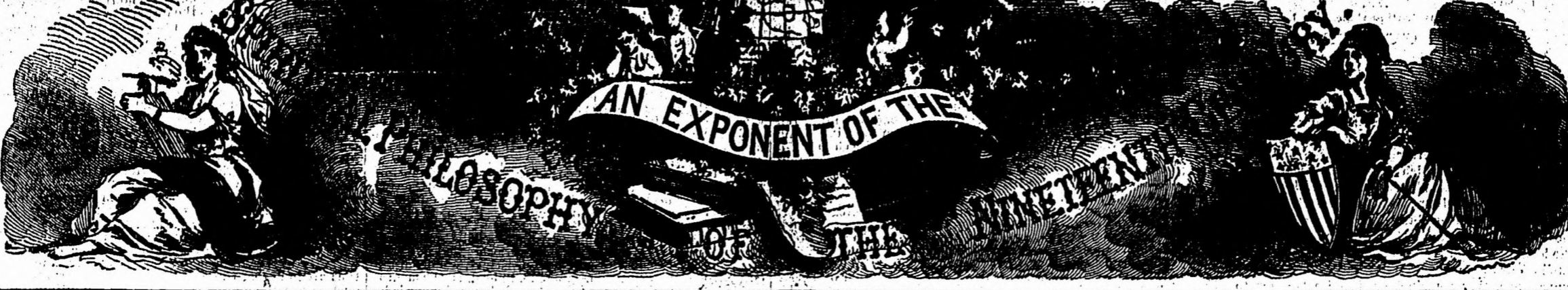


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For the Banner of Light.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

BY K. R. STILES.

'T is the merry time of Christmas,
And although it bringeth pain
Unto many a sorrowing household,
With each loss there cometh gain.

Moved as by one common impulse,
Is the heart of all mankind;
Thus it sendeth out an influence,
Tender, potent and refined.

Would that thoughts and deeds of kindness,
Of good-will and happy cheer,
Might from heart to heart be flowing
Every day throughout the year.

Then mankind would sigh no longer
For that "Heaven" so far away—
But with hearts aglow with kindness,
They would walk its streets each day.

THE LO' CHRIST.

A LEGEND OF AN ANCIENT FAMILY OF BRITANNY.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS GATHERING AT ST. CLOUD—
THE MYSTERIOUS WARNING OF THE LO' CHRIST.

All those who dine upon Parisian grass, the strollers of Sunday belonging to that large and very interesting laborious class that has been called from all time, and too often with disdain, the "small bourgeoisie of Paris," all these diners, all these strollers, we wish to say, ought to have remarked, at the south-west extremity of the grove of Viroflay, half way between Versailles and St. Cloud, the remains of walls, rising at certain places some feet above the soil. These vestiges form still three or four grand parallel ranges, and clearly indicating the ancient situation of apartments. In one corner there is a piece of straw-thatched roof placed upon the angle of two sides of a wall by stone-outlets whose work is patented by the prefecture. It is here the workmen go to shelter themselves in case of rain. And this shelter also is not disdained by Parisian horsemen—intrepid these—who go from Paris to dine at Versailles, just to try a new saddle. But few of the passers-by, horsemen or pedestrians, who have sought a refuge among these ruins, know what were these remains now covered once more by the wild mulberry, ivy and honeysuckles.

The Countess of Barry had caused to be built upon this site a pavilion, half hunt-box and half English cottage. This building, a palace in miniature by the luxury of its interior arrangement, often gave asylum to Louis XV., aged then nearly sixty-four years. The king fled from the senseless, enervating confusion of his court, and the gross and selfish sycophancy of his ministers, and clearly wished to escape the fierce clutches of the fatal disease which devoured him, and which was to carry him off. The astonishing intelligence of the Countess of Barry, fertile in every kind of resource to amuse her royal lover, succeeded almost always in scattering the dark fancies and the heavy spirits of the exhausted and used-up old king. The *recherche* suppers, where only a few choice spirits were selected to the pavilion of St. Cloud, for so they styled this delightful spot of pied-a-terre of Du Barry's, above all the gift of amusing Louis XV. But in contrast of reunions of the same kind which had taken place at Versailles, at Marley or at Louveciennes, these at the hunting pavilion were carefully composed by the countess of men eminent in the army, in the clergy, in arts or in literature. In such company the king felt revive in him the supreme instincts of a gentleman. He made his host relate fantastic histories, but above all he loved to listen to the legends of the ancient houses of his nobility. One evening the countess had brought to the table of the king, among the twenty illustrious hosts, the Minister d'Argenson, the painter Fragonard, at that moment in all the *éclat* of his talent, Montesquieu, who had just issued the last edition of his "Lettres Persanes."

The marshal, prince of Soubise, was among the invited. He had accepted the urgent invitation of the countess; because, towards the end of the reign, which became so unfortunate, he was precisely the most worthy of composing the escort of the king of France, who abstained out of disgust and chagrin. During the repast the king maintained a sad and taciturn humor. The conversation had been pushed by him toward lugubrious subjects. He feared death, and he eagerly sought to know if one could not arrest it, or at the least be warned of its coming.

There were at the table some believers in the numeraries and practices of the *convulsionnaires* sect which had flourished under the government of the regency, but whose star commenced to pale under the rays of another star of popular credulity—the German Mesmer and his *baquet*.

These convulsionnaires pretended that death when consulted gave warning of its coming. The skeptics forming the majority denied the thing absolutely. For some moments the king had looked at the prince of Soubise, who sanctioned by the movement of his head the argument of the dissenters.

"So, marshal," said he, "you ought to have some good legend to narrate to us on the subject of this warning one may have on approach-

ing death. Countess, with your own hand, pour for us the wine of Tokay, it will then become even better. Pour for the dead, countess; they have a place at the banquet."

The guests rose in order to present themselves their cups before the crystal carafe that the countess of Barry held.

"Sire," commented the marshal of Soubise, "if it pleases your majesty, I will relate the Breton legend of the Lo' Christ."

"The Lo' Christ?" interrupted the king. "Is not this the *Armorique* name of the old family of Ker' Lau?"

"Indeed, sire, the Ker' Lau are only known in Lower Brittany, under the appellation of Lo' Christ. All the Breton legends agree in saying that the dead return to warn their relations of the moment of their death. And this fact has been above all remarked and demonstrated in the family of the Lo' Christ, who have been forewarned by some one of their deceased parents at least a month in advance of their last hour."

The king had put aside his silver plate, and, with his elbows on the table, listened attentively. The Prince of Soubise continued:

"One evening the Admiral Jehan, Baron of Lo' Christ, had returned from the chase, and, according to his custom, had dismissed his people. The Admiral, spite of his sixty years, was vigorous still. He followed gaily and with a springy step the path which would conduct him out of the forest, to the wall even of his house. The old man whistled cheerfully a hunting air, dating certainly from the epoch of Gaston, Count of Foix; his favorite dog, more fatigued than his master, followed without searching or beating the bush. The road was cut by a half-cleared bit of ground; the Baron Jehan, in crossing it, admired the silver crescent of the moon, which rose above the tops of the trees in the dark blue heavens, crisp with stars.

"Suddenly he saw a few steps before him a man, occupied with strange business, lighted by the trembling glimmering of a lantern. The Baron could hardly believe his eyes, because an instant before this bit of ground was entirely deserted. He approached quickly, and recognized the grave-digger of the village, the sexton of the cemetery, about to dig hastily a ditch.

"'Alan,' he cried, 'what are you doing there? Speak!'

"Some seconds passed.

"Alan, my old Alan, what are you doing there?" repeated the admiral.

"But the nocturnal laborer continued to hurry his lugubrious business, and did not reply. Certainly the Baron Jehan was brave among the brave; in his life he had given a thousand proofs of it. However, he felt cold drops of sweat on his temples, and it was with a hesitating voice that he still added:

"Will you not say why you dig this tomb?"

"The grave-digger remained mute; his bald skull, which shone in the light of the moon, was bent toward the depth of the ditch, and he threw with energy heavy shovelfuls of earth, which fell at the foot of his lantern.

"The admiral vigorously controlled the fear which commenced to seize him. Impatience coming to him, he pushed one side the old grave-digger, who trembled upon his spade, and returned no more. Then Jehan de Lo' Christ, saw a tombstone quite finished, upon which he could read:

"Here lies,
In the peace of the Lord,
High and mighty,
Jehan De Lo' Christ,
Baron de Lo' Christ,
Who was admiral of the vessels
Of our Sire,
The King."

"As he finished reading, a white shadow floated before his eyes; the countenance of a well-beloved daughter, whom he had formerly lost, was apparent to him, covered with tears, and a stifled sigh was heard, and the shadow disappeared in the night.

"Again the Baron felt his blood receding. He resumed his road with a hurried step, and did not turn till he reached the other end of the half-cleared bit of ground. The grave-digger and his lantern had disappeared. The shadow of the great trees lengthened peacefully upon the heath, and the silver crescent of the north shone forth in the sombre blue of the heavens, painted with observant stars.

"This sinister vision and the voice of Ker' Lau up to his manner, but there the brilliancy of the lights, the sight of an abundantly-served table, the savory steam of the meats, the generous wines and the foamy mead, quickly dispelled the bad dream. He seated himself gaily at the table, after having pinched in the most gallant fashion the red cheeks of a waiting-maid, who brought an enormous dish of venison.

Now, nine days after this, the Baron Jehan accepted, on invitation, at *gazon d'honneur*, at the marriage of Yvonne, the daughter of one of his former tenants, and, in one month from the vision of the forest—this was the day of the marriage—he arose full of jocular gaiety.

"The admiral caused his *valet de chambre*, a brave old soldier of the fleet of Dunkerque, to draw his waist neatly in, to perfume and to pomade him, and then he went down into the court of honor, making his long, golden spurs echo bravely as he descended.

There a superb black charger waited him. Ah, the beautiful beast! What carriage of spurs he carried! What red nostrils! What eyes of fire! And then the little ears, pointed and quivering!

"And also what a valiant man was the Baron Jehan, who, spite of his sixty years *bien sonnés*, with one bound threw himself into the saddle, booted his stirrups, gathered his bridle, and pricked his horse, hardly allowing his servant who held the bridle time to draw back.

"He set out at the pace of a little hunting gallop, whistling an air of the chase which might be the *Mars* after the day of Queen Momm. The great gate of the domain was soon reached and cleared. The spirited beast increases his spirit, his gallop becoming more rapid. He bounds by starts and breathes excitedly. Evidently some unknown cause excites him. His master, by gesture and by voice, tries to calm him; but he seems not to hear. The horseman then draws in the bridle; the horse, all dripping with sweat, leaps, fights the air with his two feet, rears and tears away with a long, furious gallop, after having violently broken away the bridle from the hands of his master. The race was furious, mad; the excited animal cleared the meadows, the fields, the valleys, and after a hundred turnings, entered into the forest like a tempest.

"Suddenly, in the midst of the half-cleared bit of ground, he struck against a stone and threw his horseman violently to the ground. The Baron Jehan, who was killed instantly and on the spot, where only one month before he had seen his tomb dug by the old grave-digger!"

Louis XV., raised lightly his eyebrows; he had turned toward the chimney, where heavy

logs of oak were flaming, and he was disturbing the fire with an anxious air.

"Ah! marshal," said the young Duke of Richelieu, *un esprit fort* of the court, or who believed himself so, "you draw it strongly for us! As for myself, I have faith neither in ghosts nor in demons."

"You certainly believe in God, my dear duke," replied the marshal of Soubise. "He to whom nothing is marvelous, may open your eyes. To whom it pleases him he can unveil the future. A soul has come into this world, and since it is immortal it can return."

The king, who listened, made an impatient gesture. The prince of Soubise understood this gesture, and took the word immediately.

"Will your majesty permit me to ask you if you have souvenir of, having seen some years since at the court the baroness of Ker' Lau, whose beauty made a sensation?"

Louis XV. bowed his head affirmatively several times.

"She was accompanied," said he, "by her son Herve, whom I made one of my pages. Go on, marshal, go on!" And the king again turned his arm-chair to the table.

"Ah! well, sire, she was the daughter-in-law of the Baron Jehan, of whose unfortunate end I have just spoken. Did you ever see a more attractive mother more amiable son? At the court her bearing was at once gentle and lofty, and she left in her passage a perfume of nobility and of purity! What Parisian could equal the baroness? Her accent, even firm and sometimes cutting, lent a singular grace to her language. And when she sang in her native tongue, under our powdered hair, under our court habits, we felt of other days felt a deep sentiment swell in us; it was a souvenir of *Armique*, our country."

"I have passed a whole summer in the patrimonial land of Ker' Lau. I had for the baroness the tenderness of a father, and her filial friendship, her friendly disclosures on the future of her son, were infinitely valued by me, and were an absolute enjoyment."

"One evening we were both in her boudoir; the open window permits the entrance of the embalméd fresh air of the evening. The perfume of the roses of the *parterre* came to us. The song of the solitary nightingale in the trees of the park struck out with sonorous brilliancy. We talked of a thousand things in a sweet and absolute quietude. Above all we talked of her son, who was growing up, far from her in the service of your majesty."

"Suddenly Mme. de Ker' Lau uttered a piercing, sharp cry, her face took on a vivid pallor, all her limbs trembled.

"Look in the mirror!" said she with a broken voice. A candle is at my feet! Do you hear the death bell? Do you not see me wrapped in the white cloth of the dead? Ah! it is finished with me! See the Baron Jehan, who rises his face bloody with a deep wound on the temple. This is the signal of the family; in one month I shall be dead. Prince! prince! one more favor; run, go and find my son, that I may see and embrace him before dying."

"The next day, after a night of horrible agonies, the baroness, after the strongest and most earnest persuasions that I was able to offer, called together her servants, her farmers, her lawyers, and put her affairs in order. I set out for Paris, leaving her near her coffin, thinking only of her soul, and her beloved son."

"On the way, sire, I met a courier of your majesty. You sent me the order to rejoin the army of Holland."

"Eh! Well?" said the king, anxiously.

"On my return, sire, Herve de Ker' Lau Lo' Christ gave me the news of his orphanage!"

A silence of some minutes followed this revelation. Then the king arose. In quitting his seat he viewed a Venetian mirror placed above his head; his eyes assumed a strange fixity, and his face a ghastly pallor. But, observing the anxious attention of his guests, he immediately became calm, poured out for himself and emptied a glass of Tokay wine, said good-evening with his hand, and retired into his room.

Two months after what one has just read, the 28th of April, 1774, at two o'clock in the afternoon, Louis XV. died of small-pox. The following night, without any ceremony, a *voiture dechaise*, transformed into a hearse, transported the body of the king to Saint Denis. One individual alone followed the funeral carriage, and this was the page, Herve de Ker' Lau.

The Prince de Soubise, in the memoirs that he has left, writes positively that on the evening of this last supper at the pavilion of Saint-Cloud, as he followed the gaze of the king, he saw in the Venetian mirror Louis XV. lying on his belfaire with funeral solemnity, and this sight brought on the pallor and terrors of Louis XV.

To-day, Also, is an Example.

We write in no spirit of bitterness nor disrespect for any opinions the human heart may hold sacred. We believe the great movement which culminated in the history of Christianity demanded some personal founder to inaugurate its faith and establish its separation from other, older beliefs. We can as well believe that such a founder was the Jesus Pandira of modern scholarship, or the Jesus of Nazareth of ancient belief, as that all other sects and religions date from human founders. But whilst it is sweet and gracious to hear how constantly the doctrines of love, forgiveness of enemies, purity and reverence for the Creator permeated the teachings of antiquity in every age and country, it would be as absurd to take the life and example of Buddha, Christ, Confucius, Pythagoras, Jesus, or any of the sages and seers of thousands of years ago, as it would be to reduce all our music, organs and orchestras to the five-stringed lyre of Orpheus, our opera houses to the traveling cart of Theseus, our comfortable homes and splendid palaces to the square huts which formed the dwellings of an Ahab or David.

