, any creature that is endowed with eyes is the equal of the most gifted person. The eyes of the tiny ant outshine those of the fairest maiden, and vie even with

the flash of her diamonds. Yet the little insect cannot behold what we do, sunset glory and starlight beauty, the mountains and the seas. It lives in its own diminutive world, beautiful but narrow. And so with the entire animal creation.

So that mere eyes are not enough; they are but windows to look out from. The windows themselves cannot see, but are the medium through which vision is transmitted. It is the capacity of the seer alone that determines what shall and what shall not be seen. It is the seer that possesses the vision. If we could only put our own eyes into the heads of some other persons, how much more and how differently we should see from what we do now. Our physical and our intellectual view of life is modified in numberless ways by our experience, our education and our habits of thought. The trained botanist sees in flowers and plants and trees what does not exist for the eyes of the person who knows little or nothing of botany. The practiced geologist, the delving miner and the artist each sees wholly different things from the height of a mountain, and only because they are all looking for different things. They have the same eyes, but not the same gift of seeing. And that gift belongs to the being within to whose external being the eyes belong. We all look abroad on the world with the power and in the direction which our temperaments, our tastes and our habitual thought combine to inspire.

Our Universalist expounder of this profound and interesting subject admitted the two-fold nature of vision. Though his definition partakes, insensibly perhaps, of the theological character, he really means to convey the idea that there is but one true vision, and that is the internal, or spiritual. If we see only externally, we are not much better than blind. The Scriptures, says our friend, nowhere attempt to limit our vision. We are summoned to look and to penetrate the mysteries of life. Revelation and religion include all things good. The days of mystery are passing away, and a world of order and beauty is opening to our awakened sight. In life it is the one whose vision is the clearest that succeeds. The mechanic or the merchant must needs make his calling a vital part of him. Neither can hope to prosper if he is careless or heedless. The lawyer must be quick to discern the value of testimony, to follow the meaning of statutes. The medical man must have a clearness of vision that enables him at once to comprehend the nature of disease and the peculiarities of temperament which are so interwoven with it in its many forms. And the minister should have the vision of Luther, of Wesley and of Murray to keep the world of men from spiritually perishing. Washington and Lincoln saw the vision of a whole and happy republic of freemen, or they could have accomplished nothing. Grant saw the vision of final victory, to be undisturbed thereafter, on the smoky heights of Vicksburg, in the swamps of Chickamauga and through the dreary Wilderness.

In our domestic life, remarked this speaker, many a home is perishing to-day for want of vision. How many infelicities under domestic roofs would clear up and disappear, if the many peculiarities of disposition and the varied motives of mind and heart were more clearly seen. A more perfect knowledge of character before marriage, and a more considerate judgment afterward, are sadly wanted. In all household tempests we should strain our vision to behold the dawn of peace. In the whole course of our lives it is vision that helps on reality. The people perish in poetry, in art, in invention, in literature, where there is no vision. This is one of the plainest lessons of history. In the height of the glory of Greece and Rome, the eyes of the population were lustrous to see the many deluges that presided over their destinies. As the light went out for them, the darkness set in.

There would be no civilization for the human race if these lights of vision were not all the while kept burning somewhere. For an untold multitude life would not be worth living, if it were not thus illumined. Some people call it illusion, and fancy that thus characterizing it ends it; but what is life at best but an endless series of these so-called illusions, raising expectation, and never satisfying the enjoyment, and leading us on and on to the end? It is farthest possible from self-deceit; it is but the gift of vision that is imparted in a larger or less degree to us all, and is to be cultivated as the very life and reality of our being. Some people name it idealism, but that in its turn requires explanation. For if the idealization of things external, the turning of the real into the ideal, is the same thing, then it is neither more nor less than vision, and that is in the last analysis our very life itself. Thus does the man of vision realize what the self-styled practical, that is external, man is wholly ignorant of.