Personalities—whether they live out or trample down these principles—represent, even at their best, the habits of thought, opinions, customs and beliefs of the age and country in which men live. Some few may advance before their time, and in that sense lead the race upward; but still it is only in the enunciation of higher and grander views of God, and good that they are worthy to be esteemed as exemplars, and in that sense, and that alone, the Buddhas, saints, martyrs, Messiahs and prophetic men of old can be held as worthy of imitation. For all the rest, the daily bread of progress in mind, soul and intellect is just as surely given by the All-Provider, as is the daily bread of the body.—Mrs. Britten, in *The Two Worlds*.

Twelve million five hundred thousand pupils were enrolled in the public schools of this country last year; the average daily attendance was 8,144,038; the public schools cost last year \$140,274,484; the total value of grounds, buildings and apparatus of the public schools is estimated at \$72,894,720.

Literary Department.

AMY LESTER;

OR,

A STRANGE GIRL.

Written Expressly for the Banner of Light.

BY CARLYLE PETERSILEA,

Author of "The Discovered Country," "Oceanides," a Psychological Novel, Etc., Etc

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CHAPTER XVI.

Material and Spiritual Bodies.

The reporter for the village newspaper wanted some sensational gossip, and so he called on the Lesters, to interview Amy.

Amy was on the veranda at the time, gazing dreamily out over the lake; the reporter took his cigar, went out and seated himself in a large chair, thinking he would take it easy. "Well, Amy," said he, "how are the spooks just now? Your eyes look as though you could see something strange, surely." Amy made no reply, and did not appear to see the young man at all.

"Come, Amy," said he, "I want to hear something about the other world, for between you and me and the lake I am not quite satisfied with what Mr. Goodman says about it. Come, now, little girl, you just question that ghost of yours, for I am in dead earnest, and it's more for myself than for the paper I want to hear what the ghost has to say."

"Well," said Amy, the dreamy look deepening in her eyes: "Johnnie Gray will be drowned in the lake next week. You can put it in the paper now if you want to."

"Great heavens!" exclaimed the reporter, "what do you mean? It will break his widowed mother's heart! Oh! it's all nonsense!" said he. "Come, tell us something more cheerful than that," nevertheless, he jotted it down in his memorandum book.

"Well," said the child, "you will leave this village in a few months, go to a large city, and after a year or two you will start a paper yourself; it will be a good and wise editor, will become very rich, and you and your paper will do much toward helping on the progress of the world. The angels feel deeply interested in you, and you will believe all they have to tell you some day."

This pleased the young man immensely, for it was the one ambition of his life; yet how did this little girl know anything about it? He had never spoken to her before, and had never regarded her in any other light than that of a very small child.

"Amy," said the young man, deeply interested, "how do you know all these things?"

Amy's eyes closed, her little form swayed slightly, she sank into the nearest chair, her face became pale and statue-like, her hands lay listlessly in her lap, her voice became deep and sonorous as it answered:

"Young man, do you perceive that it is not this child who is speaking to you, but a power above and beyond her? Laugh no more about 'spooks' or 'ghosts,' for I swear to you it is not the child who is now talking, but the spirit of your own father. I am merely using this child's voice and organs of speech because I could not make my more ethereal ones audible to your material sense. My son, I wish you, here and now, to prove to your own satisfaction that I am speaking the truth. I will talk with you on any subject which you may choose, and let it be one beyond the power of this childish brain. To give you tests will prove nothing; you will say that Amy heard or knew, for you were both born and reared in this village. My body lies in the churchyard yonder."

The young man stared at Amy in amazement, yet he thought he would do as the voice bade him.

"You say you are the spirit of my father," said he; "if so, tell me about your present life and surroundings, for, of course, this little girl could know nothing of it. Father, you were not a religious man; you run a sloop or canal-boat on this lake, and used to swear and drink; yet you were a good husband and father, gave me a good education, and left mother comfortably provided for. Tell me, father, if it is indeed you, what kind of life you are now leading?"

"I am leading a very pleasant life," said the voice, "in spite of my irreligion, swearing and drinking. I do not swear and drink now. They are both very foolish habits, and I have given them up. Yet I did not go to hell for irreligion, swearing or drinking."

"Father, tell me where you are?"

"I am here at this present moment," said the voice, "and I can be almost anywhere I like; but my actual abiding-place is just outside the limits of your atmosphere, not five miles distant, and I can travel over that space in about one second of time. I have nothing to do but to will to be here with you, and I am here. Don't you call that a pleasant way of traveling, my boy?"

"Yes," answered the reporter, "that must be very pleasant; far pleasanter than sailing a sloop on the lake. But I am eager to hear all about you, dear father, for I do believe it is you. Tell me more."

"Well," said the voice, "I do not throw away the Bible, but accept everything in it

that is true. The great mistake that Mr. Goodman and many others make is in calling it holy, and thinking there can be no error in it; it is only a bundle of literature, written by various men, at various times in the days long gone by—partly history, partly romance, partly poetry—and should be taken on its own merits, nothing more, nothing less. I say this, for I intend to quote from the Bible in order to make you fully comprehend just how it is with me, and because you and others are familiar with the Bible and its various authors. St. Paul says, 'There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.' He was right, my son, in this respect, for my natural body was laid out there in the churchyard, and I am here with you and this little girl, in my spiritual body. The natural are those things which are seen, the spiritual those things which are unseen; you cannot see me, but I can see you. Moses tells you about the heavens, and he was right, for I dwell in the air or the heavens, and not on the material earth; yet I can visit you here if I have a desire to do so. My spiritual body is as palpable to me and other spirits out of the natural body, as your natural body is to you and other spirits that are yet in their natural bodies; there is also a spiritual earth corresponding with your natural earth, and a spiritual heavens corresponding with your natural heaven, or the atmosphere. Our atmosphere is ethereal, yours material; we also have spiritual waters, as you have natural waters; we have oceans, seas, lakes and rivers; mountains, hills and valleys; houses and lands; cities, towns and villages and scattered rural homes, as you have on the material earth; yet ours are all spiritual, as yours are all material. I must tell you all this, my son, in order that you may know how and where I live, what are my surroundings and employments. My dear son, I have taken a step higher, that is all."

The reporter stared at the child, but she appeared to be in a pleasant sleep, her face looking pale and spirituelle; this voice that issued from her lips was not at all like that of a little child. "Most certainly," thought the young man, "this is a strange girl."

"Well," said the reporter, "how is it about the forgiveness of sins, through the blood of Christ—the judgment day—all the people rising out of their graves, and so forth?"

"There is no such thing as the forgiveness of sins," answered the voice: "If a person sins he is punished, but not by a personal God casting him into hell, and he is not saved through the blood of Christ. First, a person should thoroughly understand what sin is. Sin is a transgression of the natural laws of one's being, and there is no other sin which can be committed; and for these sins there is another natural law that punishes the sinner; for instance, if a person puts his hand in the fire it is burned; that is the natural punishment for the transgression of a natural law; but we in the spiritual life can pass through and through fire, it cannot hurt us. If a person in the mortal swallows poison his body is destroyed, for it is a transgression of a natural law, and his spirit rises up where poison cannot hurt him. If a person tries to injure his brother-man, the injury recoils upon himself; for men are like the links of a chain—injure one, and the chain becomes imperfect. Sin is error, and is always at last overcome and conquered by wisdom, for if a man, through ignorance, puts his hand in the fire once, and is burned, he is not apt to repeat the error; no sin is ever forgiven, not even the least, for if a man transgresses any law it brings its own punishment, and nothing can alter it. If a man falls from the top of a high monument he is dashed in pieces, or at least his body is; nothing can change the natural law; and so of all error, even the least, not one is ever forgiven. The only way to escape sin or error is to learn wisdom; and, my son, that is one reason why I am here at this moment, that I may teach my child truth and wisdom; take his feet from out the paths of error. But, my child, there is a principle of truth underlying the idea of a savior; the principle does not apply merely to one savior, it applies to a great many saviors; for instance, this child being perfectly innocent, suffers that others may become wise, or in order that truth and wisdom may be given to the world; and so of all who are persecuted and suffer for truth's sake, these are the saviors of mankind; it is not one alone, but the underlying principle that a few must suffer for the many, but they are all at length rewarded."

You say, my son, that I was an irreligious man; that I used to swear and drink. Mr. Goodman used to say that I was a fit subject for the devil; unless I repented and believed in Christ I should surely go to hell; and, to tell you the truth, my boy, I did not know when I was with you but this was so, and I

[Continued on sixth page.]

The Spiritual Rostrum.

THE NEW IDEAL OF THE CHRIST.

An Inspirational Lecture by

W. J. COLVILLE.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

NOT only at Christmastide but all through the year, and through all the years and all the centuries, does the name of Christ ring out over the earth with the soft, sweet melody of a silver bell, or the powerful, stirring notes of a trumpet which calls to the highest and noblest activity. The Christ-idea in human history is the expressive embodiment of humanity's ideal; and whether much or little information be obtainable concerning the great and glorious character known to history as Jesus the Nazarene, the ideal of perfect manhood portrayed by the four evangelists in four distinctly different but nevertheless accordant ways, must ever remain sacred and attractive to all who seek to rise to some diviner expression of life than is ordinarily accepted as the average standard of nobility in the world of commerce, or even in the external church, which professes to be the exponent of the teachings of the world's wisest and most illuminated teacher.

Theological disputes settle nothing; scholastic controversies over dogmas leave the intellect perplexed more than ever, and they certainly fail to satisfy the emotions or benefit the life of those who engage or are drawn into them. Theories concerning redemption as a "scheme," and salvation as a "plan," are now rapidly becoming obsolete, while the influence of the Nazarene, after almost nineteen centuries, is daily waxing stronger and more commanding in the world, and that despite the fact that much that was formerly considered necessary to religion is now passing away as a portion of the outworn creeds formulated in less enlightened ages, and incapable of application to the present needs of mankind.

Art having always played a conspicuous and important part in portraying and appealing to the feelings of the race, we need not be surprised to find the form of Christ in every variety of pose in the world's great repositories of learning, as well as in its temples of worship. In India and many other Eastern climes it is Buddha who is represented in place of Christ, but in either case the intention is the same—to represent as palpably as possible the ideal outgrowth of human life. While every Buddha claims to be a follower of the noble prince, Siddhartha, and every Christian styles himself a disciple of the pure and holy Jesus, the difference between one portrait of Buddha or of Christ and another is surprisingly great. The traveler in the East sees the "Light of Asia," portrayed in every variety of manner, sometimes with exquisite sublimity and grace, at other times with positively repulsive hideousness; and does not the European tourist turn from the most inspiring portrayals of divinity made manifest in mortal guise to frightful caricatures of human nature, absolute travesties upon the divine ideal, and learn that these widely opposed productions of the painter's and sculptor's art are all representations of the same historical personage? We do not wonder at prevailing skepticism on all historical questions in the presence of such grotesque incongruity; but we do not deem it reasonable for the thoughtful student to turn away either in scorn or disgust from any attempt, however puerile or mistaken, to teach through the magic of form and color some lesson needed by at least a portion of the great diversified human family, to which we all alike belong. While it is a profound truth that man is formed in the image of God, it is nevertheless an indisputable fact that man is continually trying to embody his best idea of God in his own form; and this is but natural and right, for God is known by man only through man. Doubtless other orders in creation apprehend the Supreme Being in ways we know not of, peculiar to their particular constitutions and necessities; but no man cometh unto the Father except through the Son, and in the deepest mystical sense of the phrase, the Son is the essential divinity of all men—the light enlightening all who come into the world.

In the days of Priestley, Lindsay and other early English Unitarians, fierce controversy raged, and it seemed to undermine old theological beliefs; yet we think but very little to establish the true idea of the intimate relations always existing between the Infinite Parent and his human children; and up to this very date, not a few professors of so-called liberal theology confine themselves almost entirely to a method of attack or onslaught upon the views of those from whom they differ. Acrimonious dispute inevitably results when one seeks to prove a negative; only when there is a great affirmative proposition to be maintained is it possible to couch discussion in temperate language and brotherly love. To prove Jesus to be divine, to demonstrate that he is only a mere man, is the object of the negationist. The affirmatist, on the other hand, is seeking to prove the divinity of all men. The one sets out to belittle the character and work of Jesus, the other attempts to raise the standard for every member of the race. No diligent student of current literature, and none who listen to popular preaching, can fail to see how widely different are the methods employed by the two wings in the liberal religious movement of the day, though both are out of sympathy with the waning sacerdotal theory of the church.

Comparatively few young people to-day have much disposition to enter into theologic arguments to prove or disprove a doubtful question, yet there was never a time—if the annals of history are to be trusted—when such widespread interest was taken in the development of character as to-day. The very croak of the pessimist is a sign that the optimist is in the right, for he who laments present unworthiness is only telling the world that its actual condition falls far below its ideal. Ideals are high to-day, averages are low; to reach examinations tax all the energies of the student; more and more is constant being expected of all who expect to serve society in any representative capacity, and amid this straining after high ideals we may all discern the Spirit of Truth convincing the world of sin because convincing it of righteousness. Great things are expected of even little children now, and thus the majority fall lamentably below the standard set up for imitation. The goal of attainment is now rapidly becoming for the masses what it was formerly only for an elect few. In recent centuries the works of Thomas à Kempis, Mme. Guyon, Fenelon, and others, have been read and true mystics, were venerated as authorities on extraordinary sanctity rather than looked upon as practical counsels for daily following. The Catholic Church has always drawn a clear and sharp line between commandments and counsels, and has paid extreme honor to such as lived according to the latter as well as in harmony with the former.

The tendency of to-day is to develop "radical saints," men and women who, without a particle of asceticism in their composition or their creed, are nevertheless seeking to divinize the commonplace and pronounce the new beatitudes "Blessed be druggery." In the days when the monastic spirit was more industriously cultivated as a necessary adjunct to holiness, and indeed in many instances as the only certain aid to purity, life was stripped of its joys and pleasures, and rendered as barren as possible before the eyes of the neophyte who, as a candidate for heavenly honors, was called upon to totally eschew all the joys of time and sense. It is not necessary at this time to recount the many unsuccessful as well as intensely painful struggles of those who sought to develop the spirit by crucifying the flesh; the subject is well known to all students of ecclesiastical history; but it is not difficult to trace the growth of a style of art in those days which disguised the symmetry of culture and placed a premium on misery, while it discounted as sinful, even innocent amusements. At such a time, and under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the central figure in the Gospel story was clothed in garments of woe. Sorrowful dirges accompanied devotional exercises, and the most harrowing depictions of indescribable misery were furnished to almost infants, and instilled into their youthful minds the poison of dread instead of the sweet nourishment of affection.

No task can be more instructive than to set one's self to work comparing the different noted heads of the Christ, and of the Madonna, and if you please to add to your labors you may also compare the features of saints and angels; and if you would still further increase your review, take to an examination of the representative gods and goddesses of Greek mythology, and further extend your task if you will till you have acquainted yourself pretty thoroughly with the religious art of the entire globe. Any thoughtful man or woman will arise from such comparative study enriched with a thousandfold wisdom and a necessary logic information, for the gods and goddesses are permanent in the human mind, because the forms of art are fixed, while musical sounds are fleeting. What a marvelous thing is an old painting or statue! We need not wonder at the veneration paid to it; it is a silent, faithful witness to the deepest feelings of some great man of long ago; it depicts with unerring and unchanging accuracy his inmost thoughts as he contemplated some lofty theme, too high for present comprehension, or dived into the abyssal depths of mysteries too profound to be solved with our present lines and plummet. Christ is not different from a history, and the engraver is fanatical enough to protest against art as the handmaid of ethics is blind indeed to the genuine requirements of the race. There is a widespread feeling, though a fallacy, that the Hebrew law forbids the exercise of the engraver's skill; it does nothing of the kind; it only for-

bids the worship of graven images, and that is forbidden, all appearances to the contrary. In both the Greek and Roman churches, which are often literally filled with works of art of every description. Idols must and will have expression; they create their own embodiments, they force their way out into shapes which declare them and give them life by the exertion of the artist.

Art is born, exactly as language is produced; it is not manufactured, it grows; it is an outbreathing of a spirit which cannot be confined. When the Puritans banished everything symbolical from their modes of worship, they were in the fierce convulsive throes of a reactionary agitation. Some of them had come from lands where the letter had been utterly substituted for the spirit, instead of employed to manifest the spirit; while others were of such stern and rugged temper, and came from such inflexible homes, that all venting of natural emotion was hateful in the eyes of men who looked upon the world as a place of sin. We are now happily in the midst of a renaissance; beauty is everywhere re-acknowledged; deformity no longer is looked upon as good. But a new birth must not be a repetition of an old birth; it must be something higher, purer, better, in every way calculated to enforce the truth of endless progress through the medium of the law of evolution. Christ is being reconceived in Christendom, and this reconception of Christ is an infinitely higher thing than aught presented in the literary sensation of a few years since. Robert Elmore, by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, in that book of the excellent pen, and they are many, there is a depressing undertone of gray with the sun coming out to positive unbelief. There are no certain sounds concerning human immortality, nothing jubilant and triumphant by way of joyful assurance, but a continual sighing over incompleteness and inefficiency. Such a book, which contained no new thought whatever, would never have had a phenomenal sale in both hemispheres had it not been for the prevailing deep-rooted distaste for the old methods of theology, an aversion daily increasing, and especially so in circles where a genuine effort is being made to make religion more and more truly a matter of noble living. Every one who is inspired by the masters whom we should not slavishly imitate, but whom we can well look up to as our superiors in attainment, though not in possibility; and it is just here that we need to be particularly careful to steer clear of egotistic folly and self-assertiveness on the one hand, and a no less insidious slavery of imitation on the other.

The great masters in science, literature and art are our inspirers, but we are not to follow them blindly; we must not pretend to think their achievements a finality. While we suppose nearly everybody will agree with us in this, we do not expect the applause of the ultra-Orthodox in our continued application of the rule to all questions concerning the authority of Christ and Scripture. But let us see how the Bible itself testifies concerning the Messiah. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we are presented with a portrait of a hero triumphing over suffering, one whose sorrows led to glory. There is nothing in the outward appearance of this deliverer of his people to win their regard. He is destitute of that superficial comeliness which attracts the superficial observer; but though he has no external beauty, he is more than that which he lacks; he is to those whose interest he awakes and for whose deliverance he endures reproach, he shall assuredly see the result of his travail in such wise that he shall be satisfied. Hebrews and Christians are found arguing hotly over Isaiah's prophecies. Let religious pugilists wrangle if they will; our aim is to deduce the moral from the text, and this can only be done when we regard the hero under consideration as a type rather than a solitary person. Israel, in the days referred to by Isaiah, was oppressed and afflicted, yet the prophets told the remnant of Abraham's seed that grievous sufferings would befall them, but that they would be raised up a deliverer among them; but that the deliverance might be final and complete, the whole nation of Israel must agree to become God's righteous servant. Vicarious suffering seems to be very plainly taught in that utterance of Isaiah, but it is taught only as universal human experience exemplifies it. The righteous do suffer in the midst of the camp of the ungodly; they suffer with the unrighteous and on their behalf but not in their stead as their substitute, for every error punishes and victimizes those who perpetrate it. Thus, though it is possible to suffer with the unrighteous and not for them, they know it is here that the theologians stumble because they fail to perceive the salutary nature of suffering as a means of growth. We shall outgrow suffering, but when we have outlived it we shall have reached a state where any further pain would be useless.

The prevalent idea of Jesus is of a man of sorrows acquainted with grief; but acquaintance with grief really means knowledge of its cause, object and remedy. Those who are oppressed most bitterly with grief are least acquainted with it, for they do not behold its beneficent occurrence. They cannot see beyond an actual present occurrence. Of the suffering which is to befall them, they know the purpose and outcome of the lesson they are learning. The story of Jesus, as told in four distinct ways by the four evangelists, is a rich mine of inexhaustible treasure for us directly we perceive that all humanity is included in the Christ. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The Adam consciousness of the race must be supplanted or superseded by the Christ consciousness. What we call the natural is manifested or expressed before the spiritual, just as infancy and childhood must precede maturity. Under the theological dogma the beautiful doctrine of the immaculate conception is lost sight of. It will be long before we are able to view in its native loveliness, and when it is it will unfold to every mother that she may become in some measure the mother of the Messiah. It is recorded that once in the history of time a child was conceived, gestated and born in the ordinary way, and yet immaculate. Mary is upheld before all the world as the pattern of sanctity. Now if she be rightfully upheld as such, every mother can become as she became, or she is not a model or example, but only a fair, unique object on which we may gaze with profoundest admiration and loving awe, but never hope to imitate.

The Madonna in art, to be a true and living inspiration to a nobler womanhood, must be conceived and executed as thoroughly natural, with the pure naturalness of unadulterated fidelity to the divine command, which says to each and every creature in the universe, after your own kind and in your own degree be perfect. Surely it is not unselfish in any sense, nor need it perplex the student of anthropology to protest that every child should be born true to the order of nature as revealed in anatomy and physiology. There is in the world to-day an irrepressible demand for holiness; not the fanatical exaltation of the mystic, and lovely form in nature in the interests of self-mortification, but symmetry of thought, resulting in symmetry of form, which alone is properly expressive of the spiritual form of man, which can be made manifest in ultimates when the law which leads to ultimatum is known and carried out in every particular. The perfect child is born of a perfect mother; hereditary is not outraged, but complied with; the mothers of the race are the architects of coming generations, but let fathers think they are without responsibility. A mother of holiness or of a woman, and we hail as one of the most promising signs of the times the ever-increasing emancipation and elevation of woman visible on every hand. The mysterious dogma of miraculous conception the legendary tales of the East confirm; but we are not careful to arrive at conclusions on knotty points of vexed theology, which, if settled ever so thoroughly, would not contribute an iota to the real welfare of mankind; thus we will not seek to arbitrate between Howard MacQuary, Father Ignatius and Heber Newton, or between the Cowley Fathers and the liberal Episcopalians in a matter of belief or of bodily health, which does not influence conduct is destitute of all vital interest, and true philanthropist, however attractive it may appear to such as value the letter more highly than the spirit. The true follower of the truth taught by Jesus is one who cares very little for the legendary and mysterious for his own sake, and least of all does he seek to finally settle the question of miracles; he cares far more for morals than for magic. At the same time he takes a lively interest in all that sheds light on the vexed problem how to improve the condition of the human family, with reference alike to the hereafter and the here.

The doctrine of immaculate motherhood by holding up a perfect pattern to the race, is a fertile source of genuine inspiration, provided no bewildering dogmas are interpolated; for nothing is more necessary than that the rising generation should be made to feel that perfection is the goal for which all are striving. But we must realize the truth of perfection on its lower before we attain it on its higher plane. John the Baptist preached and practiced renunciation of everything save what was absolutely indispensable to the maintenance of the body, while Jesus was accused of gluttony by ascetics because he did not refuse invitations to banquets and partook of the hospitality of many who were in ill odor among the "uncle" guild," as Robert Burns would have expressed it. To trace the history of the entire human family in the record of the Christ is to make an application of the gospel concerning "the light of the world," which removes the central figure in the gospel history far above the reach of such fanaticism as we so often find displayed by those who insist on the exclusive divinity of the Christ, and the personal existence of the prophet of Nazareth. As the Jesus of Nazareth, the man of meek and lowly heart, who does not strive or cry, the embodiment of gentleness and non-resistance, the Christ-ideal is clothed in Essenian garb. It can scarcely be doubted that very many of the earliest Christians were Essenians, though Dr. Wise may be right in his conclusion that Jesus himself was a Pharisee, and his bitter denunciation of the hypocrites of the Pharisees can easily be accounted for as coming from one who knew the Pharisees as they were, and in every detail, and had himself been frequently made the victim of their bitter machinations. Then the stern, severe attitude of the Messiah denouncing injustice publicly, and overthrowing the tables of the money-changers in the temple courts because their practices were dishonest, would suggest a totally

different disposition to that distinguished by excessive meekness and lowliness. We never try to gloss over or evade a statement because one portion of a narrative does not apparently tally with another. We deem the work of the reviewer not to consist in trying to make a character conform to his own idea or preconceived established conception, but to see whether or not it is possible by looking at a wonderful impersonation from many sides to catch many instead of but one or two aspects of a singularly great and therefore complex manifestation of nobility. Versatility is invariably present where there is true genius; inspiration is drawn by a really great soul from every quarter, consequently it is not possible to rightly estimate the work of the greatest of teachers unless we can see him engaged in a multiplicity of occupations, but all animated with the same spirit and directed toward the accomplishment of the same stupendous end—the welfare of all humanity.

The infancy of Jesus, so conspicuously brought before the world at Christmastide, is most singularly attractive, because it seems to tell us all how utterly independent of accessories true greatness must ever be. Prince Siddhartha became the "Light of Asia"; he attained to the height of Buddhahood by renouncing a throne and all the brilliant equipments of regal state; but Jesus was ordained in a manger, but not in opposition. Puerile, indeed, is the mental attitude of those who seek to confound the two, and no one is to mean the other, but the two are symphonic; the same old story of character-shines through both; but the Christ-ideal is in many respects the finer of the two, because it points down to the very lowest state of human society, and declares that thence may arise humanity's ideal—the world's redeemer. The cradle of Bethlehem is the focal centre of interest at first. Without the lesson it conveys, all other lessons would be prematurely given. We must know the little town of Bethlehem and the manger before we can witness the holy child, giving to the world and to us, and as he grows and conquering those numerous trials and tests which we must all meet and pass successfully before our initiation into the real mystery of life can be accomplished.

We hear in these days very much concerning heredity, and very much, too, concerning surroundings as molders and fashioners of character; let us see whether the infancy of Jesus suggests any true solution of the bearings of these important questions. His mother was immaculate; her every thought and wish was consecrated to the highest good; in her pure womb she cradled for the first time a spotless babe, and when she brought him forth there was no room for him in the inn. The inn, full to overflowing with transient guests, but offering no home or even temporary resting place for the world's deliverer, exactly corresponds to that state of human society which offers no welcome whatsoever to a spiritual messenger or message, because it is already crowded to overflowing with mortal aims, ambitions and employments. A full vessel can take in no more water until some of its contents are poured out; so a life full to the brim with external engagements and considerations has no place for the emancipator of the race who comes in humble guise, and to whom the rank and file of the world are so much opposed. The world has not learned the lesson well does not disprove the need and beauty of the lesson; rather does it give a cogent reason for its more imperative enforcement; for when a great principle has been enunciated, and woe and confusion have ensued in consequence of its being disregarded, so much the more plainly do we see the intense importance of the lesson, which clearly must be learned ere the race can be uplifted.

The babe of Bethlehem, before whose lowly crib the shepherds and the magi alike prostrate themselves, shining the stars and the sun and moon, and the wealthiest alike bring the best they have to offer, is for all time a standing monument to the all-important truth that external riches and adornments are nothing in the eyes of the All-Seeing. Circumstances limit no one who has not the cause of his own limitation within himself. A truly noble work is never really hampered or restricted because of a lack of earthly support. It may seem to languish by reason of outward embarrassments, but in reality it is the more perfectly carried forward when it must appeal only to the score of true goodness and genuine selflessness. Of intense fervor of devotion to the cause he is called to the world will but tend to impede the progress of a divinely commissioned undertaking by distracting thought from the essential nature of the work itself to its magnificent accompaniments. In like manner a very great and exceptionally illumined teacher of truth may work the freer and become all the better equipped for his mission by being deprived of all those outer glories and comfortable assistances which seem to the externally minded absolute necessities if work is to be carried on. It is surely the most singular test of greatness that a man can rise to the very highest pinnacle of success solely by virtue of his immense inherent power and intense fervor of devotion to the cause he has espoused. Almost any one could become great in a popular sense with influential backing and the added help of an aristocratic lineage and bearing; but for a village carpenter's son to achieve higher distinction than that of the monarchs of the world is to demonstrate the force of an authority not dependent upon either precedent or circumstance, but relying for its efficacy solely upon the strength of genuine unassailable worth.

In taking the central figure of the gospel story as humanity's greatest ideal, we are not attempting to vary the ideal, but to present the treatment of the theme is artistic and poetic rather than historical. That great man of letters, Matthew Arnold, was very fond of calling attention to the vital difference between the *ezek* language of science and the *fluent* language of poetry. No one would take Sir Edwin Arnold's splendid poem, "The Light of the World," as a necessarily accurate piece of historical composition. The charm of the work is not that it gives names and dates with precise accuracy, but that it touches the soul, influences the heart to pure devotion, and reaches the intellect through the sweetest and most effective emotions which we are capable of. Possibly the view may be entertained by many who are not very deep reasoners, that such a character as that of Jesus may be a purely composite one; that from a variety of sources materials may have been collected, and out of these many elements a type of human excellence produced, but there are but two sources whence we can derive our materials—the actual lives of men who have reached the standard we seek to portray, and our own prophetic instincts, which lead us to see ahead far enough to discern the golden age of such a type as we imagine will be the most expressive of the future. The purely idealistic mystical or subjective view of the Christ is not unreasonable, but it is less than ample. The widest view is, of course, that taken by those who can see both sides of the subject at once. The idealist sees the divine potency in every member of the race; the historian sees the ideal actualized in at least one member of the race. The idealist, who is also a historian, sees in the fulfilled ideal in the solitary instance, the promise of universal fulfillment later on.

There are two ways of looking at the controversy between Unitarians and Trinitarians, and it depends upon how we view the matter as to which side entails our strongest sympathies. The Trinitarian, and also the Swedenborgian, says Jesus was, when on earth, God manifest in flesh. The Unitarian has often been heard to negative this affirmation, and thus all Unitarian tendencies have been characterized by Evangelicals as attacks on the very foundation of Christianity. Now what is the real issue at present between orthodox and liberal Christians? The one believes that only one man was ever entitled in any true sense to the title Son of God; the other strives to find and acknowledge the essential Christ in all mankind. It is not a matter of degree, decide whether or no there can be three persons and one God; but it is vital to every high and holy human interest to take such a view of human nature as a whole that we can realize that salvation is the calling into expression of the divinity common to us all. We are unsaved and unregenerate, just as we are babes and children, until we have attained to the saved and regenerate condition, which is spiritual manhood and womanhood.

Jesus came to seek and save those who were as yet unsaved and unsanctified; he came to teach men to know themselves and he was not the proud antagonist of other teachers; he did not forbid others to exercise the gifts of the spirit because they did not operate ostensibly in his name; he rebuked the zeal of his indiscreet followers who sought to put down the work of others who knew not the personal Jesus, and leveled denunciations only at hypocrites because of their duplicity. Between the ages of twelve and thirty years, the New Testament gives us no account of the life of Jesus; but tradition tells us that he spent those eighteen years fully as much in traveling as in his home. He visited Arabia, Persia and India; shed the light of his holy teaching and benign influence upon the lodges of the East, where, for thousands of years, preparation had been made for the evangelization of the entire world. Jesus was no friend of secrecy and darkness; he was utterly opposed to all veils of mystery drawn over the face of truth for the purpose of concealing his lovely features from the world, but at the same time he duly appreciated such secret concealment as existed only for the freer and more complete knowledge, ultimately, of the method of his own teaching was not a mystery. Great multitudes followed him from place to place, and crowds gathered wherever he took up a temporary stand; he was an outdoor itinerant preacher, and he also, entered synagogues and expounded the law whenever invited by a presiding officer to do so; the common people heard him gladly, and in his vast audiences were numbered many of the influential as well as of the humbler classes, Jews, Samaritans and Romans, no matter how bitterly prejudiced against him he was, he was able to win the hearts of his hearers, and to witness the marvels of his holiness and wisdom upon his hearers as well as the intellects of men. His first appeal was always to the affections; as he knew human nature thoroughly, he recognized the supreme importance of addressing the heart. The first public sermon of Jesus commenced with eight

distinct beatitudes. In this beginning of his ministry before the public, he took his stand among the truest of the prophets, and not with the prevailing priests. The affirmative and negative forms of teaching are placed in vivid contrast as we peruse the Bible in both its testaments. We cannot deny that he is cursed who removes his neighbor's landmark and oppresses the fatherless and widow; but how infinitely preferable is it to pronounce a blessing upon those who walk uprightly and show how to attain to the life of perfection by following divine counsels than to thunder in the ears of offenders the terrors of outraged justice. No one is frightened into righteousness; such goodness as is sometimes springing from dread is counterfeit; nothing can be real which has not its root in the affections. The rewards of virtue need to be proclaimed rather than the punishments of sin, for the latter are negative deprivations while the former are positive benefactions. It is always a most instructive study to ponder over the phraseology employed in the New Testament to describe the penalties incurred by those who do not live according to the gospel rule. They do not see life, they are in darkness; they are excluded from a wedding feast; the kingdom in the far country is desperately hungered for; now on the other hand the joys of heaven are pictured as marvelous possessions; wages earned are fully paid. The beatific vision with its unspeakable plenitude of rapture is promised to the pure in heart; those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled with good; talents are multiplied in their increase; rulership over few is increased to lordship over many cities, etc. We are restless, unsatisfied, discontented and much else that is painful so long as we remain outside the fold, but when within its blessed precincts all our wants are satisfied. We are so constituted that we can never be at rest until we have found the enduring life.