If, continues our preacher, a clear vision is so essential to earthly progress, what shall we say as we enter upon heavenly pursuits? We listen, says he, for the footfalls on the farther shore: "Many believe the sea of eternity bars us; our bosom many a white sail, that the angels of love have launched their silvery barks and are gliding down to earth, laden with messages of joy and peace for a suffering world." We seek the light, he said, and shall it be long hidden from us? Is there an earthly answer to every human cry, and no response to the questionings of the soul? Is nature more generous at the foundation of her temple than in the finishing of its dome? Do we make all earthly things ours, then stand like paupers at the gate of heaven? Is not the upper life as brilliantly lighted as the lower? Does the giant of Death conquer the God of life?

That the soul is possessed of eyes other than the visual organs, is apparent from the spiritual experience of the race. Some there are who see not, as there are others who sing not; but this is no argument against the reality, either of music or of the spiritual vision. Illustrations of spiritual gifts are to be met with all along the pages of history. If the range of our vision were shut in by the walls of the material universe, and no light could come from beyond the grave, civilization would soon perish with the dust. In the very midst of the cares of life we are to seek for that view of destiny which brings light out of darkness and snatches victory from defeat. The heart is always strengthened for external trials by the inward belief, a vision at most, in something fundamentally good. We are therefore to seek for and await the coming of the true vision before we yield to discouragement, which is the precursor of despair. When we do thus yield, we are truly said to perish.

We earnestly commend this lighter and truer view of the things of this life to every one of thoughtful consideration. What comes to us all in flashes, like the wind that goes and comes as it listeth, we are to make habitual and regular, the guide and companion and inspiration of our lives. We need not be what the world calls

great in order to possess vision in the largest degree. And in possessing it we secretly become conscious of having what the world can neither give nor take away. It is wholly of the spirit, and spiritual. It glides the past like the clouds that make the pavilion for the setting sun. The drudgery of life ceases to be drudgery, and takes on a poetic, that is a divine, significance and meaning. It crowns our commonest experiences with a halo of beauty. It smooths the rough ways, defies poverty, inspires cheerfulness and courage, and wears the harness of life without letting it chafe in any part.

The Public School—A Western Warning.

The recent session of the Association of Teachers in Montana Territory, continuing for three days, was held at Helena, and we find an account of the Association's proceedings in the Helena Daily Independent. The essay read by Mr. Carleton, principal of the Helena High School, treats of the future of our public schools in a manner that is urgently suggestive. He makes the statement that seventy-five per cent. of our vast immigration goes west of the Mississippi River, and that a very large majority of it is apt to be against the public school. Along this stretch of country, he says, in which we form a conspicuous part, truth and error, freedom and bondage, knowledge and ignorance, tolerance and intolerance will one day contend for the mastery in a struggle whose echoes will be heard around the globe. The day when we could laugh at these dangers and hurrah for the United States in the same breath is passed.

Recurring to the oft-quoted definition of the word Education, the essayist declared that there is no religious element in the meaning of the word. Yet Cardinal Gibbons, in an article in the North American Review, quotes freely from the obsolete definitions of Webster, and asserts that education means to instruct, to instill into the mind principles of art, science, morals and religion, and therefore insists that religion cannot be divorced from education. But the wish is father to the thought in all these arguments of our Catholic friends. The speaker said frankly that the Catholic opposition to our public school system is one of the greatest dangers that threaten the free schools in the Northwest. Yet he disavowed all wish to cherish any sectarian feeling on the subject, and would consider it only in a spirit of candor and open and absolute truthfulness.

He declared it to be a fact which could not be questioned, that the vast majority of Catholics in this country, comprising the better classes and the best educated of them, are firm believers in and friends of our public schools. It is likewise a fact that it is the policy of the Catholic Church to build up a great system of parochial schools in opposition to our public schools, and a gigantic beginning has already been made in the Northwest. Every priest and church officer seems pledged to this policy of the church. The charge brought against the public schools by the Catholic hierarchy is that they are godless and immoral. They insist that religion and education shall be joined together.