Modern novelists are cruelly pathetic when authors like Tolstoy seek to show that children are a source of suffering to their parents because the parents are always afraid of losing their darling ones. What says the gospel on this point? "Set your affections upon things above." Does that mean, some will ask, that we are to seek to become destitute of natural affection, cold and callous toward our little ones? Certainly not. It means, when rightly interpreted, that instead of confining our attention to their outward forms we must seek to discern them for what they are—children of God as well as our children, and therefore immortal. Before commencing his public ministry, Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, and then went into the wilderness to undergo temptation. The baptism by John was the consecration of the outer self to a divine service; the conquest over insidious temptations was the victory gained in the province of the affections. Jesus could not have spoken with the highest authority had he been acquainted with truth in theory only. He must practice the theory, so as to secure demonstrations in his own case before he could demonstrate it in the healing of those who came to him for succor. A cursory glance at the story of his temptation will never reveal its inner meaning. We must know the demon who tempts us, as our own inordinate self-love and devotion to externals before we can perceive the significance of the threefold trial to which the Master was submitted. Every child loves himself, and until the work of second generation commences, self-love is the dominant passion of the human heart. Far from being evil, self-love is one, though the lowest, of the three loves essential to the making up of every individual. When, however, the higher self has asserted itself, there are two courses before us, and we must choose one and refuse the other. The one being higher and the other lower, our choice is not properly between good and evil as polar opposites, but between greater and lesser good.

The entire difference between white and inversive magicians is that the former are altruistic and the latter entirely self-seeking; both classes of wonder-workers are possessed of great occult force, both have undergone ordeals in which will has triumphed over sensuality, but the one class has chosen to aggrandize self while the other has preferred the path, even though often attended with sorrows, which seeks out and discovers the panacea for human misery in the true elixir of unselfish consecration to the general good. Command these stones to become bread, that you may satisfy your personal hunger therewith, is a temptation to which all must meet sooner or later. The spirit in which it is met will depend the future career of the one who has confronted it. There is a singular Oriental teaching much discussed among theosophists to the effect that there are two Nirvanas. Those who have lived meritorious lives are entitled to bliss, and they can, if they please, having completed their probation, enter into the rhinoceros heaven, an occult term descriptive of those who think only of self. Others there are who refuse to partake of any bliss until, through their instrumentality, human misery has been assuaged; they refuse the blessedness to which they are entitled in a vain and personal delight, and of their own intense desire cleave closely to the earth and constitute its invisible band of guardian angels. "Christ emptied himself of his glory," is the testimony of an apostle; can we not see how the bibles of the world can be combined into a beautiful anthology, and how the various religions symphonize exquisitely when the vital features of all are discerned? The second and third temptations of Jesus are further trials of his willingness to discard all hope of earthly honor and glory at the call of truth. His kingdom is therefore to be a spiritual kingdom only; no tempting bauble, no glittering jewel of this world's fabricating an attractive lure resolutely fixed upon imperishable verities. The mighty works performed by Jesus were not exceptional, they were the natural and necessary concomitants of his state; he declared them to be in accordance with unvarying order; he spoke of them as no unique performances, but as the outcome of a state to which all might attain if they chose.

It is at this point that the religious world has almost entirely parted company with the New Testament, and also with the Testament for that matter, for the same works are mentioned in both. Between the two opposing schools of modern radicalism, so called, there seems to be a union, because the two paths stretch out in opposite directions entirely. One set of "liberals" endeavor to prove that nothing unusual in the way of healing ever took place, and that all reputed miracles are myths. The development theory of Strauss is pitifully defective, while the romantic theory of Renan also leaves much to be desired. Both have come to counteract the errors of an effete orthodoxy, and their only satisfactory substitute is to be found in spiritual radicalism, which teaches the actual occurrence of the wonders, and bids them to the fulfilling of the law, the Son of law. Jesus as a teacher and demonstrator of truth, according to his own confession, did nothing for the purpose of proving his solitary divinity, and we hail it as one of the most promising signs of the times that the most distinguished occupants of progressive pulpits are now seeking to expound the fourth gospel in its bearings upon the true divinity of human nature.

Man is the way to God; he who has seen the inmost of man has seen God's image, and the external must be eventually made after the likeness of this divine image. Passing over the fact that the lives of the public mind and the truth as an all-healing power was so strikingly demonstrated by the Master, we approach the summit of Tabor and at last the height of Calvary. The transfiguration of Jesus is the subject of Raphael's masterpiece, regarded by many art connoisseurs as the greatest painting on earth; and what was that transfiguration but the passing-over from the work of general teaching and healing to that of final triumph over death on behalf of all humanity? One must conquer first; all may conquer afterward; one must be the brave, unflinching pioneer who dares the way before another footstep follows. The mysterious road of the Master, the triumph of Jesus formed an epoch in the history of the world; he lived in the fullness of time, neither before nor after, and his advent was in harmony with every requirement of evolution. His coming and victory marked a new era in human affairs; he introduced a new because a more complete ideal to the earth, and when his three most intimate companions saw in some measure what the new life really signified, they fell to the earth, speechless with awe and admiration. All great truths are first borne in upon the consciousness as a very few, and those few are bewildered with the extraordinary nature of the revelation.

In the hour of his transfiguration Jesus realized what death he must die; it was amid the glories of that incomparable scene where even his garments became white and glistening as the light, that he perceived how he must save the world; first he had to live, for it, then to die for it, then to rise for it. The death scene has always abounded in tragedy, but rarely has a painter given the crucifixion to the world as it should be represented. We are all painfully familiar with the wan, haggard features of the figure impaled on the cross, but the early centuries the most uncommon to represent the Savior crucified with a crown of gold and gems on his head, and an expression of triumph lighting up his countenance. There is such a representation in the catacombs, and there are a few paintings extant in some of the great galleries of Italy where this beautiful idea is superbly illustrated. Yet we can dispense with the symbolic crown of gold and jewels and let the world's redeemer wear the traditional crown of thorns, but we must set him forth not as crushed by sorrow but as crushing it; his seeming note of despair is in truth a cry of victory, the words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, are susceptible of translation, "My God, my God, how thou hast glorified me," they will bear the conventional reading also; but when we take the two interpretations of the phrase together, we can best express the thought of the original in such a compound phrase as this, "My God, my God, while seeming to forsake me, how thou hast glorified me." It can never do ought but add to the already brimming cup of mortal sadness to speak as though a great and noble soul was bowed to the very earth by grief, and gave up the ghost with a cry of despair at his lips. In the story of the seventh and final exclamation of the Master, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," but the most mysterious of all his utterances could have been but a question such as this, Why are we apparently abandoned while in truth we are being glorified? In the briefest and simplest manner possible we will

try and suggest an answer to this great cry of the human soul, which seems to hover, to resolve a reason that all can understand. In the supremest moments of our lives we become truly individualized, and in the act of individualization the soul must stand alone. In that beautiful occult novel, "Three Sevens," by the Phelons of Chicago, we are told of how the neophyte has to pass through four distinct orders of trial before becoming a hierophant, and in the last and most important trial he must, to his own consciousness, meet and subdue the fiery element entirely without assistance from outward or sense, and in this trial of individuality sustaining him. After he has passed the test successfully he learns that he has never been an instant alone. As we who aspire to become living members of the mystical body of the Christ must follow the captain in all things, it is needful that we should, each one of us, encounter the trial where we feel as though even God and immortality were mythical, that we can show our devotion to right, and pursue clearly even though there seems to be no reward here or hereafter. They who work for reward are not the greatest, therefore an agnostic, and possibly an atheist, may stand higher in spiritual relations than many whose faith in God and immortality is sublime. Character is the end of discipline, and when the highest type of character is evolved, the purest happiness ensues unthought. They who do not ask a crown receive the brightest diadem; they who would gladly give away their harps and palms possess them in such wise that nothing can ever deprive them of their well-earned possessions. We may lose all we have, but what is left is the greatest, for it is within us. It is high time now that the cross should be preached not as a symbol of suffering, but of union; the two must become one; the mystical marriage must be consummated, as will and understanding are fully united in man. Divine love and wisdom, equally, coeternally divine, must appear a unit in expression, and as the true Koorucians, brothers and sisters of the Golden Cross, have not always taught in their mystic emblems, the union of the masculine and feminine elements in every soul must be completely manifested ere the golden era can commence. Paul may have misjudged woman and favored her seclusion, but Jesus is represented as the best friend woman ever had. Not only did he prove himself her royal champion, he commissioned her on the very morning of his resurrection to announce the joyful tidings to the apostles. Peter heard of the rising from the dead through the lips of Mary Magdalene, the first preacher in the new era was a woman, and she a saint who had been a sinner. We are not losing our reverence for Jesus because we are giving wider interpretations of the possibilities of all men. The Christ is the body of all faithful souls of which we may severally become members in particular, and in this glorious organization let us all strive to know our proper places, that we may serve truly in ways of respective usefulness. In the Grand Lodge, some are the societies which do the work, others are the constitutions, others hands or feet, some are in the internal organs, but all are good and all are useful. The ideal Christ is not the personal Jesus, but the Spirit of Truth already manifested through him, and to be made manifest through all. As in the Adam-state our sense-consciousness we all must surely die, so in the Christ-state of spiritual perception we all are made alive.

There is indeed a glorious Christ-sphere overarching this globe, above the numberless states lower than this, and a grand universal heaven, in which may be found a multitude from every state and condition under it, gathered into as they are prepared to rise through aspiration to identify themselves with truth and goodness only. From the various local heavens which surround this planet and fill its atmosphere come the bulk of communications, only partially reliable, and displaying tendencies akin to those fostered and manifest on earth; but when a soul in its eager quest for more of truth seeks to affiliate with the unit, then in answer to search for pure unfathomable good comes a ray of light from the Christ-sphere, the great universal circle of light, which is the highest heaven of which the inhabitants of earth can at present form any kind of conception, and from that heaven, in the impulse of divine instruction, comes ever the new commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you," and this new kind of love, what is it but the love which ignores all limitations and reaches out universally to bless the whole family of God and man? It is this pure affection which manifests the Son of God through the form of the son of man; it is thus and only thus that the kingdom of heaven within becomes displayed without; and the ultimatum of this divine kingdom is the coming of the Christ in the flesh. The second coming of Christ will be fulfilled when the race has shown forth what the great forerunner displayed as the guide and ensample when nearly nineteen centuries ago he walked the hills and plains of Galilee.

POEM.

Who is our Teacher and our Guide?
Who leads us from the paths of wrong?
Whose gentle voice doth whisper peace,
Inspiring love's immortal song?
Who is our Shepherd, kind and wise?
Who calls us when we roam astray?
Who takes us by his loving hand?
Whose eyes beam like a faithful star?
Surely the ages all have seen,
And many lands the gifts divine
Which from that sacred spirit flow;
Which spoken in Jesus' pure shrine.
Surely the angels doth display,
The spoken Word of God in man,
Is vastly more than thought doth frame,
And more than our dim eyes can scan.
We heard the words of Buddha fall
Like rippling music o'er life's sea.
We heard Confucius exclaim,
We heard the flow of Taoism's stream.
We heard pure Zoroaster's voice
Proclaim the sacredness of fire;
And heard the Grecian sages tell
Of wisdom and the high desire
For knowledge which displays the soul,
And makes of life a rounded whole.
We listened by the mystic Nile,
And also by the Ganges stream,
And where Euphrates' waters smile,
We caught from heaven a tempered beam.
But 'twas on Jordan's lovely banks,
And 'mid the Galilee's blue,
We saw the true light of the world,
Whose lustre ever crevices fills
Of this dull planet, cold and dark,
Till it has caught the heavenly spark.
Who is he, that immortal man,
Who speaks as man speak not before?
Whence comes he, therefore is he here?
Reading life's rugged threshold door?
Why is he not among the great?
Why dwells he not in palace home?
Why doth he wander far and wide,
And in the wilderness doth roam?
He is the best friend of our race,
The truest, the divinest of men,
Foxes have holes, and birds have nests,
But such he needs not, for his plan
Is so to teach the human race
That all who find the path of love
May tread the way to heaven's blue.
And link their hearts with states above
Life's petty idols and its strife,
And thus breathe in a broader life.
How shall we honor our ideal,
Our Savior, Friend, and Prophet true?
How shall we travel in his steps,
And gaze into the heaven's blue
With eyes as fearless as his own?
Undimmed by dust of anxious care?
How shall we work in his best name,
And thus his mighty conquest share?
He does not call that mortal life;
Shall slugs and snails his matches fame;
He does not seek for men's applause,
Nor recognition doth he claim.
His word is this: Go, cheer the sad,
Bid mine depart and sickness fly;
And as ye dwell in love and light,
So shall ye share my home on high.
No costly service doth he ask,
But that which springs from fervent love.
He claims for his own those hearts
Who blend the serpent with the dove;
Who work with kindness will to bless
Sinner or brother, where'er found.
And make, by holy words and deeds,
All human temples holy ground.
Not as a victim draped in woe,
But as a happy prince of light,
We'll picture the immortal One
Who came to make earth's desert bright.
From Bethany, where he dwelt,
Where his holy footsteps trod.

He taught the gospel word of peace,
And claimed the unity of God.
As the pure Christ, God's image fair,
Shone forth in mortal flesh and blood;
So may the members one and all,
Through whom the selfless Christ doth spread,
Each in his own appointed place,
Shine forth in mortal flesh and blood.
The light of perfect truth,
Thus only do we follow him.
From that high universal sphere,
That circle more than others blest,
That purest home of faithful love,
Where workers in pure action rest,
May each and every soul on earth
Receive the blessing God imparts
To all who seek to do His will.
Through brain and muscle, hand and heart.
In union with the truly free
Of every clime and every race,
May we be all humanity.
Reflected as our Father's face;
Then claiming all that cannot fail,
Of blessing all that cannot fail.
The depths of truth and good we'd sound,
And every sun-crowned height we'd scale.

Banner Correspondence.

Massachusetts.

QUINCY.—William G. Prescott writes: "A friend and myself attended a circle at the house of Mrs. Corey, at No. 8 Summer street, Watertown, on the afternoon of Nov. 4th. There were a dozen or more mediums present (all private with the exception of Mrs. Corey and Mr. Jones, the spirit-artist), who were entranced during the afternoon. We all had a very enjoyable time. The same evening my friend and I were intending to go to 53 Concord street to attend a materialization séance at Mrs. Stafford's, so I invited Peguier, the Indian control of Mrs. Corey, to go there and materialize. She promised to do so. We did not mention to any of our other spirit-friends that we were at Mrs. Corey's that we were to attend Mrs. Stafford's séance that evening, as we wished to see if they would mention it."

The first spirit that materialized was my friend's wife, who did so at his side. The first words she uttered were, "Didn't we have a good time this afternoon?" He pretended at first not to know what she meant. She then said, "Oh, you know we were out to Waterbury." My spirit-friend, who was too busy giving spiritual food to others to take time to partake of any herself. "I know it," she said, "but she ought to take time." (I think so too.)

When Mrs. Stafford was arranging the circle that evening she said she had received a letter from a person hundreds of miles away who wished a chair to be left vacant for a spirit-friend of his. She placed one, and in it paper, pencil and envelope. During the séance a materialized form went to the chair, and taking the paper and pencil, upon the floor and wrote at lightning speed, and then folded the paper, put it in the envelope, sealed and directed it, and left it in the chair. I inquired on Sunday, the 15th ult., if an answer to the letter had been received, and the reply was, "Yes; and the person who received it was much pleased." She wrote that the materialized spirit wrote a message for herself and two for spirits that were present but did not materialize.

A friend called one evening at Mrs. Stafford's, and Mr. Stanbury, spirit of the Independent State-writer, who is also a good slate-writing medium, and Mrs. Stafford's manager, was impressed to get two slates and place between them a piece of tin painted black. He then by request placed two gold rings on the top slate and placed the slates upon the table, and those present sat around the table. An autograph was also placed there and played upon some ten minutes, when the slates were opened, and upon the tin was a beautiful copy of a picture which had been in gold in his hand in Maplewood. No one present knew that he had such a picture. I have since seen the original of which it is a copy, and I pronounce the copy perfect, except that it is smaller. The most wonderful part of the spirit manifestation is that a sufficient quantity of gold could be taken from those rings on the outside of those slates to do the picture on the inside of them."

NEWBURYPORT.—J. C. Cheney writes: "While Mrs. M. St. Omer was in this city my wife and mother had a sitting with her, and obtained slate-writings under the most rigid test conditions in a room as light as sun could make it. The slates had been thoroughly cleaned, and did not for a moment pass from her possession. I would heartily recommend her to all doubting Thomases who honestly desire to know the truth."

FITCHBURG.—Miss R. P. Lyon, Secretary, informs us that Mrs. Hattie C. Mason of Gardner was the lecturer here on the 13th inst., giving the best satisfaction both as a speaker and test-medium. "Be true" was the subject of the evening's remarks, and the control said: "It costs something to be true in this life; true to ourselves and to the world. It is easier to drift with the tide of popular sentiment in whatever channel it may lead; but it is far better to face the storms of opposition, to live true to the promptings of the spirit within, even though we sacrifice our reputation; for if the God of conscience approves, what care we for other gods." "Sunshine," the little Indian control, gave a great many tests and communications, bringing the sunshine to many hearts, as most of them were recognized. We shall be pleased to welcome this worker again at some future time."

BOSTON.—Mr. A. Danforth writes: "The entertainment given on the evening of Wednesday, Dec. 9th, for the benefit of the First Spiritual Temple Fraternity School, was well attended, and netted by voluntary contribution a handsome sum in aid of the Temple work."

The exercises opened and closed with singing by the quartette, consisting of Messrs. Jenkins, Russell, Hall and Teague. Cornet solo by C. DeWitt Davis. Violin solo by Albert Barker. Piano solo by Miss Maude Banks. Song by Mrs. Starna, Miss Lizzie Nolen, the Davis Sisters and Miss Maude Banks. Recitations by Miss Grace Dyer, John Nolen, Elmer Packard, Miss Hattie Dodge, Winnie Heywood, Miss Lizzie Nolen, Miss Abbie Parker, Grace Melvin, Alice Bill, Mrs. A. C. Armstrong, and "The Yankee Girl" (in costume) by Mrs. E. W. Heberton. A "Review of Three Score Years," by A. Danforth, depicted a life on earth and in spirit-life by ten members of the school.

We endeavor in these recitals to keep before the children our Phenomena and Philosophy, and to teach them by living pictures that lives on earth and the spirit-life are connected by love and sympathy.

It is our intention to have similar recitals every month until spring.

New York.—W. M. writes: "A continuation of the new departure in conducting funeral services took place at the residence of the late Wm. Ransom Romaine, No. 61 West 34th street, in this city, on the evening of the 8th inst."

Mr. Romaine was a liberal-minded gentleman, and had studied the subject of spiritual manifestations thoroughly. He became perfectly convinced of the truth of the communication of spirits, and of the continuance of life after the phenomenon of what we call death. His calmness and resignation, when his spirit was about to take its flight, were most remarkable. He was much more concerned about the welfare of those he was leaving than he was about his own departure. At last, when the summons came and the angel of death pressed his eyelids down, he seemed to wrap the dra-

pery of his couch about him and lie down to pleasant dreams. There was no fear, no dread, and so our friend was released and out of pain—out of suffering.

The services were now and extremely interesting. The body lay in an oak casket, rich in its simplicity. Beautiful flowers and evergreens surrounded it; roses and lilies filled the air with most delicious perfumes. The parlors were filled with friends of the new-born spirit; no tear-stricken mourners, no long prayers; only honesty, sincerity and truthful expression. The rooms were brilliantly lighted, and from the rear parlor came the low sweet strains of music.

Mrs. Brigham was the first speaker; her address was most beautiful. She referred to the friend who had just put on the robes of immortality—to the splendid intellectual and moral attainments of the departed. She gave many beautiful metaphors, and explained their reference to the birth of the spirit.

A well-known artist was invited to speak a few words. He said that he had met more to rejoice and celebrate than to mourn the departure of this much-loved man, whose outer garments lay in the embrace of death before us, but whose spirit was now free from the body and doubtless present gazing upon the scene before him. The artist described the process of death in glowing language as seen by the seers of the nineteenth century, and referred with great earnestness to the difference between the dreary, dismal and sorrowful funerals of the past and the one in which we were now engaged. Flowers are the harmonious expressions of nature and also the emblems of immortality; they mingle with the joys that welcome our birth, they adorn the marriage bells, and at last are interwoven with the immortal memories of those loved ones who have passed the pearly gates of eternal life.

This closed the pleasant services of this most impressive and delightful ceremony. A beautiful song and accompaniment, and the company went away; but every one present will recall pleasant memories of the occasion."

NEW YORK CITY.—Titus Merritt writes that Mrs. Elsie Reynolds of San Francisco, Cal., has been giving séances for some weeks past at her rooms with Mrs. McCune, 36 East 32d street, near Park Avenue Hotel, also in the parlors of some of the wealthy business citizens of New York, with great success. "At one held at a private mansion near Gramercy Park recently, with a party of about sixty persons, the proprietor had a new light cabinet made and placed against a solid wall in the middle of the large front parlor—made in such a manner as to be quickly put up or taken down. Mrs. R., on all occasions, sat in her chair out of the circle, and several forms appeared before she entered the cabinet."

Michigan.—DETROIT.—A Lay member of the Progressive Spiritual Society writes: "Mrs. Lena Bible served our society during the month of November in a most acceptable manner. For December Mr. Oscar A. Edgerly of Newburyport, Mass., is our speaker, this being his first visit to our city. He came to us well recommended, and his work warrants all that we were led to expect, and we feel to endorse him as a fine trance speaker and test medium. We feel that his work among us will be conducive to a furtherance of our Cause in this city. We shall endeavor to secure his services for a longer engagement as soon as he has opened dates at his disposal."

Our city is also favored with the presence of Mr. Adrian B. Ormrod, a fine test medium, who is holding meetings every Sunday afternoon, which are well attended and resulting in much good. So, all things taken into consideration, Spiritualism is very far from being obsolete in Detroit."

Maine.—AUGUSTA.—A correspondent writes: "G. A. R. Hall was filled to overflowing Sunday evening, Dec. 13th, many not being able to find even standing-room. Mrs. Leslie of Boston was our speaker, and gave excellent satisfaction. She was followed by Dr. H. F. Merrill, who gave in the space of thirty minutes names, dates even of birth, to the number of about seventy, all being fully recognized. These fine lectures and remarkable tests are drawing in the people, and the First Association of Spiritualists of Augusta has every reason to rejoice and take courage, for never in its history has there been such a deep interest in the cause of Spiritualism among all classes as at present. Our society is now planning for societies, and will soon have a fund with which to obtain the services of the best speakers on the Spiritualist platform. Sunday, Dec. 20th, Prof. Haskell of Togus was our speaker, followed by Dr. Merrill."

Minnesota.—ST. PAUL.—M. T. C. F. writes, Dec. 14th: "The genial trance speaker and reliable platform test medium, Mr. Frank T. Ripley, is engaged to lecture and give public tests for the St. Paul Spiritual Alliance until March 1st. His time is well occupied in the twin cities—speaking and giving tests at close of lecture in Minneapolis every Sunday morning, and at St. Paul the evenings of the same day. He also holds a test séance for the public each Wednesday evening for the benefit of our Society. Mr. Ripley gives many tests at the close of each lecture. He is making many friends here by his harmonious ways, and the interest in Spiritualism has never been so widespread as at present."

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Consumption and Rheumatism.
A Scientific Statement in Plain Language of their Origin, Treatment and Cure. By GEO. DUTTON, A. B., M. D. Cloth, pp. 60. Price \$1.25. For sale by COLBY & RICH.

December Magazines.
PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL.—"Sir Edwin Arnold, Journalist and Poet," is the subject of the opening sketch and portrait. An interesting sketch is also given, accompanied by a portrait of Baron Hirsch, a worthy successor of the philanthropic Sir Moses Montefiore. New York: Fowler & Wells Co.

VACCINATION INQUIRY.—The Royal Commission resumed its sessions Nov. 20th. Quoting the *Lancet* *Post*, the *Inquirer*, referring to the long protracted existence of this body, says: "By the time the Commission have settled whether compulsion shall go or stay, it will have disappeared—at all events over a considerable area of the philanthropic Sir Moses Montefiore in the matter, have virtually repealed all the Vaccination Acts in the Statute Book. London: E. W. Allen.

THE SIDERAL MESSENGER has for its frontispiece a fine engraving of "Ladd Observatory of Brown University," Providence, R. I., and for its leading paper, an address delivered there on the occasion of its presentation, by Winslow Upson, on "Ancient and Modern Observatories." Northfield, Minn.: W. W. Payne.

HERALD OF HEALTH—"The Abuse of Exercise," "Longevity," "Climate for Consumptives," and "The Perfect Man," are subjects of the general articles. New York: Dr. M. L. Holbrook, 40 East 21st street.

THE BIZARRE, NOTES AND QUERIES.—This number closes the eighth volume. Eleven pages are occupied by "Catechisms Aerial (The Secret Discipline)" of an Ecclesiastical History Explained, by Theodore Temple. Information on various abstract subjects is also given. Manchester, N. H.: S. G. & L. M. Gould. For sale by Colby & Rich, Boston.

THE INDEPENDENT PULPIT.—A correspondent considers the question, "Is America a Christian Nation?" and a long array of quotations from the writings of Confucius are given to show that there can be no Morality without Religion." Waco, Texas: J. D. Shaw.

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Newspapers sent to this office containing matter for insertion, should be marked by a line drawn around the article or articles.

Banner of Light.

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

Holiday Notice to Patrons.

In obedience to the expressed desire of our Wholesale and Retail Agents in New York and Boston—who feel the pressure of the increased business volume incident to New Year's—we would give notice that those who have advertisements on our seventh page which they wish renewed must see that they are at this office on Thursday, Dec. 24th, as the first forms, containing the seventh page, will go to press that night.

Those having notices, etc., for the editorial department must have them at this office on Monday morning, Dec. 28th, as the paper will be put to press on Monday night.

"Merry Christmas!"

This has been the invariable salutation from lip to lip, on the annual return of Christmas Day, from time immemorial, and is likely to continue to be for time immeasurable. It is a greeting that expresses the gladness of the time better than perhaps any other could. Christmas has preeminently been held to be childhood's own blessed anniversary, sacred as it has ever been to the appearance of the loved child Jesus on earth, and heralding as it does the promise of a new life to the world of man. So it is observed in a spirit of joy and gladness, and celebrated with offerings of love and friendship on every side, and hailed as the opening of a fresh new year by all people who are recipients of the influence its real character sheds everywhere abroad.

On its return this year, therefore, it is greeted with renewed pleasure and observed with all the tokens of a revived gratitude. No other day or season like it makes its appearance from the opening to the closing year. It contains not only the most precious memories and a full store of priceless associations, but it blossoms all over with glad hopes, restored faiths, renewed friendships, warmest charities and welcome revivals. In the spirit of the one whose birth it commemorates, old and young become one together, uncounted households overflow with love without alloy, and hearts warm and melt to hearts as if there was no longer anything in the world to separate them.

It certainly is a needless thing to do to intimate to Spiritualists the fit manner for them to choose such a day's or such a season's observance. If they have truly learned anything from the deep revelations which are supposed to have illumined their lives, it is that this pervading and predominating spirit of love that characterizes Christmas time is the spirit in which they have themselves been freshly baptized and made children of light in the midst of the surrounding darkness.

There is the peculiar privilege to have realized as few or none others have, that what has become a sort of universal outbreak once in a whole year is but the true condition of pure life every day in the year. They ought to be supposed to understand that this abnormal demonstration of the better spirit is only the normal state when that spirit is suffered to manifest itself without obstruction. It is for them especially to testify to the fact that life is indeed but death when this animating spirit of love is withdrawn and happiness a mere name without its joyous presence and prolific function.

To Spiritualists and all other readers, for so good a reason as this, we offer, in all sincerity, the congratulations which are a prominent feature of the Christmas season. We extend them the cordial expression of our fraternal joy on the return of the day that has been set apart for centuries by the Christian world for the special celebration of the power and the blessing of love in its simplicity, its innocence, and its purity. We join with them in greeting this passing symbol as the promise and pledge of the far greater and more wonderful advent whose silent and mysterious power is to cover the world of humanity as the waters cover the sea.

A Noble Production

Is the CHRISTMAS DISCOURSE by W. J. COLVILLE, which we give our readers on the second and third pages of this issue.

The Workingman's Solution.

Trades unions are not a survival of the ancient guilds. The germs of both the modern capitalist and the modern laborer are to be found in the guild, but the unions consist of laborers only. When the trades unions arose, the guilds had to a great extent become obsolete, as had likewise the statute of apprentices which in a degree perpetuated their rules.

The prime object of trades' unions was the enforcement of the statute, in Queen Elizabeth's time, in respect to the regulation of wages by public magistrates. It was suspended by Parliament from year to year, and finally repealed in 1814. The conspiracy laws were simultaneously reinvigorated by legislation, making it illegal for laborers to combine for the purpose of affecting wages. The result was very far, however, from suppressing the unions. On the contrary, it drove them into seclusion, and gave rise to outrages. The unions combined to fight these conspiracy laws, which in 1875 were finally repealed. As Prof. Adams has remarked in a highly instructive lecture on this subject, with increased power to the unions has come, as it always does, a sense of responsibility and good behavior.

Discussing the subject of the unions, he proceeded to say that the questions dealt with by them are of the internal organization of industry as between labor and capital, and whether the unions can affect an increase of wages. They cannot, he argued, if the wage-fund doctrine were true, for the sufficient reason that they can neither affect the number of laborers nor the amount of capital to be invested. But the wage-fund doctrine is not true, because wages are not things but values, and values do not come wholly out of capital, but are partly created by labor.

The division of the total product is not the result of demand and supply, but of bargaining between laborer and capitalist, the proportion depending on the relative strength of the two parties to the bargain. And the trade union adding its support to the strength of the laborer if he cannot obtain satisfactory terms from the employer, and, much more, furnishing him with information of the conditions of the labor-market, and consolidating the individual laborers into one body with a single organized conception of their powers and rights—the laborer can hardly help increasing his strength for making a more favorable bargain all the time.

It is possible to finally encroach on profits by increasing wages in this way, and on interest. In the former case the weaker employer goes to the wall, and the unions thus contribute to the centralization of business in the hands of the most able, or, in other words, to the growth of monopolies. To insist on apprenticeship rules was an attempt to create an aristocracy of labor, a privileged class, and it would not succeed. The result would be a diminution of the total product, by forcing into idleness all laborers outside of unions, and by decreasing the total out of which wages must be paid.

It is not right, maintained the lecturer, that more should be paid the laborer out of charity. That is demoralizing. But the lessons of history teach the right he really ought to demand and extort. The slave comes first, having no interest in the product of his work. Then comes the wage-laborer, with no interest except so far as his skill helps him to rise. Next comes the system of coöperation, whether literal coöperation, profit-sharing, or socialism, in which the laborer is directly interested in his products. And finally, trades unions bring us nearer to some form of coöperation, by asserting a man's right not to be discharged except for cause; and trades unions are the instruments by which the idea will be carried further.