But what kind of religious teaching shall we have? The Orthodox Protestant wants his kind; the Universalist Protestant desires his kind; our Catholic brother demands his kind or none; our Hebrew friend insists that none of these will do for his children; and there are many others who do not want their children to be instructed at school in religion of any kind. What, now, is to be done in the face of such varied wants, demands and preferences? The founders of our republic, answers the essayist, with that wisdom and sagacity which characterized their every undertaking, left the religious instruction of the child to the home and the church, where only it belongs. They declared for all time that the Church and the State could not have anything in common. We should teach morality, love of country; teach our boys and girls to be true, noble and useful men and women; and leave the rest to the Church to do.

Cardinal Gibbons says, however, that if the denominational plan of Canada prevailed, the evils of our school system would disappear. Would he compare the condition of the people of Canada, under the denominational plan, with that of the people of any State or Territory of this Union? The Church, said the essayist, advocates the denominational plan in order to secure its proportion of the school money. Suppose we concede to our Catholic friends the right to draw their proportion of the school money. What results? In a little while our Episcopal friends demand the same right. Denominationalism follows denominationalism with its claim. The public school thus goes out, and the denominational school comes in.

The result is, as a nation we turn squarely about and face the setting sun. We take our leave of liberty and progress. We welcome thrones and altars that for centuries wrung the life-blood from the starving peasantry of Europe. And America, called the hope of the world, disappoints the world, because the public schools, which were the hope of America, were displaced and overthrown. The public school, said the essayist, must not perish, but it must be purified. It is the corner-stone of our institutions, and they stand or fall together. That can but be a strange conception of religious education that would put secular education in jeopardy, which is ready and willing to sacrifice all needed progress in practical knowledge to the supremacy of its own claims to authority.

The South Carolina zealots who hounded the Rev. Dr. J. Woodrow because of his liberal views and teachings on evolution, and caused him to be turned out of the chair of didactic and polemic theology of the Theological Seminary in Columbia, have been at their old tricks again, of late, and he has been made to feel the hand of persecution once more, efforts being put forth to prevent students from listening to his lectures as a Professor in the University of the Palmetto State. At last accounts both the Doctor and the students remained firm, and thus virulent adversaries were enjoying(?) a quiet "set-back."

A large proportion of the trouble and inharmonious in the ranks of Spiritualists is caused by hints, surmises and innuendoes for which no one individual is responsible, because the one who originates them declines to support them by proof, or even to have himself or herself known by name.

Our thanks are tendered to Mr. George A. Bacon, of Washington, for a copy of the Official Congressional Directory, by W. H. Michael, clerk of printing records. It is a royal octavo of 296 pages, with a fine engraving of the Capitol and a map of the city of Washington. As a book of reference it is invaluable.

A. B. Richmond's New Book.

The patrons of THE BANNER have from time to time been informed of the progress made by A. B. Richmond, Esq., in his preparation of a new work—bearing on the Seybert Commission and its remarkable "findings"—which when issued from the press would, we predicted, create a profound sensation. The book has at last (as will be seen by the announcement on our eighth page) been brought out from the press of Colby & Rich, and cannot fail to verify our prophecy and make its way in the reading world.

In a clear and explicit manner Mr. Richmond describes in this work what he experienced at Cassadaga Lake last summer. As he entered the camp-ground, and saw among the crowds of visitors, judges, lawyers, doctors and learned professors, as well as business men from every condition of life, "I smiled," he says, "a complacent kind of a 'Seybert Commission smile' at the weakness and credulity of my fellow-men." At this moment he, adopting the words of Puck, said:

"What fools these mortals be!"

But when he left he was compelled to say, "And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray."