The ethical basis of the laborer's right to share in profits is found in the fact that capital itself is not the result of abstinence, but rather a social product; technical skill, inventions, and our whole industrial efficiency being the fruits of the labors and struggles of past generations.

Creating Crime.

Crimes are being created so rapidly by legislation that it is becoming a serious question how far legal crime, or crime in the eye of the statute, is morally a crime, or a crime in the eye of morality. An article on this subject in **THE BANNER** of Nov. 28th, *appropos* of a discourse of Rev. Mr. Savage bearing on the same subject, finds a responsive echo in the editorial columns of the *St. Joseph (Mo.) Herald*, which proceeds with a serious discussion of the subject.

It says that the root of the evil is to be found in the impossibility of establishing virtue by law, learned by old nations long ago. And in answer to the question whether anything can be done, it admits that it is practicable to discourage, discountenance and control the tendency, but that total prevention is impossible.

Why not, asks *The Herald*, distinguish between crimes and mere evils, between what every man's conscience tells him is wrong and what may or may not be evils? The whole land, it declares, is demoralized by this incessant statute-making. We have so mislabeled ourselves that in some localities every rich man evades or resorts to subterfuges every year to escape the intolerable burdens; while for numberless law-made crimes we may be dragged to far-off courts, or to Washington, at our own expense for everything. And every year, as it is discovered that the pretended crime is not suppressed, new measures are tried and new statutes made.

The Herald continues: "Every citizen is liable to prosecution for some offense, but only the obnoxious, the 'spotted,' are named. Every statute only increases offenses, offenders, and public burdens. Already the land swarms with wretches ready to perjure for a witness fee when called on. Under the system they swarm like the vermin and frogs in Egypt of old."

In the discourse already alluded to, Mr. Savage draws the following distinctions, which it is well to bear in mind; that, technically speaking, sin is an offense committed against God, while vice is an offense committed chiefly, or first, against ourselves—a private, personal thing. Crime is the breaking of a statute law, supposed to be a social wrong. He asserts that crime is not always evil. Looking down the course of human history, we see that a large part of those men whom we most revere were considered criminals by their age, and indeed were criminals by reason of being breakers of statute law.

In this sense Socrates was a criminal, and was put to death as such. Jesus of Nazareth was a criminal. In the times of Nero and Diocletian all the early Christians were criminals. And so, too, coming down the years,

Bruno was a criminal, so was Martin Luther, so were Vanini and Servetus. And at a still later period, so was all that grand cluster of men who stand out in the firmament of our recent past like stars, whose shining heralded the dawn of a larger, wider human freedom—these were criminals—Channing, Parker, Garrison, Phillips, John Brown, all the noblest men of their time.

Ethical Teaching.

In his address before the School of Ethics at Plymouth last summer, on ethical teaching to children, Prof. Felix Adler said he would first teach them justice, not in the legal but the ethical sense. The aim of the principle of justice are the perfection of the social organism as the end, and perfected individualization as the means, with the result that the practical command of justice is—"respect the individuality of the fellow-man." He said it is not true that justice is only concerned with duties that we owe to all men, in virtue of matters in which all men are alike—such as "thou shalt not kill," etc. Those commands are authoritative only in virtue of the duty to respect and further our fellowman's individuality, which we cannot do if, for instance, we kill him.

Take the right to liberty: the child's attention may be called to the bad effect of slavery on the master, to the bad effect on the laborer wherever the conditions of his employment deprive him of moral independence. Take the right to freedom of opinion: has a parent, for instance, the right to press his religious opinions on a child before the latter is old enough to understand the question? Take the right to property: he would avoid all dogma, and present to the child the simple proposition that he who will not work shall not eat. The present system of getting and having is to be maintained until something better takes its place. It is the fruit of painful evolution, and contains much that is precious.

Take speaking the truth: You must speak the truth because others go by what you say; they build on it, and you hinder and obstruct them if what you say is false—and the same of your promises. And how does charity differ from justice? The distinction is that we use justice to our equals, charity to our inferiors. The true test of charity, in the sense of relief from suffering, is in its effect on the donor. Charity as vanity only results in more vanity. True charity will result in a greater simplicity in the life of the giver.

There is, besides, mental and moral charity. The first puts its pupils in the way of higher knowledge, as Socrates did; moral charity is the bending down to the sinful for their moral regeneration, of which the best example is Christ and the Magdalen. The duty of gratitude in the receiver, and the duty in the giver not to make much of the gift, both arise from the duty to respect the individual; the receiver of charity not to look on the giver as a mere instrument to help him, and the giver not to regard the receiver as a mere creature, whom he has raised up and made, and who is dependent on him.

Children are likewise to be taught about their duties to servants; first, the respect due to all labor; second, as a special sense due to them as helpers, the joy brothers and sisters of the family. And we have duties to animals, because cruelty to them develops cruelty in us. In justification of animal food we are to consider man the orrible in which all the utilities of nature are refined to higher spiritual uses.

Providence and Population.

The entire population of the world at the present time is stated to be 1,479,729,400. This statement is made on the authority of a book recently issued by the German publishers of the "Almanach de Gotha" and of numerous geographical publications. It is a book of general statistics, classified according to the divisions of the globe and the various countries therein, and is as completely trustworthy as a compilation of so extensive a character well can be. The further statement is made that the population of the world has increased since 1822 at the rate of about five millions each year.

Asia is the largest of the great divisions of the earth's surface, being 17,530,686 square miles in extent, with a population of 825,954—or 47 inhabitants to the square mile. America, including North and South, comes next in the great divisions, with an area of 14,891,402 square miles, and a population of 121,713,000, or only 8 inhabitants to the square mile. Africa is the third grand division in order, having 11,277,364 square miles and 163,953,000 inhabitants, or 14 to the square mile. Europe has 3,756,860 square miles, and a population of 387,379,000, or 94 inhabitants to the square mile. Australia, including Tasmania, has 2,991,442 square miles, and a population of 3,230,000, or a little more than 1 to the square mile. The polar regions are supposed to contain 80,400 inhabitants; while the islands of the ocean are computed to contain 733,120 square miles, and 7,420,000 inhabitants, or about ten to the square mile.

This makes the statistical picture of the globe's extent and population. It shows what the human race numbers approximately, and excites reflections upon the ultimate designs of an overruling providence in the creation, distribution and evolution of his family scattered over the earth. In the clear and powerful light of such a statement, it certainly becomes the makers of narrow creeds, and the dispensers of divine penalties to be humble, if not wholly silent, before the dispensations of a providence they can never expect to measure or control.

Spiritual Facts of the Ages.

We shall place before our readers next week the twentieth number of Dr. F. L. H. Willis's valuable historical series bearing the above title. This number includes the early years of the Reformation, and portrays the Spiritualism of the French Huguenots, showing it to be identical with that of our own times.

The Universal Peace Society has just held a peace conference in New York City, asking all Christian governments to adopt arbitration instead of force in settling international disputes.

The famous philanthropist, Mr. Daniel Hand, of Guilford, Ct., has just passed away at the ripe age of ninety years. He has given away more than a million dollars during his lifetime.

Railroad trains' accidents are on the increase. There have been two a day for the past year. A smash-up has just occurred in Kansas—twenty-six passengers more or less hurt.

Seers and Prophets.

The *Minneapolis Tribune* states appreciatively that Miss Abby Judson recently addressed a meeting of Spiritualists of that city at the lodge parlors on "Jewish Prime Ministers," referring particularly to Joseph, Daniel and Bezaonah. She said in substance:

"Those three men belonged to a race both practical and imaginative. While virile in worldly matters they are susceptible to spirit influence. Each of these men held the highest position, not only in the nation in which he lived. In the seventeenth century B. C. Egypt led the world; in the sixth century B. C. Babylon, whether capital of Babylonia or Persia, was the head of the known world; and England, under Victorian rule, may be conceded to lead the nation in which he lived. In the nineteenth century, while D'Israeli, though rich, and son of a literary father, was handicapped by belonging to a despised race.

When asleep the spirit bodies of Joseph and Daniel were near, separated from their physical bodies, and great spirits disclosed the future to them in visions.

When a boy Joseph's dreams foretold his advancement; and when in prison he foretold the near future. He interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh; and, by rare executive ability, saved the abundant crops for the years of famine.

Daniel's visions were of a more exalted character. He foretold the fall of Babylonia; the four successive dominant kingdoms; and the coming of the great Nazarene.

D'Israeli, though envied by practical Anglo-Saxons, was a dreamer born. In two of his earlier novels he portrays the prime minister that he was to be. In his last novel, *The Question*, he shows the continuance of the Jewish race depends on its inherent virility; and we shall see it become yet more prominent, as prejudice fades away in the light of human brotherhood."

An Impressive Test.

In a late review of Mrs. Maynard's interesting book, we quoted a suggestion made by Abraham Lincoln, that any skeptic who claimed it to be an optical illusion when one declared he had seen a piano raised from the floor without the application of visible power, should be asked to place his foot so that a leg of the piano would rest upon it when it came down, and thus prove beyond question the falsity of his claim. A practical instance of this test was stated by Prof. S. B. Brittan in the course of his discussion with Mr. Hanson in Hartford, Ct., about the year 1883. In response to his opponent's call for facts, Mr. Brittan said he was present at the house of Mr. Alvin Adams in Watertown, Mass., when a piano, weighing one thousand pounds, with three men sitting upon it, whose weight amounted to four hundred pounds more, rose bodily in the air, without mortal means, and while suspended at a distance of some feet from the floor, the instrument, with all its legs raised from the floor, correctly marked time to the tune of Hail Columbia. One of the Harvard professors, seeing the occurrence, said he must be psychologized, when he was advised to test the question by putting his foot under the piano! He did so, and the piano, when it came down, came upon his waiting foot, and the Professor was convinced by what Mr. Lincoln would have termed "the weight of evidence resting upon his understanding."

Whiskey Civilization.

The garrison at Whipple Barracks in Prescott, A. T., includes a company of Apaches. On the last pay day they received their money, of which certain whiskey peddlers were so covetous that they offered these Indians all the whiskey the latter were able and willing to pay for. The usual result of course followed—a big drunken spree, with seven Indians looked up in the guard-house, and an equal number of Indian and white soldiers laid up in the hospital.

It would have been something like justice to ferret out and look up the law-breakers who were guilty of selling these Indians liquor. And they richly deserve a treatment of even a more vigorous nature. If the dealers in liquor on the frontier are forbidden to sell it to the Indians who are not United States soldiers, much more should they be forbidden to sell it to those who are. If this is any part of the process of introducing the red man into the sphere of modern civilization, it ought to be so understood, and at once, by the people of the country.

Holiday Gifts.—All persons of a receptive, and therefore liberal, turn of mind, who are considering the character and fitness of the gifts which they desire to make to their friends at this holiday season, are herewith reminded that they will be sure to find their thoughts turned into the right channel if they will pay an early visit to the **Banner of Light Bookstore** and carefully consult the riches of thought and revelation that load its tables and counters and shelves. They can hardly fail of the complete gratification of their most varied desires. Within the walls of the **Banner Bookstore** are to be found a collection of the most advanced, liberal, and spiritual writers of this or any other age. The list to make selections from is of the widest scope. Poets, philosophers, writers of fiction, recorders of spirit-phenomena, essayists, liberal thinkers and free speculators, are each and all fully represented here, and are ready to perform desired and timely service by the simple act of friendly distribution. This is the very season when it is most fitting to pass their works freely from hand to hand.

"The New Orthodoxy" was the topic discussed at the December meeting and dinner of the Unitarian Club, at the Hotel Vendome in this city. The chief feature of the occasion was the presence of Rev. Lyman Abbott, of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, and editor of the *Christian Union*. He defined the new Orthodoxy as evolution—the better present growing out of an imperfect past. He thought it needed to be proclaimed to-day, more than ever before, that the sole sovereignty of God is that of infinite, eternal love. While believing in the reality and terribleness of sin, the punishment of sin has for its end redemption. Man is going through a refining process through the ages, to continue until Christ our brother, and God our father, and man, shall be all in all. Rev. A. J. Gordon said the old Orthodoxy was a partialist system. It never intended to reach or save all men. Though he would not assert Universalism dogmatically, hypothetically he announced himself a Universalist.

"Amy Lester," the sterling original story by MR. CARLYLE PETERSEN—now running through **THE BANNER**'s columns—deserves the close attention of the thinker as well as that of the ordinary lover of fiction. The characters are strongly drawn, and the thoughts expressed through the child-medium are full-charged with suggestive food for reflection.

The message from MOSES F. CHANDLER, given at our Free Circle, and published in **THE BANNER** of Dec. 5th, is recognized by friends as being strikingly characteristic of his personality.

Eighty-Four Years.

The eighty-fourth anniversary of the birth of John Greenleaf Whittier, the beloved Quaker poet, was observed in Newburyport, Mass., Dec. 17th, many friends repairing to the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cartland on High Street, where he is staying.

From all parts of New England came acquaintances, and those who were not able to be present contributed beautiful and appropriate gifts.

Truly it was an inspiring sight. The aged poet, crowned with the silver of his eighty-four years, standing erect, his eyes kindling, and his countenance lighting up as he took some old and very dear friend by the hand, and expressed his gratification at the meeting. Here was this great and noble man receiving the congratulations of a host of admirers with the great modesty habitual to him and shrinking from anything like display or outside show.

Among the telegrams received were the following: From New York, "A nation's greetings be thine to-day. A nation's blessing attend thy way. (Signed) Abby Hutchinson Patton."

From Brantwood, Ont., came this: "Your young Mohawk friend asks for you, to-day the Great Spirit's blessing. (Signed) E. Pauline Johnson." This second dispatch was from an Indian girl whom Mr. Whittier befriended.

Bishop Brooks sent to the host the following letter:

"Dear Mr. Whittier—I have no right save that which love and gratitude and reverence may give, to say how devoutly I thank God that you have lived, and are living, and that you will always live. May His peace be with you more and more.

Affectionately your friend,

PHILLIPS BROOKS."

Among others who took occasion to express their good wishes in writing were Rose Terry Cooke, Lucy Larcom, Sarah Orne Jewett, Harriet P. Spofford, Rev. A. P. Peabody, Celia Thaxter, Robert C. Winthrop, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe and the senior literary class of the Gloucester high school.

Mr. Whittier's birthday was also observed in Amesbury on the 17th with appropriate exercises at all the public schools, and an entertainment given by the young ladies of the Methodist Sunday-school in the evening.

Margaret Fox-Kane Donation Fund.

Up to date we have received in aid of Mrs. Kane seventy-three dollars; but more funds are needed. Of course our readers understand that this is a special case.

Colby & Rich, Boston, \$5.00; Mrs. Carrie Grimes Foster, 5.00; A. Friend, Boston, 1.00; F. J. Lippitt, 1.00; Geo. A. Shultz, 1.00; I. W. Russell, 2.00; C. F. Whittaker, 1.00; Mrs. A. E. Crane, 1.00; Maranacook, 1.00; Columbus Wells, 1.00; Mrs. H. D. Cook, 2.00; A. Friend, Cleveland, Ohio, 5.00; Mary D. Bell, 1.50; A. H. Nichols, 1.00; Eben Owen, 1.25; M. T. L., 1.00; T. C., 1.00; A. Farnsworth, 1.00; Samuel Robinson, 50 cents; M. H. Warren, 2.00; C. P. Gram, 1.00; Mrs. E. Barrows, 2.50; Benj. Cross, 1.00; R. C. Hartman, 2.00; Geo. A. Bacon, 1.00; A. Friend, 1.00; Dr. Hale, Boston, 1.00; Mrs. D. W. Johnson, 5.00; Friend, 1.00; Mrs. J. A. Chapman, 1.00; Friend, 1.00; E. R. Painter, 1.00; H. W. Lincoln, 1.00; Nathaniel Freeman, 1.00; Robt. Barstow, 1.00; Mrs. Almira McLaughlin, 1.25; E. M. Winslow, 1.00; S. R. Francis, 50 cents; M. C. Lacy, 1.00; Friend, Peconic, 50 cents; J. E. H., 1.00; M. P. Walker, 2.50; T. B. R., Dover, N. H., 1.50; H. C. Whiting, 50 cents; Frederick Dancer, 50 cents; Jas. Wilson, 1.00; O. E. L., 1.00; J. W. Holmes, 2.00; Dr. Jas. Cooper, 1.00; Friend, 1.00.

M. Jackson, \$1.00
P. D. Bryant, 1.00
Gad Norton, 1.00
Mrs. J. Tilson, 1.00
C. F. D., 1.00
Solomon W. Jewett, 2.00

Just What is Needed to be Said.

In his address at the opening of the Episcopal Congress in Washington, Bishop Phillips Brooks of Massachusetts, making reference to the then approaching meeting of the Congress of the United States, said that some members of Congress have been criticised for indulging in utterances which contain no element of Christian religion, but on the other hand rather set it at naught. He admitted the justice of such criticism in some cases, but he did not feel disposed to judge harshly of men's speech. "If," said he, "your speech measures your deepest feeling, and expresses your honest thought, it is religious."

There spoke a man possessed of a profoundly religious nature, whose mental habit it is to search for religiousness in all forms of life and expression. How very much richer would this world of humanity be if such a spirit were found pervading all, in place of the reorientation of variant religious sects, and the uncharitableness of religious criticism. Bishop Brooks has dropped the needed word at the needed time.

Not even hypnotism is a new thing under the sun. In a lecture on "The Religious and Sacred Literature of Babylon," delivered at the British Museum, Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen said that among the cuneiform inscriptions are some very curious passages, which speak of a "medicine man" visiting a sick person and making passes over his body, and the fact is corroborated in a recently discovered sculpture where a god is seen making passes behind the neck of a kneeling figure. Palm wine and biters are mentioned in the records as a remedy for indigestion or biliousness. This was the Babylonian substitute for "sherry and biters."

The ravages of influenza are increasing in this country as well as in Europe. Many people in London, Eng., are prostrated. All classes are infected, and the physicians are in consequence overworked. It not only attacks royalty, but royalty's subjects. Both the King and Queen of Sweden are ill with the disease, the Emperor of Austria, as well as the Princess Charlotte of Saxe-Meiningen.

We regret to learn of the severe illness of our friend Alfred E. Giles of Hyde Park; but are pleased to hear that the indications are favorable for his speedy restoration to health and activity.

Read what is interestingly said by various writers under "Correspondence" heading, third page.

Active preparations for war with Chili still continue in the navy department, and steps have been taken to secure the most available vessels in the merchant marine for possible service in Chilean waters. Arrangements have been made in New York and San Francisco to charter, if necessary, from thirty to forty vessels, to be used as transports and coilers. Naval officials are also looking about in New York for vessels to be used in the torpedo service. They regard the fast private yachts as the most available craft for this service.

According to one of the ablest German strategists, who has just published an essay on war, England is likely to decide the result of the next European conflagration; the important question being whether she will remain neutral. England, he says, hates Russia and fears France. She might play a favorable part for Germany, but she will not, especially if the Liberals are in power.

We have received from Geo. A. Bacon of Washington, D. C., a copy of the official Congressional Directory, corrected to Dec. 25th, for which we accept our thanks.

Message Department.

ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS

Of each week Spiritual Meetings will be held at the Hall of the Banner of Light Establishment, from 8 o'clock P. M. to 10 o'clock P. M. J. A. Shemmel, Chairman.

Answers to Questions, and the giving of Spirit Messages, will occur on the same day, and the results be consecutively published in this Department of THE BANNER.

At these Séances the spiritual guides of Mrs. M. T. Longley occupy the platform for the purpose of answering questions propounded by inquirers, having practical bearing upon human life in its departments of thought or labor. Questions forwarded to this office by mail, or handed to the Chairman, will be presented to the presiding spirit for consideration.

Mrs. Longley, under the influence of her guides, also gives exorcised individuals anxious to send messages to their relatives and friends in the earth-life an opportunity to do so.

It should be distinctly understood that the Messages published in this Department indicate that spirits carry with them to the life beyond the characteristics of their earthly lives—whether of good or evil—that those who pass from the mundane sphere in an undeveloped condition, eventually progress to a higher state of existence. We ask the reader to receive the doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

It is our earnest desire that those who recognize the messages of the spirit world will verify them by informing us of the fact for publication.

Natural flowers are gratefully appreciated by our angel visitors, therefore we solicit donations of such from the friends in the spirit world. It is a pleasure to place upon the altar of Spirituality their floral offerings.

Letters of inquiry in regard to this Department must be addressed to

OLNEY & BROWN.

Questions Answered and Spirit Messages

GIVEN THROUGH THE TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP OF

Mrs. M. T. Longley.

Report of Public Séance held Oct. 30th, 1891.

Spirit Invocation.

O! thou Spirit of all Goodness, thou giver of life and all that it contains, thou who art Lord of the seed time and of the harvest, we turn in thought to thee at this hour and sing our songs of praise for all that thou hast bestowed upon human life through nature's works. We thank thee for the beneficent display of thy plenitude on every hand, for teeming fields white with harvest and rich with fruit which the present season has brought forth by spirit in the earth-life, and for the glorious light that upon human life by way of experience, even through discipline, mental and physical, which at times may seem severe, but which, when summed up, has been given to us as a blessing and the power for good which it has contained.

We realize, O! thou Spirit of all Love, that it is through tender affection and love that we have been able to understand the secrets of thy universe, and read the mysteries that are written everywhere. Not because thou hast designed to remain mysterious, but because thy love and grace would be enlightened. Unto this end we reach upward through aspiration and desire toward the fount of knowledge and of eternal truth. Quicken our understandings and give new light to our minds, so that we may grasp and comprehend those things which as yet have not been revealed.

We are glad to come into spiritual communication and harmony with bright souls from the world beyond, to be in accord and sympathy with those who are pure-minded and lovingly understand the truth, the revelation of the truth, the truth's sake. From the aspiration which such souls may bring, and from the influence which we may gather from these angelic spirits, we receive new strength and inspiration, also, by giving new understanding with a strong desire to reach out in helpfulness toward our kind, even as they are doing from day to day.

We return thanks to the pure souls for the endearments of social life, for the sympathies of kindred hearts, and for the kindly feeling which extends into the life of our fellowman. We thank thee, O! thou Spirit of all Love, for the beautiful flowers, which are tokens of thy love and of angel ministrations, for all the good things in life we return our thanks forever more.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—We will attend to your questions, Mr. Chairman.

Ques.—[By "Student."] Can spirits make use of the knowledge of the physical sciences acquired in the earthly life?

Ans.—No information concerning human life and its various departments of usefulness, no knowledge of natural law, can be acquired by a mortal that is not of service to him after he passes from the stage of mortality. Science is the revelation of truth, the revelation of the various operations of natural law. Certainly, then, if you can acquire a knowledge of the operation of any department of natural law, whether it be in the realm of physics or in the realm of subjective life, you will have enriched your mind and added to your store of information concerning life and its significance. Most assuredly is a knowledge of the various sciences of use to spirits who have passed from the physical plane into the spiritual kingdom.

There are intelligences in the other world who are interested in studying the operations of that great law, which, generating a subtle but potential force, sends it abroad throughout the universe to vitalize every object and form of existence. This force is electricity, so vaguely understood by man in the present day compared to what it will be in future generations, that in its present use it may seem crude; but mankind is beginning to learn more and more of this force, to experiment with it, and to understand how it may be made of inestimable value and benefit to the human race. By-and-by, when generations have come and gone, this electric force, so-called, will have become such an invaluable agent or servant for man that it will be employed in numberless ways, the extent of which is not dreamed of in the present day.

Astronomy is a scientific study. It is the investigation of that law which not only has brought forth the existence, and set in motion, in their orbits, but which causes them to revolve from age to age and unfold in beauty and splendor. This study of worlds, of suns and systems, known to you as astronomy, is a science which can be demonstrated and revealed to human understanding. Certainly a knowledge of it is of use to spirits who have put off the mortal garb. It may have interested them here, and they may, while on earth, have gained much information concerning the sun, the stars, the planets, and the various bodies that roll in space, and that knowledge will not be lost to them when they enter the spiritual world, but their minds having been turned in this direction, they will be impelled to pursue that study and increase their knowledge of this vast subject.

So with other sciences, or branches of science, which men and women have sought to explore and understand while on this earth. They may come now to do when they become spirits, and the knowledge will be of use to them in that enlightened world, while the experience which they gain through such study, and the power of mental unfoldment which is increased within them, will be of great advantage to them as progressive souls.

Q.—[By "X."] To whom or to what is the soul reconciled? I ask this because of the almost universal theological meaning attached to the word reconciled when coupled with that other term account.

A.—Theologians do not all put the same interpretation upon this word, or upon other words, as has been accepted and established by evangelical bodies. The mind of the theologian is capable of advancement as well as the mind of the scientist, who perhaps stands wholly outside of the pale of theology; and as the theologian, or he who is a student of theories and philosophies, unfolds in knowledge, he may lay aside the definition of a word or term, which in past years has satisfied him, to accept in that, like something broader and more satisfactory because of its larger nature.

To be reconciled to any person or to any system is to come into harmony with that individual or with that system. To be antagonistic to any system or to any intelligence is to be out of harmony with it. We have been led to believe in bygone centuries that the human soul is out of harmony with God, out of harmony with the great spiritual life of the universe, out of tune, so to speak, with all that is good and heavenly or divine in its character. Why have we been led to believe this? Because we have been told that we are beings of total depravity, that sin is inherent in the human family, that man is a creature of inconsistency, of evil tendency, of all that is degrading and degraded, while the great, divine, infinite life belonging to God is above and beyond us, of which we are really a part, and having been made by God the creature of the Father of all. So we have been told that we must be reconciled to the Divine Spirit, reconciled to God, to that

which is spiritual and that which belongs to the infinite life.

From our standpoint we have no such conception of human life. We do not see that man has ever been divorced from God. We believe that God is indwelling in the human family, a part of every human soul, and that it is impossible for man to in any sense be separated in time or in eternity from the great infinite life from which he springs. He may not understand God, but his finite mind can fully comprehend the infinite. It may have a dim consciousness of the abiding presence of the infinite spirit; it may have an innate realization of some omnipotent and omnipresent power dwelling within its own life, as well as pulsating throughout the universe; but it cannot comprehend God, or in any mortal language definitely express even that realization; and because man cannot thus interpret and understand the infinite, theologians have declared that he is not reconciled to God, that he is antagonistic to the great Divine.

Not so. As ignorance flees, man becomes better equipped with an understanding of truth, and with a knowledge which a study of the universe and of the human family brings to his mind. He grows nearer and nearer to a conception of the infinite presence, comes more fully to realize his relationship to the Divine Principle, and therefore comes more into harmony with the great First Cause, is less antagonistic and more reconciled. If you like those terms better, but only because he has enlarged his capacity for understanding, only because he is advancing in soul-knowledge, only because his power for expressing the possibilities of his nature is increasing through the experience which comes to him.

Joseph Sharp.

[To the Chairman.] They tell me to step right in before the preacher, and so I do, sir, for I am interested in this thing. I have been studying it since I found out so much concerning it after I went to the spirit world. There have been many things for me to learn; for though I have been in more than one dominion on this earth, and had an experience in each, I find that which I gained here, while doing me good in the spirit-world, still belongs mostly to this life, and I have found many other things to take my thought on the spirit-side.

I was not born in this country. I came across the sea when a young lad, and I found much that was strange to me when I reached foreign shores. Nearly the same sensation came over me when I entered the spirit-world. I found everything real and substantial there, but some things were strange to me. My surroundings were not just what I had thought; and, sir, I have been looking over the country since I went to the other life so as to know all about the situations and conditions to be found there. I have not been doing this all along, but that has been a part of my work, and I have been busy, too, in other things, throwing off the mass of the rubbish that came to me here, and freshening myself up a bit so as to feel young like some of those I have met on the spirit-side.

I am quite well satisfied with the spirit-life. I do not wish to come back and take up the old work. It is all right for others to come after us and follow on and do as much better than we did as they can. I am glad of it. I am glad, sir, that there is a way open for man to get out of this life, and to reach a better and useless, and give others a chance to step in and do better if they can.

I have children on this side, and my children are among the best. I want them to know that I have come to send my love to them, and what is more, that mother sends hers, too. She is well and happy on the spiritual side. I found her looking smart and bright, and well content with that life which she had found. I do not know as there is any better word I can bring than this: that we are alive, doing well, and expecting to do better, because we do not stand still over there, but we keep making ahead for something brighter beyond.

[To the Chairman.] The last part of my life I lived in Ludlow, Mass., and that is where many of those who know me best are to be found. I will take it kindly if you will just put me down as from that place, for I am from there, as far as I can be, being a spirit who belongs to another world. I am Joseph Sharp.

John Hubbard Stevenson.

[To the Chairman.] I give you greeting, sir. I feel that I am privileged in gaining permission to step forward from the number of intelligences who attend this place and to make myself understood, if possible, by friends who yet remain on earth. Strange it may seem to them to receive a call from an unseen visitant, whose home is not of this earthly matter, but who yet feels himself so strongly individualized, and so identified with the man of old times who walked the streets of New York City and its environs as John Hubbard Stevenson, that he claims to be the same in returning to your office. I do not feel it to be other than what I have been—a little enlarged in experience and knowledge, perhaps, to what I was here—but I do not feel that I am much more rounded out in social qualities, for I experience the same emotions of friendly feeling and of affectionate regard going out to my personal friends that possessed me here. Sometimes we do not express these sentiments as strongly as we might while we are engaged in the pursuit of material enjoyments, or in the exercise of our profession; but they are a part of the spiritual man, and remain with him even after he passes from the form of clay.

I do not come, Mr. Chairman, to give a dissertation upon any particular subject which belongs to this physical life. But I come through the exercise of my social nature, merely to reach out to friends on earth and to tell them that I live, that I have passed safely through the great here which all, I think, at some time or their lives dread to meet, and yet which comes as a gentle friend to conduct a living soul out of the narrow vestibule of human experience into the broad temple of truth and knowledge.

My home was in Staten Island, where I passed away. I have many friends, for I was a merchant of long standing in the city of New York. The house with which I was connected still remains as a business firm of integrity and of successful career. Years ago I withdrew from it, in order, sir, to enjoy the quiet of social life and the quiet of a more private experience, because I felt that I might do so during the later years of my life on earth. I feel that some friend will learn that I have returned to your office, and believing this, it gives me strength to reach out in spirit to that friend and all friends, and give them my hearty good-will and affectionate regards.

Michael Angelo Blunt.

Like others who come, I am here with the thought of meeting my good friends in spirit and coming into communion with them.

Many times I send out my influence, and I feel that it reaches the lives of my family and those who are very near to me in affection, even though they do not understand that I, as a living man, am beside them. The years come and go, and I realize that many of them are passing away, taking with them the more vital memories of my life and its experience. I realize very well that others come up to take our places, as the gentleman said who preceded me, and that it is right we should pass on to other scenes and other opportunities for working out our energies and expressing our native talents; I am quite satisfied to have nature go right on as she always has been doing, sending off those who have done their work and bringing forward new lives for experience and growth.

I can hardly tell you what brings me here to-day, except that I have a warm feeling of remembrance for those who are here in whom I have been interested, and whom I am interested still. I am concerned in the welfare of our town; and in the way affairs are conducted for its people. It has grown since I went from the body, things have changed somewhat, but I keep track of them very well considering that I have no mortal form to watch them through.

It may be known that I had certain plans of a material nature in contemplation when I went from earth-life. I did not expect to be called quite so soon. When I went out to Colo-

rado to look after my own concerns, I supposed I should find them in such shape as to give me a new start, and I expected to return to my Millford home, in good old Massachusetts, and enter into business life more largely. The old adage, that "Man proposes, but God disposes," was true in my case, as it has been in many cases of human experience; but I am just as well satisfied as if I had planned all these things for myself, for I have been working into new business lines on the spirit-side. I am interested in the press, in the dissemination of news throughout the country, and free my own mind as I did here, only in a little different way, to be sure, and in other branches, but still in just as practical and vital a manner as I did here in the printing-office.