It is needless to remark that the feeling indicated by this expression shows that what he had thought a mere fallacy had been proven to him to be a stubborn fact. He was, therefore, in order to be consistent with his well established reputation as a conscientiously honest man, compelled to report to the world his convictions, and he did so in his able "Open Letter to the Seybert Commission," a copy of which has appeared in these columns. To those who think he may have been mistaken in his observations, and consequently in his conclusions, he says: "Surely a man of average mind can tell with certainty whether he held two slates in such a position, and under such conditions that another person present could not write on them without his knowing it." He avers that, to his own personal knowledge, slates were thus held, and while being so held writing was produced on them, *fac similes* of which he gives. Were it to be admitted that he could be, under such conditions, deceived, "then," he says, "all the ordinary methods by which we obtain knowledge are fallacious, and the facts in life that we can be certain of are few indeed."

"Nature," he continues, "did not intend that our senses should be false witnesses, but truthful; and the instances where they testify falsely to us, compared with the millions of truths they tell us of every day of our lives, are as a single grain of sand to the accumulation of an ocean's shore, or a single leaf to the foliage of a forest."

We do not purpose at this time to give any extended review of this masterly arraignment of the Seybert Commissioners' report of their so-called investigations—that step will be deferred to another opportunity—but simply to direct the attention of our readers to the fact that no more able defense of the truths of Spiritualism, so far as Mr. Richmond has experienced them, or of the integrity and intelligence of its adherents, has been put in print than is embraced in this new and strikingly interesting book. That it will have an extended circulation and be thoughtfully read and approved of by all honest minds there can be no doubt.

A copy of Mr. Richmond's book should be in the home of every Spiritualist, and of every individual who loves truth and desires to follow its lead.

To Southern Spiritualists.

Mrs. CLARA A. FIELD has a letter from St. Augustine, Fla., on our second page, to which attention is called, as also the Secretary's statement of matters at Palatka. Mrs. Field, who is an eloquent inspirational speaker, is an authorized agent of the BANNER OF LIGHT for the taking of subscriptions. We trust that the Southern Spiritualists will feel to keep her actively employed both in her medial and business capacities.

Many years ago Mr. Epes Sargent was editor of the Boston Transcript. Later on he became a prominent Spiritualist and wrote several excellent books upon the subject—while doing much other literary work. Several years after his connection with the Transcript ceased, he was one day in his office, when the subject of Spiritualism was broached by the then editor. The same day he paid us a visit, and in the course of conversation remarked, in a somewhat indignant mood, that he was not in the habit of using profane language, but, said he, "I was tempted, on account of the exceedingly silly questions put to me in regard to the Spiritual Philosophy, to say 'What a blanked fool you are!' But I did not."

Mrs. J. H. Conant, our late medium, never believed in the reincarnation or reëmbodiment theory, as stated recently in a Boston sheet. On the contrary, she always personally opposed it. We heard Mrs. Dyar-Clough—then Mrs. Dyar—deliver a lecture on reëmbodiment in Mr. Ayer's private house one Sunday previous to the building of the Temple, which we endorsed, and said so then and there, consequently we have nothing to offer against her late lecture upon the same subject. But this we do aver, namely, that Mrs. J. H. Conant assures us she did not control Mrs. Clough during its delivery.

The National Republican of Washington, D. C., states that at the regular meeting of the Unity Club—held on Friday night, Jan. 27th, at the residence of Mrs. Cowling, 512 I street Northwest—the essayist of the evening, Mr. Geo. A. Bacon, read a very suggestive paper on "Hidden Powers," which proved to be an elaboration of the subject of psychometry; the topic (as are all to the elucidation of which Bro. B. turns his attention) was skillfully handled.

THE BANNER is in receipt of the first number of an Italian Spiritual Magazine, issued at Florence (Florence), entitled "Il Corriere Spiritico," and dated Jan. 1, 1888. It is a work of thirty pages, in colored paper cover, with a portrait of its editor, Giovanni Sacchi.