I want to tell my friends that I saw those mourning good old Mr. Bragg, and that he is conscious of his station. He knows that he has passed from the body, and he is fully alive now. He would like me to say for him these things, and that he is pleased, strongly pleased and astonished at all the great life that he finds surging around him. That grand soul, Adin Ballou, assisted him, as he has assisted others in passing from the body, giving them new conceptions of life, and teaching them spiritually that they may see their condition and realize what is coming to them.

I speak of this because I think it will interest our friends, and they ought to know something of the things belonging to the spirit-life. They are all coming there some day, and they may go as suddenly almost as I did, without realizing that their end, as far as physical life goes, is at hand. It will do none of them any harm to study up these things and make them a part of their lives. I am Michael Angelo Blunt.

Sylvia Gale.

My people all live in Wisconsin. Some of them are trying to acquaint themselves with the spiritual philosophy. They have just begun to read some of its literature and to study mediumship, although I have tried for a long time to arouse them on this question.

I was not a Spiritualist before I went from earth. I knew nothing of the claims of Spiritualism makes. If any one had told me that my mother could come back from the spirit-world, or that my friends whom I thought dead could come to speak to me, giving me clear messages, I probably should not have believed it; it would have seemed too good to be true; but I did not know of it. Sometimes I heard vaguely of people who had dealings with unseen beings, but I paid no attention to the subject.

I was interested in the study of music. My whole life was bound up in it. I never could satisfy myself with my ability of expression, it seemed so crude to me, and I longed for advantages which I did not have. I thought if I could sometime go to Europe and study with the great masters, I might develop that taste which I felt, but I did not find time for it, but I had no hope of so doing, and I never did. In the spirit-world I now hear such wonderful music, I listen to such glorious voices singing so sweetly that I stand mute, not daring to give expression to my own sense of harmony, but waiting until I can unfold, through study and through the sympathetic contact of higher minds, that which I know sometime will come forth.

I want my friends to know this, because I do not wish them to think of me as dead, with all the longings and the hopes and the desires of my life, or those of any other life, buried up in the grave. They are a part of the spirit, and continue to live. I want to say, too, that I have had my wish in one direction. I have gone across the water to other lands in company with bright spirits who have had work in that direction. I have seen and listened to those across the seas who give musical expression to their talents, and I think I have gained in that experience. I know that my wish has been granted, and that is much; so I am waiting for more to come, as I believe it will in the great Beyond.

I send my love to my friends. If they are sincere in their profession of wishing to know of Spiritualism, if they are earnest, and if they will be patient in their investigations and sit for what knowledge may be brought to them on this subject, I believe there will come to them from the spirit-world something that will be of great value to them, and I will do all that I can to help them in their search for light. I am Sylvia Gale.

J. B. Pownall.

[To the Chairman.] Put me down on your record, sir, as J. B. Pownall. I suppose I have a right to say that I come from Waltham, from that good old manufacturing district. When I was here I was employed by the American Watch Company, and I took a great deal of interest in that concern. I was interested in its band, and like the young lady who has just disappeared, I took great pleasure in following the most careful calculation of numbers, but now I am getting an idea of music such as I never had on this side.

I would like to come back into private communication with many of my old neighbors and friends, not to speak of those still nearer to me, like personal associates. Why! I feel as if I had volumes to say, so much of what I have been learning since I went out of the body, and so many things concerning the life that I led on earth, flash across my mind.

I am not asleep, I am not so fully awake as I have been since I went to the spirit world. I have kept account fairly well of things that have happened to my friends on this side, but I have spent my time mostly in attending to affairs on the spirit-side, for I hold that this is what I ought to do. I am a part of that life now; I live in the world that belongs to spirit, and I have work to do there—not the same kind that I had here, but work that calls for the very strongest exercise of my energies and the most careful calculation of my mind. It is my pride to be able to do the work well, and to have it appear well beside that of some one else who has considerable skill and efficiency.

I belonged to societies here, some of them secret and some of them open, and I do not lose my interest in the fraternity nor in anything that attracted me while I was on earth. I have sometimes visited the boys in the fire department, and have enjoyed coming into their atmosphere, though I do not imagine they have the slightest idea of what I am. They might have thought of me as ghostly if I were here, but that is not so. I am a real living man, and I feel stronger than I did before I went from the earthly side.

[To the Chairman.] My object in coming is to let my friends know I can come, and I hope it will be accomplished. I thank you, sir, for giving me this privilege.

Elizabeth Pearson.

Some of my old friends have been asking mentally and among themselves why I do not come back here to your Circle-Room and say a good word for the cause of mediumship, for I was a medium, and I was interested in the work which spirits have to perform through their instrumentalities on earth.

I do not come to make any extended speech. I only come in answer to the inquiry of my friends, and say to them: I do not remain away because I have lost my love for the good work, or because I have no interest in mediums. I know there are many who are turning back from spirit-life to these doors of communication, seeking an opportunity for speaking to their friends, or for doing something in their behalf, and I do not wish to take their time or in any way to prevent some one of that throng from performing his labor of love.

I feel that the work is going on; that, instead of making a great noise throughout the world, crashing here and there, Spiritualism is quietly finding its way into thousands of homes. It has been set up as a bright light upon the family altar, and it burns steadily, giving good cheer and warmth and encouragement to the household, and making its power felt in each life there. I know that Spiritualism has its thousands of mediums all over the land, and through them individual spirits speak their words of identification to friends on earth. It is imparting its healing power to the sick, giving consolation to the sad, bringing hope to the weary, and to the weak a new help and strength, and in many ways instructing humanity. This is a good work, and I do

not think my little word is needed to add to its power, or to prove that Spiritualism is a grand and beautiful blessing to mankind. I cannot do this of myself, and it is bringing its own evidence of this fact by its works and the results of its movements.

So I tell my friends that they may be cheerful, may feel that all is going well, and they may also believe that their friends and fellow-workers who have passed to the spirit-life are still in league with them in the continuance of good work, and that they still love them, and send their influence of peace to bless their lives.

I lived in Boston. My friends who ask these questions among themselves are in Boston and near by. I have caught the tenor of their minds, and so I have had permission to speak in this way. Elizabeth Pearson.

Charles S. Wing.

As I come to the medium I feel a little restricted because of physical infirmities. They have gone by; I know they have gone, and they are no part of me now; yet through some law I sense them, as I reach out through your medium to my friends on earth.

I have been to your circle quite often since I went from the body, but not at first asking to come in this way, because I wanted to learn about it, and know how to handle the medium. I believed in spirit-return. I could feel sometimes in quiet moments the presence of an invisible power. I have friends in your ranks, and I am glad to be here. It is good to me to tell my friends that I am sound and strong in the spirit-world, that I have renewed and reformed home associations, and have a pleasant place on the other side with the dear ones who had passed on, but who were awaiting my coming in the new country.

I have had a feeling that I am called, Mr. Chairman, that I am wanted to come back to your circle for something, and I do come to bring my love, I want to tell my friends that I, for my part, am ready to meet her in the presence of some medium, and to give her something quietly that I have in mind which I would like to say. I want her to go to a trance medium, I think she will know to whom, where I can speak what I have to give.

I have, sir, come very near to a number of mediums, and I have impressed some of them and made my presence felt as best I could; but I want to do better, and I think I shall. Every time I come to the atmosphere of a sensitive I get new strength to throw off the effects of the physical infirmities and to make myself felt. I have no impediment of speech, no halting in speech, no infirmity whatever of the outward now to contend with. I feel stronger and clearer in thought and in outward condition than I have for years, and that, I know, will be pleasant for my friends to hear.

I would like to give my regards to my friend Colby, and tell him that I am doing well and have been to the point where I told me in years gone by. I remember and it is strange how they come to me) little things that we have talked over in times past when we met; they come up clear to me; then I look them up on the spirit side to find how near the right they were, and I am quite well satisfied that he has been a good scholar in the Spiritual Cause. I am Charles S. Wing, from Amesbury.

INDIVIDUAL SPIRIT MESSAGES

TO BE PUBLISHED NEXT WEEK.

Nov. 3.—John R. French; Linda Baker; J. T. Heard; Cora Ferguson; John Rosch; Lydia Maria Child.

Dec. 11.—Nathaniel Barstow; Henry E. Farrar; Sarah Callahan; John Mayhew; George N. Allen; Eliza G. Walcott.

Dec. 15.—Sally C. Dow; Josiah Lyman; George Francis; Nancy Clough; Edward H. Purcell; Mamie Rice.

For Over Fifty Years

Mrs. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP has been used for children teething. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for Diarrhea. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

The Harmonical Philosophy.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

It seems to me that nothing would contribute more to the moral and spiritual progress of mankind than the perusal and diligent study of the works of our great seer, Andrew Jackson Davis.

Now that a new volume has appeared,* giving flashes of light from these works, by the pen of Mrs. Davis, I hope fervently that the attention of the world will be more effectively drawn to the books of Mr. Davis, books which are valuable, the best chapters in the New Testament; moreover they reveal new truths not revealed in sacred writ, thus transcending the scriptural revelations, particularly in regard to the hereafter, the origin of man, and respecting all essential things appertaining to what Mr. Hudson Tuttle calls the Science of Human Life Here and Hereafter. No other books seem to me comparable to Mr. Davis's. They are ineffable, exquisite, and so rich in structure that the highest branches of knowledge that I am amazed not to find them in every library. They are books not to be read once and then laid on the shelf. No; one desires to read them over and over again, and each time new revelations seem to reward the reader. So great are these writings of our seer that our age seems incapable of appreciating their grandeur. Yet, in ages to come, the homage due to the author will be paid, and posterity will eagerly peruse their sublime truths and making the adequate reward from all superstitious and contribute brightly to the ushering in of the Kingdom of God, when the human race shall be a fraternity indeed, and not merely in sentiment. Mr. Davis's teachings are so comprehensive and all-embracing, that all possible reforms that aim at social, political and industrial improvements are by him urged, and justified by appeals to the highest motive. I know that whatever I may here say in praise of the Harmonical Philosophy* can not be by any means do justice to the matter, or be adequate to the glorious truth.

May the new book, "Stanzas," have the effect of inducing the readers to procure and peruse the original volumes! REV. S. WEIL.

Bradford, Pa., Dec. 6th, 1891.

*STANZOS: Quotations from the Inspired Writings of Andrew Jackson Davis, Seer of the Harmonical Philosophy. Second and edited by Della E. Davis, M. D. Fine cloth, 50 cents. Sent by mail, \$1.00. For sale by Colby & Nich, 5 Bowdoin street, Boston, Mass.

If old people are forgetful, they always remember to use Johnson's Anodyne Liniment.

A gentleman who occupies an important position in the department of public schools in a certain district, in a personal letter says that in his neighborhood there were recently hanged a father and son, who dangled on either side of a limb "like a pair of saddle-bags, and so near each other that it seemed as if one were whispering in the ear of the other concerning the fraudulent character of the law." Truly a startling idea; and it is significant and gratifying that it should have been formed in the brain of a prominent school teacher. It is encouraging to know that some educated persons are thinking correctly. When educated persons see things as they are, there will be a change for the better. Ignorance among the educated is the mother of poverty and misery among the lowly.—Twentieth Century, N. Y.

Baldness is catching, says a scientist. It's catching flies in summer-time! Use Hall's Hair Renewer and cover the bald place with healthy hair and flies won't trouble.

Passed to Spirit-Life.—From his daughter's home, near Reno, Nev., Dec. 1st, 1891, Alva C. Earl, aged 61 years 6 months and 20 days.

He was born in New York; afterward lived in Iowa; the past twenty years resided on the Pacific Coast. While in California he was a prominent seer, and held communication with them. He was a clairvoyant and trance medium, devoting nearly all his life for forty years to the cause of Spiritualism. He leaves a wife and three children, who are waiting for him in spirit-life. T. E. WILLIAMS.

Ordinary Notices not exceeding twenty lines published gratuitously. Special Notices charged ten cents per line. Additional lines will be charged. Ten words on an average make a line. No space for poetry under the above heading.

[Continued from first page.]

used to think I should. I now know all this to be false, or error; my so-called Irreligion was in my favor; my swearing was a vulgar habit, my drinking injured my body; those transgressions brought their own punishment, and that is all the punishment there is; praying to Christ never saved any man from punishment, and never will; those who never heard of Christ, never saw the inside of a church, are just as happy here as the most sanctimonious Christian who ever lived, and the nearer a man lives to nature, or the natural laws that govern his being, the wiser and happier he is here. Now, my son, I have kept this little girl in this condition about long enough, and I shall cease speaking through her, but I want you to remember all that I have said, and think of me as a wise and happy spirit; be kind to this child, speak well of her, for she needs all the kindness which you can show her. Farewell for this time, and my blessing rest upon you."

Amy ceased speaking. Soon she opened her eyes, but still looked pale and weary. The reporter's face wore a thoughtful and serious expression; he regarded the child as he would an angel; he laid his hand on her head and stroked the golden curls; he raised the little limp hand and kissed it; he left the veranda and the house a wiser, better man. Poor little Amy, all unknown to herself, was doing a work in this village; the seed of truth was being sown here and there by those childish hands, to spring up and bear a harvest in time. This was in the days before the advent of Modern Spiritualism; such a thing had never been heard of in this village or by this child; that was yet in reserve for her. She was one of those who were being prepared for a work which was to come—prepared by the hands of the angels.

The reporter did not put a word in the village newspaper about little Amy Lester; his heart held its own secret too sacredly for that, and he felt as though he could almost annihilate any one who could hurt or speak ill of the child; she was a little queen to him henceforth.

CHAPTER XVII.

Materialism and Atheism Conquered by Reason.

There resided in the village a very wealthy gentleman; he was Mr. Lester's uncle, and consequently Amy's great uncle. He was a very learned as well as a very eccentric man; he was an Englishman, the younger son of a lord. He was a very reserved gentleman, and did not mingle with the people of the village. He had received his portion at the death of his father, the old lord, and concluded to take up his residence in America. This beautiful lake, Champlain, had attracted his attention, and he purchased a large tract of land—the land on which this village now stood; he built a splendid mansion, after the old English style, in which he resided. He formed charcoal pits in the adjacent mountains, and many hundred men were employed there.

Thus the village came into existence. He owned many sloops and canal-boats, in which the coal was sent to various parts of the country—to Burlington, Troy, Albany, New York City, and many other places. He built a saw-mill on one of the tributaries of the lake. Many men were employed here, and many of his boats were loaded with lumber—altogether he was the greatest man who moved all the rest. Of course there must be houses built; there must be stores. Soon a church was erected, not Mr. Goodman's—that was a later affair—but a heavy stone church, after the Queen Elizabeth style, afterward Mr. Goodman's more modern wooden church, and a fine brick schoolhouse; soon a young ladies' seminary made its appearance. The village became thriving and well-to-do. Mr. Derby was getting along in years, and had now given up active life altogether. He was very studious, and had a large and valuable library. He had been heard by the people of the village to say many times that he did not believe in a personal God or a personal devil—in fact, he had begun to doubt the immortality of man altogether, and the village people called him an atheist. This gentleman heard that his little grand-niece, Amy Lester, was a very singular child—a strange girl. He became curious to know wherein she was strange, and sent a polite note to Mrs. Lester requesting that Amy be allowed to pay him a visit of a few weeks. Mrs. Lester was very glad to have Amy go at the time appointed. Mr. Derby came himself in his carriage and took Amy home with him. She was taken by the housekeeper to a beautiful and luxuriously-furnished room overlooking the lake. This was to be her room while she remained at the Derby mansion.

Mr. Derby was a portly, handsome, noble-looking old gentleman, with waving white hair and beard; his eyes were as mild and blue as the summer sky; his hands were white; his manner that of a scholarly and benign gentleman of the olden time. His youth and middle life had been given to business. As old age approached he began to speculate about a future life, but found nothing to satisfy his inquiring mind in religious dogmas and creeds. The next day after Amy's arrival he sent for her to come to the library. She gladly obeyed the summons, for she intuitively loved this old gentleman, her great-uncle, and she felt as though his soul was very nearly related to hers. It seemed to her as though he was nearer to her than her own father, her father being a son of Mr. Derby's sister.

When little Amy entered the library Mr. Derby rose to meet her, bowing

